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Prepared by:

Dr. Srikanta Roy Chowdhury

Dr. Dinesh Chandra Ray

Diki Ongmu Bhutia

Dewakar Thatal

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AGRARIAN TECHNIQUES AND PRACTICES DURING THE SULTANATE PERIOD

It will of course be unreasonable to expect that the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate would have effected any radical changes in the system of agricultural production, though the coming of certain new technologies seem to have helped irrigation and there was spread of some market crops. According to D.D. Kosambi, this change did no more than intensify the elements already present in Indian feudalism while the Muhammad Habib regards these to be not only radical but so progressive in nature that to him these deserved the designation of 'rural revolution'.

PLOUGH: An illustration in the *Miftah ul Fuzala*, a Persian lexicon compiled in about AD 1460 in Malwa, clearly shows the plough with an ironshare drawn by two yoked oxen. Unlike Europe, India could not developed horse-drawn wheeled-plough for the reason that Indian plough was light in weight suited for the soft soil.

SOWING: For sowing, the method of broadcasting was known. The practice was to scatter seeds manually by taking them out from a cloth-bag slung over shoulders. The time scale of seed-drill in India is controversial: some would trace it back to the Vedic age. At any rate, the only positive evidence for its use along the western coast of India comes from one Portuguese traveler Barbosa (1510 AD) in connection with wet-rice cultivation.

HARVESTING, THRESHING & WINNOWING: Harvesting was performed with a sickle, and threshing by using oxen that walked round and round over the ears put on the threshing floor. 'Wind Power' was exploited in winnowing in order to separate the chaff from the grain.

IRRIGATIONAL DEVICES: There were many sources of water for the purpose of irrigating fields. Rain water was the natural source. Ponds and tanks received this water which was used for irrigation water channels formed by inundation served the same purpose. But the most controlled source was the water of the wells, especially in Northern India. Almost all the irrigational devices were oriented towards drawing water from wells. The latter were more often than not masonry with raised walls and platforms. *Kuchcha* wells also existed, but these could not have been durable or strong enough for extensive water lifting.

There were five devices to raise water from wells:

1. The simplest technique was to draw water with rope and bucket by using hands without any mechanical aid.
2. The second method was the employment of pulleys (*charkhi*) combined to the rope-bucket contraption which was activated manually.
3. An improved method of the rope-bucket-pulley contraption was the employment of a pair of oxen to replace human power. At this stage, it had become a specialized device for drawing water intended specifically for irrigation. In some areas of Northern India it is still in operation known as *charasa*.
4. The fourth technique was what is considered to be semi-mechanical as it worked on the First Class Lever principle. A long rope is lashed to the fork of an upright beam or trunk of a tree to put it in a swinging position. The bucket is fastened to a rope whose other end is tied to the one of the swinging pole hovering over the well. The pole's other end carries a counterweight, a little heavier than the bucket when filled with water. This contraption requires a little effort only on the part of the person operating it. The device is known as *shaduf* in Egypt. It is called *Tulā* (Balance) in Sanskrit, but in Bihar and Bengal it is known as *Dhenkli* or *Lā*.
5. The fifth water lifting method is called *saqiya* or *Persian Wheel*. None of the four mechanisms

described above required wheels as their basic component. The water-wheel could well claim to be called a water-machine because of the employment of the gear system. With gears we enter upon a very advanced stage in the technological sense: it has been surpassed only now by electric tube-wells.

The five devices to raise water from wells described above can be put into two broad categories:

- I. Intermittent or discontinuous water supply device, and
- II. Continuous water supply system

The first four belonged to the former and the fifth to the latter category. Again, depending on the nature of the operative source, the first and the fourth fall in the 'human power' category and the others were driven by 'animal power'.

Imperialist/ Cambridge/ Colonial School:

In post-enlightenment world as Bipan Chandra[1] argues imperialist perspective first emerged in the writings, pronouncements, and declarations of the Viceroys, Lord Dufferin, Curzon, and Minto, and the secretary of state George Hamilton. It was firstly put forward by V. Chirol, the Rowlett Committee (sedition) report. American scholar Bruce T. McCully attempted to theorise this approach in 1940. Further this school split into liberal and conservatives. Its conservative wing further developed itself as Cambridge school. Anil Seal[2] and J.A. Gallagher developed this school in India after 1968.

Cambridge School

The conservative colonial administrator who studied British Empire from imperialist point of view and supported British Empire as a source of civilization in India were known as Cambridge School. Anil Seal, J.A. Gallagher, Gordon Johnson, Richard Gordon, and David Washbrook, were chief exponents of this school.

This School developed its interpretation of Indian past on the basis of imperial needs[3]. Purpose of this school of history writing is to interpret Indian past in a manner so that it could facilitate British Empire. This school deny the exploitative nature of colonialism. They do not recognize the fact that Indian's anti- colonial struggle was an outcome of British Colonialism and its economic, social, cultural and political exploitation of India. They see the Indian Struggle against imperialism as mock battle or mimic warfare. They completely overpassed the imperial contradictions as a reason of for India's struggle for Independence. The imperialist writer deny that India was in a process of becoming nation rather they understood India as a group different caste, religions, creeds, and communities. They argue that political organisations in India is based upon group mobilisation according to these groups and these groups are using Nationalism as a cover to their selfish, and individual interests. National movement according to this school was not a people's movement but a product of the needs and interests of the elite groups. Thus, the elite groups and their private interests provided an idea, ideology and movement of nationalism. Two main constitutive element of this group were, caste and religious identities or political connection built around patronage. They argues that each group had their very narrow selfish interests and they used nationalism as an ideology for mass mobilisation and to gain public support.

Dufferin, Curzon, Chirol, Lovett, McCully and B.B. Misra argues that India's educated middle class used nationalism to fight against 'benevolent Raj'. Anil seal in his book Emergence of Indian Nationalism develops an almost similar view like this. He argues that Indian national movement had not been fought against British imperialism rather it represented the struggle of one elite group against another elite group for British support. Thus Anil Seal interpreted Indian National Movement in terms of mutual rivalry and jealousy.

Along caste and religious identities, Anil Seal and John Gallagher[4] interpreted that Indian elite groups had been formed on the basis of Patron-Client relationship. They theorize that, as the British Imperialism extended its administrative, economic and political power to the localities and provinces, local elites started organizing politics by acquiring clients and patrons whose interest they served, and who in turn served their interest. Thus Indian politics began to be formed on the basis of this client-patron relationship. These historians argue that later bigger leader emerged who acted as a brokers and worked as a link between local population and British Raj. Anil Seal says that Chief political brokers were Gandhi Nehru and Patel. This believes that local people on whose behalf these political brokers acted, they associated themselves to this movement only after 1918. This school

also believes that Indian national movement had nothing to do with exploitative nature of British colonialism rather it developed itself due to their own grievances such as war, inflation, disease, drought and depression and it is these grievances which were cleverly used by nationalist to convince them to participate into struggle against British Empire.

Romila Thapar[5] in her article interpretation of Indian History: Colonial Nationalist and Post-Colonial, discusses that modern historiography of India has been inaugurated by British power. In order to legitimize their imperial rule in India they started inventing a past of modern India. This process was further taken forward by nationalist historiography and post-colonial historiography (Marxist and Subaltern Interpretation of Indian History). Thapar pronounced British historiography as Colonial School. She argues that colonial historiography of India was based upon the thrust of colonial power of gaining knowledge about India. She argues that imperial historiography was based upon the idea of "knowledge is power"[6]. To gain legitimacy in their pursuit of power within India they started locating connection between and European past. In that process they just not only investigated Indian past for gaining knowledge but instead of that they constructed a different knowledge about Indian Past. This ideological intentions of imperial power inaugurated a whole range of debates, discussion about "the orient". Thapar further argues that this process led to the very stereotypical project of Indian national self as a complete contrast of western and idea of Europe. This historiography was mainly responsible for shaping imagination about "The orient" as an "other" of Occident.

THE CONFUCIAN STATE

The state in traditional China was in crucial respects unlike any other state in the pre-modern world. In many ways it was unique in character. In theory, the boundaries of what constituted China, or *Zhonqquo*, literally meaning the 'Middle Kingdom', were never clearly delineated. In the Confucian scheme of things, the Emperor was considered to be the 'ruler under Heaven' (Tian-xia). His realm was seen to include not just those provinces which came under the direct rule of the imperial administration, it was also believed to include those areas which merely acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chinese Emperor but which ruled themselves in virtually every other respect. In some of these outlying areas, such as Tibet or Mongolia under the Ch'ing dynasty, the imperial presence was physically represented by a garrison or by an official known as a Resident. But in other areas, even this did not exist, and the overlordship of the Emperor was little more than a fiction carefully maintained by the Chinese and not openly challenged by the ruling circles in those areas.

A consequence of this was the blurring of the distinction between what constituted the foreign affairs and what constituted the domestic concerns of the Chinese Empire. Normal diplomatic and commercial relations with non-Chinese people and states were, with very few exceptions, governed by the so-called "tribute system". The arrival of foreign envoys or commercial missions was perceived as the arrival of missions to pay tribute to the Chinese Emperor and they were treated as such. They were used to bolster the domestic position and prestige of the Emperor of China as one who presided over a vast conglomeration of people, Chinese as well as non-Chinese, "civilized" (as the Chinese understood it) as well as "barbarian". Of course, when hostilities broke out between the imperial government and any of these other states or people, this could not be easily accommodated within the framework of the tributary system.

But the imperial government preferred to view this as only a temporary aberration. Hostilities had to end at some point. If they ended in a stalemate or in the victory of the imperial forces, then the status quo before the outbreak of hostilities was usually restored. However, if they ended in the victory of the foreign forces and in their conquest of China, this too did not always lead to a breakdown of the system. As happened with the Mongol conquest in the 13th century and the Manchu conquest in the 17th century, the conquerors simply assumed the exalted position of the Emperors of China themselves. The fact that rulers with different ethnic origins and cultural traditions were occupying the top positions in the Chinese Empire did not in itself lead to the collapse of the imperial system. As long as these rulers carried on with the traditional statecraft based on Confucian principles, life carried on as usual. In this sense, the traditional Chinese state cannot be considered as a national state of the Chinese people, but as a much broader political entity presided over by an Emperor ruling according to Confucian precepts.

THE EMPEROR

It may be pointed out that the Emperor of China was a Confucian monarch. Confucianism held that the social and political order, on the one hand, and the natural order on the other hand, were integrally linked, and that the primary function of the Emperor was to maintain this overall cosmological order. Thus, the Emperor was held responsible not only for any major disturbances in the social and political life of his empire, but also for natural disturbances and calamities such as floods, droughts, earthquakes, etc. In such periods of "great disorder", Confucian tradition actually legitimized rebellion against the ruling Emperor. A successful rebellion was considered a 'proof' that Heaven had withdrawn its mandate to rule.

This perhaps, explains why the Emperor of China, unlike the Emperor of Japan, was not just a figurehead, but the actual ruler of the land. He was:

- the chief executive of the land and the linchpin of the entire administration,
- expected to appoint, transfer, punish and dismiss his officials,
- expected to supervise and guide their activities by pondering over their reports and memoranda and by issuing directives, and
- supposed to personally intervene in any matter in any part of the Empire when this was necessary.

Whether an Emperor actually did this or not depended largely on his own abilities and inclinations, but he was expected to do so. The Emperor was also the only lawmaker. The laws of the empire were little more a compendium of the judgments and directives issued by the Emperor and his predecessors. He was also the

supreme commander of the armed forces.

Because the Emperors were meant to be actual rulers, and not just figureheads, when China was faced with major crises and humiliation in the 19th century, the blame fell directly on the Emperors themselves, and not just on their officials. The major peasant rebellions of the middle and later 19th century, as well as the emerging radical nationalist movements had one thing in common – they all called for the overthrow of the imperial ruling house. Because the Emperors considered themselves to be the upholders of the traditional Confucian political order, they were hesitant to initiate the radical changes necessary to pull China out of its crisis and decline. In general, the reforms they instituted were too little and too late. The result of all this was that the imperial institution in the late 19th and early 20th century China became more and more discredited unlike in Japan. It was rapidly overtaken by events and was eventually overthrown in the Revolution of 1911.

THE BUREAUCRACY

Apart from the institution of the Emperor the other great pillar of the traditional Chinese political system was the bureaucracy. From the time that China was first unified by the Emperor C'hin Shih Huang-ti in 221 B.C., the day-to-day administration of the empire was carried out by a bureaucracy that was more elaborate, more developed, more rationalized in its structure and functioning, than any other in the pre-modern world. It is inconceivable that a country as vast as China could have remained united and have had such a stable system of government for so many centuries without such a bureaucracy.

From the highest official at the Imperial Court to the lowest official in the district, the entire bureaucracy formed part of the distinct corps. It was governed by an elaborate set of rules, regulations and rituals pertaining to the recruitment of the officials, their promotion, transfer, dismissal and punishment, and to the way they had to carry out their official duties. These rules and regulations were in one sense harsh and restrictive, and ensured the obedience and subordination of the officials to the Emperor. But, in another sense, they gave the bureaucracy a degree of autonomy and acted as some check on the arbitrary whims of different Emperors. An official could reasonably expect that if he abided by the rules and carried out the functions of this office, he would not be unduly harassed by the Emperor or his other superiors.

One of the most remarkable features of the Chinese bureaucracy was its system of recruitment. For the first 1000 years of the Chinese empire there were several routes of becoming a bureaucrat, including the purchase of official positions or inheriting a position from another family member. However, from the 11th century AD onwards, the primary means of recruitment was through a centralized system of examinations. Once in every three years examinations were held throughout the empire which was theoretically open to all males, whatever their social standing. These examinations tested the candidates' mastery of Confucian scholarship. The identity of the candidates was kept a closely guarded secret so that the examiners would be impersonal and unbiased in their marking. The successful passing of the examinations automatically placed an individual in the category of the gentry. If the candidate succeeded in passing the examinations at the provincial level after having cleared the first stage at the district level, he was also entitled to be appointed as an official of the imperial government.

This system of recruitment through examinations conditioned the bureaucracy in important ways. It ensured that the officials of the empire were by and large men of exceptional intellect and scholarship. Long years of education and training in the Confucian classics also ensured their loyalty to and indoctrination in Confucian ethical and political values. The fact that they were recruited on the basis of merit, rather than favouritism, etc., gave them a higher degree of self-respect and prestige than they would have enjoyed otherwise. This is not to say that all officials were incorruptible, or that they were not subject to the pressures and pulls of their office. But it was in general true that Chinese officials continued to have a certain prestige and status even if they temporarily fell out of favour with their superiors or the Emperor.

However, in the 19th century, when China was faced with unprecedented challenges, complicated by the intrusion of the modern, industrialized West, the Chinese officialdom became a prisoner of its own scholarship, of its own complacency and self-esteem. Although many outstanding officials understood the challenges the country faced, and even risked their necks advocating the need for bold, innovative reforms to meet the challenge, they were exceptional. The majority tended to carry on with their conventional outlook and modes of functioning which were unable to cope with the pressure of developments. With the defeat of the reform movement of 1898 the initiative to pull China out of its crisis finally went out of the hands of this

important stratum of traditional society into the hands of newly emerging classes and forces who had very few links with or loyalty to the old social and political order.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE SOCIETY

The social and political system of traditional China was highly complex and sophisticated. Its complete collapse and radical transformation in the first half of the 20th century might make us think that it was fundamentally weak and unstable. But this was not always the case. In fact, it had endured in its basic form, with some evolutionary changes, for close to two thousand years, holding together a region of vast size, population and great diversity.

SOCIAL HIERARCHIES

The basic hierarchy of Chinese society consisted of the four occupational orders which reflected the political and moral values of Confucianism. Highest of all were the scholars (*shi*); next came the peasants (*nong*), then the artisans (*gong*), and last the merchants (*shang*). Excluded from the four orders were people in some occupations regarded as infamous: actors, prostitutes, servants, soldiers, *yamen* (local administrative unit) messengers, vagrants and others.

The four orders were rounded out by intermediate structures, each with its own hierarchy, and every individual fitted snugly into an appointed place. The guild had its patrons, members, and apprentices, the village its local hierarchy, and the family its complex network of relationships based on authority.

A DEVELOPED AGRARIAN SOCIETY

China has always been predominantly an agrarian society. The bulk of her population lived in the villages, and agriculture was their principal source of livelihood. The basic division in the society was between the large majority of labouring peasants on the one hand, and the landlords on the other. The landlords did not till the land themselves but lived off the income from their lands which were tilled by the peasants. However, this does not mean that China was a simple agrarian society. From the very early stages China had a complex and developed social order. For example as early as the first millennium BC, we see the construction of formidable border fortifications, trunk roads, huge dams and irrigation networks, etc. There were certain basic factors that had contributed in the development of a strong state organization from very early times. The Chinese civilization had developed through the ages under circumstances that had compelled the people to undertake collective political and economic activity on a large-scale. For example there was always the need to defend themselves from the incursions of their nomadic neighbours as well as the need to contain the ravages of floods, or to ensure adequate irrigation, etc.

The enormous growth of commercial farming and inter-regional trade, particularly from the 10th c. AD, also profoundly affected the character of the Chinese society and state. The ruling class thereafter was no longer a class that derived its wealth solely from the land, but also from commerce. The development of the money economy, the growth of lively urban centres, the spread of literacy (although mainly among the upper class), the increased inter-regional as well as overseas migration, etc., all combined to make the China of the later imperial period a far cry from that of the beginning of our epoch. Until the Industrial Revolution in Europe, China was among the most advanced societies in the world.

THE GENTRY

Of the three main social classes in traditional China, the dominant class was what has been called "the gentry". The gentry was the class of landlords who did not themselves till their lands. They derived their wealth mainly, though not entirely, from the rents (often as substantial as 1/2 of the value of the crop) paid to them by the peasants who worked on their lands. But to define this class simply as a landowning class would be inaccurate. This is because over the years members of the gentry had taken up various pursuits in diverse fields. They were also distinguished by their educational attainments, social prestige and a lifestyle that set them clearly apart from the common people. The sons of the gentry families by and large underwent a process of rigorous education in Confucian scholarship. Their success was measured by the scholarly degrees that they earned in various levels of state-sponsored examinations. The top stratum of the

successful candidates in the exams was appointed as officials under the imperial government. This was considered as the highest achievement possible in traditional Chinese society. Having one or more of their members holding high public office was in turn one of the main ways in which the gentry families protected and expanded their landed estates and other sources of wealth, and enhanced their social status.

Not enough research has been done to specify the exact connection between the scholar-officials as a statutory group and the land-owners as a class founded on landholding. What is certain is that it was a feudal situation: the mass of the peasants were under the domination, both economic and extra-economic, of a minority. Joseph Needham has suggested the term "bureaucratic feudalism" to emphasise the unique combination of economic and political power. Whether they were actually serving in the imperial government or living on their rural estates, the members of the gentry had important social and political functions. The non-serving gentry members were a kind of local elite at the district level, whose cooperation was absolutely essential for the stability and effectiveness of the imperial government.

For example they:

1. participated in the construction and maintenance of charitable and public works,
2. informally adjudicated disputes among the local population and served as intermediaries between the local people and the administration,
3. organized militia and other forms of self-defence associations to police their areas, and
4. maintained order in times of trouble.

In general, their sphere of operations and their responsibilities increased whenever there was a decline in the strength and effectiveness of the imperial government. This was seen most clearly in the last years of the imperial system in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The remarkable thing is that while emperors and ruling dynasties rose and fell, the existence of the gentry class, as well as its willingness to adjust to different rulers, showed amazing continuity. For example the real resilience of this class was seen in the early 20th century. This was a period when imperialism and the growth of modern industry and commerce had made deep inroads into the traditional agrarian economy. Moreover:

- the abolition of the examination system in 1905 knocked off one of the gentry's main avenues to advancement, and
- the 1911 Revolution brought down the entire edifice of imperial rule with which they were intimately associated.

Yet the gentry as a class did not disappear at once, but continued to adapt and survive, although in a distorted form. The overall stability and resilience of the traditional social and political system was integrally linked with the character and functions of this class.

THE PEASANTRY

Agriculture had a privileged position in the Confucian economic ethic, and peasants came second in the hierarchy of the four orders. It was said: *Zhong Nong Bing Shang*, that is, respect agriculture and despise trade. By far the most numerous class of Chinese society was the peasantry. The condition of the peasants undoubtedly varied from region to region and from one period of time to another. But by and large, they were ostensibly exploited and poor. After the great waves of migration that filled up the central and southern regions of China from the 3rd to the 6th centuries AD, the amount of available land did not increase significantly. Population increase was 200 % (from 143 million in 1741 to 430 million in 1850). But the increase in the size of cultivable land was only 35 % (from 549 million mou in 1661 to 737 million mou in 1833). This led to growing pressure of the population on the land. In theory, the peasantry in China was not serfs. But in reality, their condition was not much better than that of serfs. Poverty and insecurity compelled the bulk of them to become tenants paying half of their crop to the big landlords as rent. The peasantry was caught between the extortionate demands of the landlords on the one hand, and the obligation to pay up heavy taxes including forced labour service to the state. So oppressive was the burden of taxation that many peasants used to flee their villages, forsake their status as independent cultivators and become virtual retainers of powerful landlords who could protect them from the exactions of the state officials.

Recurring floods, droughts and other natural calamities added to the miseries of the peasants. These calamities were more frequent and their consequences were harsher in times when the imperial government was weak and it could not maintain the dams, dykes and other public works necessary for normal agricultural activity. When the central authority was weak there was no check on the exactions imposed on the peasants

by rapacious local officials or gentry members. It was precisely in such periods in Chinese history that we see the proliferation of secret societies and the increasing incidence of banditry. By and large the phenomena of secret societies, banditry and other symptoms of lawlessness were an outgrowth of acute discontent and destitution among the peasantry and other poor sections of rural society. To cope with their increasing hardship, peasants often banded together in associations which had to be secret because they were ruthlessly hounded by the state. This was particularly true of those peasants who, because of economic and political compulsions, had been forced to leave the security of their original homes and families and become migrants in search of a livelihood. It was quite natural that when times were hard, these societies would turn to some form of banditry, usually preying on the local rich.

In times of real mass dissatisfaction and frustration among the peasantry these secret societies often became the nuclei of peasant revolts and even large-scale rebellions, directed against the officialdom or against the ruling dynasty itself. Time and again, huge peasant armies were formed, which ransacked the local or provincial seats of government or tried to march on the capital itself. When they succeeded in storming the imperial headquarters, as happened several times in the history of China, it invariably meant the collapse of the ruling dynasty. In this way the peasantry, sometimes played a crucial role in political affairs by catapulting a new ruling house onto the throne of China.

THE ARTISANS

The town-dwelling artisans, the third order of the society, were organized into guilds which controlled production and marketing in each professional sector: weaving, shoemaking, bamboo handicrafts, gold working, and so on. The guilds were also mutual insurance societies, religious fraternities, and unofficial arbitrators in trade disputes. Each guild had a patron saint or legendary founder, usually a divinity from the Taoist pantheon, whose annual feast day it celebrated.

Not all handicraft work was performed in towns under the supervision of the guilds. Rural manufacturers, which provided work on the farms during the off-season, were an important part of each village economy.

THE MERCHANTS

In the Confucian scheme of things, merchants were at the bottom rung of the social ladder, lower even than the peasants. This was because commerce, unlike agriculture, was not considered a primary form of economic activity. But this formally low status was, in practice, no bar to merchant families thriving and improving their social status. Many merchants managed to amass huge wealth. The better off merchants invariably sought to raise their social standing either by marrying into prestigious gentry families or else by securing official positions for their sons. Apart from the normal examination route to officialdom, the possibility of directly buying official titles and positions ensured that a good number of merchant families had at least one member with official standing. It was also a common practice for wealthy merchants to invest some of their profits in buying land. This they did more the sake of prestige rather than of economic value. All this ensured that there were fairly close links between the top stratum of the merchant class and the gentry and officialdom. Particularly, with the rapid development of commerce in the later imperial period the increasing involvement of gentry members with some form of commercial activity, the gap between these classes was much narrower than it was formally made out to be.

State supervision and control of commerce, however, prevented the development of the independent economic and political activity of the merchant class. In China, the state understood the potential of commercial activity as a source of revenue and sought to keep it under its tight control. Apart from taxing commercial activity, the State also started establishing lucrative monopolies of certain essential commodities like salt and iron as early as the 2nd century BC. By and large a feature of the Chinese merchant class is that it did not challenge this state regulation and state control of commerce. On the contrary, the most prominent merchants were content to collaborate and to act as some kind of state agents in business. The merchant guilds and associations served primarily as mutual-aid societies, and never became centres of struggle and of independent economic and political power, as they did in Europe.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE ECONOMY

China's traditional economy evolved in a slow and gradual process in which organizations, techniques of production and distribution, etc. were developed over a long span of time. The Chinese attitude towards life, ways of living and doing business had a bearing on these organizational activities which were not subject to swift and frequent changes. China had been extremely rich in natural resources. The vastness of land, fertile plains, forest wealth, reserves of minerals and coal, rich water resources, etc. have all contributed in the economic development. However, the economic development of China passed through various phases witnessing progress as well as regression. The main components of the traditional Chinese economy can be classified as agriculture, handicrafts, trade, indigenous transportation and service activities.

AGRICULTURE

China, had predominantly been an agricultural society. Agriculture advanced over the years along with changes in the agrarian structure and relations. The production relations in agriculture passed through various stages; from hunter-gatherers to slavery and feudalism. All these stages left their mark on agrarian relations. There emerged two patterns of land ownership private and collective. The private ownership of land gave rise to landlordism. The collective ownership of land included royal and government estates as well as military and monastic lands. Interestingly, all these patterns of land ownership expanded and functioned in a feudal system. Different kinds of taxes were imposed by the state as well as the landlords and the state regulations proved beneficial to the landlords. For example, the monastic landlords were exempted from paying taxes and labour services. This was in spite of their large lands, assets and works. However, during all the stages we find certain technological advances in the field of agriculture. Particularly, during the eighth and twelfth centuries AD agriculture was transformed to a large extent. We know about these changes from a variety of sources. For example:

1. Chueh Szuhsieh (during the Northern Wei Dynasty) wrote a book, *The Manual of Important Arts for the People* which covered a variety of themes related to agriculture like sowing operations, adopting agricultural production according to local conditions, farm tools, husbandry and emphasis on high yields for it read: "Better reap good harvests over small areas than poor harvests over large areas."
2. Lu Yu (733-804 AD) wrote *The Book of Tea* which mentioned about the cultivation of tea bushes and tea-processing methods.
3. In 1149 AD Chan Fu wrote a book entitled *Agriculture* which dealt with paddy field work.
4. In 1273 AD the Yuan government issued *The Fundamentals of Agriculture and Sericulture* which contained details about cotton growing techniques.
5. Wang Chen wrote a book *On Agriculture* between 1295 and 1300 AD. This book gave illustrations of agricultural implements and operations.

Besides the advancement in the methods of agricultural operations we find an improvement in the quality of tools also. For example the popularization of iron smelting by hydro-power flowers tremendously increased the production of iron agricultural implements.

The Sui-Tang period witnessed a new type of plough which had eleven parts and was adjustable for working in varying depths. During the early Ming period efforts were made to bring more land under cultivation. For example, King Chu Yuan advocated that the soldiers posted at frontiers should devote 70 per cent of their efforts towards cultivation and 30 per cent towards defence. For soldiers posted in the interior the ratio was 80:20 per cent. However, in due course of time the Ming government increased taxes on the peasantry.

The land system that gained prominence under the Ming was manorial. Its basic characteristic was that the peasant held land from the landlord and in return he owed certain dues and services. For example, he was supposed to work for a number of days on the landlords' lands. This system remained quite effective till the 15th century. However, a number of peasant uprisings contributed to the decline of the Ming dynasty. Some of them were:

- The uprising in Shantung under the leadership of a woman peasant Tang Saie (1420 AD).
- The peasant uprisings under the leadership of Yeh Tsung liu in Chejiang province (1445-50 AD).
- In 1448 AD, in Fujian province, Teng Mao chi declared himself the "King of levellers" and led the peasants in armed uprising.
- The peasant uprisings in Shaanshi province (from 1627 AD onwards), etc.

In fact, feudal oppression, famines and floods left their mark on agriculture.

The Ch'ing period witnessed a gradual rise in the land under cultivation. For example, in 1661 the total land under cultivation was 82,350,000 acres and by 1812 it had gone up to 118,500,000 acres. Agricultural development centered on the cultivation of rice and cash crops. Land tax remained the greatest tax.

However, there also emerged a labour market. A large number of hired labourers worked on the lands of the landlords on seasonal, yearly or daily basis. Though this was in specific regions only it slowly paved the way to free the labourer from feudal control to sell his labour.

Another important development in the pattern of landownership was the emergence of a new landlord class. This consisted of government officials, gentry and merchants.

The Ch'ing rule witnessed a number of peasant revolts, the most famous one being the Great White Lotus Rebellion (1796–1804). But it was only during the 1850s that the Taipings, attempted to establish a new agrarian structure in China.

HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY

Chinese handicrafts, particularly from the Shang period (1523–1027 BC), have been of a high quality. For example excavations have yielded beautiful pottery and bronze vessels of that period. The manufacture of such items continued and the most frequently pursued handicrafts were:

- Lacquer and Porcelain ware
- Bronze items like vessels, weapons and tools, etc.,
- Cloth, and
- Paper

Similarly salt making, iron smelting etc. developed as specialized skills.

The traditional handicrafts industry developed as a subsidiary to agriculture. This was because the seasonal character of agricultural operations gave ample time to the peasants to engage themselves in handicrafts manufacture. Gradually independent craftsmen also appeared on the scene in rural as well as urban centres. However, the techniques of production remained largely primitive where only simple tools were used. Many items had a market even outside the country. For example, during the Han period Chinese brocade was in great demand in Rome.

At different intervals certain innovations were also carried out. For example, during the Three Kingdoms period the old weaving loom was made easier to operate by reducing the number of pedals from 60 to 12. Similarly the paper made during the Tang period was famous for its fine and even texture in many countries outside China. High quality porcelains were produced under the Sung and Yuan dynasties. Some of the famous kilns were located at Henan, Kaifeng etc. By the time of Ming–Ch'ing period the blue vase and the multicoloured vase were the most famous products.

The salt industry had expanded during the Tang period and by Ch'ing period a large work force, consisting thousands of workers, was employed in salt making plants.

Certain achievements were made in the field of iron smelting and new methods of making steel were introduced during the Ming period. Coke was used as fuel for iron smelting. Smelting of zinc, a very difficult process, was done in China since the early decades of fifteenth century and later the method spread to Europe.

Engraved wood block printing had appeared during the Tang period and by Ming–Ch'ing period printing was also being done through movable type made of copper, lead, tin or wood. Besides the regular printing plate now the multi–printing plate was also introduced.

Spinning and weaving remained a subsidiary occupation but from the middle decades of the Ming rule it also developed as an independent enterprise, manufacturing for the market. For example, during the early Ming period we find the evidence of hired weavers working on the looms of a wealthy merchant. It was reported during the Wan Li period that:

"Craftsmen in Hangchou, having their own employers, were paid wages on a daily basis. Those who had no regular employers stood on a bridge early in the morning waiting for their names to be called."

This indicates that a free labour market had emerged. Many rich weavers also increased the number of looms in order to hire other weavers to increase production. An important development was the distribution of raw materials to weavers, dyers and stampers by cloth merchants. The raw material was processed stepwise till the final product came. Hence, on the one hand the rich weavers were becoming owners of workshops and on the other the merchants acting as contractors, organized textile production. However, these activities

were confined to south-eastern China only. Yet, they represented the beginning of capitalism in China. A new kind of class struggle was also emerging. We find evidences of protest against increase in taxes on looms. For example in the closing years of sixteenth century many workers went on strike in Suchou when the tax superintendent increased taxes on looms.

Similar incidents were witnessed in the mining industry. In 1603 the workers of the Hsi shan mine went to Peking to demonstrate against the high-headedness of the mine superintendent. In 1606 the office of the tax collector was burnt by the miners of Yunan. Yangjung, the mine superintendent, killed more than one thousand miners in retaliation. This further enraged the miners and more than two hundred of Yang's followers were killed. All these incidents show the growing awareness among the workers.

Though the Chinese industry did not develop on modern lines (as was the case in Europe) handicraft workshops represented the highest stage of development in the traditional industry of China.

INDIGENOUS TRANSPORT

As we all know communications play a vital role in the growth of a country's economy. In traditional China the most vital transportation link was through the rivers and canals. In fact from very old days, particularly the Chin-Han period, water conservancy projects were developed in relation to navigation, agriculture and animal husbandry. Some of the important canals dug during this period were:

- Liu Chu canal
- Tsao-chu canal built under the supervision of Hsu po, an expert on water conservancy, and
- In 69 AD the Haunghe River was harnessed under the supervision of Wang Chin, etc.

In all these projects a huge labour force was involved. These projects also improved the transportation of grain.

An unknown author listed 137 major waterways in China during the Three Kingdoms period in his work *Waterways Classic*. By 6th century AD Li Tao-Yuan mentioned 1252 other waterways in his work.

Between sixth to twelfth century AD a number of canals were built at state initiative. The aim was to link the principal river in North China. The construction of Grand Canal, which stretched six hundred miles from Hankchou to Shantung province, was a major achievement. Besides helping in the transportation system the canals also improved irrigation facilities.

It is worth mentioning here the efforts of Pan Chi hsun in supervising water conservancy works and navigation along the Huanghe and Huai rivers during the sixteenth century. He even wrote two books: *My Humble View of the Two Rivers* and *An Outline of River Control*.

During the Ming-Ch'ing period large-scale efforts were made to improve transportation through rivers and canals. However, rampant corruption emerged in this area. In 1811 AD it was estimated that more than half the budget of water control was lost in corruption. The post of superintendent of water control yielded the largest amount of bribery.

As far as land routes are concerned, the Tang and Sung governments not only maintained the earlier routes but also improved them. The situation remained the same during the Ming-Ch'ing period. Efforts were also made to clear the main routes from pirates.

Ocean navigation in China had a long history and by the nineteenth century certain coastal villages and major ports had developed for overseas trade.

Improvements in communications immensely contributed towards the formation of a nationwide market and gave impetus to trade.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

In ancient China trade was mainly controlled by nobles or officials. This was the case particularly during the Chou period. By the Warring States period we find that merchants had emerged as a social class. There is a reference to a merchant Pai Kui who made big fortunes through the purchase of grain and selling silk and lacquer ware in the years of good harvests. In the years of bad harvests he sold grain and bought textile and cotton goods. The ancient silk route was well-known and by first century AD Chinese merchants were trading with the Western World. By the time of Tang rule Chinese commodities had a market in Arabia, Japan and other countries. The most important items of trade were silk fabrics and porcelain wares. An important development during this period was the appearance of "fei qian" (means flying money) a bill of exchange.

During the Sung, Chin and Yuan period paper currency also appeared in China. Extensive trade also led

to urbanization and establishment of market centres. For example in Hangzhou commercial activities were carried out even in night and the city had more than twenty licensed pawn shops. Marco Polo described Dadu, during Yuan rule, a city where one thousand carts filled with silk were transported every day.

Very often there were protests by merchants against high taxation. For example in 1599 the merchants of Lin Ching (in Shantung province) went on strike against the tax superintendent and burnt his office. There also emerged regional merchant associations (Tung-hsiang hui) but till the nineteenth century they could not consolidate merchants' interests and powers.

The merchants were termed lower in social stratification and the government imposed various kinds of controls on them. For example:

- licensing was there in items like salt manufacture and distribution,
- trade in rice was dominated through grain tribute system, and
- direct control was kept on silks and pottery made in imperial manufactories.

OBSTACLES IN CAPITALISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Certain aspects of initial capitalistic development had emerged in China during the late Ming and Ch'ing period. However, its normal growth was hindered due to a variety of reasons. Let us briefly examine some of them.

1. For a long time China had a self-sufficient economy under a feudal set-up. This, to a large extent, effected production processes. For example, we have already seen how peasants were exploited by landlords. Hence, any increase in productivity benefited the landlord whereas the peasant received no share in it. The peasant production either of food grains or handicrafts remained confined to meet the daily demands of the traditional household. Thus, the emphasis on traditional household structure restricted market relations and commercial activities. This in turn hindered the expansion of industrial capitalism.
2. The handicraft guilds in China worked under strict regulations. These regulations were imposed by the feudal government to have a strict control over the artisans. Moreover, the regulations related to the distribution of raw materials, grading of finished products etc., forestalled competitions in the market and this again hindered capitalist development.
3. The attitude of the feudal government towards commerce, handicraft, textile and mining industries was also an obstacle in the development of capitalist forms of production. For example the Ch'ing government levied heavy taxes on tea, salt and liquor; often purchased products at low prices and restricted the movement of products as well as traders. Many a times mines were closed arbitrarily despite the profits. This was done so because the government was afraid that the constant staying together and interaction amongst the miners might create troubles for the government.
4. Merchants remained at the lowest levels in Chinese society. In order to obtain social status they invested in buying lands. This diverted a considerable amount of money which otherwise could have played a role in commercial and industrial development.
5. Investments in land and money-lending were considered a profitable business. This prevented the transformation of wealth into industrial capital.
6. Restrictions imposed on foreign trade during the Ming and Ch'ing period adversely affected the production of certain commodities of trade.

In short we can say that though cracks were emerging in feudal system it was the feudal influence on economy that restricted the development of capitalism in China.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE SOCIETY

The social and political system of traditional China was highly complex and sophisticated. Its complete collapse and radical transformation in the first half of the 20th century might make us think that it was fundamentally weak and unstable. But this was not always the case. In fact, it had endured in its basic form, with some evolutionary changes, for close to two thousand years, holding together a region of vast size, population and great diversity.

SOCIAL HIERARCHIES

The basic hierarchy of Chinese society consisted of the four occupational orders which reflected the political and moral values of Confucianism. Highest of all were the scholars (shi); next came the peasants (nong), then the artisans (gong), and last the merchants (shang). Excluded from the four orders were people in some occupations regarded as infamous: actors, prostitutes, servants, soldiers, yamen (local administrative unit) messengers, vagrants and others.

The four orders were rounded out by intermediate structures, each with its own hierarchy, and every individual fitted snugly into an appointed place. The guild had its patrons, members, and apprentices, the village its local hierarchy, and the family its complex network of relationships based on authority.

A DEVELOPED AGRARIAN SOCIETY

China has always been predominantly an agrarian society. The bulk of her population lived in the villages, and agriculture was their principal source of livelihood. The basic division in the society was between the large majority of labouring peasants on the one hand, and the landlords on the other. The landlords did not till the land themselves but lived off the income from their lands which were tilled by the peasants. However, this does not mean that China was a simple agrarian society. From the very early stages China had a complex and developed social order. For example as early as the first millennium BC, we see the construction of formidable border fortifications, trunk roads, huge dams and irrigation networks, etc. There were certain basic factors that had contributed in the development of a strong state organization from very early times. The Chinese civilization had developed through the ages under circumstances that had compelled the people to undertake collective political and economic activity on a large-scale. For example there was always the need to defend themselves from the incursions of their nomadic neighbours as well as the need to contain the ravages of floods, or to ensure adequate irrigation, etc.

The enormous growth of commercial farming and inter-regional trade, particularly from the 10th c. AD, also profoundly affected the character of the Chinese society and state. The ruling class thereafter was no longer a class that derived its wealth solely from the land, but also from commerce. The development of the money economy, the growth of lively urban centres, the spread of literacy (although mainly among the upper class), the increased inter-regional as well as overseas migration, etc., all combined to make the China of the later imperial period a far cry from that of the beginning of our epoch. Until the Industrial Revolution in Europe, China was among the most advanced societies in the world.

THE GENTRY

Of the three main social classes in traditional China, the dominant class was what has been called "the gentry". The gentry was the class of landlords who did not themselves till their lands. They derived their wealth mainly, though not entirely, from the rents (often as substantial as 1/2 of the value of the crop) paid to them by the peasants who worked on their lands. But to define this class simply as a landowning class would be inaccurate. This is because over the years members of the gentry had taken up various pursuits in diverse fields. They were also distinguished by their educational attainments, social prestige and a lifestyle that set them clearly apart from the common people. The sons of the gentry families by and large underwent a process of rigorous education in Confucian scholarship. Their success was measured by the scholarly degrees that they earned in various levels of state-sponsored examinations. The top stratum of the successful candidates in the examinations was appointed as officials under the imperial government. This was considered as the highest achievement possible in traditional Chinese society. Having one or more of their members holding high public office was in turn one of the main ways in which the gentry families

protected and expanded their landed estates and other sources of wealth, and enhanced their social status.

Not enough research has been done to specify the exact connection between the scholar-officials as a statutory group and the land-owners as a class founded on landholding. What is certain is that it was a feudal situation: the mass of the peasants were under the domination, both economic and extra-economic, of a minority. Joseph Needham has suggested the term "bureaucratic feudalism" to emphasize the unique combination of economic and political power. Whether they were actually serving in the imperial government or living on their rural estates, the members of the gentry had important social and political functions. The non-serving gentry members were a kind of local elite at the district level, whose cooperation was absolutely essential for the stability and effectiveness of the imperial government.

For example they:

1. participated in the construction and maintenance of charitable and public works,
2. informally adjudicated disputes among the local population and served as intermediaries between the local people and the administration,
3. organized militia and other forms of self-defence associations to police their areas, and
4. maintained order in times of trouble.

In general, their sphere of operations and their responsibilities increased whenever there was a decline in the strength and effectiveness of the imperial government. This was seen most clearly in the last years of the imperial system in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The remarkable thing is that while emperors and ruling dynasties rose and fell, the existence of the gentry class, as well as its willingness to adjust to different rulers, showed amazing continuity. For example the real resilience of this class was seen in the early 20th century. This was a period when imperialism and the growth of modern industry and commerce had made deep inroads into the traditional agrarian economy. Moreover:

- the abolition of the examination system in 1905 knocked off one of the gentry's main avenues to advancement, and
- the 1911 Revolution brought down the entire edifice of imperial rule with which they were intimately associated.

Yet the gentry as a class did not disappear at once, but continued to adapt and survive, although in a distorted form. The overall stability and resilience of the traditional social and political system was integrally linked with the character and functions of this class.

THE PEASANTRY

Agriculture had a privileged position in the Confucian economic ethic, and peasants came second in the hierarchy of the four orders. It was said: Zhong Nong Bing Shang, that is, respect agriculture and despise trade. By far the most numerous class of Chinese society was the peasantry. The condition of the peasants undoubtedly varied from region to region and from one period of time to another. But by and large, they were ostensibly exploited and poor. After the great waves of migration that filled up the central and southern regions of China from the 3rd to the 6th centuries AD, the amount of available land did not increase significantly. Population increase was 200 % (from 143 million in 1741 to 430 million in 1850). But the increase in the size of cultivable land was only 35 % (from 549 million mou in 1661 to 737 million mou in 1833). This led to growing pressure of the population on the land. In theory, the peasantry in China was not serfs. But in reality, their condition was not much better than that of serfs. Poverty and insecurity compelled the bulk of them to become tenants paying half of their crop to the big landlords as rent. The peasantry was caught between the extortionate demands of the landlords on the one hand, and the obligation to pay up heavy taxes including forced labour service to the state. So oppressive was the burden of taxation that many peasants used to flee their villages, forsake their status as independent cultivators and become virtual retainers of powerful landlords who could protect them from the exactions of the state officials.

Recurring floods, droughts and other natural calamities added to the miseries of the peasants. These calamities were more frequent and their consequences were harsher in times when the imperial government was weak and it could not maintain the dams, dykes and other public works necessary for normal agricultural activity. When the central authority was weak there was no check on the exactions imposed on the peasants by rapacious local officials or gentry members. It was precisely in such periods in Chinese history that we see

the proliferation of secret societies and the increasing incidence of banditry. By and large the phenomena of secret societies, banditry and other symptoms of lawlessness were an outgrowth of acute discontent and destitution among the peasantry and other poor sections of rural society. To cope with their increasing hardship, peasants often banded together in associations which had to be secret because they were ruthlessly hounded by the state. This was particularly true of those peasants who, because of economic and political compulsions, had been forced to leave the security of their original homes and families and become migrants in search of a livelihood. It was quite natural that when times were hard, these societies would turn to some form of banditry, usually preying on the local rich.

In times of real mass dissatisfaction and frustration among the peasantry these secret societies often became the nuclei of peasant revolts and even large-scale rebellions, directed against the officialdom or against the ruling dynasty itself. Time and again, huge peasant armies were formed, which ransacked the local or provincial seats of government or tried to march on the capital itself. When they succeeded in storming the imperial headquarters, as happened several times in the history of China, it invariably meant the collapse of the ruling dynasty. In this way the peasantry, sometimes played a crucial role in political affairs by catapulting a new ruling house onto the throne of China.

THE ARTISANS

The town-dwelling artisans, the third order of the society, were organized into guilds which controlled production and marketing in each professional sector: weaving, shoemaking, bamboo handicrafts, gold working, and so on. The guilds were also mutual insurance societies, religious fraternities, and unofficial arbitrators in trade disputes. Each guild had a patron saint or legendary founder, usually a divinity from the Taoist pantheon, whose annual feast day it celebrated.

Not all handicraft work was performed in towns under the supervision of the guilds. Rural manufacturers, which provided work on the farms during the off-season, were an important part of each village economy.

THE MERCHANTS

In the Confucian scheme of things, merchants were at the bottom rung of the social ladder, lower even than the peasants. This was because commerce, unlike agriculture, was not considered a primary form of economic activity. But this formally low status was, in practice, no bar to merchant families thriving and improving their social status. Many merchants managed to amass huge wealth. The better off merchants invariably sought to raise their social standing either by marrying into prestigious gentry families or else by securing official positions for their sons. Apart from the normal examination route to officialdom, the possibility of directly buying official titles and positions ensured that a good number of merchant families had at least one member with official standing. It was also a common practice for wealthy merchants to invest some of their profits in buying land. This they did more the sake of prestige rather than of economic value. All this ensured that there were fairly close links between the top stratum of the merchant class and the gentry and officialdom. Particularly, with the rapid development of commerce in the later imperial period the increasing involvement of gentry members with some form of commercial activity, the gap between these classes was much narrower than it was formally made out to be.

State supervision and control of commerce, however, prevented the development of the independent economic and political activity of the merchant class. In China, the state understood the potential of commercial activity as a source of revenue and sought to keep it under its tight control. Apart from taxing commercial activity, the State also started establishing lucrative monopolies of certain essential commodities like salt and iron as early as the 2nd century BC. By and large a feature of the Chinese merchant class is that it did not challenge this state regulation and state control of commerce. On the contrary, the most prominent merchants were content to collaborate and to act as some kind of state agents in business. The merchant guilds and associations served primarily as mutual-aid societies, and never became centres of struggle and of independent economic and political power, as they did in Europe.

THE TUNGCHIH RESTORATION & THE SELF STRENGTHENING MOVEMENT

In the mid-19th century, the Ch'ing state, having withstood challenges from the internal crisis generated by the Taipings and the European onslaughts of the two Opium War, embarked upon a programme of reform and strengthening the state. This Period referred to as the Tungchih Restoration had two major policy components. Tungchi was the reign title of the Emperor who ascended the Chinese throne in November 1861. The Tungchih reign extended from 1862-1874. The two aspects of the policy were:

RESTORATION OF CH'ING POWER (*chung hsing*): This was a cardinal theme of restoring the power and glory of the state and by implication of Confucian society. The idea of restoration was not anything new. There were in fact several such restorations attempted in Chinese history which in the interim provided a renewal of faith and commitment in the dynasty and the traditional order. The more significant of these restorations were in the 9th century BC of the Western Chou, the Han restoration of the first century AD and the Tang in the 8th century AD.

SELF-STRENGTHENING (*trugiang*): This entailed a limited modernization policy concerned initially with the creation of an armaments industry. However, during the 1870's and 1880's modernization was extended to areas of industry, communications and most importantly to education.

ARCHITECTS OF THE RESTORATION AND SELF STRENGTHENING

The principal architects of these programmes were Prince Kung (1833-1898), the brother of the late Emperor Hsien feng and Wen Tsaing (1818-1876) who was the Chairman of the Ministry of Public Works and the Minister of Civil Works. At the provincial level they were fortunate to have some outstanding bureaucrats who built the programme. The most prominent of them was Tseng Kuo fan (1811-1872) who in 1860 as the Imperial Commissioner was instrumental in helping the state to suppress the Taipings.

Tso Tsung-tang (1812-1885), another official who had come to the limelight in the wake of the anti-Taiping manoeuvres, played a critical role in the establishment of modern enterprises and in restoring the agrarian economy.

One of the principal figures of the Restoration was Li Hung chang (1823-1901), who during the last half of the 19th century played an important role in China's relations with the Western powers.

These officials were supported by a host of provincial leaders and officials, all products of the examination system. They were products of Confucian education and committed to preserving the social order and the Confucian conception of the State. One need to bear in mind that this social and ideological base was to determine both the contours as well as the extent of reform what was proposed.

RESTORATION OF THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY

In the mid-19th century several observers were to comment on the general desolateness of the Chinese people. Restoration of the agrarian economy became the principal concern at this time. Limitations were placed on government spending and more importantly on the material aspirations of the peasantry. The idea was neither to increase national wealth nor production. A balance was sought to be struck between state finances and people livelihood and thereby to re-emphasize the principles of Confucian political economy.

The programme had major thrusts:

1. Extension of cultivated areas,
2. Expansion of public works, and
3. Reduction of land tax.

Extension of cultivated areas

In the wake of the political disturbances of the first half of the 19th century, much land lay abandoned because of the migration of the rural population. As political strife ended, efforts were made to repopulate areas like Hunan, where demobilized soldiers were given plots of land. Peasants were encouraged to migrate to the more prosperous and irrigated regions. For instance, in Chin Chiang in Chianghsi, the population increased from 8,000 to 40,000 in a period of just 6 months. Although some of the repopulation was spontaneous. Ching officials encouraged it through homestead acts. Agricultural resettlement offices were established to encourage group organization and to distribute seed-grain and tools.

The results of this policy were, however, uneven. In some provinces like Chiangsu, Fujian and Zhenjiang more peasants than before owned land in the form of small farms of less than one hectare. In Chenjiang, in Chiangsu province, for example, landowners had disappeared in the wake of the Taipings and only peasant owners left. With the restoration, however, land was given back to the original owners. Bureaucrats and army officers built up vast holdings. Now a clear trend emerged towards concentration of land ownership.

Reconstruction of Public Works

In an effort to fight famines, reserve granaries were repaired and additional granaries created with the help of the gentry. The most urgent task, however, remained the waterworks. Dikes and canals had been badly neglected. In Chili, Shantung, Shenhsi and Sichuan vast enterprises were launched to repair hydraulic works and recover flooded lands. Though it was recognized that the major threat to the agrarian stability of the North China plain was the vagaries of the Yellow River, attempts to control it remained at the planning stage only.

Reduction of land tax

A principal target of the popular movements had been the tax abuses. It is estimated that the Tungchih rule, land taxes were cut by some 30 per cent. An important step was the permanent reduction of land tax in the more affected areas like Ciangsu.

As in the case of all the other reforms, the benefits of the tax reforms did not reach the peasants. This was because:

- the rise in the price of silver cancelled out any benefit that they may have enjoyed;
- the land registers were not drawn up nor the new tariffs published, hence local magistrates and gentry continued to collect taxes at the old rates; and
- the proposed reduction in land tax was not accompanied by a reduction in rent. The majority of peasants who were tenant farmers were thus left outside the purview of the tax reform.

The attempt at rehabilitation of the agrarian economy hardly improved the lot of the peasants, since the larger socio-economic and political exploitation of the peasant by the large landowners continued. There were several other aspects of the non-agrarian economy which received little attention. The Restoration government had no policy of encouraging the revival and development of trade and commerce and did little in this direction.

There were some attempts to improve transportation as a means to fortify Peking by sea and to ensure a sustained food supply. Steamships gradually replaced the big seagoing junks. In 1872 the China Merchant's Steam Navigation Company was started. There was considerable resistance to the introduction of steamships for inland water transport, the building of railways and the telegraph system. It was believed that these innovations would seriously undermine the Confucian social order.

To sum up, economic policy during this period was essentially conservative. The aim, both stated and unstated, was to re-establish and strengthen the agrarian foundations of the traditional state with a minimal of change. Land was given back to the original owners in the areas affected by the Taipings. It was the gentry which were directly benefited by the reduction in taxes.

RESTORATION OF STATE AND CIVIL AUTHORITY

Besides the agrarian and economic rejuvenation, the Tungchih Restoration focussed on the re-establishment of state authority and administration which had been seriously undermined during the first half the nineteenth century. Substantial attempts were made to improve the bureaucracy with an emphasis on recruiting "men of talent". As in the past, examination was stressed upon as the only road to power and prestige. Attempts were made to curtail the sale of degree and offices which during the preceding decades had reached alarming proportions, a process which was perceived as contributing to the general morale of the civil administration. The goal was to be able to recruit the ideal officer, an officer of all-round competence. Besides trying to streamline the bureaucracy in line with the goals of a Confucian state, the Ch'ing quickly re-established the economic, legal and social privileges of the elite in an attempt to consolidate their support. The political and administrative reconstruction was consolidated through ideological reconstruction, with an emphasis on Confucian knowledge. Schools and academies were reopened in an attempt to extend Confucian teaching to a wider section of people.

NEW DIPLOMACY TOWARDS THE WEST

Despite the defeat in the two Opium Wars most Chinese officials and gentry believed that the barbarians could be driven back. A few leaders mentioned earlier, however, like Prince Kung, Wen Hsiang, Li Hung Chang and others, recognizing the gravity of the foreign aggression, felt it necessary to evolve new institutions to contain foreign encroachments. Hence, on January 20, 1861 the *Tsungli Yamen* was created. The role of the *Tsungli Yamen* was seen as one of controlling the superintendents of foreign trade in the various ports. It had general charge of all China's relations with the Western powers. Here it would be pertinent to mention the translation of Wheaton's work *Elements of International Law* into Chinese by an American missionary, W A P Martin in 1864. This translation was tremendously useful to the Chinese since it enabled the *Tsungli Yamen* to insist on the inviolability of treaties, that is, they tried to make the treaties a protective wall for the Chinese government and to confine the Western powers to the letter of the treaty.

SELF STRENGTHENING

A closely connected policy of the Restoration was the official policy of limited modernization, called as the *Yangwu Tung* (foreign matters movement), a term that came to refer to anything foreign from diplomacy to industrial machinery. The first expression of this policy was the creation of an armaments industry. Following this were the development of mines, communications and textile industry, all of which were covered by the new objectives of the 1870's onwards of acquiring "wealth and power" (*Tsu kaing*).

Tsu kaing had first been advocated for reasons of domestic policy, i.e.:

- to ensure the Imperial militia's ability to suppress popular movements, and
- to resist the foreigners.

It was an attempt at national recovery in domestic and foreign relations. There was a growing recognition that to maintain power a minimum of technology had to be borrowed from the West. Feng Kuei-fen (1808-1874), a scholar from Suchou, wrote a series of essays of the need to utilize Western technology to defend the traditional state. Feng's ideas found a fair response among the officials and gentry all of whom were concerned with the preservation of the traditional order.

To rationalize and justify the introduction of Western technology, a popular axiom of the period was 'Chinese learning as essence and Western knowledge for practical use'. This view tried to prevent any criticism that the changes proposed were inimical to the basic values and norms of Confucian culture and society.

Given the military humiliation that China had faced, the modernization of the military was given initial priority. The two major aspects of the military modernization were to:

- reorganize the Ch'ing armies and to-reinforce loyalty to the state of the rapidly growing regional armies, and
- make China militarily equal in arms and armaments of the West.

This recognition of the need of modern weapons and their manufacture in China led to the establishment of four major arsenals between 1865 and 1867.

- The Chiangnan arsenal was started under the aegis of Tseng Kuo fan in 1865.
- The Nanking arsenal was started by Li Hong Zhang.
- The Fuchou shipyard was founded by Tso Tsung tang in 1867.
- An arsenal was started at Tientsin in 1867 under the direction of a Manchu dignitary, Chung-hou with an Englishman Meadows as technical advisor.

However, the first of the objectives of reorganizing the armies remained unfulfilled, since it would have involved greater changes in class structures and values, changes which the Ch'ing was unwilling to allow.

The modern arsenals introduced mechanized production in China for the first time. This did not, however, lead to a technological revolution. Nor did it result in the emergence of a bourgeoisie. The arsenals were essentially state enterprises which did not stimulate any ancillary industry and functioned more or less like bureaucratic departments racked by growing deficits, inefficiency and corruption.

The first phase of the industrialization policy, however, was not able to stem the tide of decline in the agrarian economy and the traditional handicraft sector.

Though the emphasis in the first instance was on borrowing of Western technology for the making of rifles, cannons and modern ships, there were other trends which developed at the same time. The *Tsungli Yamen* required interpreters. To meet this demand foreign language schools (*Tung Wen Kuan*) were started. The first of these was started in Peking where English, Russian and French were taught. Other centers were opened in Canton and Shanghai. There were also schools attached to the arsenals which gave instructions in technical subjects and Western languages. Gradually these schools extended to introducing other Western subjects as well. The consequences of this trend were to be seen not only in the field of education, but also in Chinese views on change, reform and modernization.

THE SECOND PHASE

During the 1870's arms manufacture seemed less important once the great popular uprising had been suppressed. Soon the second phase of the *Yangwu* movement was launched. Li Hung Chang and others intended to draw on the wealth and competence of the merchants to set up new enterprises. They aimed to make China rise to "wealth and power" (*Fu-kiang*) as Li Hung Chang wrote in 1872. Li applied the term *chuan tu shang pan* (government supervision and merchant operation) to all the new enterprises that were started. As part of this policy the China Merchant's Steam Navigation Company was launched in 1872. Even here the attempts to draw in private capital though successful in the first few years, did not last very long. By 1877, the Company under the guidance of Sheng Hsuan huai (1844-1916) represented the interests of the bureaucracy. The mining industry was developed both to meet the demands of the armaments industry as well as to forestall the foreigners who were demanding the right to open mines in China. Between 1876-1885 about 10 mines were opened based on the *chuan tu shang pan* system. All these were under the control of Li Hung Chang.

It was in the textile industry that there was some competition between official and private enterprise. The Shanghai Cotton Cloth mill started in the late 1880's went into production in 1890. In the 1860's several textile companies were launched by a Chinese comprador with support from foreign firms. The first entirely Chinese textile factory was a silk factory opened in 1872 in the Canton region by a silk merchant Chen Chi-yuan. But his success was not entirely appreciated by the officials. The attitude towards private entrepreneurship is best represented in a

comment made by a local official: "only the public authorities have the right to use machines."

The *Fu-kiang* policy led to two major innovations in the fields of communications, i.e.: railways and the postal system. In 1863, 27 foreign firms gave a proposal to construct a railway between Shanghai and Suchou which was rejected as part of an effort to prevent further foreign encroachment. This position changed with the favouring of limited modernization. In 1881 the first Chinese railway, 11 kilometres in length was commissioned to haul coal for the Kaiping Mining Company. In 1870-71 foreign companies installed telegraph lines linking Hong Kong, Shanghai and Vladivostok. The introduction of national postal services met with opposition from the officials, the foreigners and the banks and other companies which had a vested interest in a private postal system. The officials feared that the suspension of the official service (*yichan*) would seriously endanger official authority. The banks did not want to lose their business. The foreigners who had established their own services in the port cities wanted to retain foreign mail firmly in their own hands.

Beginnings of a Modern Education

The establishment of foreign language schools as part of self strengthening led to new trends in the field of education. No doubt the innovations were not on a large scale nevertheless they were to lay the foundations of an exposure to non Chinese ideas which expanded rapidly during the last decades of the 19th century. A small number of schools were opened to train a limited number of men for taking careers as technicians or officials. The Institute of Western Knowledge was started in Canton in 1880. In Tientsin a telegraph school was started in 1880, a naval and army medical school in 1881 and a military academy in 1885. Between 1872-1881, 120 Chinese youth were sent to Hartford in the United States to receive American education. A parallel mission was sent to France in 1876. These programmes were severely criticized for making the participants too westernized.

It is significant that some of the beneficiaries of this education abroad, like Yan Fu played an important part in Chinese intellectual and political life at the end of the century. This policy of officially sponsoring overseas education was given up by 1881. This happened partly due to the exclusion policy of the United States whereby the US unilaterally suspended and other Asian immigration in the wake of a strong anti-Chinese movement in California. During the last decades of the 19th century, however, several Chinese students were to seek education abroad.

Opposition to the innovations

There was sustained opposition to the *Yangwu* movement in official circles from the beginning. The most prominent of the critics was Wo-jen, a Mongol official who held important positions as tutor to the Emperor and Chairman of the Hanlin Academy. Using Confucian texts, Wo-jen tried to argue that science and technology would not resolve the problems of the state. The controversy, however, remained within manageable limits as long as the *Yangwu* movement was advocating the making of arms to suppress internal revolts and prevent foreign incursions. The conflict became sharper when innovations were sought to be introduced in other areas like industry, communications and education. The opposition was strengthened by popular resistance to mechanization and the modern economic system. Riots over the introduction of railways were used to argue that the introduction of modern technology endangered law and order. It must be remembered that popular opposition stemmed from both religious beliefs and superstitions as well as from the belief that the machines had ruined the livelihood of the people. The conservative reaction, however, was fighting to preserve a traditional state and order, which it feared would be undermined by the new developments. In the long run the fears of Wo-jen and others proved to be right.

The impact

The major results of the Restoration and the Self Strengthening movements were as follows:

1. The Restoration reinforced the political and social roles of the gentry.
2. Since the state had drawn on the military forces created by the provincial gentry to quell the Taipings and other popular uprisings of the 19th century, the seeds of regional militarism were sown. These new armies were superior to the traditional Imperial Army, and potentially were a threat to the state: a threat which was actualized in the early 20th century.
3. Historians agree that the state sponsored enterprises illustrate the rise of modern capitalism in China. A striking social development was the emergence of bourgeoisie, officials, compradors, merchants, gentry and landowners.
4. New intellectual and literary trends in the form of translations and publications widened the horizons of Chinese intellectuals. Increasingly Chinese scholars were becoming aware that Western knowledge was more than mere technology.

In the final analysis, these efforts met with only short-term results. The aim was not to transform but to preserve with innovations. Power continued in the hands of small ruling elite. The limitations of the efforts to gain a greater control over foreign relations were sharply belied by the 1880's. Foreign presence, far from being contained, seemed to pervade wider and wider areas of Chinese society during the last two decades of the 19th century. The *Yangwu* movement, while it set the ball rolling in initiating industries and modernization of the Chinese economy, was not really able to strengthen the Chinese economy and state to face the challenges of imperialism or meet the needs of its exploited peasant masses.

THE CRITICAL YEARS AND THE SCRAMBLE FOR CONCESSION

The pattern of history in the Far East after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 is woven about six main threads: Western aggression, rivalry among the powers, Russian ambition in the Far East, the Japanese imperialism, the revolt of China against the old order, and the attempt on the part of the Western Powers to substitute cooperation for competition.

By the Treaty of Shimonoseki, China agreed to pay a huge war indemnity to Japan. But rank corruption, mis-government and the war had emptied her exchequer, and to meet her obligation China had to borrow from abroad for the first time in recent history. This aggravated her troubles and a new trend of foreign control over her finances started, which multiplied the bonds about her.

Russia secured the privilege of advancing the first installment of loan to China. But Russia was not financially sound and she in turn had to seek assistance of the French bankers. Both Russia and France used the financial troubles of China to gain their ends. The so-called 'battle of concessions' was started immediately by France. A fresh delimitation of the boundaries between French-occupied Tonking and China was effected in favour of France. She was also granted options on the mines in the southern provinces of China and the right to extend the railways from French Indo-China northward.

Russia also did not lag behind. Taking advantage of her new position as protector of the integrity of China, she persuaded her to grant Russia the right to build the Chinese Eastern Railway across Manchuria. As a reward of her financial assistance, she was permitted to establish in China the Russo-Chinese Bank. This Bank was granted many facilities and very extensive fiscal powers which included the receipt of taxes, some control over local finances and the right of construction of an extended system of railway and telegraph lines. She also received some privileges in China. China entered into a fifteen-year defensive alliance with Russia which gave her the right in case of war to utilize Port Arthur and Kiao-Chou as naval bases.

Germany, the third partner of the Triple Intervention, could not but regard without apprehension the advances of France in the South and Russia in the North. This secured the position of the Dual Alliance of France and Russia in the Far East. Moreover, the successful cooperation of the two partners strengthened the bond of the Dual Alliance. Besides, William II, who demanded for Germany "a place in the sun", was anxious to obtain a foothold in China. The murder of two German missionaries on November 1, 1897, in the province of Shantung afforded Germany a chance. Within two weeks, the German fleet appeared at Kiao-chou. Germany demanded and obtained as compensation a ninety-nine years' lease of the harbour of Kiao-chou with the surrounding territory and got full jurisdiction within the leased territory together with the right of free passage for her armies in a neutral zone of fifty kilometres outside it. She also received large commercial and financial privileges, including the first option on any undertaking in the province of Shantung in which foreign assistance was needed. This signified an enormous extension of Germany's power, while the sovereignty and integrity of China were further endangered. The other Powers became jealous of this German gain and demanded 'compensation' which started a 'scramble for concession'.

By two agreements in 1898, the Russians were granted lease of Port Arthur and Dairen for twenty-five years, the right to extend the Chinese Eastern Railway southward to Dairen and mining right in Manchuria. It was also agreed by Russia that these important harbours should be opened only to the warships of Russia and China. France too pressed for fresh privileges. In 1898, as Russia advanced against the north gates of China, France obtained a ninety-nine years' lease of Kwang-chouan. China agreed to a non-alienation agreement covering the Chinese provinces bordering Tonking and conceded France the right to extend the Indo-Chinese Railway into Yunan as well as right to designate French advisers to the Chinese Post Office. As a compensation against these advances made by France, Russia and Germany, Japan received a declaration of non-alienation regarding Fukien.

These acquisitions of huge portions of China by different Powers, which threatened China with eventual partition, could not but disturb Great Britain. British commercial and financial interests in China, already stabilized and respected, naturally preferred *status quo* in this part of the world. But when it was greatly threatened by the events following China's defeat in the hands of Japan, she also entered into the compensation for concession and began to adopt measures to maintain her dominant position in the Far East. Her efforts were not altogether unsuccessful. She got: 1. lease of Weihaiwei "for as long a period as Port Arthur will remain in Russian occupation"; 2. extension of the lease of the territory on the mainland opposite to Hongkong; 3. a revision of her Burmese boundaries; 4. a declaration of non-alienation of the provinces bordering the Yangtze River; and 5. a promise that the Inspector General of Maritime Customs should be a Briton as long as British trade would predominate.

Even Italy, the weakest among the European great Powers, put in a claim for a naval base in Chekiang. But this time China showed enough courage to resist and Italy's attempts were frustrated.

These several leaseholds could be the beginning of partition. The helpless Chinese government was forced to agree not to 'alienate' certain parts of the country from some foreign Powers by the 'declarations of non-alienation'. By such non-alienation declarations, France obtained special right on the territory bordering Tonking, Britain in Yangtze Valley, Japan in Fukien, Russia in Manchuria, Mongolia and in Chinese Turkestan, and Germany in Shantung. This earmarking of the provinces into 'spheres of special interest' which led to the 'sphere of influence' theory was nothing but the first step towards the eventual partitioning of the country among the Powers. In their respective 'spheres of influence' the different Powers enjoyed special financial and other privileges. The establishment of such rights on a firm basis could lead to the assertion of a 'protectorate' by gradual enlargement of the powers of control.

The foreign penetration in China was not limited to the acquisition of the leaseholds and 'declarations of non-alienation'. An international scramble for constructions of strategic railways followed as these were sure to give some economic, military and financial authority to the Powers receiving such rights. They, too, might from the basis for territorial claims in case China was actually partitioned.

Belgium, with the support of the Dual Alliance, first received the privilege of constructing the Peking-Hankow line. Britain by show of force, secured a number of important mining and railway concessions. America, Russia, France and Germany also claimed and obtained concessions. Thus European encroachments went on in merry-go-round-fashion, and at the turn of the century, the Chinese, were threatened with the financial imperialism of the Western Powers just as an earlier generation had been the victim of foreign aggression for the expansion of commerce.

The different Powers competed with each other for getting some special privileges in some particular areas of China. But once the 'spheres of influence' were definitely earmarked, each agreed not to compete for concessions in the other's sphere. In the later phase of the scramble the Powers also cooperated amongst themselves for safeguarding their interests. Thus France and Britain agreed to share the privilege that either of them might secure in Szechuan provinces and in Yunan. Britain also made some understanding with Russia and Germany about the exploitation of the Yangtze Valley, Shantung and Manchuria.

Thus China was gradually being parcelled out among the Powers. She lost her strongest forts; she could no longer control her external trade and her tariffs; even her finances and internal organizations began to fall into foreign hands. All these were ominous signs and many persons thought at the time that China would also share the fate of Africa in the hands of the Imperialists.

Vinacke has described this process of parcelling out of China into so many spheres of influence as "cutting the Chinese Melon". It was clear that the integrity of China was worth very little to the imperialistic Powers and that an era of special and exclusive privilege was dawning in China. Nevertheless China was not parcelled out among the powers on account of certain developments at the time. The very facts of the international scramble and the strong rivalry among the powers gave rise to three developments which saved the Celestial Empire: the 'open door' doctrine, the Boxer Uprising and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Besides, though the Powers were putting strong pressure on China, they could not altogether forget the potential strength of the Chinese dragon.

Open Door Doctrine: In the beginning of the nineteenth century the U.S.A. stood only behind Britain as the major trading power in China. Though she had used force sparingly she too had taken full part in the opening of China to trade. In the mid-sixties, as the USA turned by the Civil War, she could not devote much energy on China. But during the last quarter of the century, the USA felt the impact of the Industrial Revolution. By the nineties, the industrial development became very rapid and the American capitalists began to feel the necessity for extensive foreign markets.

The U.S.A. could not play any active part during the scramble for concessions in China in 1897-98 as she was then busy in war with Spain. But when the war ended in 1898, she once again began to show keen interest on the vast Chinese market. The American public opinion was not in favour of any acquisition of territory in China; but with the development of the conception of 'sphere of influence', the hold of European Powers on certain portions of China increased greatly. The USA realized that if the tendency continued, a Power without a territorial interest like her might speedily be excluded from the Celestial Empire. So she was greatly disturbed by the prospect of the partitioning of China amongst the Imperialist Powers.

The USA decided to act. Her annexation of the Philippines and her presence in that area in considerable strength made it possible for American diplomacy to play an active role in China. She was not very interested in creating her own sphere of influence for the obvious reason that the richest provinces of China had already been given away. The USA's problem was thus to find an effective method to safeguard its own interests, without trying to undo what has already taken place.

The USA's response to the problem was the 'open door' doctrine. The genesis of the 'open door' doctrine can be traced back to the 'most favoured nation' clause in the treaties signed between China and the Western Powers in the forties of the nineteenth century. Since then equal opportunity for trade in China had been generally insisted on by the strong trading nations particularly by Britain and the USA.

Like the Monroe doctrine the 'open door' policy also was perhaps first outlined in the British Foreign Office. Britain viewed with alarm the rapid expansion of other Powers, especially Russia, in China. To maintain her economic supremacy unimpaired in that country, in March 1898 and in J 1899, British government appealed to the U.S.A. for some joint action to maintain an open door there. Taking his cue Britain and to safeguard the rapidly developing commercial interest of the USA in the vast Chinese market, John Hay, the U.S. Secretary of State, initiated in September 1899 the famous 'open policy'. As the policy was first propounded by John Hay, it is also known as Hay's doctrine.

In 1899 Hay asked the American ambassadors in London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Tokyo and Rome to seek clarification assurances on certain points. These were that (i) no Power having a so-called 'sphere of interest' or leased territory in any part of China should interfere with any Treaty Port or any vested interest therein; (ii) the Chinese treaty tariff and the Chinese collection of customs should be guaranteed by all, and that duties so levied shall be collected by the Chinese government; and (iii) no discrimination of harbour dues or railroad charges against other countries should be made by any Power within its 'sphere of influence'. In other words, Hay in his doctrine of 'open door' policy urged all the Powers to guarantee an open Chinese market and an indiscriminating tariff toward, merchants of all nations.

The stress on the responsibility of the Chinese government in the collection of duties, took for granted the authority of that government. Thus in an indirect way the USA assisted in the maintenance of Chinese territorial and administrative integrity.

This 'open door' policy of Hay was heartily supported by Britain which had trade interest throughout the vast Chinese Empire and did not like to acquire new colonial burdens in the Pacific. Though Britain for the sake of commercial interests was desiring the restoration of the 'open door', she was not in a good moral position for denouncing the enclosure system as she had laid claim and established a sphere of influence for herself. All the other Powers except Russia agreed in principle to this. But the Russians hedged and remained significantly silent on the question of the uniformity of harbour dues and railroad charges which made the whole acceptance precarious.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Western Powers had tried their best to force open the doors of China. By the end of the century, when they succeeded in opening the doors, these Powers tried to close the areas under their influence to others. Thus the vast areas of the Celestial Empire were once again closed, though not by China this time, but by the imperialist Powers themselves. By the 'open door' was not meant the doors of China, but the doors of the Powers in their respective 'spheres of influence'. This was a remedy against the evils of growing international competition, and by affirming this policy, the Powers once again went back to the cooperative policy of the sixties of the nineteenth century for the exploitation of China. Although Hay's doctrine did not attract much attention at the time, the 'open door' came to be regarded as an accepted policy in almost all the subsequent treaties concerning China beginning with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902.

Many Americans asserted that the enunciation of the 'open door' vindicates the age-long US policy of championing of equal opportunity and protection of the territorial and administrative integrity of Far Eastern countries. The hollowness of their claim is made evident from the fact that just before its initiation the USA conquered and colonized the Philippines in direct violation of the concept of the 'open door'. Indeed the USA was not motivated by a high ideal in championing the 'Open door' policy. What she did she did to safeguard her commercial interest, and not for maintaining the integrity and independence of China. She did not raise any strong objection against the 'spheres of influence' which was inconsistent with equality of commercial opportunity to all.

By the 'open door' policy, she merely emphasized that she too was interested in the vast market of China and was a claimant for equal facilities in trade and enterprise there. But without belittling Hay's Doctrine it may be said that it was inadequate to protect either immediate American commercial interests or the historic American principle of equal opportunity. In this connection, however, one may recall the words of Langer that "in the Far East the Powers were dealing with the fate of an empire of upward of three hundred million souls and no less than five major states were disputing the spoils".

The 'open door' doctrine, though accepted by most of the Powers, did not receive anything approaching international guarantee from them promising the 'territorial or administrative integrity' of China. After becoming the sponsor of this policy the USA, however, began to participate more actively in the affairs of the Far East in general and China in particular. This American interest in China did give the latter power some external support in her fight for self-preservation.

The 'open door' policy, however, saved China from immediate dismemberment. But though, in one sense, it was a guarantee of Chinese integrity, on the other, it was nothing better than a scheme, for the exploitation of China through international cooperation. Though this policy regulated the game which was played out by the powers, it did not confer any immediate commercial benefit on China. In spite of expressions of approval of this policy, most of the powers continued to enlarge their demands and pressed for new concessions.

FORMATION OF THE UNITED FRONT

The formation of the United Front in China came about at the initiative of the Communist International, the CPC and the Kuomintang. The reasons for its formation were partly ideological and had partly to do with practical considerations. The post-World War I years saw a lot of sympathy generated for Soviet Russia in China, a radicalization of the Chinese intelligentsia, and the emergence of Marxism and workers and peasants movements. There was an overall disillusionment with the Western powers. The Communists of USSR had taken the initiative to renounce all privileges and claims to territories, and also over the Manchurian railway in China which the previous Tsarist government controlled. Therefore, it was natural that the major political groups in China should establish friendly ties with the Soviet Government as well as the Communist Party there.

The Kuomintang also, therefore, apart from the CPC, had direct and friendly ties with the Soviet Union. On the other hand, it was a firm opinion of the Soviet Government, the CPSU, and the Communist International that not only the CPC but also the Kuomintang in China was a progressive and revolutionary political formation. This understanding was based on the analysis that all the political and social forces in colonial and semi-colonial countries that were struggling for national liberation had a positive role to play in world politics. They considered all political groups which were against imperialism to be playing an important role in the worldwide struggle against a common enemy of the newly emerged socialist country Russia. These groups included the workers and communist movements in the rest of Europe, as well as of the colonial and semi-colonial countries like India and China. Therefore, there was a strong case, in the opinion of the Soviets and the Communist International, that they should collaborate as and when they could against the common enemy.

The Communist International, which based itself on the ideas of Marxism, also had a stake in promoting revolutions in other countries, as these revolutions would necessarily represent the interests of large sections of the people in opposition to those of the vested interests there. In China they saw that not only the workers and the peasants, but also the bourgeoisie and the middle classes were opposed to warlordism. This opposition to warlordism was there because the warlords were the mainstay of feudalism in China. The social and political hold of the warlords not only represented the interests of the landlords as opposed to the peasants, it also hampered the development of capitalism and modernization in China. Since the class interests of the bourgeoisie lay in the development of a modern China, they were opposed to the warlords. Their interests were represented by the Kuomintang which struggled against warlordism. The interests of the Chinese bourgeoisie also lay in opposing imperialism, because imperialism too was an obstacle to the growth of advanced capitalism in China. The Western powers conveyed all the profits and the Chinese bourgeoisie could not compete with them. Therefore, the Kuomintang opposed the Western powers.

The Communist International also realized this to be the situation and established friendly relations with the Kuomintang, apart from the CPC. This friendly collaboration with both, the Kuomintang and the CPC, enabled the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to act as an intermediary in initiating the formation of the United Front of the CPC and the Kuomintang.

The CPC

There were some differences within the CPC over the formation of United Front. However, the emphasis on the world politics as well of the social and political forces in China was by and large accepted by the CPC. The Communist movement had, in fact, emerged in China in the context of the growth of nationalism and the movement for democracy. National liberation was, therefore, a primary goal of the CPC. The leaders of the CPC realized that there could be no democracy and no improvement in the lives of the people without first freeing China from the strangle hold of the imperialist powers. Moreover, at times there was a political understanding between these powers and, the warlords. Therefore, national liberation was inseparable from a struggle for, social emancipation in China.

The CPC saw that Kuomintang was opposed to both – imperialism and warlordism. Its leaders also realized that the Kuomintang in 1924 was a much stronger force in China than the CPC was. It had a much larger mass base and support among the Chinese people, more intellectuals and professionals as members, more influence within the armed forces and greater finances and military equipment at its disposal. It could, therefore, be a useful ally in a struggle against the common enemy, even if it did not represent the everyday demands of the workers and peasants. The CPC leaders had moreover a good opinion of Dr. Sun Yat Sen, the Kuomintang leader. In the context of the immediate political tasks before them they agreed that there was greater scope for collaboration than differences. They also felt that this collaboration need not mean that the CPC confine its activities to the common tasks. Therefore, they decided, on the United Front with the express understanding that the CPC would continue with its independent demands even as they fought together with the Kuomintang for national liberation and against the warlords. The United Front was, therefore, the only way to unite large sections of the Chinese people in order to isolate the enemies.

The Kuomintang

The experiment with republicanism in the decade after the Revolution of 1911 brought neither economic nor political stability in China. The political ineffectiveness of the Republican government made Sun Yat Sen think in terms of evolving new ways of fighting the imperialists and the warlords. The rising tide of the left and the workers' movement added new diversions to the struggle for national liberation. It meant that the nationalist

forces could be enlarged in their social base to include the workers and peasants of China. Sun Yat Sen's own effectiveness coupled with the growing Communist movement and its influence in the workers' movement made him realize two things:

1. It was imperative that the Kuomintang should be reorganized,
2. It was no longer possible to fight the imperialists and warlords alone.

The answer to him seemed to be a reorganized Kuomintang which should incorporate within itself the support of all sections of the Chinese population. This could only be achieved through a United Front with the Communists, and the friendly help of the Soviet Russia.

The Negotiations

In the spring of 1921, the Dutch agent H. Maring, as representative of the Communist International, met Sun Yat Sen. This proved to be the starting point of the negotiations for the United Front. After that, the problem was considered at a Congress of the Communist Parties in Moscow in January 1922, and then by the Central Committee of the CPC in August 1922. In the same month another representative from the International, Adolf Joffe, came to China to work out the basis of Soviet-Kuomintang-CPC co-operation. After lengthy negotiations he persuaded Sun Yat Sen to adopt a policy of alliance with Soviet Russia and admission of the communists into the Kuomintang. This policy, approved by fifty three nationalist leaders at a conference in Shanghai on September 4, 1922, became the blueprint for the United Front policy as well as for the reorganization of the Kuomintang. On the other hand the Third National Congress of the CPC (held in Canton in June 1923) took a formal decision to form a United Front with the Kuomintang.

In June 1924 the Kuomintang held its First National Congress in Canton. Li ta Chao, Mao tse Tung and other Communist leaders also attended the meeting. This Congress passed a resolution to admit members of the Communist Party in their individual capacity into the Kuomintang. A new party programme and constitution were adopted. It also decided on some concrete measures regarding the reorganization of the Kuomintang. The Manifesto of the First National Congress of the Kuomintang in China was adopted here. Sun Yat Sen gave a new interpretation to his Three Principles in the Manifesto. The Congress declared its three policies to be:

1. friendly relations with the Soviet Union,
2. the development of the workers and peasants movements in China, and
3. co-operation with the Communist Party of China.

Hence, the United Front for national liberation and democracy came into being in this First National Congress of the Kuomintang in 1924. Maring had played an important role throughout the negotiations from 1921 to 1924.

Nature of the United Front

The first and most important feature of the United Front policy was the emergence of the Kuomintang as a revolutionary organization capable of leading the struggle for national liberation and against warlordism in China. The entry of the Communists into Kuomintang meant that the capabilities and experience of a great number of very dedicated revolutionaries was harnessed in the nationalist struggle. Among the five members elected to the Presidium of the KMT was also Li ta Chao, a Communist. Among the 24 members elected to the Central Committee there were 5 leftists and 3 communists. Although not in a majority, the leftists and communists were more influential in making policy decisions. As a result there emerged a strong left wing within the Kuomintang. This meant that the Kuomintang as a whole became far more radical in its politics and support to the workers and peasants movement than it had ever been in the years prior to 1924.

The new interpretation given to the Three Principles also suggests the same:

1. *Nationalism* had now a much stronger anti-imperialist content which laid emphasis on an independent struggle and also advocated full equality for all the nationalists within China;
2. The new principle of *Democracy* stressed on the democratic rights of not only the privileged and the educated, but of all the working people as well as of all the individuals and organizations that opposed feudalism and imperialism. In practice this entailed the right to free speech, to organize and struggle for better living;
3. In relation to *Livelihood for All* it included anti-feudal demands such as "equalization of landownership", "land to the tillers", "control of capital" and improvement of the living conditions of the workers. This in practice meant opposing the control of national wealth by a small section of capitalists and landlords.

The United Front led by Kuomintang called for a coalition of the national bourgeoisie and the workers and the peasants to work towards the establishment of a democratic coalition government. This, in fact, was carrying out precisely the immediate tasks underlined in the CPC programme. This also meant that the most radical programme put forward by any political grouping in China was being implemented within the framework of the United Front policies.

POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism denotes the philosophy which has now arisen after and in opposition to the philosophy of modernity. Frederick Jameson, a critic of Postmodernism, thinks that Postmodernism is a cultural process initiated by a radical change in the nature of capitalism. He has characterized Postmodernism as the 'cultural logic of late capitalism'. Jean Francois Lyotard, who popularized the term 'Postmodernism', states that 'the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the post-industrial age and cultures enter what is known as postmodern age.'

The major ideologues whose works constitute the corpus from which Postmodernism is formulated are Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Deleuze, Guattari, White and Rorty. Their works posed a major challenge to the narratives of modernity and their theories attacked the basic foundations of knowledge created by modernity with Reason and its centre. The targets of their criticism have been capitalism, historicism, humanism, scientism and rationalism which constitute the modern world.

Firstly, Postmodernism questioned the claims of the Enlightenment philosophers for universal knowledge. It also criticized the search for foundations of knowledge. Modernity gave rise to grand narratives, that is, overarching theories purporting to explain each and everything within its compass. Postmodernism rejects the very idea of such grand narratives and attacks the all-encompassing overarching ideologies.

Secondly, Postmodernism debunks the claims of the science to achieve truth. Postmodernism takes nothing as absolute and leans towards relativism, sometimes total relativism. It, moreover, rejects the claims of human and social sciences for representing the facts and the world. In the opinion of Post-modern theorists, there is no truth which is beyond or prior to linguistic intervention; it is language which constructs the reality and the world for the humans. It is, therefore, futile to search for truth beyond language which, in turn, conditioned by the individual and local cultures.

Thirdly, Postmodernism also attacks the modernist organization of world and knowledge in binaries. According to the post-modernists, the modernist tradition tried to arrange knowledge around certain major binaries in which science was the core common element – science vs. rhetoric, science vs. literature, science vs. narrative. Here science represented the true knowledge, while the other side of the binary belonged to imagination and false consciousness. It also generated other sets of binaries. Fact vs. fiction, truth vs. imagination, science vs. magic, masculine vs. feminine, etc. are the binary oppositions conventionalized by the theorists of modernity. In these binaries, the second term almost always occupies an inferior position. Postmodernism challenges this knowledge based on binaries and instead emphasizes on multiplicities, varieties and differences.

POSTMODERNISM AND HISTORY-WRITING

Postmodernism offers a fundamental critique of the conventional mode of history writing. Sometimes the critique becomes so radical that it almost becomes anti-history. The main ingredient of history-writing, such as facts, sources, documents, archival records, etc., all come under severe scrutiny under the microscope of postmodernist vision. The certainty and continuity attached to historical writing are thoroughly debunked, the inner working of historiography is put under scanner and its proclaimed nearness to 'truth' is attacked. The history-writing itself is historicized, and its rootedness in the western culture is highlighted by the postmodern thinkers. Postmodernism rejects the 'objectivist' tradition of history writing starting with Ranke which strove to recover the past 'as it actually was'. It has attacked history both in its grander versions as well as in its relatively modest versions. It challenges the proclaimed objectivity and neutrality of the historians and claims that the process of interpretation transforms the past in radically different ways.

Postmodernism questions the very basis of conventional historiography by locating its origins in the modern Europe's encounter with the other. It began with the European Renaissance which prompted the Europeans to 'discover' other lands and people. In this quest the 'history' served as a tool for posing the modern western self in opposition to the other whose history was supposed to be just beginning as a result of its encounter with Europe. Thus the practice of history was employed not just to study the past but to fashion it in terms of the criteria set by modern Europe. History, therefore, evolved a western quest for power over the colonized territories and its desire to appropriate their pasts.

There are basically two types of history in conventional sense. One is the grand narrative of history which visualizes that the human society is moving in a certain direction, towards an ultimate goal – global capitalist society or a global communist one. There is another, more modest version of history which claims to rely only on facts and to eschew any ideological orientation. It claims neutrality and objectivity for itself and is the most accepted version of history writing. This is also known as the 'lower case history' which is 'realist, objectivist, documentarist and liberal-pluralist'. At the centre of professional history writing is the notion of objectivity, of facts, of being able to represent reality, to recover the past. Historical facts are seen to exist independent of and prior to interpretation. Historian's job is thus said to be able to discover the truth, to be neutral and dispassionate.

Postmodernism rejects all these notions. It not only attacks the attribution of any essence to the past, but also criticizes the attempts to study the past for 'its own sake'. Both versions of history writing are considered as ideological and situated in particular cultural formation. Both kinds of history is said to be 'just theories about the past', without any claim to represent the truth. Both are the products of western modernity and represent the ways in which it 'conceptualized the past'. According to postmodernism, there is no historical truth but what the historians make it out to be, no facts except what the historians interpret, no representable past except what the historians construct.

In postmodernist view, the history can be accepted as genuine knowledge only if it sheds its claims to truth and hence to power, and accepts its fragmentary character. The only history possible is micro-history. The ambiguities and gaps in historical narration are inherent and essential to it and should be retained. All quests for continuity, coherence and consistency should be dropped. It should be accepted that all documents and facts are nothing but texts and are ideologically constructed.

There are even more extreme views within postmodernism with regard to historiography. Keith Jenkins, therefore, declares that 'we are now at a postmodern moment when we can forget history completely.' Here he differs somewhat from his earlier position where he felt the need for anti-modernist 'reflexive histories'. Recently, however, he has taken the position that 'thanks to the "non-historical imaginaries" that can be gleaned from postmodernism we can now wave goodbye to history'. He justifies his position on the ground that the history we know is entirely a modern western product which never earlier existed anywhere in the world. This extreme position questions the very existence of any kind of professional history writing.

CRITIQUE OF POSTMODERNISM

As postmodernist critique of modernity ranges from total rejection to partial acceptance, so does the criticism of postmodernism varies from virulent attack and complete rejection to some level of its acceptance. The critiques have pointed out that in some extreme form of postmodern relativism, the implication may be that 'anything goes'. However, such a stance may justify the *status quo* where 'everything

stays'. Total relativism and nihilism denies the transformative praxis and does nothing to change the repressive socio-economic and political order. By segmenting the knowledge and by demarcating the socio-cultural boundaries to extreme micro levels, it makes it impossible to create a broad solidarity of the oppressed. Moreover, the postmodern analysis of society and culture is lop-sided because it emphasizes the tendencies towards fragmentation while completely ignoring the equally important movements towards synthesization and broader organization. At another level, by conceptualizing power as distributed into countless small and big systems, practices and organizations at various levels of society, postmodernism obscures the selective concentration of power, the basic relations of domination and subordination, of repression and resistance. It also tends to ignore the roles of state and capital as much more potent tools of domination and repression.

Some critics also charge postmodernism with being historicist as it accepts the inevitability of the present and its supposedly postmodernist character. If the world is now postmodern, it is our fine to be living in it. But such postmodernity which the western world has created now is no more positive than the earlier social formation it is supposed to have superseded. Moreover, it is not very sure that whether the modernity has actually come to an end. In fact, large parts of the world in the erstwhile colonial and semi-colonial societies and East European countries are now busy modernizing themselves. Even in the west, the chief characteristics of modernity are still there – industrial economy, political parties and factions, markets, unions, state regulations, discipline-based knowledge, etc. The concept of postmodernity, therefore, remains mostly at an academic and intellectual level.

Critics also argue that many postmodernists, deriving from poststructuralism, deny the possibility of knowing facts and reality. As a result, no event can be given any weightage over another. All happenings in the past are of the same value. Thus, theoretically, the Holocaust or any brutality of a similar nature can be equated with any other event, whether tragic or comic, because, in postmodernist view, it is the language which creates events and histories for us.

Sumerian Civilization

Mesopotamia derived from Greek words 'mesos' (middle) and 'potamos' (rivers). Actually Mesopotamia is a flat country between the Tigris and Euphrates in Middle East. Mesopotamia broadly corresponds to present day Iraq. Mesopotamia can broadly be divided into two regions- Northern Mesopotamia and Southern Mesopotamia. These two regions have very different environments. Northern Mesopotamia had plenty of rainfall to support cultivation of wheat, barley and other crops. Hence the beginning of agriculture in the Zagros mountain foothills of Northern Mesopotamia goes back to nearly 10000 B.C. Later the important Neolithic settlement of Jarmo came up in this area. Between 8000 B.C. to 6000 B.C. a number of Neolithic villages came up in Northern Mesopotamia.

But Southern Mesopotamia, on the other hand, was an arid zone with less rainfall but constituted the alluvial plains (Delta) of the two rivers and was therefore highly fertile. Absence of rainfall in the valley was made up for by great amounts of water brought down from the Eastern and Northern mountains. Actually Tigris, Euphrates and their tributaries overflowed during spring and summer due to melting of snow in mountainous areas and they carried silt containing organic elements and solutions of inorganic compounds from rock minerals which fertilized the fields. Hence the soil of southern Mesopotamia was fertile. But irrigation, melioration and canals were needed all through the year to raise good crops. Because of this fertility here flourished the first Civilization of the world- Sumerian Civilization between 4000 B.C. to 3000 B.C.

The growth of Sumerian Civilization was preceded by three transitional cultures-Ubaid (5500 to 4000 B.C.), Uruk and Jemdet Nasr.

Sumerian Civilization is known as Civilization since it possesses the Civilizational features such as urbanization, surplus production, metallurgy, organised religion, class stratified society, state formation, monumental architecture, long distance trade, art of writing and predictive sciences.

Urbanization:

Anyway, at the beginning of the third millennium B.C., the southern part of Mesopotamia was not yet unified, rather several settlements had grown into cities. Gordon Childe called this phenomenon 'urban revolution'. These cities built on natural hills, were surrounded by walls. They had a population of 20000 to 80000 each.

Situated in the extreme south west of Mesopotamia was the city of **Eridu**, which according to Sumerian legend developed a high Culture. Close to Eridu lay the city of **Ur**. North of Ur the city of **Larsa** stood. **Uruk** lying on the bank of Euphrates played a prominent role in the unification of the country. Other important city States were **Nippur** and **Kish**.

Surplus production:

The rapid growth of city has been attributed to migration from the nearby rural settlements. Maintenance of such a large population presupposes the availability of enough surplus that was made possible mainly by the highly fertile soil of southern Mesopotamia. Canals were dug and dikes were constructed along the banks of the streams. Besides an extensive agricultural method adopted by the Sumerian farmers which included the use of metal plough and draught oxen, which also contributed to increase the agricultural production that supported a large population.

State formation:

The origin of state in Mesopotamia can be traced to the political and economic requirements of the Mesopotamian society. In the formative phase of Sumerian Civilization temples played a key role in

promoting agriculture through organizing labour for putting irrigation system in order, through allocation of irrigation water as well as in erecting defensive walls of the city for protection. Thus temples in Mesopotamia assumed the role of such an authority before the development of state institution. But since the temple had no state organ such as an army to support them they could only coerce the peasants to produce surplus by an ideology and a value system emboldened by suitable legends, myths or by instilling the fear of God. A part of the surplus produce was collected by the temples in the form of offering made to the deities. Gradually temple became a centre of collection, storage and redistribution of surplus produce including crafts production. Most of the temples of big cities such as Ur, Uruk, Eridu and Nippur contained large granaries and warehouses along with quarters of craftsmen. This further strengthened the authority of temple and temple officials. In this manner temples prior to dynastic period in Mesopotamia assumed the status of a state. Based on her study of the temple of Lagash Anna Schneider has termed the status of Mesopotamian States as 'temple state'. Based on archaeological findings and Sumerian written texts the political history of Mesopotamia is divided into - early dynastic period(3000 to 2350 BCE), Akkadian dynasty(2350 to 2150 BCE) and the Third dynasty(2150 to 2000 BCE). But our syllabus is confined until the Akkadian dynasty.

The Sumerian king list suggests that beginning with 3000 BC the Sumerian city States were ruled by chiefs and kings who also performed the role of priests. Titles such as En(spouse of the city deity), sanga(temple administrator) and ishakgu (tenant farmer of deity) titles were adopted by the kings . The competition to control natural resources manifested into inter city state warfare and each city raised it's army not only to protect it's irrigation and water rights, trade routes and city walls but also to acquire more from the other states. Kings provided leadership in this wars and success in wars enhanced their prestige. This brought about a change in the nature of kings as priests were replaced by selected/nominated kings with their organised army, bureaucracy and well defined laws. Temple was replaced by palace as centre of political authority. Thus title such as lugal (big man) , Ensi (city ruler) was used for the kings.

Metallurgy:

Development of metallurgy was an important feature of the Sumerian Bronze Age Civilization. Gordon Childe traced a link between urbanization, metallurgy and bronze age Civilization. Few evidences of the use of copper has been found from Uruk Culture. But copper being a soft material, it had limited utility as tools. Bronze , on the other hand, had several advantages over copper as metal. Bronze was very useful as plough hoe and weapons such as daggers and axes. Hence the people of Sumeria developed the bronze metallurgy which essentially involved alloying/ mixing of copper and tin. Accordingly a full-time specialized group was emerged to manufacture bronze objects. But in Southern Mesopotamia there was problem that it did not possess copper and tin. Sumerians had to bring copper and tin from Iran and Anatolia. But since the Southern Mesopotamia was producing enough surplus, it could sustain the specialist metal workers and use the surplus to get raw materials from far off places.

Religion:

Sumerian religion was not a single or unified religion. There was a clear distinction between religion at the state level and at the popular level. Each city had its own respective gods and goddess. State promoted the worship of the chief city deity in a big temple dedicated to the deity, which was termed as ziggurat. But at the popular level several deities were worshipped in smaller shrines. Deities at these shrines were worshipped by a particular group of people- certain professional groups, clans or tribes.

However owing to the cultural exchanges between several regions and due to systemization of rituals, myths and religious ideas by Sumerian priests, gradually a common tradition or Pantheon was developed. By this process of assimilation many deities became the members of a single family. As Sumerian society had become stratified, the deities were also ranked in an order. The prominent deities were **An** (Sovereign God), **Enlil** (controller of universe or king of kings), **Enki** (Lord of earth or god of sweet water). Among the female deities the popular was **Inanna** (goddess of fertility). After the unification of Akkad and Sumer, Nippur became the religious centre of unified Sumeria and a temple was dedicated to the most worshipped deity Enlil in this city. As the Sumerian society became patriarchal, a number of female deities lost their importance. The religious texts also inform us about a major harvest festival symbolizing the marriage between Inanna and Dumuzi, the god of vegetation and cattle.

Society :

The evidences of simple social differentiation in Mesopotamia can be found from the Uruk transitional phase. But with the beginning of Sumerian Civilization Mesopotamian society was clearly stratified. With the origin of state economic, religious and military power came into the hands of priest king. Leadership in warfare and ability to manage food and other resources created trust of the common people to the elite king and his officials. This enabled the elite to grab the surplus from the producers. Thus wealth generated in the hands of the elite. The available surplus was distributed in an inequitable manner while the larger share was given to the king, priest and warriors whereas actual producers were denied legitimate share of the surplus. Thus society was divided among elite and commoners. The earlier clans or tribes came to be stratified on class lines.

Robert Adams in his analysis of early Mesopotamian society uses the growing differentiation in artifacts as an index of growing class stratification. His study shows that in the Ubaid culture there was no such social differentiation according to the evidences of burials. But the burials from the early dynastic period indicate clear class stratification. The Royal burials of early dynastic period contain copper, gold objects and objects of precious stones. Some burials contain few copper objects and occasionally precious stones. But most of the burials contain only pottery or nothing at all. It is not need to mention that metal being costly, could be used as burial objects only by the elite or wealthy.

Gradually Sumerian society became more rigid as described by Hammurabi's Code. Society became divided into three classes- Awelu(nobility), Muskhenu (tenant) & Wardu (slaves). Since Sumerian society became patriarchal, woman was treated as a thing. She lost equal status with her counterparts man. She lost a number of rights.

Writing:

Sumerian Civilization was the first Civilization to develop the art of writing. In the beginning Sumerians employed pictographic symbols. But afterwards they changed these symbols into conventional signs which represented syllables. They had about 300 signs. They impressed their writing upon soft clay tablets, making use of stylus that was provided with tip or wedge. For that reason the system of writing was called cuneiform. Many thousands of business letters left by the Sumerians. Besides business letters, religious literature like epic poem and love poem were also left by the Sumerians.

Monumental Architecture:

Monumental architecture is considered as one of the important features of any Civilization. Archaeological excavations revealed that public buildings such as temples, palaces and other large

buildings had prominent position in Sumerian Civilization. Most of the buildings were made of sun-dried bricks. But in the buildings of the later phase some burnt bricks were used along with sun-dried bricks. From the beginning of the 3rd millennium B.C. to 2000 B.C. a number of square and pyramidal temple towers(Ziggurat) were constructed. They were built upon a raised platform. Each city had a such Ziggurat. Ur had one Ziggurat constructed with usual sun-dried bricks upon a lower level of burnt bricks, that was 200 feet long , 150 feet wide and 70 feet high. Although Ziggurat were the dominant features of Sumerian architecture, there were several other large buildings such as palaces. One of the impressive one remnants of palace is the Royal palace of Kish , constructed about 3500 B.C. It was built of brick provided with huge staircases, large columns and panelled walls. It is surprising that the prior to 300 B.C. Sumerians knew how to construct not only vault and arch , but also the dome.

Long Distance Trade:

Sumerian trade was also thriving. So expensive of Sumerian trade that their merchants had agents in places as far away as Asia Minor. Salesmen travelled from one city to another for hundreds of miles. The long distance trade increased in the 3rd millennium B.C. Although there is reference of finished goods such as vessels(from Iranian site Tepe Yahya), the largest proportion of imports consisted of raw materials. Copper came from Magan (Oman) , Iran and Anatolia. Silver came from Taurus mountains. Timber and lapis lazuli came from Northern Mesopotamia and Badakhshan . Timber also came from Meluha (Indus Valley). Besides, ivory and ivory objects also came from Meluha. Sumerian used to export perfumes, textiles, and agricultural goods. Long-distance trade was carried through Persian Gulf. It is to be noted that trade was basically carried through barter. However gold and silver were also used as medium of exchange.

Science and technology :

In the field of science and technology Sumerians made some contributions. The construction of several large buildings such as ziggurat(temple) ,or palaces could not have been possible without the knowledge of some system of measurement and mathematics. Similarly long distance trade could not have been possible without some knowledge of astronomy. Hence Sumerians developed some system of mathematics and astronomy. They had the knowledge of measurement of fields, debit and credit calculation. Their unit of counting was 60 and still we use this for the division of hour. They divided the circle into $6 \times 60 = 360$ parts or degrees. They also developed the idea of movement of sun, moon . They divided the year into lunar months of 29 to 30 days, each year contains only 354 days.

TRADE DURING THE DELHI SULTANATE

Internal Trade: There emerged some considerably big flourishing towns as well as numerous townships during the 13th - 14th centuries. Those towns naturally needed to be fed and supplied with raw material for craft production. At the same time, there was growing practice of land revenue realization in cash. By the time of Alauddin Khilji, the **cash-nexus** came to be well-developed and the ruling class tended to claim almost the entire peasant surplus by attempting to reduce the share of the rural intermediaries. Both these factors were conducive to the development of inland trade. To pay the land revenue in cash, the peasantry was forced to sell its surplus produce while the merchants had a market in newly emerging towns for agricultural products. This trade resulting from the compulsions of land revenue system is termed as 'induced trade' by Professor Md. Habib.

The inland trade developed at two levels:

A) the short distance village-town trade in commodities of bulk, and B) long distance inter-town trade in high value goods. The village-town trade was a natural consequence of the emergence of towns and realization of land revenue in cash. The urban centres were dependent for supply of food grains and raw material for manufactures from the surrounding villages whereas the villages had to sell the agricultural products to receive cash for meeting the land revenue demand. The peculiar nature of this trade was the one-way flow of commodities. While the towns received food grains and raw material from the villages in the vicinity, they had no need to send their products in exchange to the villages which were by and large self-sufficient. This one way trade was owing to the land revenue demand imposed upon the villages which naturally led to a continuous drain on rural sector and made the towns dependent on the villages. The turnover of this trade was high in terms of volume but was low in terms of value. The commodities were food grains, that is, wheat, rice, gram, sugarcane etc. and raw material like cotton for urban manufactures.

The inter-town trade was mainly in luxury articles and was thus a high value trade. The manufactures of one town were taken to another. Barani reports that Delhi, the capital itself, received distilled wines from Kol (Aligarh) and Meerut, *Muslin* from Devagiri and striped cloth from Lakhnauti. Ibn Battuta reports that ordinary cloth came from Ayodhya and betel leaf from Malwa. Candy sugar was supplied to Multan from Delhi and Lahore and *Ghee* from Sirsa in Haryana.

The long distance inter-town trade also carried goods coming from other countries from entry point towns to the urban centres as well as the export goods to the exit points. Multan was perhaps the great *entrepot* for overland foreign trade and served as a centre of re-export, while Gujarat port towns such as Broach and Cambay were exchange centres for overseas trade.

Overland Trade: Multan was the major trading centre for overland trade. India was connected to Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia through Multan-Quetta route. But on account of repeated Mongol turmoil in Central Asia and Persia, this route was less preferred by the merchants.

Overseas Trade: The Khilji annexation of Gujarat must have enlarged trade relations between the Delhi Sultanate and the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Hormuz and Basra were the chief ports for the ships passing through the Persian Gulf, while the ports of

Aden, Mocha and Zedda along the Red Sea were important for Gujarat. Through these ports commodities moved on to Damascus and Aleppo, on the one hand, and Alexandria on the other. Alexandria and Aleppo opened upto the Mediterranean Sea with linkages to Europe. Tome Pires, a European traveller, reports that merchandise of Gujarat were also carried towards the East. To the port of Malacca situated at the Malacca Straits and Bantam and Achin in the Indonesian archipelago. The coloured cloths of Cambay and other Gujarat towns were exported to Malacca and spices were imported.

The Italian traveller Barthema (first decade of the 16th century) reports that about 300 ships (annually?) of different countries come and go from Cambay. He adds that about 400 Turkish merchants resided at Diu.

The Il Khanid court historian Wassaf reports that 10,000 horses were annually exported to Mabar (Malabar) and Cambay from Persia. The Broach coin hoards containing the coins of the Delhi Sultanate along with the gold and silver coins of Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Persia, Genoa, Armenia and Venice further testifies to large-scale overseas trade.

The ports of Bengal had trading relation with China, Malacca and the Far East. Textiles, sugar and silk fabrics were the most important commodities exported from Bengal. Bengal imported salt from Hormuz and sea-shells from Maldive Islands. The latter were used as coins in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Sind was another region from where seaborne trade was carried on. Its most well-known port was Daibul. Sind exported special cloths, dairy products and smoked fish.

The coastal trade touching Gujarat, Malabar and Coromandal coasts in between provided an opportunity for exchange of regional products along the coastal line distinct from inland inter-regional trade.

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Prepared by: Dr Kaustav Chakraborty

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Compare and contrast Viola and Olivia.

The remark that Shakespeare's comedy has "no heroes but heroines", apart from its apparent implication that here plots are initiated and driven towards its climax by women, brings out the deeper fact that the vision of comedy essentially manifests man's adaptability, and women shows greater capacity for resilience and adjustment than the stronger sex. Shakespeare's comedy presents a portrait gallery of wide variety of female characters who exhibit a remarkable capacity "to shape the world towards happiness" (Charlton). *Twelfth Night* is a romantic comedy and it presents love as life-affirming principle; Olivia and Viola, the two female figures of the play, in their likeness and difference convey the dramatist's concept of womanhood. Though Olivia, the beautiful countess, initially the exotic object of adoration of the hero and adored by other men fulfils most of the criteria of a conventional heroin, it is Viola who motivates the action and by her uncommon charm arrests the sympathy and admiration of both the audience and the hero.

Apart from the common femininity, the two ladies have some other shared ground. Both of them are exquisitely beautiful and they offer complement to each other. At first glance Viola is moved by beauty of Olivia's beauty: "'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white / Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on." Olivia is also attracted by Viola in person of Cesario: "Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit, / Do give thee five-fold blazon." The ladies are intelligent, animated, refined and cultivated. Both of them belong to nobility: Olivia, the countess, is at top of the hierarchy and marries Viola's brother while Viola ends up by marrying the duke occupying the highest level of the order. There is similarity of their situation too. At the beginning both lose their brothers, fall in love at first sight, suffer the pangs of unrequited love until are united with their heart's desire by fine chance-resolution of all entanglements. Both are made to represent the vitality, resilience and life-affirming qualities. It is they who take the initiative, pursue, persist and win over their respective lovers.

The dramatist shows his real skill in drawing how, in spite off a common outline of their fate; the two women present so divergence of temperament and attitude. Olivia is the countess of Elyria with an well organized household and secured social status, but Viola arrives at the land following a shipwreck and to ensure her security in this unfamiliar land assumes the disguise of a page under duke Orsino, who touches a deeper chord in her heart though the latter is now languishing for the countess. The action is

set in motion. Olivia is proud and imperious “the most impulsive of the very impulsive group” who has “something of a spoiled child about her which contrasts with the combined frankness and self-control of Viola”. The former is dignified in handling her household, while latter is marked by sympathy which extends to all and even when she learns that Olivia has fallen in love hopelessly her gentle heart goes out to her in sympathy. Olivia is of course intelligent but lacks in Viola’s resourcefulness with which she maintains her disguise.

Though in different ways they embody the different aspects of what is generally recognized as feminine. Viola with her purity, tenderness and self-sacrificing devotion serves as model of womanliness in silent suffering. Modesty permeates all her speeches and actions. Olivia represents the other side; she is passionate, rash in her judgment and fickle minded and can go far to attain her object of desire.

The play opens with both of them having lost their respective brothers. Olivia, with due regards to her sincerity of feeling, is theatrical in her reaction and takes the vow in order to “keep fresh / And lasting in her sad remembrance” the memory to “...water once a day her chamber round/ With eye-offending brine....” Viola’s love for her supposed lost brother is strong and tender, but she bears it silently and develops an admiration for the other’s devotion.

In this comedy of love Viola is used as the touchstone by which other such relations are measured. She shows exquisite delicacy in conveying duke’s love to Olivia though she was aware of her deepest affection for the man: “I’ll do my best / To woo your lady. (aside) Yet, a parful strife! / Whoe’er I woo, I would be his wife.” Olivia holds the centre of erotic desire in the play frantically sought by men (by Orsino, Agucheeke, Malvolio), for whom love comes as a purgation of her overpowering pride. Love is concealed in the depth of one soul and it creates tumult in other plunging it into frenzy. Olivia’s is the “quick flaming love which is more of the senses than of the soul, born in a moment of impulse, unable to restraint itself...” She asserts that “the youth’s perfection ... With an invisible and subtle stealth / To creep in at my eyes.” It remains at this level, and she is deceived in finding Sebastian’s face her destiny as she was in loving an illusion of a woman in male’s attire. On the other hand, Viola only “let concealment, like a worm I’ the’ bud, / Feed on her damask cheek.” Viola’s deeper affection evokes deeper sentiment in the duke hitherto living a superficial life. Hers is the love that will “write loyal cantons of condemned love / And sing them loud even in the dead of night.”

The comedy is poised between the two figures: Viola embodying the superhuman sweetness, tolerance, self-sacrifice depth of love inspiring a similar response around and Olivia, the animated impulse, impulsive and whimsical, frenzy of love attracting the same craze for her. In their very difference they complement, balance and throw into stronger relief the excesses of each other. Disguise and mistaken identity play their parts. Yet the universe is an ordered one; despite deceptive appearance and despite disruptive possibility, series of accidents stop the socially disruptive implication of one woman desiring another. Shakespeare could handle with the subtlety of the genius the poise and shape our response to the total effect of the comedy.

Trace Isabella's passage from a pathetic queen to a detestable partner in crime.

Marlowe, really lacking in skill of portraying convincing female figure, presents a variant on the theme of a woman with two rivals in love in *Edward II*; here the queen, by the wanton neglect of her husband, - step by step - is thrown into the arms of her paramour who eventually turns into Edward's political opponent. Isabella is vastly different character in the two parts in which the play falls. In the first part she is the wronged one - patient in suffering, politically conscious enough to sacrifice her own interest in order to save Edward from civil war, a model of fidelity, who authorizes Edward's death in the second. The dramatic significance of the transition apart, critics are greatly divided concerning the credibility of her portrayal.

In the first part we see the loving and undeviatingly faithful Isabella is the hapless victim of her husband's homosexual relation with Gaveston. She is forced to live in grief and almost begs for Edward's love. She is farther injured by Gaveston's baseless accusation of having an affair with Mortimer followed by Edward's calling her a "strumpet". Politically she is much more mature than her husband and fully understands the implication of the Earls' threat to take arms against the king. But in order to spare Edward the trouble the queen even lets him have Gaveston. Yet she knows, "... I love in vain/ He will never love me." Her friendly understanding with Mortimer does not show any mark of infidelity. The stichomythia revealing her torturing dilemmas as well as the soliloquies show her loving concern for her husband. Even after Mortimer's suggestion to withdraw her allegiance and her own realization of the futility of her effort, she remains faithful to her wifely duties towards the exploiter.

There is something really pathetic in her attempt to influence the Earls for recalling Gaveston in order to please Edward. The conflict is suspended for a short while and Edward rewards her eloquence with a golden pendent declaring it to be their second marriage. She responds wholeheartedly: "O how a kiss revives poor Isabella". Soon the king resumes his lavishing all his cares on his friend. Isabella expresses her frustration. Being informed that France has seized Normandy, the selfish and unstatesmanlike king sends the queen and his son to negotiate with the king of France, her brother. Some critics find it inconsistent that the soliloquy calling Heaven to witness her devotion is followed immediately (after 45 lines) by the confession that Mortimer is really worthier of love. But it should be kept in mind that she had already passed the bound of her endurance: she has suffered wretchedly, arranged for Gaveston's return and even protested against Mortimer's violence ("Furious Mortimer what hast thou done?"). Her injured affection for Edward as well as her admiration for noble and caring Mortimer now crystallizes as love; yet she resolves to give her husband a last chance.

Edward continues the same. The Earls now take on the arms and Mortimer declares their purpose to restore the throne to its rightful place and rid the king of flatterers. The queen and her son, Kent, John of Heynold, younger Mortimer and others rebels arrive in England. Isabella regrets the civil war but places its responsibility on Edward and her brother. She rebukes her son: "You must not discourage/Your friends that are so forward in your aid." With the help of foreign aid and that of the rebels she alters her fortune which also marks the beginning of the process of the corruption of best through power. Gaveston is killed by the rebels, many Earls are beheaded, younger Spenser is raised to

replace Gaveston, and Mortimer is captured. Queen's soldiers come to his rescue and now the table is turned on Edward.

The last phase shows the hitherto unknown face of the model of wifely sacrifice that of the ruthless queen. She empowers/gives carte blanche to do with the king what Mortimer likes. The order is passed to keep changing the lords in Edward's charge. Like her partner she acquires the skill of dissembling the hypocrisy and sends a false message of loving concern to Edward. She expresses her love for her paramour explicitly ("life of Isabella") and with him degenerates. She is callous about Kent's execution. After the abdication of Edward, knowing that the queen wants him dead Mortimer evolves suitable measures to murder the king. She almost becomes the shadow of the tyrant. The play, however, ends with Edward III. Announcing the death penalty of younger Mortimer rejecting her mother's protest, and she herself is taken to prison to await trial: "He hath forgotten me/Stay I am his mother."

The role of Isabella turns out to be really crucial in the play. She lends feminine interest to the play as a wife, mother, mistress, co-ruler, sister and queen, and adds psychological dignity. Her status as a wife makes Edward immoral; as a queen she pleads with the Earls, retains Gaveston, helps Mortimer, raises foreign aid, authorizes Edward's death and places her son on throne. Hence much controversy has been concentrated upon the credibility of the change which takes place in her character in course of the play. Commentators complain that "such a sudden volte-face had nothing in common with the usual workings of human heart." However, the alteration has been defended on the ground on the mistreatment she receives from the selfish, deceitful, suspicious, insulting and unworthy Edward which drives her gradually towards the gallant and noble Mortimer. Her hands, "tired of hauling my lord from Gaveston", seizes the scepter. The blackening of Isabella's character, whose role in first part is mainly to be pathetic, is needed to render pathos to Edward and is not quiet impossible, though uncommon; but Marlowe had yet to learn the subtle and refined art of portraying convincing character.

Attempt a critical appreciation of *The Good Morrow*.

"Stand still, and I will read to thee, / A lecture, ... in love's philosophy..." (John Donne: *A lecture upon the shadow*). The love poems contained in Songs and Sonnets explore every conceivable facets of Donne's consciousness concerning love, ranging from jealousy, hatred, fear, anxiety to the bliss of consummated love, in their "rare emotional flight on the wings of intellect". They are typically Donnesque, endowed with the stylistic and thematic traits known as Metaphysical. The Good Morrow is an aubade spoken in bed both literally and metaphorically. It might be also an abrupt break away from a serenade at the realization of futility of existence before the present the lovers loved each other, the realization triggered off by contentment of the present situation which brings in the promise of immortality.

The poem opens with the impatience of the lover at the thought of meaningless existence before the lovers fell in love with each other. Somehow angrily he records the futility of their experience in past; its insubstantial nature is brought out by such images as sucking on "country pleasure" or snoring in "seven

sleepers' den". The images, in contrast to the present maturity which lovers enjoy being fulfilled by each other, prepare us for the coming of a new day which is central to its theme. A Petrarchan note is struck when Donne glorifies his beloved as the only reality, all other beauties being mere shadows: "If ever any beauty I did see, which I desired and got, it was but a dream of thee." It is the impulse to stabilize the external time that he conceives of it as a series of detachable fragments, and ceases life in unique instances: "And now good morrow to our waking souls". Love controls and bounds space absolutely. The tendency of contemporary science to condense or compress the world into smaller spheres through its apparatuses is reflected in his attempt to make their "little room an everywhere". Geographical maps and voyages are alluded to in order to emphasize the lovers' indifference to the external landscape and their concentration on the unique fusion of their two worlds into one.

Now the lover, coming so much closer to his beloved, closely inspects their situation. Their eyes contain each other's face and the "rest" of the face becomes the mirror of the heartscape. Apart from showing his love for details, the lines carry a platonic overtone. The use of "true" and "Plain" followed by "heart" brings out the simple, sacred and pristine and pure nature of their love. The use of "sharp north" and "declining west" and the defects in the geographical hemispheres shows a sense of decay devoid of emotion, passion and warmth as compared to lovers' hemispheres. Donne is distinguished for his use of circles, concentrics and spheres in order to show the infinite quality of love. The use of the scholastic philosophy of Saint Aquinas- ("all compounded things are held to be liable to corruption and decay by a disproportion of their parts") - is evident in "Whatever dyes was not mixed equally". The dialectic of love is brought to a fine resolution: "If our two loves be one, or thou and I love so alike, / That none do slacken, none can die."

In the first stanza we find "run-of-the-speech" or "run-on-line" that create an impression of emphatic assertion by the heavy letters like "D", "w", etc. The iambic metre creates the effect of a rising to an emotion. In the second stanza a change is seen from the overwhelming emotion to the subdued effect before the final presumptuous confidence in mutual reciprocity and reconciliation of love. In the third stanza the emphatic tone gives it note supremacy and the triumph over time arrests the movement. It is a peculiar blend of transition from proclamation of presumptuous confidence to degenerating doubt to everlasting love.

Donne sees things in their banal actuality. The intellectual element is made to dominate its emotional impressionism. "A thought for Donne was an experience and modified his sensibility". The strained analogies (as he concedes likeness between the lovers and the hemispheres) and also the rhythm which characterized his writing are integral to its meaning. Here we have a mind labouring to organize the matters of private experience into systematic order and to treat the world of feelings as a structure as positive as Euclidean demonstration.

In The Good Morrow both metrically and syntactically sentences are broken into disjointed phrases. The unmusical words sounds and the irregular stress deny the passage a steady movement. The poem shows how important the expression is to the mood of his poem.

The poem justifies Donne as the pioneer of the “Metaphysical school” of poetry. It begins abruptly without preparation and the reader is left to imagine the circumstance for himself. The language is unromantically plain and straightforward and mixes colloquial expressions. The tone is somehow unrelaxed. The poem does not develop the kind of lyrical atmosphere common to most love poetry, but a sense of controlled power dominates here whose masculine force proves itself. Donne plays with time. In the first stanza he deals with “time past”, the second with “time present” and the last with “time future”.

Donne chooses twenty one lines - three stanzas with a rhyme scheme of ab, ab, ccc – for the poem. It is probable that the form was most appropriate for his change of mood from angry impatience to mutual reconciliation of love. The title of *The Good Morrow* is most befitting as the “morrow” brings about the awakening of the body, soul and mind.

The Good Morrow may not be Donne’s best love poem but it is not certainly the “*vers-de-societe*” nor is it the “*thought of a dry brain in a dry season*”. Here is a unification of sensibilities for which Eliot commended Donne and other Metaphysical poets. It puts forward Donne’s philosophy of love: it is not solely soul, but also the body that embody the love. The poem also succeeds in creating a voluptuous atmosphere calling up in it two flesh-and-blood human being who acts in relation with each other. The impression of a passionate reality made upon the reader results of the poet’s artfully concealed art which is nothing if not dramatic.

How far has Shakespeare unlocked his heart in the sonnets you have read?

The issue with Shakespearean sonnet which has remained unresolved for centuries is whether his fourteen-line lyric dramas allow spectators, through the wings, glimpses of personal drama or they are the literary exercises by the greatest dramatic genius of the language. The wide ranging difference of opinions can well be apprehended through the opposite stances taken by the two great poets according to their respective inclinations: for Wordsworth, “*With this key Shakespeare unlocked his heart*”, and Browning declares, “*If so then less Shakespeare he*”. A soberer and juster appreciation may be possible if we hold that “*It is through the subjective art that the unconscious intelligence nurtures and eventually blossoms into a cosmic life which is a synthesis of infinite life and eternal beauty.*”

The problem is also heightened by the fact that sonnet, generically a subjective art, here is written by a dramatist, who is, for the most part, romantic in temperament as also having the rare capacity of breathing life into the otherwise lifeless art of sonneteering.

Until twentieth century it had remained a literary common credo that most of the sonnets reveal the author’s innermost feeling and illumine the mysterious hidden corner of his heart. In an attempt to identify the persons addressed to in the sonnets, critics - though not with absolute certainty - have spotted out Mr. W H as Earl of Southampton and the mysterious dark lady, with greater uncertainty, as Mary Fitton.

The series of sonnets devoted to the noble friend is shined throughout by the inspiring personality of the beloved youth and his glorious beauty, "more lovely and temperate" than the "summer's day" and is darkened by the pain of his absence. However, the joy in his "remembrance" is somehow clouded by the overwhelming consciousness of the inexorability of time: "Time will come and take my love away!" The feeling is brought in with an urgency of an experience felt intensely and personally by the speaker himself. It is the precise point where Prospero merges with the dramatist and the sonneteer with the man.

With the assertion of the enduring quality of art and the promise of poetic immortality, the poet speaks his heart out with no pretension of convention. We have an open admission of the poet's early failure and an apprehension of the wintry old age. He also fears that under the pressure of mutability love becomes lust, and the most intense and affirmative of human experiences changes into expenditure of spirit. The only security he imagines is in the restorative and consolatory love of his friend.

An illusion of self-revelation comes to the fore at the resentment directed towards himself for his inability to resist the attraction of the false mistress. She is neither idealized nor etherealized, but presented as dark as hell in frailty and infidelity. The only consolation he receives is the agreement: "On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed".

In his treatment of the ever-recyclable subject of love, Shakespeare introduces two masterly variations: his love sonnets are addressed to a fair youth and to a lady - dark in her character if not in complexion. They may help to offer an illusion of the "untutored" cry of a soul.

He shared a kind of spirituality with Petrarch, but unlike him, it is born out of his selfless devotion and sadness over human transience. He strikes a difference from other sonneteers in treating Time as an enemy to be defied and never as a power whose laws should be submitted to: "Love is not Time's fool".

However originality does not bear testimony to autobiographical reference. At first glance, they may offer an illusion of a personal confession, but if we consider the tradition of Elizabethan sonneteering as well as the dramatic instinct of the poet himself, the autobiographical strain, if not altogether dismissed, seems to shrink into slenderer proportion. The emotional and ethical crux was common to both Elizabethan and French masters like Ovid, Ronsard, Petrarch and others.

His sonnets may be presented as scenes from a love-drama, a picture in which gestures not only make up the present harmony, but hint at the psychological background so that a powerful reaction is built up to a history of love. A dramatic power to convey immediacy is achieved by patterning the persons not by analyzing them. The action consists in the lyrical sequence slowly moving towards a tragedy. This trio formed by an aging poet, a noble friend and a faithless lady exhausts almost every possible kind of love relationship, Time being a constantly threatening villain.

In fact, the absence of any authentic order of the sonnet sequence makes it difficult to relate them to the particular circumstances of his life. Modern criticism has tended to shift its focus from

autobiographical element in the sonnets to their real poetic merit. The truth about the sonnets can be located within the sonnets themselves.

A tentative conclusion may be drawn if we hold that the sonnets are autobiographical in the sense that they contain the expression of the poet's innermost concerns because the creator - in spite of Eliot's famous dissociation of the creator and the sufferer - cannot be completely aloof from his creation and especially when the dramatist takes his pen to record some of his thoughts in "black ink" through the art of sonnet. "The sonnets present to us a cast of characters...whose identity and definition fluctuate unpredictably as the sequence progresses between the mimetic modes of allegorical abstraction and autobiographical concreteness" (Harold Bloom).

How does Shakespeare seek to eternize his love in a world of transience?

"But you shall shine more bright in these contents/ Than unswept stone, besmar'd with sluttish Time". Shakespeare's 14 line lyric dramas allow spectators, through the wings, a glimpse of the personal drama which shows, what he feared most is the loss of love, constantly threatened by the "ravages" of Time, the "despoiler of created things". The fear of mutability does not only provide the main theme of most of the sonnets, it continually encroaches on other interests and overshadows them. His faith is not as much deeply rooted in Christian theology as to mitigate his terror in human transience and not to regard it tragically. Though in some sonnets the power of love itself or the procreation is conceived as the preserver, it is something greater in him, like Ovid, with which he confronts Time. With a rather thin tradition that Shakespeare embarked on the theme of poetic immortality only to leave it with lines that guaranteed him that immortality.

Shakespeare's imposition of an identity on his friend which equates beauty with truth echoes the mystical creed of Greco-Italian Renaissance. But his conviction of the eternizing power of poetry is stronger than Horace. Petrarch often speaks of the persistence of his love for Laura, but there is nothing comparable in the "*Canzoniere*" with Shakespeare's defiant challenge to Time. Time is as hateful to the ancients as it is to him; but while they show a realistic attitude in recommending submission to its laws, he comes out as an uncompromisingly idealist. His laments over transience as well as the promise of poetic immortality belong far more to the sixteenth century, more particularly, to France than to the older Petrarchan tradition. All the three types of time - geological, archeological and humane - as classified by Leopardi, are explored in the sonnets.

There is a constant interplay between loss and store linking the words "win", "increase", "store", and "gain" in dissonance with "loss", "decay", "ruin", "take away" and "death". They record an ongoing conflict: Time threatens a ruin and Shakespeare tries to fortify the existence of his love.

The ruin poems envision Time himself as the master-artificer of self-consuming artifacts, "a kind of action-sculptor or action-painter gone berserk". His "strong hand", in a fit of frenzy of self-destruction, smashes down "Time's best jewel", and it requires a "strong hand" to counter its action. The struggle for

immortality now cast as poetomachia in which Time himself is seen a powerful rival with the outcome quite uncertain. Poetry alone written in "black ink" on "yellow pages" can outlast Time's own favourite media of "brass" or "stone" with the "might" of a "miracle".

The youth of his adoration is presented as a potential victim, helpless against the cosmic principle of destruction: passive, disarmed, and doomed without the saving power of "my verse". His excellences are plunderable commodity, perishable objects belonging to the basic elements in flux: "Increasing store with loss, loss with store." The poet's attempt to eternize the "short lease" of the summer of his friend's glory is like the attempt of the bourgeois, struggling to shore up the cosmic economy against mutability.

Time as a character comes in confrontation with the eternizing power of Shakespeare's sonnets which assumes the character of a dramatic conflict. Impermanence of life is countered by the permanence of art, fragmentary truth of life by the total truth of art and the lifelessness of the art of sonneting by the poignant immediacy of the apprehension of loss of love.

In a paradoxical way, it is Time who realizes the potentiality of love. It "makes thy love more strong". Instead of giving way to silly despair Shakespeare claims an exemption for his friend from the unalterable laws of transience which gives a kind of spirituality to the sonnets. And it is through his "eternal lines" that Shakespeare has concretized his promise: "So long as men can breathe, and eyes can see, / So long lives this, and gives life to thee".

Discuss Milton's grand style with special reference to *Paradise Lost*, BK I. Do you think the grandeur is maintained through out?

"He is our great artist in style, our one first-rate master in the grand style." (Arnold)

"A good Book," as Milton finely says, "is the precious life-Blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life Beyond life." Milton's *Paradise Lost*, whose epic impasse embraces not only the fortune of a single hero or a city, but "a particular event" which moulded the destiny of the "whole human race" (the Fall), demanded the medium of an "answerable style" (Bk ix *Paradise lost*) to release its tremendous energy and force. Epic is the most dignified of genres and is more fully concerned to fulfill the definition rather than to topple or ignore it. Accordingly, the poet situates his sublime poem in the tradition of grandeur refusing to allow any "middle flight", and his grand style strictly keeps the subjective egotism within the generic decorum of the epic. He could occasionally invest himself with grace but his natural force was "gigantic loftiness". However, it does not forfeit delicacy and subtlety. As a result, his "style" adopted the verse which allows both a stateliness and flexibility, an ability to rise to the most "sublime" height and at the same time to indicate, through changes of movement, the relationship between the four great theatres of action - heaven, Eden, Hell and the earth.

Critics have attributed the grandeur of Milton's style to following qualities: (a) use of unfamiliar and dignified words arranged in a harmonious order, Latinism and archaism; (B) use of proper names and similar devices suggestive of splendid, remote or awe-inspiring theme in order to encourage readers to cast his eye and his mind over the radiance and variety of action of the epic involving God, giant and human Being and (c) the whole thing managed with an austerity, almost Dantesque.

The sublimity of style, however, is manifested in too varied forms to be catalogued in such broad general terms.

Milton achieves his loftiness as much by the word orders as by the sonority, dignity and the weight of the words themselves. Sometimes Latinism renders an added shade to the meaning of a word. While he uses "hideous ruin", the word ruin involves a literal fall in Latin. His phrase has what Raphael calls a "speed almost spiritual".

As Ricks observes, "Though his single lines may not be mightier than Marlowe's, his sentences are". The end of his sentences is less a "destination" than a "destiny"; his ability to harness the thrust of his syntax which sustains his argument and gives dynamic force. The power of sublimity is felt in the massive, breathless opening lines. Withholding the verb (sing) until the thirty-ninth word it sets the magnitude of his magnificent task of encompassing the huge theme of man's disobedience, fall and restoration: "Where couldst thou words of such a compass find?" (Marvel) Miltonic construction enables the poet to break free from the fixed order and thus to drop ideas into the sentences in any order he chooses. His language often deviates from common speech. Many of the memorable lines in Milton have the directness of "no more of talk..." Satan asks: "What matter where, if I be still the same". Milton often uses half lines to jar against previous lines as evident in the final phrase "With vein attempt" in lines 41 to 44. He separates "tore" and "up" which suggests the Herculean strength needed to tear up the veil. The brilliant and succinct lines such as "Better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven" have the free standing force of a proverb but its greater force comes from the contextual setting. Eliot rightly observes that "... it is his ability to give a unique and perfect pattern to every paragraph, such that the full beauty of the line is found in its context ..."

Milton's rhythm creates a "new and self-justifying effect". The verse has a "slow planetary wheelings" (De Quincy). Mr. Empson found in it "the sliding, sideways, broadening movement...". Arnold pointed out the self-retarding verse movement of some of the verse rhythm – the one driving forward and the other circling on itself. In fact "The Grand Style has the energy of Satan, who 'Throws his step flight in many an Aerie wheele'" (Ricks).

Milton mixes different lures in one kaleidoscope and produces the constantly changing images. Many of the images used to describe Satan and his followers make them the caricature of God's action. The greater part of the light in Milton's Book is the direct light of the sun itself; but radiance of Milton's poetry varies; it often "is liquid; and it too is both porous and firm.... We must receive the tinctures and reflections which gild his liquid verse." (Ricks) The images engage all the senses. Dr. Davie notices the muscular effect produced by the lines 44 to 49, a sensation almost as forceful as the physical experience.

Milton's is the richly rhetorical style. The long-tailed epic simile seeks to fulfill its generic commitment. In stead of introducing new metaphors his respect for literary decorum makes him Bring ancient metaphors to life. Finely he distinguishes Between the "permissive" glory and the "false glitter" of Satan's form and the glory of God's goodness: "... th' excess / Of glory oBscured: as when the sun new-risen / Looks through the horizontal misty air". Here "glory" is used in Both literal and metaphorical sense. Suggestive alliterations, like the one in "Heaven high tower" in connection with fall of MulciBer, the plain sense of high tower as well as the cliché that Heaven is high are surpassed By feeling of depth of the fall. The Book is replete with pregnant allusions, pun and most importantly, the rhetoric of prolepsis. Without aBandoning epic grandeur he could draw on infinite suggestiveness of words and word order. The mingled Beauty of sight, sense and sound, the device of offering and then denying somehow similar to the rhetoric of "occupatio", hesitation of syntax and witty conceits combine to make him an ingenious and profound poet.

Johnson's criticism of his style as formed By "perverse and pedantic principle" somehow foreBoded twentieth century dissatisfaction with the unfamiliarity and remoteness of the style. Buttler characterizes his language as the "BaBylonish dialect" itself "harsh and BarBarious" By the exulted genius of the poet is made to convey his emotion really effectively. It should also Be kept in mind that his Anglo - Latinism was very common in seventeenth century and simple enough for readers somehow familiar with the literature of the age. Apart from the dramatic and muscular effect, as Dr. Davie says, Milton creates a kind of narrative effect By deploying language as episodes in a story to provoke questions answered in a way at once "surprising and just". More over, the magnificent description, in truly Miltonic sense, of the Fallen Archangels and the grand rhetoric put in mouth of Satan served for Milton, By then disillusioned with the rhetoric of puBlic politics, to Bring out the deceptive splendour of the devil.

Eliot points out how efficiently his writing could "make the Best display of his talents, and the Best concealment of his weakness". The sustained elevation and dignity of his grand style is made to serve two purposes: "a heroic dedication to tradition" and "a heroic dedication to himself" (Ricks) and his confidence in his creative power. His lines mingle the charmed suBjectivity of lyric with the grave oBjectivity of epic and the speech rhythm has the compactness of "divine immediacy". Manifold and varied are the excellencies of his style, "that style, which no rival has Been aBle to equal, and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contriButed something of grace, of energy, or of music." (Macaulay)

BELINDA

Alexander Pope has designed *The Rape of the Lock* as the representative works depicting *Belinda* as the model of the common fashionable ladies of his time. *Belinda* is the chief attraction and she becomes the heroine of it. She is the only leading character. Yet her screams and the flashes of lightening from her eyes are compared to those of an epic hero.

There are several aspects of the personality of Belinda as portrayed by Pope in *The Rape of the Lock*. At the very outset of the poem, we see her as an idle and late-rising aristocratic lady who possesses keen interest in domestic pets. Her idleness is established when we see her sleeping unto twelve. Besides, they felt interested in the love letters of their so-called beloved. When Belinda at last got up from bed after having been licked by Shock, her eyes first opened on a love-letter.

Therefore, she is full of vanities and loves gilded chariots and ombre. At the same time, she is ambitious to get married to peers and dukes or to other high officials. This is why she frequently visits the Hampton Court in the river Thames. She passes an aristocratic life and mixes with the Barons recklessly.

Moreover, Belinda is the embodiment of the coquetry, the art, the artifice and the false pride. However, Ariel acquaints us with her flirtatious nature when exhorting his fellow spirits to remain vigilant. Ariel discovers surprisingly that in spite of all her pretence, she is amorously inclined towards a gallant.

Then, we get the picture of her shallow outlook about religious faiths and beliefs. She is a worshiper of beauty who prays to the goddess of beauty and offers all the items of cosmetics before her. She is a typical presentation of women's excessive attention to self-decoration and embellishment. She gathers all the fashionable items from all over the world-Indian glowing gems, Arabian perfumes, files of pins, puffs, powders, patches etc. In a satirical passage, Pope describes Belinda in a Confucius mood before her dressing table.

Here files of pains extend their shining rows,

Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.

Thus, assigned by her maid Betty, Belinda seeks to improve her bodily charms. However, she does not show any respect for the holy book, Bible.

Therefore, the moral bankruptcy of these ladies is further ridiculed when Thalestris points out the need for sacrificing everything, even chastity, for reputation. They consider that virtue might be lost, but not a good name.

To wind up we can say that *The Rape of the Lock* is a mockery of the manners of the tea-cup times of Queen Anne. Here, Pope seeks to throw light upon the fickle minded fashionable ladies of the 18th century England depicting Belinda as the representative character.

Character Analysis of Belinda in The Rape of the Lock

Belinda represents the fashionable and aristocratic ladies of the time. She is a woman of superb beauty and charm. Early in the poem, she is compared to the sun (also at the beginning of the Canto II). The brightness of her eyes surpasses the brightness of the sun. The poet invests her almost with divine beauty. Beside this admiration, she has many denouncing qualities in her character.

Except being a beauty the faults of Belinda are many. The poet fully reveals to us her petty pleasure-seeking nature. She suffers from all the vanities, laziness, follies and moral scruple of the aristocratic ladies of her time. She is treated as an object of mockery, ridicule, and even condemnation because of her shallowness, superficiality, and lack of any intellectual interest or moral elevation in her life. The lady sleeps till the hour of twelve in the day. Her dog licks her and she gets up every day from her all prophesied purity. Belinda is proud to be secretly in love with the Baron just after opening her eyes; first thought is about love letter which has been addressed to her. Next, she gets ready for her toilet and her day begins at noon. The toilet-table is like a church to her. She takes help of “cosmetic power” and her maid-servant Betty assists her in her sacred ceremony of the toilet. These show her superficial nature and lack moral awareness.

Her rendezvous is the Hampton Court where the fashionable girls and men of upper-class society gather. But Belinda is in the limelight, attracts attention and love. Gossip, cards, coffee-drinking occupy much of Belinda’s time in the day. She does not seem to have any intellectual interest. Spiritual shallowness and incapacity for moral awareness are great in her. She has transformed all spiritual exercise and emblems into a coquette. Self-display and self-adoration the used as her ornaments.

After cutting off her lock, the lamentation of Belinda again brings out the shallowness and superficiality of her mind because she says that she would not have been so hurt if some after hair except her golden-curl would have been stolen.

Pope attributes divinity to Belinda’s character. She is an incarnation of the goddesses of beauty. She is brighter than the sun. She eclipses the sun by bringing joy and gaiety into the world of fashion. As the poet says-

“Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay

Hurt to cause pain to, to wound (mentally), to damage.”

Pope has a mixed and complicated attitude towards Belinda. He admires her but does not spare to criticise her. The paradoxical nature of Pope’s attitude is intimately related to the paradox of Belinda’s situation. Although pope has ridiculed many of Belinda’s manners, he did not have her to be judged as a bad woman.

There is no doubt that Belinda has a number of “fall.” This fall consists in her manner, of life. Yet pope presents her in an agreeable form and we are led to forget her frivolities or morality. But the actual aspiration is laid on the very society of which she is the product. She is the maiden through whom Pope expresses his dislike of the society which was given to mirth and merriment at any cost.