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Rajiv Gandhi University

BAHIS304 WORLD HISTORY (1500-1950) - II



BA (HISTORY)

6TH SEMESTER

Rajiv Gandhi University
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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

World History (1500-1950)

Syllabi	Mapping in Book
Unit I- World War I a. Causes. b. Effects. c. Treaty of Versailles.	(Pages 4-28)
Unit II- Russian Revolution a. Causes. b. Course of the Revolution. c. Lenin's leadership.	(Pages 29-47)
Unit III- Totalitarian States a. Fascism in Italy. b. Nazism in Germany.	(Pages 48-65)
Unit IV- World War II a. Causes b. Effects and	(Pages 66-98)
Unit V- Post-War Movements a. Colonialism and Nationalism in Asia: b. Burma c. Indonesia d. Vietnam.	(Pages 79-95)

INTRODUCTION

The history of the world is the history of humanity from the earliest times to the present, in all places on earth, beginning with the Palaeolithic Era. It excludes non-human natural history and geological history, except insofar as the natural world substantially affects human lives. World history encompasses the study of written records, from ancient times forward, plus additional knowledge gained from other sources, such as archaeology. Modern history, or the modern era, describes the historical timeline after the Middle Ages. Modern history can be further broken down into the *early modern period* and the *late modern period* after the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. *Contemporary history* describes the span of historic events that are immediately relevant to the present time. The modern era began approximately in the 16th century. Many major events caused Europe to change around the turn of the 16th century, starting with the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, the fall of Muslim Spain and the discovery of the Americas in 1492, and Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation in 1517. In England, the Modern period is often dated to the start of the Tudor period, with the victory of Henry VII over Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. Early modern European history is usually seen to span from the turn of the 15th century, through the Age of Reason and Age of Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries, until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century.

According to several historians, the Modern period of history starts at the beginning of the 19th century, specifically with the Treaty of Vienna in 1815. That treaty ended a period spanning between the ruin of the Byzantine Roman Empire and the end of the Napoleonic Empire. It also saw the maturation of the world capitalist system. From another angle, it saw the growth of most of the modern ideas and attitudes of human beings spanning the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and nationalism.

This book, *World History (1500–1950)*, is divided into five units. The book follows the self-instructional mode wherein each unit begins with an Introduction to the unit followed by the Objectives of the topic. Check Your Progress questions are provided at regular intervals to test the student's understanding of the topics. A Summary, Key Terms and a set of Questions and Exercises are provided at the end of each unit. Answers to Check Your Progress have also been provided which would help the students assess their progress.

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UNIT I WORLD WAR I

NOTES

Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- First World War
- Causes of the First World War
- Effects of the First World War
- Treaty of Versailles
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- Questions and Exercises
- Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

Most of you are probably aware of how appalling the First World War was and the toll it took, not just in terms of lives but many other things. It is generally believed that the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a member of the Black Hand, an underground terror society, was the chief cause of the War. However, as you read this unit, you will realize that this was not so. The reasons for the First World War can cause confusion in the minds of those attempting to study it since they are not as clear and straightforward as the Second World War.

The turn of the twentieth century marked a new beginning in the annals of world history. It altered and redefined the history of the world in more ways than one and the transition was far from smooth. The developments of the nineteenth century had already prepared the ground for such an upheaval. The Industrial Revolution in Europe led to: Search for newer markets, search for better sources of raw material, rise of nationalism, and fierce competition due to the spread of trade and commerce.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Assess the reasons and causes for the outbreak of the First World War
- Explain the course and impact of the First World War
- Discuss the Peace Settlement of Paris and the Treaty of Versailles

FIRST WORLD WAR

The First World War, which was fought on a global scale, was a major war centered in Europe. The War began in 1914 and lasted until 1918, for a period of four years and three months, and had its impact practically on all the countries and regions of the world. It was predominantly called the World War or the Great War till the Second World War started in 1939. Thereafter, it was known as the First World War or World War I. The

War involved all the great powers of the world, which were divided into two opposing alliances that were the Allies and the Central Powers. However, the First World War was not an instant development and it was the ultimate result of various developments in the economic and political sphere which were going on for about a century in Europe. The nature of the War, both in terms of intensity and scale, was completely different from the known wars fought earlier in history. The world saw, for the first time, such a large number of countries taking part in a single act of war and the loss of life and property that it caused was unprecedented. The War also saw for the first time the extensive use of modern technology in warfare and new methods of destruction and defence through the deployment of armies, navies and air forces by the respective countries. Ultimately, more than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in this War and more than 9 million combatants were killed. This was largely due to the enormous increase in the lethality of weapons, without corresponding improvements in protection or mobility. This deadliest of conflicts not only shifted the global balance of power but paved the way for various political changes such as domestic tension and revolutions in the nations involved. David Thomson has observed, 'The greatest novelty of this war was, remarkable disparity between the ends sought, the prices paid and the results obtained.'

The uneasy relations between the major European powers escalated into a transnational conflict in 1914 on account of some instant acts of provocation. On the fateful night of 5 August 1914, five columns of German troops had converged in the town of Liege in Belgium expecting little resistance. To their surprise, they were halted by determined fire from the Liege town's forts. This was a big setback for Germany because control of Liege was essential before they could proceed with their main operation against France. They were forced to resort to siege tactics using heavy military equipment. Finally, the German troops fired from the air and Belgian forces, though strong, were not equipped to withstand such a heavy firing for long. On 13 August, the first fort of the town of Liege surrendered and three days later the entire town came under German control. This surprising turn of events eventually escalated into a horrifying war of frightening proportions and marked the beginning of an era of prolonged conflict in the history of the world. Commenting on the German aggression, German historian, I. Geiss observed, 'The determination of German empire "the most powerful conservative force in the world after the Tsarist Russia" to uphold the conservative and monarchic principles in any means against the rising fold of democracy, plus its *Weltpolitik*, made War inevitable.'

Causes of the First World War

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Though the immediate cause of the First World War was the murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, by a Yugoslav nationalist in Sarajevo, the real causes of the War lay much deeper. The fundamental causes for the outbreak of the First World War were many like the imperialistic foreign policies of the great powers of Europe, including Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey, Russia, Great Britain, France and Italy. The growth of narrow nationalism, militarism and economic imperialism were also responsible for creating an enabling atmosphere for the War. Finally, the system of secret military alliances, race for armaments, the international negotiations and the occurrence of a series of international crises made the World War inevitable. Professor S. B. Fay, author of *The Origins of the World War Volume II: After Sarajevo*, commenting on this observes that, 'These developments so offered a fertile soil in which the seeds of real war might easily be germinated.' Immediately on the eve of the War several alliances formed over the previous decades were invoked. Within weeks the major powers were at War; via their colonies and the conflict soon spread around the world. The principal causes responsible for the outbreak of the First World War were as follows:

1. Formation of secret alliances

Historians believe that the system of secret alliances which developed after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 was the greatest cause for the outbreak of the First World War. On the eve of the War, entire Europe was divided into two alliances or armed camps, namely, Triple Alliance and Triple Entente. The former consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, while Turkey joined the alliance soon after. The latter was composed of Great Britain, France and Russia. In addition, Great Britain and Japan had signed an alliance in 1902 and Japan became a part of the Triple Entente after that. The first step towards the formation of the Triple Alliance was taken when Germany entered into an alliance with Austria-Hungary. In 1882, Italy joined in this alliance. The beginning of the Triple Entente was made in 1894 when France concluded an alliance with Russia. With the dawn of 20th century, Great Britain which was following a policy of splendid isolation, also started looking for allies. Splendid isolation is a policy followed by Britain through the late 19th century, characterizing a non-participation in European matters. Historians are divided over the view as to whether Britain was following the policy of its own will or was forced by circumstances to follow it. Britain entered into a treaty with Japan in 1902 and with France in 1904. When Great Britain concluded a treaty with Russia in 1907, the Triple Entente came into existence. Thus, on the eve of the War, the whole of Europe was virtually split into two camps bound by various secret alliances. Sporadic friction between the two main groups had brought Europe to the verge of war several times since the dawn of the 20th century. There were many causes of friction which threatened to offset the peace of Europe like the naval rivalry between Great Britain and Germany; French resentment at the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany at the end of the Franco-Prussian War of 1871; the Germans fearing the containment of Germany by Great Britain, Russia and France; and the Russian suspicion of Austrian ambitions in the Balkans and the Serbian nationalism.

Serbia had ambitions of uniting all Serbs and Croats, many of whom lived inside the Habsburg Empire in the south Slav Kingdom (Yugoslavia). This made it necessary to take certain areas from Austria-Hungary by threatening to cause the collapse of the ramshackle Habsburg Empire which consisted of many different nationalities and races. There were Slovaks, Italians, Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, Romanians and Slovenes as well as Serbs and Croats. Had the Serbs and Croats left the fold, many of the others would have demanded their independence as well, and the Habsburg Empire would have broken up. Consequently, many Austrians were keen on what they called a 'preventive war' to destroy Serbia before she became strong enough to destroy Austria-Hungary. From all these resentments and tensions, there arose a series of events which culminated in the outbreak of the war in 1914. According to historian, S. B. Fay, 'The system of secret alliances made it inevitable that if war did come, it would involve all the great powers of Europe. The members of each group felt bound to support each other in order to strengthen the solidarity of the group.'

2. Economic rivalries and imperialism

Economic rivalry and imperialism was another important cause of the First World War. By the end of the 19th century, Great Britain, France and Russia, each had built up huge colonial empires. Germany was left with the smallest share of wealth acquired from colonies. Germany believed itself to be the greatest nation in the world and was not willing to accept the subordinate place in the imperial sphere. It was keen to acquire a world empire worthy of its position. Consequently, when Germany tried to capture the market which was already in the hands of Great Britain, it led to bitterness between the two powers. Great Britain was not prepared to give up her own colonies, spheres of influence and markets, and Germany was bent on getting them at any cost. Meanwhile, the Industrial Revolution increased the rate of production in the European countries. Therefore, the demand for market outside the European continent increased and in the years after 1880s, the race for imperialistic expansion also increased in intensity. The economic rivalry took the form of a struggle mainly between Great Britain and Germany. At that time, Britain was apprehending that it may be outdistanced by Germany in the race for colonies. This competition led to resistance between the two European nations.

Britain and Germany struggled for markets in Argentina; Russia and England indulged in a similar struggle for oil in Persia. These economic rivalries led to the partition of Africa. Most of the African continent was taken over by the European States in what became known as the 'Scramble for Africa'. The idea behind it was the control of new markets and new sources of raw materials. The European powers thus established their hegemony in the Far-East and the Near-East. There were also interventions in the crumbling Chinese empire. The European powers, the United States of America and Japan, all at different times, forced the helpless Chinese to grant trading concessions. The condition was such that by 1914, the habitable portions of the world were divided among the European nations, and European powers like Germany sought a 'place in the sun'.

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Some of the historians argue that the desire for the economic control of the world caused German businessmen and capitalists to wage a war with Great Britain, who still owned about half of the world's merchant ships in 1914. Some of the Marxist historians support this theory because it puts the blame for the War on the capitalist system. Opponents of this theory, point out that Germany was already well on the way to economic victory. So, some of the leading German industrialists remarked in 1913 that, 'Give us three or four more years of peace and Germany will be unchallenged economic master of Europe'. This ambitious imperialistic objective was the principal factor leading to frictions and the subsequent international crisis.

3. Germany's desire to be world power

Germany's ambitions to build a world empire also added to the turbulence of the world. As long as Herr Otto Von Bismarck was at the helm of affairs of Germany, it was on the whole a satiated power and was interested in maintaining its status-quo based upon its supremacy in Europe. Bismarck was a conservative German political leader who had a considerable role in the unification of Germany. He was devoted to Prussia, and after Germany was unified, the mighty German Empire was established under Prussian leadership. When Bismarck became the President of Prussia, he tried to fume wars against Austria and France so as to establish German supremacy in Europe. He later became the First Chancellor of the German Empire. Bismarck was keen on uniting the German states to form a German Empire that had Prussia at its centre. He knew that this could be achieved only with the empowerment of the German military. A unified Germany had tilted the scales of power in Europe. Bismarck's foreign policies were such that Germany had formed alliances with most nations and could not engage in wars with many nations. These alliances created a feeling of insecurity in the continent later and became one of the reasons for the First World War. After Bismarck's fall in 1890, Germany's ambitions began to climb high and was set at world dominance. This ambitious sentiment is evident from the eminent German historian Preitschke's statements, 'Just as the greatness of Germany is to be found in the governance of Germany by Prussia so the greatness and good of the world is to be found in the predominance of all German culture, of the German mind in a world, of the German character.'

4. French desire to recover Alsace-Lorraine

The snatching away of Alsace and Lorraine from France by Germany in 1871 and the consequent determination of the French people to get them back was another cause of the First World War. The government of the Third Republic in France left no stone unturned to keep the spirit of revenge and the hope for the restoration of the two provinces alive. France was keen to get back these two areas because these areas were rich in minerals, particularly in iron ore. The French felt that the Germans owed their industrial prosperity to these areas. In certain quarters of France, it was felt that if Germany had not interfered in Morocco, the French might have found some compensation for the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and forgotten their vengeance against Germany. But the constant German interference in the affairs of Morocco further added to the bitterness between these two European powers.

5. Italy's ambitious desires

Another cause of the War was the desire of the people of Italy to recover Trentino and the areas around the port of Trieste which were inhabited by the Italians but were still under the control of Austria-Hungary. As these areas once formed part of the Roman Empire, the Italians raised slogans of *Italia Irredenta* or 'unredeemed Italy'. Further, the economic bankruptcy and rapidly growing population of Italy also compelled her to look around for more land and economic resources. This brought Italy closer to Germany which was equally keen to challenge the status-quo in the European continent and establish a huge empire abroad.

6. Contest over control of Balkan Peninsula

The competition for the control of the Balkan Peninsula between Austria-Hungary and Russia enhanced the tension and became a major cause for the outbreak of the First World War. After the fall of the Turkish Empire, a number of small countries emerged in the Balkan Peninsula. Three of these, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia, began to clash with each other for the control of the fertile Macedonia.

Russia was keenly interested in the Balkan politics and backed Serbia in her demand for bigger Serbia, because Russia saw in it an opportunity of getting control of Constantinople, warm water port in the South and the straits of Dardanelles and Bosphorus. Using the same, Russia wished to approach the Mediterranean Sea, the attainment of which had always been the objective of Russian foreign policy.

During the Bosnian crisis of 1908, Russia adopted a sympathetic attitude towards Serbia and threatened to take action against Austrian aggression. But German declaration to stand by Austria and promise full military support to her forced Russia to retreat. This development enhanced the bitterness between Austria, Serbia and Russia.

In 1912-13, another crisis occurred in Balkan and Austria did her best to thwart the ambitions of Serbia. Austria forced Serbia to evacuate various Adriatic towns which the Serbs had conquered. Austria also raised Albania as an autonomous state to prevent Serbia from obtaining any outlet to the sea. Austria also wanted to go to war but was restrained by Germany. Austrian attitude was greatly resented by both Great Britain and Russia. The Austro-Serbian feud gradually intensified the tension in the European continent and aggravated the fragile peace in the region.

7. Militarism and naval race between European powers

Militarism was a significant cause for the First World War. European continent was an armed camp on the eve of the First World War. Militarism means the existence of a powerful standing army and navy as a measure for preparedness for war. The military and naval armament of all the great powers began to increase year after year. Each nation had its own war strategy and on the eve of the First World War, all of them had tried to strengthen their war strategies and military power. Likewise, the fear, distrust, hatred and suspicion among the various nations like the Great Britain and Germany led to the naval race. Starting with Admiral Tirpitz's Navy Law of 1897, the growth of the German fleet on the sea probably did not worry Great Britain too much at first because Great Britain had an enormous lead in this field. The introduction of the powerful British 'Dreadnought' battleship in 1906 changed all this because it made all other battleships obsolete. This naval race of Great Britain with Germany was meant to establish the might of British naval power and to make Great Britain the unchallenged force on the high seas.

After the introduction of the ‘Dreadnought’ battleship, the Germans also built new warships on equal terms with Britain. The resulting naval race turned out to be the main bone of contention between the two powers till the beginning of the War in 1914. According to Winston Churchill, ‘Though, in the spring and summer of 1914, naval rivalry had ceased to be a cause of friction because it was certain that we (Britain) could not be overtaken as far as capital ships were concerned.’

Due to this militarism and naval race the great powers of Europe began to increase their expenditure concerning their army and navy. During that time Germany increased its military and naval expenditure up to 335 per cent. Russia and Britain also increased their expenditure 214 per cent for military and 185 per cent for navy, respectively.

8. Lack of a world body to regulate international relations

The lack of a world body to regulate the affairs of the States also contributed to the War. The States were following strict confidentiality in their diplomacy and in certain States the matters of secrecy were not revealed even to the members of the ministry. As a result the issues were clouded in mystery. Although, by the end of the 19th century, certain principles of international law and morality had been evolved through the Hague Conference, the States paid little attention to them in the absence of a powerful authority to enforce these rules.

Further, the States were very much conscious of their sovereignty and they did not like the idea of submitting to any international organization and also did not consider the rules of international morality binding on them. The absence of a strong international agency created anarchy in the international relations as there was no institution to make laws for the nations and compel all to respect such laws.

9. Series of international crises

The series of international crises are as follows:

- (i) **The Moroccan Crisis:** Germany interfered in the affairs of Morocco in 1905-06 and demanded all powers to enjoy equal privileges in Morocco. This was one of the few remaining areas of the African Continent not controlled by a European power. The Germans believed that as per the Anglo-French Agreement *Entente Cordiale* signed in 1904, the French would recognize Great Britain’s position in Egypt in return for British approval of a possible French takeover of Morocco. Fearing the possible French occupation of Morocco, the Germans announced that they would assist the Sultan of Morocco to maintain his country’s independence, and insisted for an international conference to discuss its future. As per the demand of Germany, a conference was also held in 1906 at Algeciras in Spain. Meanwhile, the British believed that if the Germans had their way, it would be an important step on the road to the German diplomatic domination.

The Germans did not take the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 seriously, because there was a long record of hostility between Great Britain and France. However, to the utter surprise of Germany, Great Britain, Russia, Italy and Spain supported the French demand to control the Moroccan Bank and police. This was a grave diplomatic failure for Germany, which realized that the new line-up of Britain and France was a strong force to be reckoned with, especially as the Moroccan crisis was soon followed by Anglo-French military exchanges. This crisis further reduced the trust factor between various European Powers.

- (ii) **The Anglo-Russian Agreement:** The Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 was seen by Germany as another hostile move. The logic behind it was given that in 1894 Russia had signed an alliance with France, which was Britain's partner in the *Entente Cordiale* signed in 1904. For years, the British had viewed Russia as a major threat to their interests in the Far East and India, which were colonies of Great Britain at that time. However, the changing situation in 1904–05 where Japan defeated Russia had weakened it considerably, and it no longer seemed so much of a threat. This development forced Great Britain to change its mindset. Whereas, on the other hand, the Russians were keen to end the long-standing rivalry and anxious to attract British investment for their industrial modernization programme. The Agreement, therefore, settled their remaining differences. This Agreement was not a military alliance and not necessarily an anti-German move, but the Germans saw it as confirmation of their fears that Britain, France and Russia were planning to encircle it. Undoubtedly, this development enhanced the tension in Europe.
- (iii) **The Bosnia Crisis:** The Austrians, taking advantage of a revolution in Turkey, annexed the Turkish province of Bosnia. This was a deliberate blow to the neighbouring state of Serbia, because Serbia had also been hoping to take Bosnia. The motive behind Serbian interest was that Bosnia contained around three million Serbs among its mixed population of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. The Serbs appealed for help to their fellow Slavs and the Russians, who called for a European Conference, expecting French and British support. When it became clear that Germany would support Austria in the event of war, the French drew back, unwilling to become involved in a war in Balkans. The British, anxious to avoid a breach with Germany, did no more than to protest to Austria-Hungary. The Russians, after their defeat from Japan, dared not risk another war without the support of their allies. In this situation, Serbia did not get any help from outside and no conference took place. Austria kept Bosnia, and it was a victory for the Austro-German alliance. After this development, Serbia remained bitterly hostile to Austria and it was this quarrel, that heightened the tension in European continent, and later this led to the outbreak of the First World War. On the other hand, to avoid further humiliation, Russians were determined to embark a massive military build-up.

The Agadir Crisis: The Agadir Crisis of 1911 was a further development in the Moroccan Crisis. French troops occupied the Moroccan capital Fez in 1911 to suppress a rebellion against the Sultan. It looked as if the French were about to annex Morocco. Hoping to pressurize the French and giving Germany compensation, Germans sent a gunboat, Panther, to the Moroccan port of Agadir. The French stood firm making no major concessions, and eventually the German gunboat was removed. On their part, the Germans agreed to recognize the French protectorate over Morocco in return for two strips of territory in the French Congo. It was seen as a victory for the French but this development triggered a naval race between the European powers like Britain, France and Germany.

- (iv) **Balkan Wars:** The Balkan War of 1912 started when Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, who were known as the Balkan League, attacked Turkey and captured most of its remaining territory in Europe. After the outbreak of the War, Germany and Great Britain intervened in it and arranged a peace conference in London.

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They were anxious to avoid a conflict between the Balkan League and Turkey, and simultaneously they had to demonstrate that Great Britain and Germany could still work together. The resulting settlement divided the former Turkey's lands among the Balkan states. However, the Serbs were not happy with the gains of the Balkan states; rather they wanted Albania which would give them an outlet to sea. In the meantime, the Austrians with British and German support insisted that Albania should become an independent state. This was a deliberate attempt made by Austria to prevent Serbia from becoming more powerful.

A year after this development, the Second Balkan War broke out in 1913 because the Bulgarians were dissatisfied with the peace settlement. They were hopeful of acquiring Macedonia, but most of Macedonia was conquered by Serbia. This led Bulgaria to attack Serbia but its plan backfired when Romania, Turkey and Greece supported Serbia. In that War, the Bulgarians were defeated and by the Treaty of Bucharest of 1913, the Bulgarians forfeited most of their gains from the First Balkan War of 1912. The Anglo-German influence prevented a further escalation of the tension by restraining the Austrians who were about to support Bulgaria and planning to attack Serbia. The repercussions of these two Balkan wars were grave. On the one hand, Serbia was strengthened and it was determined to intervene between the Serbs and Croats who were living inside Austria-Hungary, on the other hand the Austrians were equally determined to put an end to Serbia's ambitions.

10. The assassination of the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand

The immediate cause of the First World War was the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, by a Serbian in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914. The Archduke was paying an official visit to the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo when he and his wife were shot dead. The assassin, Gavrilo Princip, was a member of the Black Hand, a secret society of the Serbian terrorists. Austrians were outraged at this incident and held Serbia responsible for this by serving an ultimatum for this reprehensible act. Serbia refused to comply with the ultimatum served by Austria because of Russian backing. In the meantime, Austria wanted to crush Serbia and even managed to get the support of Germany. An effort of mediation was made by the powers but to no avail. Finally, on 28 July 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, thus beginning the First World War. Initially, Great Britain and Germany tried to localize the War but soon it became evident that the matters had gone out of their hands. The Russians who did not want to let down the Serbs, ordered a general military mobilization against Austria on 29 July. Germany demanded that Russia should put an end to its military mobilization and withdraw troops. But when the Russians refused to comply, Germany declared war on Russia on 1 August 1914 and on France on 3 August. When German troops entered Belgium on their way to invade France, Great Britain who had promised to defend Belgian interest demanded their withdrawal. When Germany ignored this demand of Britain, Great Britain entered into the War on 4 August. On 6 August Austria-Hungary also declared war on Russia and other countries joined later.

In the War that followed, Serbia was supported by Russia, France, England and Japan, and in 1915, Italy which was not a member of the Triple Alliance, also joined them and declared war against Austria-Hungary and Germany. Turkey, however, fought on the side of the Central Powers, which included Austria-Hungary and Germany.

While fixing the responsibility for the outbreak of First World War in *The Origins of the First World War*, Fay observes that, ‘It was primarily Russian general mobilization when Germany was trying to bring Austria to a settlement, which precipitated the final catastrophe, causing Germany to mobilize and declare war.’

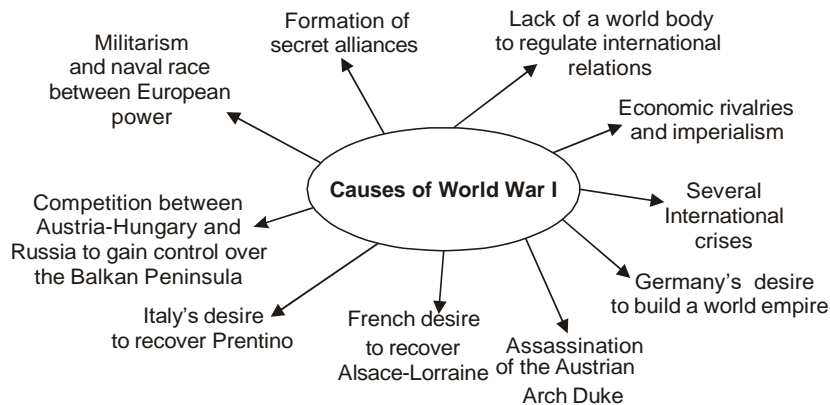


Fig. 4.1 Causes of World War I

Course of the First World War

The War, which started with the attack of Serbia by Austria-Hungary, turned out to be quite different from what most people had anticipated. It was not confined only to the European continent, but soon saw the participation of many powerful countries of the world. Almost all the big countries of the world were automatically drawn into the War in various battles that were fought in different parts of the world.

Initially, when Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, Great Britain and Germany made efforts to localize the conflict. However, when Russia declared war against Austria-Hungary, Germany also declared war against Russia. Until this time, the war had not assumed the shape of a World War. It was only after Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium and Britain, and France declared war on it that the conflict assumed the shape of a World War. Although Great Britain joined the War on the plea that Germany has violated Belgium's neutrality, Belgium could not be saved and the German force was able to smash the resistance of Belgium. Germany then headed towards Paris and went beyond Marne. However, General Foch, aided by Great Britain, compelled the Germans to retreat from Marne to the northern side of river Aisne. The battle of Marne was a turning point of the War because it foiled all German plans of crossing France and extending a helping hand to its allies for concerted action against the enemies. This development dashed all hopes of a short war. Both sides dug themselves in and spent the next four years attacking and defending lines of trenches.

During the War in Eastern Europe there were many other developments on the sidelines which precipitated the crisis. The early Russian success against the Austrians who constantly had to be helped out by the Germans caused friction between the two allies. On the Eastern front Russia mobilized at quick speed and invaded East Prussia but it was defeated by Hindenburg at Tannenberg. Russia was, however, more successful against the Austrians and occupied the Carpathian passes from where it could prove a

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threat for Hungary. However, the Germans came to Austria's rescue and pushed back the Russians and captured Warsaw, the capital of Poland.

In 1915, Italy joined the Allies in spite of its alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary because the Allies agreed to make territorial adjustment with regard to its frontiers. Further, Italy realized that this approach could help to recover some of the provinces which formerly belonged to it from Austria. Japan also joined the Allies as Germany had objected to Japan's taking of Liaotung from China in 1895 but was forced to surrender this. Turkey fought on the side of the Central Powers. In the initial stage of the War, it inflicted heavy losses on the Allies, and prevented communication between Russia and the Allies. Great Britain was defeated at Gallipoli which was probably its greatest disappointment in the War. However, soon Great Britain recovered itself from the defeat and recaptured Kut and occupied Baghdad. It also made political concessions to the Arabs by recognizing their independence. Though in the first year of War Serbia resisted the Austrian attacks boldly, in 1915, it succumbed to double attack of the Bulgarians on the south and the combined Austro-German attack on the north.

As far as the War on the sea was concerned, the British navy maintained its dominance on others on the seas. On the sea front, Germans lost heavily in the operations of Dogger bank and the right of Heligoland. In the battle of Jutland the losses on both sides were equally heavy though strategically the War went in favour of Great Britain. In spite of these setbacks, the German ships succeeded in doing much damage to Allies' commerce. However, after the comprehensive defeat at Falkland Islands, the German navy was rendered defensive.

After the defeat of Germany at Falkland Islands, the Germans retaliated with mines and submarine attacks. This was their only alternative as their surface vessels were either destroyed or were blockaded in various ports. Initially, they showed respect to neutral shipping and passenger liners but it soon became clear that the German blockade was ineffective. Meanwhile Britain also tried to mislead the Germans by flying neutral flags and by using passenger liners to transport arms and ammunition. In 1915, the British liner Lusitania was sunk by a torpedo attack. Germans knew that Lusitania was armed and carrying vast quantities of arms and ammunition. So Germans claimed that the sinking of the boat was not an act of barbarism against the defenseless civilians. This act of Germany resulted in serious consequences as out of almost 2,000 dead, 128 were Americans. At this juncture the American President Woodrow Wilson recognised that the US would have to take part in the War to protect its trade. Whereas the British blockade did not interfere with the safety of passengers and crew, but the German tactics certainly did. This led to protests from America and the submarine campaign was toned down.

In the mid-1916, the German Admiral Von Scheer tried to lure part of Britain's fleet to come out of its base so that the numerically superior Germans could destroy it. However, more British ships came out contrary to the expectations of Germans. After a fierce battle, the Germans used torpedoes and destroyed 14 British ships whereas the British had also destroyed 11 German ships in the battle, and this is famous as the Battle of Jutland. The real importance of the Battle lay in the fact that the Germans had failed to destroy Great Britain's sea power. Due to British blockade, the German fleet of high seas stayed in Kiel port for the rest of the War. Finally, in desperation due to food shortages, the German fleet embarked on unrestrained submarine warfare.

After the Battle of Jutland, the Germans had been concentrating on the production of U-boats to sink all enemy warships and merchant ships in the Atlantic. Although they

knew that this act was likely to bring the US into the War, the Germans hoped that before the Americans could make any vital contribution, they would force the British and France to surrender. The Germans got enormous success in this field in April 1917 by sinking 430 ships and Britain was reduced to about six weeks of corn supply. However, by introducing the convoy system, where a convoy of large number of merchant ships were protected by escorting warships, Lloyd George saved the situation. This act of George drastically reduced the losses by protecting the merchant ships and with it the German gamble had once again failed. The submarine campaign was important because it brought the US into the First World War. The British navy helped by the Americans played a pivotal role in the defeat of the Central Powers. During that time, after the revolt of 1917, Russia suffered a number of defeats and ultimately surrendered to Germany by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The withdrawal of Russia from War enabled Germany to transfer a large section of its troops to the western front to give a big blow to the Allies. However, the Allies were saved by the entry of the US in the War. The US entered the War as a protest against the unrestrained submarine campaign carried out by Germany in violation of all legal and humanitarian considerations. At the end of 1917, only one American division had been in action, but by mid 1918 over half a million men were involved. Most important was the psychological boost which the American potential in resources of men and material gave the allies and the corresponding blow it gave to German morale.

In 1917, a new European power, Greece, had also joined the War against the Central Powers and held the armies in Macedonia. In September 1918, Bulgaria surrendered before the marching armies of Greece and sought a ceasefire. In October 1918, Austria sought an armistice and was out of War. Turkey was also defeated. Thus, Germany was left alone in the War. In the meantime, there was a mutiny in Germany and the emperor was forced to abdicate. The new head of the German Government, Max Von Baden, sought peace based on the Fourteen Points announced by President Wilson of the US. The Fourteen Points of Woodrow Wilson were:

- (i) Eradication of secret diplomacy
- (ii) Free navigation facilities at sea for all nations in war and peace
- (iii) All round reduction of armaments
- (iv) Elimination of economic barriers between states
- (v) Evacuation of Russian territory
- (vi) Re-establishment of Belgium
- (vii) Liberation of France and restoration of Alsace-Lorraine
- (viii) Readjustment of Italian frontiers along the lines of nationality
- (ix) Impartial adjustment of colonial claims in the interest of the populations concerned
- (x) Self-government for the people of Austria-Hungary
- (xi) Evacuation from Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Serbia giving access to the sea
- (xii) An independent Poland with secure access to the sea
- (xiii) A general association of the nations to preserve peace
- (xiv) Self-government for the non-Turkish people of the Turkish Empire and permanent opening of the Dardanelles

Germany thought by asking for peace, in 1918, it would save itself from invasion and preserve the army's discipline and reputation. Fighting continued for another five weeks while negotiations went on, but eventually an armistice was signed on 11. On 18 November 1918, the terms of the armistice were conveyed to Germany. Though the terms were very hard, it had no other option but to surrender. Thus, in November 1918, the First World War ended. The War has been described as the worst disaster to the humankind. Describing the enormity of the First World War, historian C. J. H. Hayes has rightly observed that, 'The war, thus closing, was indeed a World War. Never before had there been a struggle so gigantic, so deadly and costly.'

Effects of the First World War

The First World War left a manifold impact on the contemporary society, polity and economy of the world.

1. Political Impact

The First World War had a serious consequence on the polity of the then contemporary world which was highly influenced by this event.

- (i) In the first place, the War gave a shattering blow to some of the autocratic monarchies functioning in various countries of Europe of the time. It paved the way for the development of democratic system in Europe. As an upshot of the War three autocratic dynasties, namely, the Hohenzollernian in Germany, the Hapsburg in Austria-Hungary, and the Romanov in Russia were destroyed. In a number of states, monarchical system was replaced by republican system. These countries were Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Czechoslovakia. The emergence of democratic system led to recognition of people's democratic rights.
- (ii) The War encouraged the principles of nationalism and self-determination. After the War empires having people with different culture were dissociated and independent states with distinct cultures came up to the fore. Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Alsace-Lorraine, etc., which had distinct cultures of their own made their appearance and were given to France. Similarly, Schleswig-Holstein was restored to Denmark. China, Turkey, Egypt and Ireland were also influenced with the impact of nationalism.
- (iii) The weakening position of the colonial powers in Europe provided an opportunity to freedom movements in Asia and Africa. Colonized countries like India began to feel that in view of the weakened position of the colonial powers they could hope to gain freedom. Therefore, they intensified the campaign of freedom struggle. The prolonged freedom struggle in Asian and African countries led to a change in the policy of colonial powers towards their colonies. During the pre-war period, the colonial powers treated their colonial possessions as per their wish without taking into account the wishes of the people. In contrast to their earlier practice, in the post-World War period the colonized territories were granted certain rights and some restrictions were imposed on them under the mandate system. Overall, greater importance began to be attached to the interests of the colonial people after the War.
- (iv) The First World War promoted the spirit of 'internationalism'. During the War various nations came in close contact with each other through various alliances, pacts and agreements. These relationships continued further even after the War ended, which greatly contributed to the development of the spirit of internationalism.

- (v) The most important contribution of the First World War was the creation of an international organization, The League of Nations, to monitor the international relations of various countries and to encourage peace, harmony and international cooperation. It was the horror of the War which convinced the world leaders of the need for an institution to prevent the recurrence of such war and promote international understanding. This culminated in the establishment of the League of Nations. However, unfortunately various powers did not fully cooperate with the League of Nations and tried to promote their selfish national interests and thus contributed to the failure of the League.

2. Economic Impact

The First World War which was a terrible catastrophe on humanity and caused massive loss of life and property also destroyed the economy of several countries who participated in the War. In this War, around 30 countries participated including all the major colonial powers of Europe and suffered huge losses in terms of men and material. Of the 65 million people who took part in the War more than 9 million people were killed, 29 million people were either wounded or reported missing. On this, C. J. E. Hayes has observed, 'Every family in Eastern and Central Europe, every family in Italy, France and the huge British empire and many families in America suffered loss of near relatives and close friends.'

- (i) In terms of money the War was estimated to cost around 400 billion dollars.
- (ii) Second, as a result of the War, the prices of all commodities registered a steep rise, which caused much hardship and suffering for the general public. It forced various governments to take concrete measures to regulate prices and control the distribution system. Thus, the post-war situation created an environment favourable for the rise of state socialism.
- (iii) The War also led to the rise of trade-union activities. During the War, the demand for labour increased manifold. The industrialists and the industrialized states provided all sorts of facilities to the labourers to run their factories on full capacity. The labourers tried to make their condition better by demanding much deserved concessions and benefits from the state and factory owners. To safeguard their interests, they also established trade unions. Undoubtedly, the War enhanced the importance of workers and labourers and gave them a mechanism to protect their interests.
- (iv) Fourth, scholars believe that the increasing use of paper currency was largely the outcome of the First World War. The shortage of metals after the First World War forced countries to print paper money for smaller denominations.
- (v) The War also led to devaluation of currency and economic depression in the world. In order to meet the huge expenses of the War, different countries imposed heavy taxes on the people, which caused much difficulty for the people. However, these extra taxes proved to be insufficient to fulfill the enormous expenses. Hence, the governments resorted to printing of currency notes without taking into account the reserve bullion stocks. This later became the cause for economic depression and currency devaluation.

During the First World War, for the maintenance of their armies, ships and for the procurement of arms and armaments, different countries raised loans from various possible quarters because the War expenses were beyond their expectation and paying capacity. As a result, in the wake of the War most of the great powers were forced to devalue

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their currency and were faced with great challenges of economic reconstruction. In the post-war scenario and particularly in the 1930s, the contemporary situation paved the way for the economic depression, which caused much hardship to the public throughout the world.

3. Social Impact

In the social sphere, the World War also had far-reaching consequences. The huge loss of life and material during the course of War caused untold sufferings to countless families in various countries. It compelled the contemporary world leaders to think of some mechanism for avoiding reoccurrence of war of this magnitude in the future, and to maintain peace and tranquility in the globe. This led to the establishment of the League of Nations to resolve international disputes amicably on the basis of reason and justice. This was the biggest achievement of the post-World War period.

Secondly, the cut-throat competition between the rival powers to surpass one another during the War, gave a boost to the rapid scientific progress in various parts of the world. On the eve and during the course of War, various European powers tried to improve their merchant ships, war ships, submarines, aeroplanes, and other war equipment, and invented various lethal gases to gain an edge over their opponents. These modern techniques used in the War cut short the duration of the War. Further, the scientific inventions throughout the War period also contributed to industrialization of the world and rapid agricultural progress.

The War promoted the feeling of goodwill and fraternity among the people. Before the War, the Europeans and particularly the colonial powers regarded themselves, their culture, traditions, religion and literature superior and refused to even mix up with the black Asians and Africans. The Whites, denounced the literature written by the black Asians and Africans, their conventional knowledge system and denied the very basic democratic rights of these people. However, during the War the Europeans and the colonial powers in particular, were forced to shun this feeling of racial superiority and differences, and the European soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with the Asian and African soldiers. The gallantry displayed by the Asian and African soldiers greatly impressed the Europeans and their hatred towards these races changed to some extent. As a result, the feeling of racism slowly subsided and it was taken over by a newfound goodwill among the people.

The First World War posed a serious threat to the educational system of that time. Education suffered a setback because during the War many educational institutions were forcibly closed down and students were encouraged to undergo military training to provide the necessary fighting force as per the requirement of the War. In most of the countries military training was made compulsory for the students and conventional education was discouraged. All this greatly hampered the progress of education.

The War also contributed to the progress of women. Participating in the War millions of men lost their lives. Therefore, a scarcity of labourers was felt. Factory owners and the governments of industrialized states were, therefore, compelled to engage women as factory workers. Rising to the need of the hour women workers entered the hitherto male bastions and helped in maintaining the production of their industries. Therefore, immediately after the post-war period, they came to be recognized as regular labour force. All this greatly contributed to the elevation of their status and led to their empowerment.

Treaty of Versailles

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The First World War which continued for four years and three months, i.e., 1,566 days, involved mobilization of 65 million men of whom 7 million died and 13 million were wounded and which cost around 400 billion dollars. This was brought to an end by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and four other treaties concluded at various places by the Allies. In this landmark treaty of the world, the terms of peace with Germany were embodied in the Treaty of Versailles, which is the longest document of its kind. This peace treaty was a dictated one because the German diplomats were not at all consulted before its preparation, and it was finally imposed on them. The path of conclusion of the peace treaties was not at all smooth. There were many difficulties encountered by the peace conference mainly owing to the uncompromising nature of the delegates. The 1,037 delegates who attended the Paris Peace Conference, and almost all of them, as Langsam has said, 'came to attend the Paris Peace Conference well equipped with records and memoranda'. The opinions and counter opinions of these experts further added to the difficulties of reaching an agreed decision.

The lack of well-defined principles regarding the solution of the post-war problems and the future reconstruction of the world also stood in the way of leaders in finding any formula and a definite plan. The four leading figures; Woodrow Wilson of the US, Lloyd George of UK, Clemenceau of France, and Orlando of Italy, entrusted with the responsibility of taking a decision had no similarity of interests. While Wilson wanted to establish long and durable peace based on justice and neutrality instead of taking revenge on the enemy country, Clemenceau and Orlando were more keen to protect the territorial interests of France and Italy, respectively. They were not much bothered about the problem of world peace. Lloyd George of UK was no doubt eager to establish international peace based on truth and justice, but he was willing to do all this only if the interests of the United Kingdom were protected. Hence, the proceedings of the Conference were hindered by the two conflicting approaches adopted by the leaders. Although Wilson was not in favour of secret diplomacy, in view of the eagerness of the powers like Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan to observe the terms of these secret treaties, he was ultimately forced to compromise. Commenting on this, historians like Walter Consuelo Langsam in *World Since 1919*, has said, 'Wilson's idealism came into sharp conflict with materialism at the conference and in most cases materialism triumphed'. All these difficulties were ultimately overcome before the Paris Peace Conference leading to the conclusion of five treaties:

- (i) The Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919 concluded with Germany
- (ii) The Treaty of St. Germain of 10 September 1919 with Austria
- (iii) The Treaty of Neuilly of 27 November 1919 concluded with Bulgaria
- (iv) The Treaty of Trianon of 4 July 1920 concluded with Hungary
- (v) The Treaty of Sevres of 10 August 1920 concluded with Turkey (the Treaty of Sevres was revised in the Conference at Lausanne in 1923) and peace was formally established only on 6 August 1924 when the Treaty came into force

The Treaty of Versailles was signed between the Allies and Germany on 28 June 1919. The draft of the Treaty was presented to the German Foreign Minister on 7 May 1919 and Germany was given three weeks time to file written objections if any. On 29 May objections to the Treaty were received from Germany. After the stiff attitude of Clemenceau, a revised Treaty with five days time to accept the Treaty was issued. The

Allies warned that if Germany failed to do so their country would be invaded. As Germany was under the grip of famine, the German Assembly decided to accept the terms of the Treaty, and they appended their signatures to the Treaty on June 28. Historians like Norman Lowe have commented that, 'The Treaty of Versailles in particular was one of the most controversial settlements ever signed, and it was criticised even in the Allied countries on the grounds that it was too hard on the Germans who were bound to object so violently that another war was inevitable, sooner or later.' In addition, many of the terms such as reparations and disarmament proved impossible to carry out.

Provisions of the Treaty

The various provisions of the Treaty are as follows:

1. Territorial Provisions

The Treaty affected substantial territorial changes. According to the Treaty:

- (i) Germany lost Alsace and Lorraine to France, which it had taken from France in 1871. Belgium got back Eupen and Malmédy as well as Moresnet, which it got in partial compensation for the destruction of its forts by Germany.
- (ii) Germany agreed to give Upper Silesia and the southern part of East Prussia to Poland if the people concerned were in favour of joining it. The wishes of the people were to be determined by a plebiscite. When the plebiscite was actually held the decision was in favour of a complete merger with Germany. However, Poland insisted that it must be given those areas, which had Polish majority. After the intervention of France, the League Council partitioned Silesia, leaving more than half of the area and population to Germany, but the industrialized areas of Silesia were given to Poland. Danzig, the main port city of West Prussia, was taken away from Germany and was set up as a free city under the administration of the League of Nations, because its population was wholly German.
- (iii) Memel was given to Lithuania in 1924 and in the north Germany lost northern Schleswig to Denmark after a plebiscite.
- (iv) The Saar Valley was to be administered by the League of Nations for 15 years, after which it was decided that the people would be allowed to vote on whether it should belong to France or Germany. In the meantime, France was given the exclusive rights of exploitation of coal mines of the Valley. Fifteen years after when the plebiscite was actually held, the people of Saar Valley voted for Germany.
- (v) Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania which had been handed over to Germany by Russia at Brest-Litovsk, were taken away from it and set up as independent states. This was an example of self-determination being carried into practice.
- (vi) Germany was also forced to renounce its rights over its overseas colonies. The Germany colonies were later distributed amongst the various powers including Great Britain, France, Belgium, Japan, the Union of South Africa, New Zealand and Australia as mandates of the League; this meant that various member States of the League 'looked after' these colonies. Japan got the lease of Kiaochow and the German portion of the island of Soma was left to the care of New Zealand. While Australia was entrusted the administration of German New Guinea, Togoland and Tanganyika were left to the administration of Great Britain. Certain portions of Tanganyika were left under the control of Belgium and Cameroons were given

to France. The administrative rights over Germany and South-West Africa were given to the Union of South Africa.

- (vii) Germany also lost her economic privileges in Morocco, Bulgaria and in Turkey. Due to the Treaty, Germany lost around 90 lakh square miles area. The loss was accompanied by a blow to the German Pride because the Allies tried to justify their rule over the colonies by asserting that the German treatment of the native population in her colonies had been cruel and arbitrary.
- (viii) The treaty also provided that France pay war indemnity of five billion Francs to Germany. Till France had made the payment of the sum of five million Francs, the German army would continue to occupy parts of France.

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2. Military Provisions

The Treaty of Versailles considerably reduced the military might of Germany. It was compelled to abolish the German general staff and forced to reduce its army to 1 lakh with a small navy and merchant marine, without modern equipment, to be exclusively used only for police administration. The German navy was limited to 6 battleships, 6 light cruisers, 12 destroyers and 12 torpedo boats. As regards the air clauses, the Treaty absolutely forbade naval or military air forces for Germany. The Treaty also imposed restrictions on the manufacture of arms and ammunition. It was also forbidden to manufacture or purchase tanks, armoured cars, poisonous gases and submarines. The Rhineland was permanently demilitarized and Germany was not allowed to maintain or construct any fortifications either on the left bank of the Rhineland or on the right bank to the west of a line drawn 50 kilometers to the east of the Rhine. This meant German troops were not allowed or maintained in the area and the existing fortifications had to be destroyed. The harbours of the Islands of Heligoland, Dune and Kiel Canal were also to be demilitarized and all fortifications demolished. It was even prevented from exporting and importing war materials. The military services were made voluntary and for 12 years for soldiers and 25 years for officers. The War Guilt clause fixed the blame for the outbreak of the War solely on Germany and its allies.

3. Economic Provisions and Reparations

The Treaty also aimed at keeping Germany economically weak. The League, therefore, held Germany responsible for the loss and damage caused during the War and asked to pay compensation to the Allied and associated governments. The provisions of reparations were the final humiliation for the Germans. Though there could be little valid objections to the general principle of reparations, many historians now agree that the actual amount decided by the Reparation Commission was far too high. Germany was to pay reparations for the damage done to the allies and the actual amount was not decided at Versailles. However, after much argument and haggling it was announced later in 1921. The problem of payment of reparation proved complicated as it was very difficult to arrive at an amount which Germany would pay to the Allies. For that a Reparation Commission was set up and the representatives of Great Britain, the US, Italy, France and Japan were to decide the compensation amount. On 28 April 1921, the Commission assessed the debt of Germany at 6,600 million pounds. This amount led the Germans to protest that it was impossible to pay and they soon began to default their annual installments. The international tension resurfaced when France tried to force the Germans to pay. Eventually, the Allies admitted their mistake and reduced the amount to 2,000 million pounds as per the Young Plan of 1929. But, not before reparations had proved disastrous both economically and politically. This amount was successively scaled down and finally abolished in 1932.

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The Treaty also recognized the rights of the Allies to the replacement of all merchant ships and fishing boats lost or damaged in the War (tonne for tonne and class for class). As per the Reparation Commission, Germany had to deliver large quantities of coal for 10 years to France, Belgium and Italy. It was also to deliver a large number of horses, cattle, sheep, etc., to France and Belgium. All German properties in the former German colonies and in the Allied countries were to be confiscated and its pre-war trading concessions with the signatories like Morocco, Egypt and China were to be abolished. The Rivers Elbe and Oder of Germany were internationalized with a view to provide Switzerland and Czechoslovakia an access to the sea. The Kiel Canal was internationalized and thrown open for all ships of all nations. The Allies also demanded that Germany should allow free passage to merchant and war vessels of all countries.

4. Legal Provisions

The Allies also demanded that King Kaiser William II, the emperor of Germany should be tried as a war criminal for committing ‘the supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties’. He was to be tried for these offences by a special tribunal. These provisions however, could not be implemented because the government of Netherlands refused to surrender the German King Kaiser William II, where he had taken shelter. However, as per the legal provisions within 6 months of the implementation of the Treaty Germany was to restore all the trophies, archives, historical souvenirs or works of art carried away by her forces from France during the Franco-German War and the World War. Germany was also to compensate the University of Louvain for the destruction of her manuscripts and documents and hand over two paintings to Belgium which were at that time in Germany.

The Treaty of Versailles was one of the most controversial documents signed by the nations in modern times. So, the Germans described it as a dictated peace, a Treaty forced upon by the vanquished. Throughout the Conference the representatives did not consult the Germans even once and their objections were completely overruled. Germany was forced to sign the treaty under threat of another invasion of their country. Lloyd George, who consistently advocated a lenient peace with Germany said, ‘These terms are written in the blood of fallen heroes. We must carry out the edict of Providence and see that the people who inflicted this war shall never be in a position to do so again. The Germans say that they will not sign. Their newspapers say they will not sign. The politicians say the same thing. We say, Gentlemen, you must sign. If you do not do so in Versailles you shall do so in Berlin’. Even historian E. H. Carr in *International Relations between two World Wars*, has said, ‘Nearly every treaty which brings a war to an end, is in one sense a dictated peace, for a defeated power seldom accepts willingly the consequences of its defeat. But in the Treaty of Versailles the element of dictation was more apparent than in any previous peace treaty of modern times.’

It was, thus, evident that the element of dictation was very much present in the Treaty of Versailles. But this was not something peculiarly confined to this Treaty alone. The revengeful attitude of Germany as manifested in the Treaty of Brest Litovsk and the Treaty of Bucharest concluded with Russia and Romania respectively. This further hardened the attitude of the Allies because ‘the minds of the German rulers were too clearly revealed by these treaties to permit any illusion’.

Undoubtedly, the peace settlement did not exactly succeed in maintaining peace. The leaders of the Peace Conference wanted Germany to pay heavily so that an event of this magnitude was not repeated. Even Lloyd George, who stood for the lenient treatment of Germany, won the famous *Khaki* election with the slogan, 'We shall hang Kaiser and make Germany pay to the last penny'.

The element of reciprocity was also missing from the Treaty with regard to disarmament, transportation, colonies, abolition of capitulations, punishment of officers. All these provisions were unilaterally applied to Germany alone and the Allies were completely exempted from them. If disarmament was reasonable for Germany, it was obviously reasonable for the Allies. However, except Great Britain, no other Allied power agreed to disarm. If the principles of reciprocity and natural justice had been followed, the Treaty of Versailles would have been a peace of justice. Without reciprocity, it was a Treaty of force and its terms could be executed only so long as the force continued to be applied to make them execute it.

It has been said by the critics of the Treaty that the seeds of the Second World War lay in the Treaty of Versailles. However, no great diplomatic instrument like the Treaty has been modified, revised and infringed in the same way as the Treaty of Versailles. In 1926, Part I of the Treaty was amended to enable Germany to get the membership of the League of Nations. Part V dealing with military, navy and air force was violated by Germany in 1935. Part VII dealing with the War criminals was allowed to go by default. Part VIII, dealing with reparation, was modified by the Reparation Commission and other committees in 1931 before it was given a decent burial by the World Economic Conference. Part II and III dealing with the western, northern, and eastern boundary of Germany were violated by Germany. The other steps which infringed the Treaty of Versailles again and again, including promulgation of new military laws by Germany, conclusion of Naval Treaty with Britain in 1935, occupation of Austria by Germany in 1938, and the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia by Germany in 1939. Thus, the Treaty of Versailles proved ineffective in its purpose due to the fact that the Treaty failed to satisfy neither the victors nor the vanquished. The Treaty failed to establish permanent peace, not because of its inherent faults in the Treaty, but it was mainly due to the subsequent policies pursued by the Allied Powers and Germany.

SUMMARY

- The Industrial Revolution in Europe leading to the search for newer markets and sources of raw material, the growth of modern means of transport, new found consciousness of nationalism and spread of trade and commerce led to fierce competition among the countries.
- The competing nations soon started building alliances to serve their common interests and protect their territories from rival powers. The objective of improving economic situation expanded into the act of raising a strong army and huge military build-up to safeguard the newly acquired territories and markets.

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- The First World War, which was fought on global scale, was a major war centred in Europe. This War began in 1914 and lasted until 1918, for a period of four years and three months, and had its impact practically on all the countries and regions of the world.
- The War involved all the great powers of the world, which were divided into two opposing alliances that were the Allies and the Central Powers.
- Though the immediate cause of the First World War was the murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the fundamental causes for the outbreak of the First World War were many like the imperialistic foreign policies of the great powers of Europe, including Germany, Austro-Hungary, Turkey, Russia, Great Britain, France and Italy; the growth of narrow nationalism, militarism and economic imperialism were also responsible for creating an enabling atmosphere for the War.
- The First World War posed a serious threat to the educational system of that time as many educational institutions were forcibly closed down and students were encouraged to undergo military training to provide the necessary fighting force for the War.
- The Treaty of Versailles was signed between the Allies and Germany on 28 June 1919. The draft of the Treaty was presented to the German Foreign Minister on 7 May 1919 and Germany was given three weeks' time to file written objections if any. On 29 May objections to the Treaty were received from Germany.
- The First World War placed an unbearable strain on Russia's weak government and economy, resulting in mass shortages and hunger. In the meantime, the mismanagement and failures of the war turned the people and particularly the soldiers, against the Tsar, whose decision to take personal command of the army seemed to make him personally responsible for the defeats.

KEY TERMS

- **Weltpolitik:** This term meant 'world policy' and referred to the policy adopted by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany in 1897, and replaced the earlier 'Realpolitik' approach.
- **Triple entente:** This was the name given to the alliance among France, Britain and Russia after the Anglo-Russian Entente was signed in 1907.
- **Treaty:** It is an express agreement under international law entered into by actors in international law, namely, sovereign states and international organizations.
- **Imperialism:** The *Dictionary of Human Geography* defines imperialism as, 'the creation and/or maintenance of an unequal economic, cultural, and territorial relationship, usually between states and often in the form of an empire, based on domination and subordination'.
- **Italia Irredenta:** The term means unredeemed Italy and refers to an Italian patriotic and political party, which was of importance in the last quarter of the 19th century.
- **Militarism:** The term means a strong military spirit or policy or the principle or policy of maintaining a large military establishment.
- **Dreadnought:** This was the British battleship which was launched in 1906, and was the first of its type.

- **Entente Cordiale:** This was an understanding reached by France and Britain in April 1904, which settled outstanding colonial disputes.
- **Internationalism:** This is a policy or practice of cooperation among nations, especially in politics and economic matters.
- **Duma:** The Duma was the council assemblies and was created by the Tsar of Russia.
- **Bolshevik Revolution:** It refers to the overthrow of the government of Russia, which took place in the fall of 1917.
- **Communism:** Communism (derived from Latin *communis*—common, universal) is a revolutionary socialist movement to create a classless, moneyless, and stateless social order.
- **Socialism:** This is a social and economic doctrine that calls for public rather than private ownership or control of property and other natural resources.
- **Pravda:** It is a Russian political newspaper and official mouthpiece of Communist Party of the Russian Federation.
- **Totalitarianism:** It is the concept of modern totalitarianism arose in the 1920s and 1930s. It was a new kind of state.
- **fasci di combattimento:** The local party units in Italy were known as *fasci di combattimento* or fighting groups. The word *fascies* meant the bundle of rods with protruding axe which used to symbolize the authority and power of the ancient Roman consuls.

ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The First World War began in 1914 and ended in 1918.
2. When Great Britain concluded a treaty with Russia in 1907, the Triple Entente came into existence.
3. The Treaty of Versailles was signed between the Allies and Germany on 28 June 1919.

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. Give reasons for the outbreak of the First World War.
2. List the Fourteen Points announced by President Woodrow Wilson.
3. What is the economic impact of the First World War?
4. List the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles.

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Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the series of international crises that led to the First World War.
2. Explain the course and impact of the First World War.
3. Describe the various provisions of the Treaty of Versailles.

FURTHER READING

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UNIT II RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- The Russian Revolution
- Causes for the Outbreak of the Revolution
- Course of the Russian Revolution
- Lenin's Leadership
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- Questions and Exercises
- Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

The turn of the twentieth century marked a new beginning in the annals of world history. It altered and redefined the history of the world in more ways than one and the transition was far from smooth. The developments of the nineteenth century had already prepared the ground for such an upheaval. The Industrial Revolution in Europe led to: Search for newer markets, search for better sources of raw material, rise of nationalism, and fierce competition due to the spread of trade and commerce.

Europe was the epicentre of these happenings, and the major European powers started viewing each other as competitors for the same set of resources and markets. They adopted confrontationalist policies to establish their supremacy and retain control over large parts of Asia and Africa. The competing nations soon started building alliances to serve their common interests and protect their territories from rival powers. What started as discrete events aimed at furthering economic interests soon extended to the raising of strong armies and huge military build-ups to safeguard the newly acquired territories and markets. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the stage was set for a see-saw battle between the major Western powers, which were divided into two distinct blocks by now and a war looked imminent. As the ground was getting prepared for a large-scale confrontation between the major European nations, certain immediate events of provocation worked as the flashpoint and what ensued was a full-fledged war. The First World War, as it came to be called, turned out to be one of the deadliest wars ever fought and on a scale never witnessed before.

One of the important causes of the February Revolution was the heavy military setback suffered by the Russian army during the First World War. The losses suffered by Russia in the First World War played a definite role in the mutinies and revolts that began to occur. Russian soldiers, with lowered morale, began to fraternize with the enemy. However, Tsar Nicholas II, the last Emperor of Russia, insisted on ruling as an autocrat. He had comprehensively failed to deal adequately with the problems facing the country. Social unrest and public discontent against the government reached a climax, leading to the Russian Revolution in 1917.

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The Revolution in February destroyed the Tsarist autocracy and resulted in the creation of the Soviet Union under a provisional government. However, soon Russia witnessed a period of dual power. In the dual powersystem, the provisional government held state power, whereas the national network of Soviets, led by socialists, had the allegiance of the lower classes and the political left. During this disordered phase, mutinies, protests and strikes became the order of the day. Finally, in the October Revolution, the Bolshevik party, under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin, deposed the provisional government. Besides the developments during the First World War, there were many other causes of the Russian Revolution.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

Describe the causes for the outbreak of Russian Revolution.

Discuss the course of the Russian Revolution.

Discuss the impact of the Russian Revolution

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The First World War placed an unbearable strain on Russia's weak government and economy, resulting in mass shortages and hunger. In the meantime, the mismanagement and failures of the war turned the people, and particularly the soldiers, against the Tsar. The soldiers felt that Tsar's decision to take personal command of the army was responsible for their defeats. The revolution against the Tsars began in Petrograd by the workers in response to bread shortages. People believed that the government was hoarding the bread in order to increase the prices. However, a revolt by the workers', by itself, was very unlikely to result in the Tsars' abdication. An important phase of the revolution was the mutiny of the Petrograd garrison and the loss of control over Petrograd by the Tsar. In March 1917, the Tsar first lost control of the streets, then of the soldiers, and finally of the Duma, which resulted in his forced abdication. The Marxist historians have

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grossly exaggerated the extent of political involvement in the Revolution, and it would be fair to say that only at a very late stage of the Revolution the socialist political parties became involved. When it became clear that the Duma was also ineffective, the unrest for bread shortages increased and culminated in two revolutions in 1917. The first revolution in February overthrew the Tsar on 15 March 1917, and set up a moderate provisional government. Nicholas II, his wife, Tsarina Alexandra, and his children were killed by the Bolsheviks in July 1918. Meanwhile, when the provisional government also failed to live up to the expectations and proved no better than the rule of Tsars, it was overthrown by the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917.



The new Bolshevik government was fragile at first and its opponent Whites tried to destroy it, causing a bitter civil war in 1918–20. But, due to the effective leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, the Bolsheviks or Reds won the civil war and called themselves the Communists. Later, they consolidated their power and Lenin was able to begin the task of leading Russia to recovery until his premature death in 1924.

The Russian Revolution of 1917, which is popularly known as the Bolshevik Revolution, is one of the most significant events in the history of the twentieth century world. It is considered as significant as the French Revolution. In fact, some Marxian historians rank the Russian Revolution even higher than the French Revolution. They contend that while the French Revolution put an end to the autocratic rule and paved the way for the growth of democratic sentiments and ideals of political equality, the Russian Revolution apart from bringing about political equality also sought to bring about social and economic equality. It gave a new current to the thoughts of Communism and Socialism which sought to create a new society, culture and civilization. It asserted that the real power of the society must rest in the workers because they alone produce national wealth. The Russian Revolution was also important because it was the first attempt to give practical shape to the doctrines and theories of Marx, and it was the most important effect of the First World War.

The Russian Revolution was the result of a series of events that occurred during 1917, which caused two separate revolutions in February and October, with a great deal of political wranglings in-between and which eventually plunged the country into civil war before leading to the formation of the Communist State.

Causes for the Outbreak of the Revolution

In February 1917, the Russian Revolution was an important event in the course of Russian history. It has complex causes, nature, and effect and is critical in the twentieth century international history analysis. Even the major causes of this unrest of the common people towards Tsar Nicholas II and aristocratic landowners are numerous and complicated to neatly summarize.

However, there were various factors and forces which were responsible for the Russian Revolution in 1917. The main factors were the series of bad judgements by the Tsar, the resentment at the treatment of peasants cruelly by the landowners, experience of poor working conditions by labourers and workers in the industries, and an increasing sense of political and social awareness of the people in general because of democratic ideas that reached Russia from the West. Proletarian dissatisfaction was further combined by some immediate events of the time like shortages of food and successive military failures.

I. Series of bad judgments by the Tsar: The system of Tsar fell for a series of bad judgements by the Tsar. In the First World War, the war against Germany meant that troops could not be deployed in force against the Russian revolutionaries, the underestimation of the extent of the revolts in Petrograd by Tsar until it was too late, and the Tsar generals convinced him that only the Duma could deal with the situation. The imposition of strict censorship laws and suppression of any and all forms of political dissidence were some another factors that became responsible for the Revolution. All of these events led to the fall of autocratic system which was centuries old and that had generated lot of anguish and discontentment among the people of Russia.

The Revolution started as a peaceful bread protest on International Women's Day. Bread shortage was there not because of low harvest, but because the 'railway system had become overloaded due to the war, and was unable to supply the northern cities with grain'. In mid-February, it was realised that the supply of flour in Petrograd was left for only 10 days. Skilled labourers were recruited by the army, while the rail network had been divided into sections, which was controlled by civil government and by the military. This, along with the general belief that the government was hoarding bread so as to drive up prices, meant that the demonstration of anger was aimed against the regime of Tsarist because of its inability to distribute the food stocks. The aggrieved people transformed into an unruly mob because their protest was supported by demonstrations by the more militant Petrograd factory workers. Along with this, the textile labourers and Putilov steel workers went on strike and the crowds swelled from 1,00,000 to over 2,00,000 within three days. However, it would be untrue to describe the protests as purely a revolt by the workers, as it bore the character of a general uprising of the people. But it would be right to state that the 'workers played a leading role in the demonstrations and were especially active in the violent aspects of the uprising'. However, in general the protest took the form of a peasant riot, as the frenzied mob frequently indulged in violent acts.

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Tsar Nicholas II himself believed in autocratic principles. His ministers like Pleve had dictatorial powers who continued the old policy of Russification, persecution and reaction. The wife of Pleve and the Queen who was under the influence of Rasputin, a reactionary, interfered in the affairs of administration in 1902. A group of intellectuals who were influenced by the Western ideas published a paper called 'Liberation and in 1904'. These intellectuals also formed a party known as Union Liberator. In the same year, the autocratic minister Pleve was assassinated. For all these reasons, Tsar Nicholas II thought of changing his policy and appointed Mirski, a man of liberal ideas, as the Home Minister. The press was given greater freedom. In November 1904, the representatives of Zemstvos or provincial assemblies met at St. Petersburg. They demanded freedom of conscience, speech, publication, public meeting and associations. They also demanded for a Parliament for the whole country empowered to pass all the laws and control the government. The Tsar did not concede the demands of common people and the discontentment continued to grow among the people. The students of the University of Moscow paraded the streets and shouted the slogans of 'down with autocracy' and 'stop the war'. On 22 January 1905, a large number of workers under the leadership of Gapon marched towards the imperial palace to present a petition to the Tsar containing their grievances. The royal troops did not allow them to proceed and fired at them. There was loss of life and strikes were observed in various parts of the country. The incident was known as 'Slaughter of Bloody Sunday'. Subsequently there were rebellion within the army and the general Duke Sergus, the uncle of the Tsar was assassinated. At last, the Tsar Nicholas II was forced to issue a Manifesto in October 1905.



To change a mass-demonstration into a revolution required more than just workers who were protesting in the streets; it required a loss of authority for the government in the city of Petrograd. This occurred due to mutiny of troops from the Petrograd garrison in reply to a massacre. In a brutal incident in Znamenskii Square, which was a popular gathering place for conducting political rallies, the Pavlovsky Guard Regiment troops fired upon a crowd that failed to disperse. In the massacre about forty civilians were killed, which enraged the Petrograd garrison members into mutiny. Even though a major power transfer to the workers was there, a revolution was hardly inevitable as the mutineers were described as a 'leaderless rabble',

who when threatened, panicked instantly and ran for protection. It was inaction by Tsar that changed a minor rebellion into a revolution.

The revolt also needed an organization for becoming successful. Unfortunately, many of the political parties leaders who had expected most to gain from the revolt, were in exile. Most of the socialist parties were not expecting a revolution, as Lenin had predicted in January that, 'We older men perhaps will not live to see the coming revolution'. Even Sergei Mstislavsky, who was a Social Revolutionary leader, admitted: 'The revolution found us, the party members, in our sleep'. Therefore, in the early stages of the February revolution there was relatively little political involvement, especially from socialist parties. Political parties, telephoned each other to be aware of what was happening on the street. This showed the lack of organization. Due to this complete disorganization of the socialist political parties, it is difficult to describe the February 1917 revolution as a political revolution.

There was also very little confidence from the political parties that the protests were of political nature. Alexander Gavrilovich Shliapnikov, a Russian communist revolutionary best remembered as a memoirist of the October Revolution of 1917, said: 'Once the crowd got their bread they would be content and disperse'. The Tsar was also doubtful if the protests would actually transform into a revolution. Initially, he responded to reports received from Petrograd by telling his Minister of the Courts that, 'The fat-bellied Rodzianko has written me a lot of nonsense, which I won't even bother to answer'. However, he heard that the protests were getting worse, and that the Petrograd garrison had rebelled. So on 28 February 1917, the Tsar ordered for the dissolution of Duma and for the deployment of troops against the protestors. In response, an executive committee was created by the Duma, while a Soviet was formed by the soldiers and workers, and became a rival power-base to the Duma, situated in the Tauride Palace left wing. The Soviet had the power or control in the streets, but it had no legal authority to rule, while the Duma had the legal authority to rule, but had no authority in the streets to support it. The Tsar's late reaction to the protests meant that a power base had been created in the Soviet, and this could never collaborate with the autocratic system. Only two possible outcomes were there—full revolution or full military suppression by already stretched armies.

Because of the war with Germany, the second of the two options became a near impossibility; to withdraw troops from the front so as to suppress the revolutionaries and this would result in almost certain defeat at the hands of the Germans. However, General Ivanov was appointed by Tsar so as to send troops to Petrograd and restore order in the capital. The extent of the revolutionary action in the city was under-estimated by both Ivanov and Tsar, and this was confirmed once General Khabalov was consulted by Ivanov in Petrograd about the situation. Khabalov announced that, 'the whole city was in the hands of the revolutionaries' and that 'the ministers had been arrested by the revolutionaries'. Upon hearing this, Ivanov decided that the offensive would be futile and decided against it. In effect, the decision had been made, and Tsar had little opportunity to do anything but abdicate. Rodzianko confirmed this, and he felt that nothing short of the Tsar's abdication would pacify the rebellious troops.

The continuation of strikes and mutinies have led to supplies to the front being cut; it was also dreaded that turmoil in the capital might broaden to the front only a few hundred kilometers away, resulting in mass desertion in the army. Therefore,

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the generals of Tsar advised Nicholas to abdicate so as to save Russia's war effort, and to somehow satisfy the mutineers in Petrograd. So Nicholas agreed to abdicate and initially named his son, Alexis, as his successor.

Another reason for the fall of the Tsar was his overdependence on Rasputin, a self-proclaimed psychic, mystic and healer, who had unconventional ways of healing diseases and dealing with human sins. A friend of Tsarina had suggested Rasputin when doctors failed to cure her son, Alexis, of hemophilia. Somehow, Rasputin was able to provide temporary relief to the boy. Soon, he gained entry to the Russian court and became an advisor to the Tsars. Rasputin was a womanizer and was much criticized by Russian journalists for his debauched ways and orgies. He weakened the confidence of the Tsars' subjects in him. Whenever Nicholas was away, the German-born Alexandra (his wife), who was a puppet in the hands of Rasputin, added to the subjects' discontent by giving power to those who did not deserve it. Rasputin had assured the Tsar that Alexis would get well, but when Nicholas saw no scope for improvement in Alexis' health, he decided to hand over the autocracy to his brother, Mikhail. But when Mikhail learned that the Soviet was violently opposed to the continuation of the rule of Romanov dynasty, he refused to accept, and the autocratic Tsar rule in Russia ended.

The workers were the most important and most active part of the February revolution which began as a general uprising of the people. Peasants and soldiers sympathy and mutiny led to power being wrested from the hands of the Tsar, and being transferred to the Soviet and the Duma. A series of bad judgements made by the Tsar, underestimating the revolution extent, as well as the war impact, showed his inability to suppress the revolution. When the Tsar's attempts to restore order in Petrograd failed, he was advised to abdicate, which he followed on March 1917, ending over three hundred years of Romanov rule in Russia.

It is interesting to note that the city of Petrograd was first known as St. Petersburg. This name was dropped later after the war with Prussia because the term 'burg' was seen as too German. During 1918, the communists were keen on getting rid of any Tsarist legacies, and Petrograd became Leningrad in the honour of Vladimir Lenin. Later in 1991, the name of St. Petersburg was restored to the city.

- II. The economic causes:** Economic factors like poverty, misery and exploitation of the masses by the nobility played a major role in the Revolution. In the industrial sphere, Russia was backward and depended only on foreign capital. Because of the industrialization, a number of factories were set up in Russia. A large number of peasants left their jobs to take up jobs at these factories. However, the conditions of work in these factories were quite miserable. They had to work for long hours at very deplorable wages. They had to go without any medical relief in case of an accident while on duty. They did not even have a weekly holiday. The workers were not permitted to form trade unions to bargain for better service condition and better salaries, and it was considered a crime to form trade unions. As a result, their economic condition was quite miserable. The concentration of large number of dis-satisfied workers gave rise to the feeling of political consciousness and contributed to the anti-Tsarist sentiments.

The condition of peasants was not better. Russia was mainly a backward agricultural country before the Revolution. The royal family, the nobility and the clergy owned most of the agricultural land. The peasants had a very small land holding. Many of them had to earn their livelihood from that small piece of land. In addition to

this, they had to make use of primitive tools and methods of cultivation which were not very effective or productive. As a result of this, the poor peasants became poorer because huge sums of rent, tax and tributes were to be paid by them to their landlords every year. Moreover, no attempt was made by the government to improve these conditions.

Due to the above economic factors there was an imbalance in the social structure. Due to this, 70 per cent of the Russian population was illiterate. The social structure of Russia was completely devoid of education, medical relief, and public health. Above all the system prevailing in the whole of Russia made Russian social life, highly miserable, inhuman and wretched. This created great discontent among the factory workers and farmers who in order to end this economic and social system were ready to revolt against the Tsarist government.

III. Political causes: Political factors also formed an important cause of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Politically, Russia was subjected to autocratic rule of the Tsar Nicholas II, who ruled the country in a ruthless and oppressive manner. No doubt as a result of the 1905 Revolution a parliament had been established in Russia but the sovereignty still rested in the hands of the Tsar and his henchmen. There were no constitutional checks on the authority of the Tsar and the people groaned under the autocratic rule. Even the church extended full support to the autocratic rule of the Tsars through the theory of divine rights of kings. The henchmen surrounding the Tsar were also in favour of the autocratic rule and opposed all kinds of reforms. The tsar also secured the support of the army by providing them numerous facilities which enabled them to lead a comfortable life. The masses on the other hand had no legal means of improving the social structure. A strike was considered to be a mutiny. The people had no media to ventilate their grievances. All this was naturally resented by the common people who wanted a democratic system of government on the pattern of western democracies be introduced in Russia. The people also insisted on effective share in the government of the country, and pleaded for the freedom of speech and press as well as equality before law. However, the Tsar Nicholas II turned down these demands.

People demonstrated against this ruthless, absolute and repressive Tsarist government in 1905. A peaceful demonstration at St. Petersburg was fired upon by the Tsarist troops. This incident further alienated the people from the Tsar Nicholas II. Widespread strikes, riots and the famous mutiny on the Battleship Potemkin ensued. Such was the climate in 1905 that Tsar Nicholas saw fit, against his will, to cede the people their wishes. In his October Manifesto, Nicholas II created Russia's first constitution and the Duma, an elected parliamentary body. The Duma (Parliament) had limited powers so it could not intervene immediately in the matters relating to the Tsar. Later the growing discontent among the masses manifested itself in all aspects of national life. Till that time the working class became highly receptive to Marxist ideas infiltrating into Russia. In 1893, the Social Democratic Party was founded and in 1903, this party was split into two; the Bolsheviks led by Nikolai Lenin, and the Mensheviks led by Martov. While the former was revolutionary and supported by Stalin, the latter was evolutionary and was supported by Trotsky. Therefore by 1917, the ground was fully prepared against the Tsar and the growing discontentment amongst the common people was waiting to burst and turn into a violent revolution. Therefore, historians have observed that the perversity of the Tsar and his blindness to the potential strength of the new forces, which were surging round him, produced the Revolution.

IV. Impact of liberal Western ideas: The material revolution in Russia was followed by a revolution in the realm of liberal thoughts and ideas. The Russian intellectuals were now divided between the two opposing groups of Slavophiles and Westernizers. Peter the Great was a westernizer much ahead of his times and that is why influences of Western culture are still apparent in St. Petersburg, a city created under him. The Slavophiles and westernizers had completely opposite views on the Russian civilization and how it was to be carried forward. The Slavophiles believed in the superiority of the Russian culture over the Western culture, and though they supported the emancipation of serfs and valued the freedom of speech and press, they still believed in an autocratic form of government. The Westernizers, as the name suggests, were of the view that western technology and ideals of democracy should be adopted by Russia to march on the road to success. They also believed in socialism, liberalism and political radicalism.

Large number of Russians especially the middle class came in contact with the ideas of progressive writers and they were particularly influenced by the writing of Karl Marx who pleaded for the abolition of capitalism and establishment of a regime where the power would be in the hands of the workers and the labourers. The other notable writers and intellectuals whose writings influenced the Russians included Tolstoy, Turgenev and Dostoevsky. These writings revolutionised the minds of the Russians in such a way that the educated and the enlightened people called the support of the intelligentsia and demanded political reforms on the Western lines. On the other hand, the radicals and the followers of Marx and Bakunin stood for socialism. The Russians at the same time also came in contact with the Western ideas of democracy. During the First World War the Allies declared that they are fighting the War for the welfare of general people. The Russians were greatly impressed by this declaration and were determined to fight for the establishment of people's rule in their country. As a result of the 1905 Revolution in Russia the people were assured of some sort of participation in the administration of the country. However, it was not conceded. So the people were determined to get this in actual practice. Under these circumstances nationalism also made its way into Russia which aimed at destroying everything in the existing order of the country. As a consequence of the above factors, demands started becoming louder for the establishment of constitutional and liberal form of government in Russia.

V. The emergence of revolutionary parties: After 1912, various revolutionary parties', especially the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, fortune revived. Both these groups developed from an earlier Marxist movement, the Social Democrat Labour Party, and Karl Marx's ideas influenced them. Karl Marx was a German Jew (1818–83) and his political ideas were mentioned in the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, and *Das Kapital* in 1867. According to Karl Marx economic factors are the main reason for the historical change and that the capitalists bourgeoisie exploited proletariat (workers) everywhere. It contended that in a fully industrialized society, the workers will 'inevitably rise up against their exploiters and take control themselves, running the country in their interests'. According to Marx, this was 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'.

Vladimir Lenin was one of the social democrats, who helped edit the revolutionary newspaper *Iskra* (The Spark). In 1903 over an election to the editorial board of *Iskra* the party had split into Lenin supporters, the Bolsheviks, the Russian word

for the majority and the rest, the Mensheviks means the minority. The Bolsheviks wanted a small-disciplined party of professional revolutionaries who would work full time to bring about revolution, because the industrial workers were in a minority in the country. Therefore, Lenin believed that they must work with the peasants as well, and get them involved in revolutionary activity. The Mensheviks, on the other hand, were happy to have party membership open to anybody who cared to join. They believed that a revolution could not take place in Russia until the country was fully industrialised, and industrial workers were in a big majority over peasants. They had very little faith in co-operation from peasants who were actually one of the most conservative groups in society. The Mensheviks were the strict Marxists, believing in a proletarian revolution, whereas Lenin was the one moving away from the Marxism.

The Social Revolutionaries were another revolutionary party. They were not Marxists and they did not approve of increasing industrialization, and did not think in terms of a proletarian revolution. After the overthrow of the Tsarist regime, they wanted a mainly agrarian society based on peasant communities operating collectively.

VI. Military debacle in the First World War: The military debacle suffered by Russia during the First World War also provided a great impetus to the revolutionary movement in Russia. Historians also agree that Russian failures in the War made the revolution certain and caused the troops and the police to mutiny, as there were nobody left to defend the autocracy. The common people held the Tsar responsible for the reverses suffered by Russia. The sufferings caused to the people due to shortage of food and heavy losses of men and money in the War further agitated their minds. They appealed to the Tsar to bring necessary improvement in the condition by assuming personal responsibility for the affairs of the government. However, the Tsar did not bother about the demand and indulged in fanciful luxuries. His officials also ignored the wishes and interests of the people. All this forced the people to think in terms of getting rid of the Tsar and this made the Revolution inevitable.

The War also exposed the incompetence of the government, corrupt organization, shortage of equipment and poor transportation and distribution system in the country. Although there was plenty of food in the country during the War, it did not reach the big cities in sufficient quantities, because most of the trains were being monopolised by the military. Bread was scarce and very expensive. By January 1917, most groups in the society were disillusioned with the incompetent way the Tsar was running the War. Sensing the outcome of the War, the aristocracy, the Duma, industrialists, and the army began to turn against the Tsar Nicholas II, realising that it would be better to sacrifice the Tsar to avoid a much worse revolution that might damage the entire social structure.

Course of the Russian Revolution

The first important event of the Revolution in Russia was the March Revolution or the February Revolution in Russia. It was a chaotic affair and it marked the termination of over a century of civil and military unrest. It is important to mention that the March and the November revolutions are till date known as the February and October revolutions in Russia. This is so as the Julian calendar was being used by the Russians, which was

13 days behind the Gregorian calendar which was used by the rest of Europe, and in 1918 Russia adopted the Gregorian calendar.

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In 1905, Russia suffered humiliating losses in the Russo-Japanese War and, during a demonstration against the War in the same year, firing was opened by the Tsarist troops on an unarmed crowd and this further isolated Nicholas II from his people. There were widespread strikes, riots, and the famous mutiny on the Battleship Potemkin. Such was the atmosphere in 1905 that Tsar Nicholas saw fit, 'against his will, to cede the people their wishes'. Nicholas created Russia's first constitution and the State Duma, an elected parliamentary body in Tsar's October Manifesto. However, the belief of Nicholas's in his divine right to rule Russia meant that 'he spent much of the following years fighting to undermine or strip the Duma of its powers and to retain as much autocracy as possible'. In 1914, when Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by political activists in Serbia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on its neighbours. Serbia talked to Russia for help. Tsar Nicholas II 'saw a chance to galvanize his people against a common enemy, and to atone for the humiliations suffered in the Russo-Japanese War'.

World War I

Russia's disastrous participation in World War I was the final blow in many ways to the rule of Tsar. In the very first rendezvous with the Germans (who had sided with the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the Battle of Tannenberg, the Russian army lost and there were 1,20,000 casualties to Germany's 20,000. Nicholas left St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1915 to take personal charge of the army due to continuing series of losses and setbacks. Around this time conscripts and untrained troops to the front were being sent by Russia, with 'little or no equipment and fighting in an almost continual retreat'. In 1916, morale was lowered as the pressure of waging the war was the hardest on proletarian families, 'whose sons were being slaughtered at the front, and who suffered severe food shortages at home'. The regime of Tsar and the Imperial took the blame as civil unrest heated up.

The February-March Revolution (1917)

According to the Russian calendar, the March Revolution started on 23 February 1917. However, the first revolution actually started on 8 March. On that day, there were bread riots in St. Petersburg. Soon it became a city-wide demonstration as furious industrial workers left factories and protested against shortage of food. They were soon joined by the rioters, and on the next day—encouraged by political and social activists—the crowd had enlarged and virtually every industry, shop and enterprise ceased to function as the entire populace went on strike. Tsar Nicholas wanted the police and military to intervene, but the military was no longer faithful to the Tsar and many mutinied or joined the people in demonstrations. There were fights all over the place and the whole city was in chaos. After five days over 80,000 troops from the army mutinied and looting and rioting spread extensively. The Duma and the generals were convinced, and further, that the Tsar who was on his way back to Petrograd, would have to leave. Nicholas senior generals suggested that he could save the monarchy by renouncing the throne. Faced with this weak situation Tsar Nicholas abdicated his throne on 15 March, and handed over the power to his brother Michael. But, Michael refused to acknowledge leadership unless he was elected by the Duma. He resigned the next day, leaving Russia without any head of state.

The Provisional Government

A Provisional Government was quickly formed by leading members of the Duma after Romanovs abdicated and it was internationally recognised as the legal government of Russia. It was to rule Russia until elections were held. However it did not have any absolute or stable power. A trade union of workers and soldiers—the more radical Petrograd Soviet organization—wielded enormous influence. It supported full-scale socialism over more moderate democratic reforms which were favoured by the Provisional Government members. Russia was consumed with political fervour after centuries of imperial rule, but ‘the many different factions, all touting different ideas, meant that political stability was still a long way after the February Revolution’.

Emergence of Lenin

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov—also known as Lenin—was one person who was eager to take advantage of the chaotic state of affairs in St. Petersburg. Most of the time of Lenin was spent travelling, working, and campaigning in Europe—partly because of fear for his own safety, as he was known Socialist and was considered as an enemy of the Tsarist rule. However, when the Tsar was arrested, and Russian politics was in chaos, Lenin found the opportunity to lead his party, the Bolsheviks, to power. He negotiated a return to Russia from Switzerland, his home, with the help of German authorities. As a supporter of withdrawing Russia from the Great War, the Germans were willing to help Lenin’s passage back through a ‘sealed train’. The Russian people as well as many leading political figures welcomed Lenin’s return to Russia in April 1917. Lenin immediately condemned the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet policies and ideologies instead of uniting the fractious parties. In his April Theses, published in the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda*, he believed in non-cooperation with the liberals (i.e., non-hardline Communists) and an immediate end to the War. Initially, his uncompromising stance isolated both Lenin and the Bolsheviks, but with powerful slogans like ‘Peace, land and bread’, Lenin won the hearts of the Russian people—who were increasingly unable to ‘stomach war and poverty’.

During the summer of 1917, Lenin attempted to invoke another revolution, the likes of which had taken place in February, with the motive of overthrowing the Provisional Government. Lenin sought to maneuver the Machine Gun Regiment which refused to leave Petrograd (as St. Petersburg was then known) for the frontline. However, the coup was thwarted by Kerensky, who was the most important figure of the time and a member of both the Provisional Government and Petrograd Soviet. Experienced troops entered the city to suppress any dissidence and the Bolsheviks were accused of being involved with the Germans. Whilst Lenin escaped to Finland, many were arrested. Despite all this Lenin continued plotting and scheming. Meanwhile Kerensky suffered his own setbacks in politics and even had to appeal to the Bolsheviks for military aid when he feared his War Minister, Kornilov, was aiming for a military dictatorship. ‘By autumn the Bolsheviks were climbing into the ascendancy, winning majority votes within the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. Leon Trotsky was elected as president of the former’.

The October-November Revolution

By the Julian calendar used in Russia at the time, the Revolution took place in November 1917, and the October Revolution is therefore often referred to as the November Revolution.

While Russian politics was still in a state of constant flux, Lenin realized that it was the time to capitalize on his party's popularity. He planned a coup that would overthrow the Provisional Government which was increasingly ineffective and replaced them with the Bolsheviks. On 10 October, he held a famous meeting with 12 party leaders, and tried to persuade them that there was need for a revolution. Despite the fact that he received the backing of only 10 of them plotting went ahead.

Differences between the Provisional Government and the Soviets

It was only with the arrival of Lenin from Switzerland and Trotsky from America on the scene that the Russian revolutionary movement assumed new direction. They denounced the provisional government of the country as subservient to the bourgeois of England and France, and laid emphasis on true revolution. They demanded for ending the War without annexation and indemnities, and pleaded for the transfer of all powers to the Soviets and abolition of army, the police, and the bureaucracy. They supported confiscation of all estates, nationalization of all land and merger of all banks into a national bank under the Soviet control. On the other hand the provincial government headed by Kerensky continued to work for the introduction of parliamentary institutions on the Western pattern in Russia. However, the provisional government and the Soviets were sharply divided on the issues of democratization of the army and Russian foreign policy. The provisional government was opposed to democratization of army while the Soviets favoured it. On 1 March 1917, the Soviet issued an order which provided for establishment of elective committees in every army unit, the sending of delegates to the Soviet by each unit, the control of all political activities in the army and army committees by the Soviet, the abolition of compulsory salute and simplified formulas for addressing the officers, etc. On the issue of foreign policy sharp differences existed between the Soviet and the provisional government. While the government considered the revolution as a protest against the ineffective conduct of the War by the imperial regime and insisted on pursuing the War till the victory, the Soviet stood for ending of War with immediate effect and demanded peace without annexation and indemnities. It aimed to put necessary pressure through mass demonstrations to bring the imperial foreign policy to an end.

In view of the sharp differences between the government and Soviets much could not be accomplished. However, it goes to the credit of the provisional government that it succeeded in ending the autocratic rule of the Tsars. It declared Russia as a Republic and courageously tackled the nationality problem. It also put the Poles and Finns on road to independence, encouraged cooperatives in place of private enterprises, and passed a number of laws concerning civil right, prison reforms, equal rights for women, universal suffrage, and religious freedom. But its policies in the field of land reforms were not encouraging. It also failed to exercise proper control over the armies.

Rise of the Bolsheviks

The growing unrest among the workers, peasants, soldiers, and the prevailing anarchical condition in the country were fully exploited by the Bolsheviks under Lenin. They promised nationalization of land as well as banks and industries and won the popular support. Due to this, the Bolsheviks came out victorious in the elections to towns and provincial Soviets. By promising the much desired peace they also won over the soldiers to their side. Encouraged by its growing popularity, the Bolsheviks decided to start an armed uprising. They intensified propaganda for direct action and formed their own Red Guards. As a result, large number of soldiers left the ranks and the peasants continued to capture lands from the proprietors through plunder and violence. In October 1917, Lenin created

the Military Revolutionary Committee which gave the Bolsheviks an effective control over the troops in Petrograd. The Bolsheviks had already raised the armed factory workers as the Red Guards. Lenin wanted to take full advantage of the existing national mood and favoured a revolt at an early date. A Politburo, an inner group of the Committee, was formed to take necessary decisions in this regard. On the other hand, the Provisional Government of Russia led by Kerensky proceeded with certain counter measures to meet the Bolshevik threat. But as the provisional government did not enjoy sufficient authority it could not succeed in containing the Bolsheviks.

Provisional government overthrown

Before the Revolution, the common people of Russia expected the autocracy of the Tsarist system to be replaced by a democratic republic with an elected parliament. As per the wishes of the people, Duma was set up in 1906 under the pressure of the Russian Revolution of 1905. In July 1917, Alexander Kerensky a moderate socialist took over as the Prime Minister. But, due to his limited authority, the Duma also faced several problems like the Tsars. Taking advantage of this atmosphere on 20 October 1917 the Bolsheviks executed the long planned coup and overthrew the Kerensky government. On 24 October crucial positions in the city were taken over by the troops loyal to the Bolsheviks. These included the main offices of telephone and telegraph, banks, railroad stations, post offices, and major bridges. Guards who were commissioned by the Provisional Government, and who had got wind of the plot, fled or surrendered without a fight. By 25 October, Bolsheviks controlled every key building in St. Petersburg, except the Winter Palace where Kerensky and the other ministers were held up. Before the Bolsheviks could catch Kerensky, he fled the Palace, never to return to Russia, but his ministers were arrested. On the 26th, the Palace was seized with barely a shot fired, and October Revolution of Lenin achieved its objective with the bare minimum of violence or bloodshed. The pre-Parliament was abolished and the power passed on to the hands of Revolutionary Military Committee. Apart from Georgia, Ukraine and Cossack, the Bolsheviks did not encounter much resistance from any other part of Russia and easily captured power.

Formation of Soviet Government under Lenin

The All Russians Congress of the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers, which met on 25 October 1917, approved the coup, which was accomplished by the Bolsheviks with success. Subsequently the Congress authorized the setting up of a new government under the leadership of Lenin. The new government was to be known as the Soviet of People's Commissars. This confirmed that the Bolsheviks had acquired full control over Petrograd and Moscow. However, most of the country was still independent of control. Fighting lasted a week in Moscow before the Soviet won control and it was the end of November before other cities were brought under control. Very few people expected the Bolshevik government to last long because of the complexity of the problems facing it. As soon as the other political groups recovered from the shock of the Bolshevik coup, there was bound to be some determined opposition. At the same time, they had somehow to extricate Russia from the War and then set about repairing the shattered economy, while at the same time keeping their promises about land and food for the peasants and workers.

Causes for the victory of Bolsheviks

Despite trouble in various parts of the country and active intervention of the Allied powers, the Bolsheviks came out victorious in the October Revolution. Various factors

contributed for the victory of Bolsheviks. First, the opponents of Bolsheviks were dis-united and as a result the Bolsheviks were able to shift their focus on the front where they were most needed. Second, the Bolsheviks control over the interior lines of communications and railways greatly helped them in meeting the challenges. Third, the Bolsheviks carried on an effective propaganda against their enemies, which created dissensions in the ranks of the opponents. Finally, the Red Army which was raised by the Bolsheviks fought with missionary zeal backed by Communist party members who were inspired by high sense of discipline and were willing to undertake any task assigned to them by the Party without any hope of reward. It contributed to the ultimate victory of Bolsheviks in the Revolution.

Lenin's Leadership

The primary basis of Lenin's brilliant successes as the Russian Revolution leader can be attributed to his deep mastery of Marxian theory. He analysed the various objectives and subjective complexities of decaying capitalism and growing socialism, and drew the necessary practical conclusions there from. Lenin indicated clearly to the Communist Party and the common people, both in the Soviet Union and throughout the world, the unfolding path to prosperity and freedom. There was advancement and expansion of Marxism in many fields by Lenin's great theoretical work. Lenin's major achievements include his 'analysis of imperialism as parasitic, decaying capitalism; his survey and evaluation, in the light of dialectical materialism, of many branches of current science; his elaboration of the theory of the uneven development of capitalism and its effects upon imperialist war, proletarian revolution and the realization of socialism in a single country'. He explained the method of transforming imperialist war into civil war; he also analysed the capitalist state and proletariat's dictatorship; Lenin offered a deep theoretical work on the national question; he also clarified the peasantry role in the revolution. Lenin's 'annihilating polemics' against the Narodniks, Economists, Mensheviks and the whole network of international Social-Democracy, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Anarchists, Syndicalists, Trotskyists, and other pseudo-revolutionary groups; and his ability to find solution of innumerable problems, both theoretical and practical, were of the utmost significance in welding the strength and unity—theoretical and organizational—which charted the Bolshevik Party on the course of victory.

Bold and resourceful Lenin was flexible in his political strategy. He repeatedly outlined 'separate mass actions or general courses of policy' upon the initiation and success of which depended the life of the Revolution. These policies were so original and startling that they often surprised the world. On many occasions, Lenin had to persuade opposing majorities of the Central Committee of the Party about the correctness of his proposals, as well as break through the sabotage of alien elements like Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Trotsky and others.

Lenin's great achievements in political strategy were his leadership in the change of the post-war struggle of the masses in 1905 into armed insurrection; in the boycott of the first Duma successfully; converting the imperialist World War into civil war within Russia; in the resolute stand by the Party against the Provisional Government in 1917, and the bold development of the Soviets into the mass organs which overthrew the capitalist, war-making regime; in the mass mobilization to defeat the Kornilov revolt, while at the same time continuing the revolt against Kerensky. Lenin as a political strategist succeeded in determining the precise time and manner for the October Revolution achievement. He gave correct Marxian leadership to the Party and the masses.

During the following years of revolutionary struggle in the USSR, there was Lenin's political masterstroke of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty which gave the revolution a 'breathing-spell' from imperialist attack, saving it from defeat. He led the terribly difficult Civil War and in the complicated development of War Communism. There was his tremendous work of outlining and clarifying the New Economic Policy as the means to get economic reconstruction underway in the devastated country. There was his brilliant attack upon the infantile Leftism of those revolutionaries who refused to work within the reactionary trade unions and bourgeois parliaments.

SUMMARY

- The First World War placed an unbearable strain on Russia's weak government and economy, resulting in mass shortages and hunger. In the meantime, the mismanagement and failures of the war turned the people and particularly the soldiers, against the Tsar, whose decision to take personal command of the army seemed to make him personally responsible for the defeats.
- The first revolution in February overthrew the Tsar on 15 March 1917, and set up a moderate provisional government. When this government also failed to live up to the expectations and proved no better than the rule of Tsars, it was overthrown by the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917.
- The Russian Revolution of 1917 which is popularly known as Bolshevik Revolution is one of the most significant events in the history of the twentieth century world and ranks in importance in the category of the French Revolution.
- There were various factors and forces which were responsible for the Russian Revolution in 1917. The main factors were the series of bad judgements by the Tsar, the resentment at the treatment of peasants cruelly by the landowners, experience of poor working conditions by labourers and workers in the industries, and an increasing sense of political and social awareness of the people in general because of democratic ideas that reached Russia from the West.
- After 1912, various revolutionary parties, especially the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, fortune revived. Both these groups developed from an earlier Marxist movement, the Social Democrat Labour Party, and Karl Marx's ideas influenced them.
- Vladimir Lenin was one of the social democrats, who helped edit the revolutionary newspaper *Iskra* (The Spark). In 1903, over an election to the editorial board of *Iskra* the party had split into Lenin supporters, the Bolsheviks, the Russian word for the majority and the rest, the Mensheviks means the minority.
- In 1905, Russia suffered humiliating losses in the Russo-Japanese War and, during a demonstration against the War in the same year, firing was opened by the Tsarist troops on an unarmed crowd and this further isolated Nicholas II from his people. There were widespread strikes, riots, and the famous mutiny on the Battleship Potemkin.

- The first important event of the Revolution in Russia was the March Revolution or the February Revolution in Russia. It was a chaotic affair and it marked the termination of over a century of civil and military unrest.
- According to the Russian calendar, the March Revolution started on 23 February 1917. However, the first revolution actually started on 08 March. On that day, there were bread riots in St. Petersburg. Soon it became a city-wide demonstration as furious industrial workers left factories and protested against shortage of food.
- Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov—also known as Lenin—was one person who was eager to take advantage of the chaotic state of affairs in St. Petersburg. Most of the time of Lenin was spent travelling, working, and campaigning in Europe—partly because of fear for his own safety, as he was known Socialist and was considered as an enemy of the Tsarist rule.
- The primary basis of Lenin’s brilliant successes as the Russian Revolution leader can be attributed to his deep mastery of Marxian theory.
- In the post-First World War era democracy received a great boost in the world and in the European countries in particular. In most of these countries, monarchies were abolished and demand rose in favour of democracy, representative assemblies, universal suffrage and people friendly representative governments.

KEY TERMS

- **Internationalism:** This is a policy or practice of cooperation among nations, especially in politics and economic matters.
- **Duma:** The Duma was the council assemblies and was created by the Tsar of Russia.
- **Bolshevik Revolution:** It refers to the overthrow of the government of Russia, which took place in the fall of 1917.
- **Communism:** Communism (derived from Latin *communis*—common, universal) is a revolutionary socialist movement to create a classless, moneyless, and stateless social order.
- **Socialism:** This is a social and economic doctrine that calls for public rather than private ownership or control of property and other natural resources.
- **Pravda:** It is a Russian political newspaper and official mouthpiece of Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. (a) Bolshevik Revolution; (b) Lenin
2. (a) True; (b) True
3. (a) League of Nations; (b) Fascists
4. (a) True; (b) True
5. (a) Enabling Act of 1923; (b) Bavarian
6. (a) True; (b) True

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. State the economic causes of the Russian Revolution.
2. Write a short note on the October-November Revolution.
3. Write a short note on the emergence of Lenin’s leadership.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Critically evaluate the causes and course of the Russian Revolution.
2. Explain the February-March Revolution (1917).
3. Evaluate the impact of the Russian Revolution.

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UNIT III TOTALITARIAN STATES

Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- Fascism in Italy
- Role of Benito Mussolini
- The Benefits of Fascist Rule
- Mussolini's Foreign Policy
- Italy Until the Second World War
- Nazism in Germany
- Formation of the Nazi Party
- Rise of Adolf Hitler
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- Summary
- Key Terms
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- Questions and Exercises
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INTRODUCTION

History is replete with examples where dictators have left nations exhausted, overturned and on the verge of social, cultural, economic and especially political breakdown. Dictatorship is a concept that has its origins in the mind of a person, who solely wants to achieve a state of total control over all the intricacies of a nation, and visualizes himself to be the only source of political, social and economic emancipation.

The history of the world very conspicuously reflects the above stated scenario. The world has been a witness to the nature, scope and effects of dictatorship in almost every century. However, the most prominent of all the dictatorships have been seen in the post-World War I era. After the First World War, nations of the world geared towards creating amnesty between the nations, especially Europe. The first decade post-World War I saw rampant changes in the cultural, social and political ideologies of various nations. This period saw the breakdown of old nations, old ways of thinking, and the formation of new nations with new identities, territories including various political and social changes. Various international organizations too were set up which helped in establishing global peace and the phenomenon of democracy especially in Europe was received with open arms. The European nations saw the fall of most of the monarchies and the consequent establishment of a system where people elected their own representatives, had rights to vote along with a governmental system which catered to the newly established social and cultural set up.

However, this reform was short-lived. There was a persistent conservative authoritarianism in smaller nations of Central and Eastern Europe, and nations like Germany, Soviet Union and Italy were dominated by radical dictatorship. Dictatorship in these countries led to an unprecedented control over the masses by the dictator, who vehemently rejected all forms of parliamentary rule. Europe, in particular, witnessed totalitarian dictatorship in various forms. Apart from affecting the political nature of the nations, these states also affected the overall workings of other sovereign states and openly flouted the norms established by the League of Nations which was primarily formed to maintain international peace.

Dictatorship, totalitarianism or fascism—all have common elements and characteristics, however all these ideologies have a common result—defeat, in all parameters and aspects. However, if the dictators see the people as important catalysts for reforms, dictatorship can be perceived to be good in many ways. The present unit details the various causes and implications of dictatorship in countries like Germany and Italy.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the causes behind the rise of dictatorship or totalitarianism in Europe
 - Evaluate the causes of the rise of Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany
-

FASCISM IN ITALY

Various factors were responsible for the rise of dictatorship or totalitarianism in Europe. In the first place, the democratic governments established after the First World War proved to be disappointing as they failed to resolve the social, economic and political problems facing their countries in the post-war period. Their failure was fully exploited to establish dictatorial regimes. Also, the worldwide Economic Depression of 1929 caused enormous hardships and sufferings to people and gave rise to the feelings of frustration, despondency and despair. Similarly, the failure of the League of Nations to check aggression and preserve world peace also greatly contributed to the rise of totalitarian regimes. Japan, Italy, Germany, etc., committed aggression with impunity and the League of Nations was incompetent in taking any action against them.

In addition to the general causes which contributed to the growth of totalitarian regimes in various countries, there were also some specific causes, which augmented dictatorship in Europe. First, the humiliating treatment meted out to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles immediately after the First World War, created a sense of hatred and revenge amongst the Germans. The Treaty had mutilated Germany physically, humiliated her emotionally, suffocated her economically, and encircled her territorially. This greatly offended the popular sentiments of Germany and Hitler fully exploited these sentiments to establish his dictatorship in Germany.

Second, in Italy, the Treaty of Versailles was also seen in a negative light. Though Italy fought on the side of the bigger nations, it could not gain whatever had been promised to her during the War. On the other hand, Italy had to face poverty, discontentment and disorder. The Italian leaders felt that though they had won the War, they had lost peace.

Naturally, the people of Italy sought help from someone who could alleviate them to achieve national ambitions. And they found such attributes in Benito Mussolini, who established his totalitarian rule in Italy.

Third, the successful bid by America and other European powers to curb the growing power of Japan by imposing restrictions on its navy and other ambitions in China, through the Washington Conference of 1921–22 was exploited by the military leaders in the name of ultra-nationalism in Japan to bring discredit to the democratic government and establish a totalitarian rule in Japan.

Fourth, Communism came to Russia during the First World War period. After the War, the Communist leaders were determined to spread Communism all over the world. They crushed all the anti-revolutionary forces within the country with firm hands, tried to promote Communism in other countries of world by resorting to all types of methods.

Rise of Fascism in Italy

During the First World War, though Italy fought on the side of the victorious Allies, it emerged from the War as a defeated nation. Italy was not happy by the Paris Peace Settlement (1919) because it was not given what had been promised by the Allies to it in the Treaty of London (1915). When the interests of Italy and Yugoslavia conflicted, the Allied powers decided in favour of Yugoslavia. This was the main reason of Italy's discontent in the post-First World War period. Italy comprehensively failed to secure anything tangible at the Paris Peace Conference and was left humiliated, disappointed and wounded. Elaborating the situation of Italy, historian J. H. Jackson summarized that, 'Italians felt themselves disgraced in the eyes of the world, swindled by their own politicians. War had cost Italy dear, draining her of money, saddling her with a budget deficit of over twelve thousand million Lire, facing up the cost of living. The political party in power in 1919 was pacifist, its leaders old and cynical. It is little wonder that the Italians turned to violence. A crop of secret societies, blood brotherhoods, terrorist gangs of every sort, sprang up all over the country in soil traditionally fertile for such growths.' The people of Italy felt that the country had failed to secure anything favourable for itself due to the incapability of its leadership and thus, they supported Fascism.

Totalitarianism emerged in Italy in the shape of Fascism under the leadership of Benito Mussolini. The word Fascism had its origin from the Roman word *Fascio* which means a bundle of rods which was once the emblem of the Roman authority.

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In the post-First World War period, the Italian government was faced with a plethora of problems, which were beyond its capacity to solve. Demobilization after the War increased unemployment and the country faced economic bankruptcy, starvation and inflation. Strikes, lockouts and riots by people became the order of the day. The value of national currency fell steadily and the cost of living rose very high. The uneasiness of the government to tackle these mounting problems was quite evident. Between 1919 and 1922, six-coalition governments mostly of heterogeneous character were formed in Italy. This situation prepared the ground for Fascism and the resulting autocracy was the product of the prevailing situation where democratic sentiments proved incompatible with effective parliamentary government.

The Russian Revolution also inspired the authoritarian leadership of Italy. The socialist leaders of the country tried to use the fragile economic condition to their advantage and tried to imbibe the Soviet system of Communism in Italy. Daily strikes and lockout of these socialist leaders further created a chaotic condition, which the Fascist fully exploited.

The faulty system of franchise prevailing in the country and the programme of the Fascists that promised the people 'order and glory' also greatly attracted the people and they extended their wholehearted support to its leaders. Some of the main principles emphasised by the Fascists were:

- (i) Democracy was not suitable for the country because it widens the gap between the rich and the poor, therefore the country could make progress only under one leader
- (ii) The interests of the country must get precedence over individual interests
- (iii) Quality was more important than quantity
- (iv) The Fascist leaders who embodied the will, sentiments and emotions of the people were symbols of nation's pride
- (v) It favoured equal control over all sections of society
- (vi) It favoured aggressive foreign policy and regarded war as an instrument of national interest

Role of Benito Mussolini

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Mussolini and the fascist party were attractive to many sections of society because Mussolini himself said that he aimed to rescue Italy from the existing feeble government. He played an important role in establishing a fascist rule in Italy. Mussolini was born in 1883 as the son of a blacksmith in Romagna. Politically, he was a socialist but began to make a name for himself as a journalist, and became the editor of the socialist newspaper *Avanti*. He separated from the socialists because they were against Italian intervention in the war, and finally started his own newspaper, *Popolo d'Italia*. Before the formation of the fascist party, he was not well known in Italy and outside. Commenting on Mussolini J. H. Jackson said, 'Who was this Mussolini? He was totally unknown outside Italy, and not well known within. The outside world was not much reassured when they heard his record. Son of a village blacksmith, christened Benito after Benito Juarez, the Mexican revolutionary; a firebrand Socialist in his young days; eleven times imprisoned; leader of an abortive coup in June, 1914, during which "red days" twenty men were killed; editor of the Socialist paper *Avanti* until November, 1914, when he was expelled from the party for advocating war against Austria; then editor of the *Popolo d'Italia*, a paper directed by himself and founded, it has been said, with French funds; creator of the Fascist groups; leader of riots against the Socialists who had once been his colleagues it was not a comforting record.'

During the First World War, Mussolini joined the army. The War greatly aroused his patriotic feelings and after the War in 1919, he founded the fascist party with a Socialist and Republican programme and showed sympathy with the factory occupations of 1919–20. The local party units were known as the *fasci di combattimento* or fighting groups. The word *fasces* meant the bundle of rods with protruding axe which used to symbolize the authority and power of the ancient Roman consuls. He tried to arouse national sentiments of the Italian people and inspired them to work for a progressive and powerful Italy. Taking full advantage of the prevailing discontent in the country, Mussolini organised a march to Rome, where the King, Victor Emmanuel III, terrified by this action, dismissed his Prime Minister Luigi Facta and invited Benito Mussolini to form the government. On 30 October 1922 Mussolini came to power in a constitutional manner. Having won over big business houses, Mussolini began to make conciliatory speeches about the Roman Catholic Church which he had earlier criticized. Seeing him as a good anti-communist weapon even the Pope Pius XI swung the Church into line behind Mussolini. When Mussolini announced that he had dropped the Republican part of his programme in 1922, even the king began to look more favourably on the fascists. The anti-fascist forces on the other hand failed to cooperate with each other and made no determined effort to drive the fascists out from Italy.

After assuming power, Mussolini devoted himself to make Italy a powerful nation. During that time, the economic condition of the country was awful. Describing the condition of Italy, historian J. H. Jackson observed.

Now was the time to begin the real work of Fascist reconstruction of Italy. Mussolini had achieved power by force; he could hold it only if he succeeded in improving the economic conditions of his people. Italy was a poor country; with two thirds of her land mountainous and sterile, she could not grow enough wheat to feed her population; with no substantial mineral deposits and no colonies rich in raw materials, she had to rely on exports from foreign countries

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for the stuff of her industries for coal, iron, petrol, and cotton. To pay for these imports, she exported mainly wine, olives and fruit, leatherwork, woodwork and glass, the products of the traditional skill of Italian husbandmen and craftsmen. The exports were not enough to pay for the imports, and the balance was made up, before the war, in a rather humiliating way by the remittances sent back to their families by [the] Italian emigrants, and by the money spent in the country by foreign tourists. During the war the tourist traffic ceased, and after the war foreign countries had no more use for Italian emigrants. Poverty increased in Italy, and the resultant dissatisfaction was behind the strike epidemic of post-war years.

To change the fate of Italy, Mussolini carried out administrative reforms and balanced the national budget. He took measures to stall further devaluation of Italian currency. He tried to eradicate illiteracy by making elaborate provisions for education. He introduced compulsory military training and tried to enhance the naval power of Italy to match it with the naval powers of other European countries, particularly Germany and France. He tried to improve the lot of workers by nationalising all factories and mills and set up syndicates to improve relations between the capitalists and workers. He brought more lands under cultivation and tried to improve and expand transport system and railways. Apart from these, he took several other steps to make Italy economically self-sufficient.

In 1929, Mussolini concluded the Lateran Treaty with the Pope by which the Pope agreed to accept a subordinate position to Mussolini. The Pope was compensated for giving up his political rights. He was permitted to keep in his possession the Vatican and the Cathedral of St. Peters. He was authorised to appoint bishops and teachers to teach religion. Under the pact, the fascist government recognised the Roman Catholic religion as the state religion and religious instructions were made compulsory in all schools. Some historians see the ending of the long breach between the church and the state as Mussolini's most lasting and worthwhile achievement.

The Benefits of Fascist Rule

Much of the Fascist policy was concerned with improving the economy, though Mussolini knew very little about economics. The big drive was for self-sufficiency which was essential for a warrior nation. The early years of Mussolini's rule were successful. Industry was encouraged with government subsidies so that the iron and steel production doubled by 1930, and during this period other industrial productions had also gone up. The 'Battle for Grain' in 1920s encouraged farmers to concentrate on wheat production and by 1935 wheat imports had been cut by 75 per cent. A programme of land reclamation was launched involving irrigation and planting trees in mountainous areas, as part of the drive to improve the agricultural yield.

An impressive public works programme was designed to reduce unemployment. It included the construction of roads, bridges, railway lines, flats, sports complex, schools and new townships on reclaimed land. Due to these infrastructural advantages, education and sporting activities grew manifold and the country performed exceedingly well in sports during the fascist rule as the Italian Soccer Team won the World Cup twice in 1934 and 1938. The 'after-work' organization or Topolaboro provided the Italian people many options like cheap holiday packages, cruises for tours, theatres, dramatic societies, libraries, orchestra and sporting organizations to do in their leisure time. To promote the image of the country as a great power, a pragmatic foreign policy was carried out.

However, the promise of the early years of the Mussolini's rule was in many ways never fulfilled. Little was done to remedy its basic shortage of raw materials like coal and oil. Therefore as an iron and steel producer, Italy could not match even a small state like Belgium. Though the 'Battle for Grain' was a successful endeavour, it was achieved only at the expense of dairy and arable farming. During that period, the wages of farm labourers fell by 20 to 40 per cent. As a result agriculture remained inefficient and farm labourers became the poorest class in Italy. In order to show that Italy had a strong economy Mussolini revalued the currency of Italy, Lira, far too high at 90 to the pound instead of 150 in 1926. Unfortunately, this made Italian exports more expensive in the world market and led to reduced orders. The Great Depression which occurred during the rule of Mussolini in 1929 made matters worse. Exports fell further, unemployment rose to 1.1 million and yet the government refused to devalue the Lira. The regime of Mussolini was inefficient and corrupt, so many of its policies were not carried out properly. Part of the problem was Mussolini himself because he tried to do everything himself and refused to delegate power to others because he wanted total control. On this, D. M. Smith has observed that, 'By trying to control everything, he ended by controlling very little'.

Mussolini's Foreign Policy

The failure of Italy to secure the land promised to it at the Paris Peace Conference had caused much bitterness and dissatisfaction in Italy. Mussolini was determined to revive the past glory of Italy and to make it a great nation by addressing the concerns of injustice meted out to it after the War and he followed an aggressive foreign policy. He himself asserted, 'The main duty of fascist Italy is to keep her army, navy and air forces ready. We shall have to be alert so that we can rearm the five million people at a moment and only then our rights and demands will gain recognition.' In fact, Mussolini wanted to demonstrate to the world that Italy had enough strength not only to protect herself but also to attain the lands she had been promised. An aggressive foreign policy was also helpful in diverting the attention of people from domestic politics. Italy was also keen to regain her Roman inheritance by establishing a Mediterranean and African empire. Mussolini openly declared, 'We are hungry for land, because we are prolific and intend to remain so'.

The objectives of Italy's foreign policy during the fascist regime were summarized by Katharine Duff, 'As things were, the Mediterranean far from being her empire was her prisons; Corsica, Malta, Tunis and Cyprus formed that prison's bars while Gibraltar and Suez guarded its gates and Greece, Turkey and Egypt were ready to complete the chain encircling her. Determined first to break her prison bars and then to march to the ocean without access to which she must be considered only half independent. Italy might push towards the Indian Ocean by linking Libya with Ethiopia through the Sudan towards the Atlantic through French North Africa'. Thus, Italy was keen to have control over the South Eastern Europe, Africa and even further ahead.

Italy and South-Eastern Europe

Mussolini first concentrated his attention on the South-Eastern Europe and took various aggressive steps to strengthen Italy's position in this area. By the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, Italy got back the Dodecanese Islands, which it had surrendered to Greece in 1920. In the same year the Italian army bombed the Corfu Island and occupied it. After the League's intervention and receipt of compensation from Greece, Italy left Corfu.

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This gave a fillip to the prestige of Mussolini. Italy concluded the Treaty of Rome with Yugoslavia in 1924 by which the free state of Fiume was divided between the two. The city of Fiume went to Italy and neighbouring Porto Baros went to Yugoslavia. Likewise, in 1926 the Treaty of Tirana with Albania was signed by which Albania became a dependency of Italy and in 1939 it was annexed to Italy. At the London Naval Conference in 1930, Mussolini demanded naval parity with France, and in 1931 he advocated the revision of the peace treaties.

By these aggressive foreign policy measures Mussolini was able to strengthen Italy's control on the Adriatic, increase her prestige in the Mediterranean, and extended its diplomatic and commercial influence in the South-Eastern Europe.

Seizure of Abyssinia

Abyssinia was the next victim of the expansionist policy of Mussolini. Italy was prompted to undertake this action because:

- (i) It needed more territory for the growing population of the country.
- (ii) It needed raw materials for its growing industries and markets to get finished products.
- (iii) This step was essential to divert the attention of the people from the miserable economic condition of the country.
- (iv) A war against Abyssinia could arouse patriotic spirit of the Italians who had suffered a defeat at the hands of Abyssinia in 1896.
- (v) The Abyssinia area was of strategic value to Italy. It could link the Italian possession in Somaliland, Eritrea and South-East Africa.

Although Mussolini had nourished designs against Abyssinia for a long time, he did not actually undertake this project till he was sure of a military victory against it. The attitude of the League of Nations and other big powers towards the conquest of Manchuria by Japan convinced Mussolini that despite the principle of collective security, nobody was going to stop him from conquering Abyssinia. Further, due to the Great Economic Depression, the great powers of Europe were preoccupied with their domestic problems. Internationally, they were occupied with problem of Hitler's rise to power and the pursuit of an aggressive policy by him. Taking this opportunity into consideration, the Italian troops entered into Abyssinia in October 1935. Immediately the League of Nations declared that, 'Italy had resorted to war in disregard to its obligations under Article 12 of the Covenant'. The League appointed a Co-ordination Committee and asked every member of the League to prohibit all loans or credits to Italy and place an embargo on export to Italy. However, the Italian forces continued to penetrate into Abyssinia and ultimately occupied it in May 1936.

Italy Until the Second World War

During the inter-war period, Mussolini opposed the Union of Germany with Austria, because such a union was likely to restrict the Italian influence in Europe. In 1931, he opposed the tariff union between these two countries, and in 1934 Nazis revolted and wounded the Chancellor of Austria. Mussolini immediately ordered the Italian army to help Austria. Thus, Austria was saved from the German annexation.

In South Eastern Europe, Italy tried to steal a march over France by impressing on the states of the region to form alliances with Italy rather than France. Initially Italy was able to outwit France by forming alliances with both Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. However, later France was able to increase its political influence over small states in Europe. Italy made efforts to destroy political influence of France by the dissolution of the little Entente and substituting it with a combination directed from Italy. When Italy was unable to have a monopoly of these alliances, it encouraged Germany against France's plans of reconstruction. Even in the matter of disarmament, Italy also supported Germany's stand of parity between Germany and French strength. Italy was convinced that it would give the Italian army balance of power in the European continent.

Though Italy was keen to secure German cooperation, Italy's stand on Austria against Germany made it practically impossible for the two to come closer. Consequently, on 7 January 1935, Italy signed a pact with France in Rome. By this Agreement, France met the main demands of Italy in Africa in return for concession by Italy in Central and Eastern Europe. The two parties also undertook to respect their mutual frontiers and abstain from meddling in the internal affairs of each other. Both Italy and France also agreed to oppose any unilateral revision of the Treaty of Versailles particularly with respect to German rearmament. However, after France participated in the economic sanctions enforced against Italy on account of her intervention in Abyssinia, the friendly relations suffered a setback.

After the emergence of Hitler, and rise of Germany under his leadership, Italy started improving its relations with Great Britain. At the Stresa Conference (1935), Italy had aligned itself with France and Great Britain. In January 1937, Great Britain and Italy issued a declaration that they had agreed to preserve status quo in the Mediterranean region. Another agreement was concluded by the two countries in April 1938 by which they regulated a number of issues in the Mediterranean and the Near-East area arising out of Italy's conquest of Abyssinia.

Mussolini by philosophy and attitude was closer to Germany. Therefore, in 1937, Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact, concluded by Germany and Japan in 1936, as a result of which the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis came into existence. Hitler referred to this Axis as 'a great world political triangle and determined to protect decisively their right and vital interests'. In March 1938, Hitler occupied Austria. Mussolini had assumed the self-imposed role of protector of Austria. He informed Hitler that 'Austria did not interest him at all'. By this act, Mussolini was able to earn the gratitude of Hitler but lost his cherished dream of following an independent policy and establishing protectorate over Austria.

Though the Second World War started in September 1939, Italy remained neutral in the initial phase. Its plan was to attack when the Allies were almost exhausted, because that would save Italy from the destruction of the War and would entitle it to share in the spoils of the victory. In 1940, when France was on the verge of collapse, Italy declared war against Britain and France. It formally joined the Triple Alliance with Germany and Japan on 27 September 1940. Italy declared war against Russia in June 1941 and against the US in December 1941. However, after 1942 the course of war changed and the defeat of Mussolini and Italy became imminent, due to continuous defeats and internal economic crisis. In 1943, Mussolini was arrested but later Germany army freed Mussolini and put him back into power. But, when the Allies attacked North Italy in 1945, Italy unconditionally surrendered to Allies. This marked the fall of Fascist Italy.

Check Your Progress

6. Fill in the blanks.
 - (a) The failure of the to check aggression and preserve world peace greatly contributed to the rise of totalitarian regimes.
 - (b) The believed that the interests of the individuals must get precedence over state's interests.
7. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - (a) Mussolini separated from the socialists because they were against the Italian intervention in the First World War.
 - (b) Mussolini concluded the Lateran Treaty in 1929 with the Pope by which the Pope agreed to accept a subordinate position.

The First World War ended disastrously for Germany. The collapse of Germany led to political turmoil in the country. Kaiser William II, the last German Emperor, was held responsible for the debacle of the German army and the miseries of the people. A countrywide anti-monarchist revolution compelled Kaiser to abdicate his throne. To take shelter, he fled with his family to Holland. With his abdication, a Provisional Democratic Government was established under the socialist leadership of Ebert and Scheidemann to manage the affairs of the state simultaneously. The Provisional Democratic Government conducted elections on the basis of adult franchise to elect members to the Democratic National Assembly. The Assembly was entrusted with the responsibility of drafting a Democratic Constitution for the German Republic. The Constituent Assembly met at Weimer on 6 February 1919 because Berlin was still torn by political unrest and drafted a new Constitution. This Constitution came into effect on 11 August 1919 and was known as 'Weimer Constitution'.

The Weimer Republic, which bridged the years between the Hohenzollerns and the Nazis, had a number of outstanding achievements to its credit. Due to the introduction of the Dawes Plan in 1924, Germany witnessed unprecedented prosperity in all sectors. Industrial production recorded an enormous increase. Huge foreign contribution and aid enabled Germany to re-establish the currency and rationalisation of its industrial and business life. The establishment of branches of the foreign firms in Germany not only led to the utilisation of the German raw materials but also provided employment to the huge unemployed German labourers.

In the sphere of foreign policy, Germany, during this period pursued three aims: (i) to induce the Allies to evacuate areas of Germany, which they had occupied; (ii) to restore the sovereignty of the Reich, and recovery of Danzig and the frontier in Upper Silesia; and (iii) settlement of the reparation problems to strengthen Germany's capacity. Through these aims, Germany wanted to make her own decisions. For the achievement of the above objectives, Germany signed the Locarno treaties, by which her frontiers with France were settled. Germany concluded the Treaty of Rapallo with Soviet Union in 1922, by which both the states renounced their respective demand against each other and agreed to cooperate in the commercial sphere. In 1926, Germany was admitted to the League of Nations council with a semi-permanent seat. She succeeded in getting a promise of withdrawal of foreign troops from the Ruhr in 1924 and the valley was freed in 1930. Germany convinced Great Britain, France and Belgium to withdraw their troops from the Rhineland region. The problem of reparation was also largely settled by the Young Plan. In 1932, the Lausanne Conference further cut down Germany's obligations of reparation to \$750 million. During the Weimer rule Germany began to rearm itself after the economic and diplomatic revival. Till the first part of 1930 the economic revival of Germany was started and in 1931, when economic depression was at its worst phase, Germany was spending \$700 million on its arms. Despite all these achievements, the German people, especially the younger generation was not happy with the Republican government and continued to nourish ambitions for a powerful Germany. The attempt on the part of the officials to drag down the ideals and heroes of imperial Germany also greatly irritated the young students, above all the people were not happy with the way the democratic parliamentary system was functioning in the country. The people still

remembered the days when order and discipline prevailed in the Reichstag which was in quite contrast to the bickering and quarrel going on in the lower house of the Republic, and they felt that only a strong man could restore prosperity and prestige to Germany.

Formation of the Nazi Party

Hitler and his associates formed the Nazi party in 1920 after the end of the First World War. In the same year, the party announced the Twenty-five Point Programme, which emphasised the need of scraping the Treaty of Versailles which had been imposed on Germany, establishment of vast German empire after bringing back the lost colonies of Germany, increase in the military power of the country, non-recognition of Jews as the German citizens and their removal from all important positions, ban on the entry of foreigners into Germany, imposition of ban on parties which propagated against nationalism, opposition to communism and opposition to Parliamentary system of government which was detrimental to the interest of the country, etc. In the economic sphere, the party stood for increasing incomes, limitation of profits from wholesale enterprise, land reform, nationalisation of all trusts, departmental stores and ban on land speculation. Similarly, in the social sphere, the party favoured increased old age and maternity benefits, reorganisation of higher education and government control of press, etc. It may be noted, that apart from the so-called Twenty-five Point Programme, the Nazis did not possess any positive philosophy. However, by demagogic appeals to latent emotions, fear of communism and resentment against the Treaty of Versailles, the party soon gained considerable following among the lower-middle classes who as a result of the widespread unemployment and extreme frustration were suffering untold agony.

The Nazi party was to have its own army. The army constituted two types of members; one who wore the brown shirt and the other wore the black shirt. The members of the army were recruited from ex-soldiers, veterans and hoodlums, and took part in all types of demonstrations. They were expected to disturb the meetings of other parties and ensure that their party meetings were not disturbed. The Nazi party also started its own paper entitled *Radical Observer*, which awakened the emotions of common people against Communism and the Treaty of Versailles. The extreme nationalists, who could never reconcile themselves to Germany's defeat, firmly supported the ideology of Nazi party.

Rise of Adolf Hitler

The leader of the Nazi party and the Nazi movement in Germany, Adolf Hitler was an Austrian citizen. He began his career as a political agitator after the First World War. Before embarking on a political career in September 1919 at the age of thirty, Adolf Hitler had been an insignificant person in Germany. Hitler had no formal qualifications, and he was an aimless drifter and failed artist before joining the army on the outbreak of war in August 1914. In the army he was not considered worthy of promotion as there was 'a lack of leadership qualities', although his award of the Iron Cross First Class proved that he was very courageous. He succeeded in gaining and exercising supreme power in Germany during the next 26 years and, in the process, arguably left more impact on world's history in the twentieth century than any other political figure. 'The explanation for this remarkable transformation rested partly on Hitler himself, in his particular personal qualities and gifts, and partly in the situation in which he found himself, with a nation in deep crisis.'

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In 1920, Hitler joined the German workers party, the National Socialist German Worker's Party, popularly known as the Nazi Party. Hitler's skills for publicity and as a speaker gradually popularised the Nazi Party. Soon Hitler succeeded in ousting the leader of the party Drexler and assumed supreme power in the party. In 1923, he attempted to overthrow the Bavarian government at a coup but this attempt was unsuccessful. During his trial he made the remark, 'There is no such thing as high treason against the traitors of 1918', which attracted much attention. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment, but was actually released after nine months in prison. During his imprisonment, Hitler wrote the *Mein Kampf* or 'My Struggle' in which he repudiated the parliamentary practice of majority rule and foreshadowed the future programme of Germany's territorial ambitions. According to Hitler there were easy solutions to the complex problems which the people of Germany faced in the 1920s. He blamed Germany's weak government and stated that Germany lost the war because of 'a stab in the back'. He further argued that if pure Germans who were also known as Aryans controlled Germany's destiny, it would return to greatness. Hitler blamed Jews for many of Germany's problems.

During the imprisonment of Hitler, the Nazi party was proscribed and its disintegration was set in. The party participated in the elections of 1924, but the number of its supporters fell considerably. In 1925, Hitler rebuilt the Nazi Party, and decided that he had to obtain power by democratic means rather than by force. The Wall Street crashed in 1929 because of the Great Economic Depression and the subsequent worldwide depression also hit Germany hard. Hitler used this situation and blamed Jews and Communists, using them as scapegoats to gain support for himself. Hitler spoke in a charismatic style that impressed the people of Germany. He blamed outsiders for causing troubles in the nation. Due to his charisma, the popularity of Nazi party started increasing. In the election of 1932, the Nazi Party captured 230 of 608 seats in the Reichstag. However, Hitler was restless to capture power. In 1932, he contested the presidential elections but lost to Hindenburg by a narrow margin. Therefore, during the primary part of the 1930s, the Nazi movement had grown quite powerful in Germany.

In early 1933, Hindenburg dismissed his Chancellor Schleicher and he was succeeded by Hitler as the chancellor by forming a coalition with the Nationalists and others. Hitler dissolved the Reichstag and ordered for a fresh election on 5 March 1933. The Nazis, now in power, were able to use all the apparatus/devices of the state, including the press and radio to try to whip up a majority. Senior police officials were replaced with reliable Nazis and the second private army got instructions to show no mercy to the Communists and other enemies of the state. Six days before the ballot, the Reichstag building was burnt, Hitler accused the Communists of arson and bloody revolution. He ordered the arrest of thousands of Communists and Social Democrats and suppressed the campaign activities of the anti-Nazi parties. The Nazi party was able to secure 44 per cent of the votes polled. The Nazis won 288 out of the 647 seats, 36 short of the magic figure for majority. The Nationalists again won 52 seats. This turned out to be the best performance of Nazis in a free election, and they never won an overall majority. However, Hitler managed majority in the Reichstag by putting all the Communist deputies behind the prison. Within hundred days, all opposition was suppressed. In August 1934, Hindenburg died and Hitler himself became the president of Germany and by the Enabling Act of 1933, he also got dictatorial powers.

Factors for the Rise of Nazism in Germany

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Adolf Hitler, who was almost unknown until 1929 in or outside Germany, emerged as the unchallenged leader of Germany in 1934. Several factors contributed to the rise of Nazism and Hitler to power in Germany and these were as follows:

1. **Treaty of Versailles:** After the First World War, Germany was filled with a sense of discontent, hatred and revenge, as the Treaty of Versailles crippled her physically, exhausted her economically and weakened her emotionally. The humiliating treatment meted out to Germany under the Treaty of Versailles was greatly resented by the German people and army, and they wanted to see Germany rise to the glory which it once enjoyed.

No doubt, during the Republican rule, Germany's terrible amount of war indemnity was reduced, reparation was divided into 58 installments and the allies withdrew their armies from the Rhine land, yet the Germans nourished a feeling of resentment against the humiliating and insulting behaviour meted out to them by the Allied power and eagerly looked for an opportunity to avenge the same.

These sentiments were fully exploited by Hitler, who in the words of Benns, 'was an adept psychologist, a clever demagogue and a master showman, he was a resourceful agitator, a tireless worker and an able organizer'. He openly encouraged the Germans 'to consign the Treaty of Versailles into the waste-paper basket'. The humiliating treatment was also the major factor, which Hitler exploited to win the popular support. As Langsam said, 'The continuing hostile attitude of France, the quarrel over the Ruhr, the Rhineland occupation, the Saar and the Reparation, the wrangling over disarmament-all these fed the anger of many Germans'.

2. **Growing danger of Communism:** The growing strength of the Communists in Germany was also exploited by the Nazis to strengthen their position. After the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Communist influence in Germany considerably increased. The Communists organised themselves effectively and succeeded in capturing a number of seats in the Reichstag. Hitler expressed grave concern over these developments and warned the people that the Communists of Germany on getting power shall become the orderlies of the Russian masters and Germany shall be clouded by destructive doctrines of Communists. He impressed on the people that Nazism alone could keep the growing influence of Communism under check. Hitler asserted, 'If the National Socialist Party collapses there will be another ten million Communists in Germany'. By taking an open anti-communist stance, the Nazi Party succeeded in securing the support of the big industrialists and wealthy people who were greatly scared of the Bolshevik ideals. Highlighting this point Schuman says, 'Industrialists and Junkers subsidized the brown shirt Nazi storm troopers hoping to make use of them against Communists, Socialists, the trade unions and other threats, real or imaginary, to prosperity and privilege.'
3. **The economic crisis and growing unemployment:** The economic crisis, which confronted Germany in the post First World War period, and the growing unemployment, also considerably contributed to the rise of Nazism in Germany. No doubt as a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was forced to suffer in agricultural production, colonies, foreign investments, merchant marine and foreign trade contracts. However, after 1923, Germany staged a remarkable recovery and made considerable industrial progress.

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By the end of 1929, as a result of commercial boom, the standard of living of the Germans rose very high. However, this position did not last long and after the middle of 1929, the country witnessed a steep economic decline. The reparation quarrels continued and Germany was not able to secure any foreign loans. The foreign countries raised tariff walls against the German goods. As a result, there was considerable increase in the number of unemployed youth. During the period of Economic Depression following the 1930s, unemployment figures reached an all-time high. In a population of 6,40,00,000 there were around 10 per cent people who were unemployed. Even the condition of the farmers and shopkeepers was miserable. The Nazi Party fully exploited this and asserted that all it would see that no one walked without a job in Germany. Hitler said that the day the entire German race happened to abide by the Nazi ideology; it would recapture its lost glory, power and prosperity. Fortunately for the Nazis, when they came to power, the world began to recover from the Economic Depression. This greatly appealed to the German people and they extended full support to the Nazi Party.

4. **Resurgence of militant nationalism:** The Germans by nature and temperament had weakness for prestige and glory. They could not reconcile with the weak democratic parliamentary system prevailing in the country and still remembered with pride the days when order and discipline prevailed in Reichstag. They felt that only a strong man could restore the past prosperity and prestige of Germany. When they found such a strong man in Hitler, who promised them all glory, they welcomed him with open arms. The Germans felt the need for a strong man to check the growing popularity of Communism in the country, due to swelling ranks of the discontented workers.
5. **Nazi propaganda against Jews and absence of unity among the opposition:** The anti-Semitic propaganda carried on by the Nazi Party also contributed to its popularity. The Nazi Party described the Jews as traitors who conspired with the Allies during the war and had the potential to commit treason against Germany. It impressed on the people that their hardship was due to the exploitation by the Jews, who dominated the German economy. It called upon the people to settle the accounts with the Jews. In view of this anti-Semitic propaganda, all the anti-Jew people thronged behind the Nazi Party. Also, the rise of Nazi Party in Germany was facilitated due to a lack of any strong opposition party or unity among the opposition parties. As a result the Nazi Party did not encounter any effective resistance and gained smooth popularity.
6. **Establishment of volunteer corps:** The development of Nazism in Germany was greatly facilitated by the establishment of volunteer corps. Under the Peace Settlement, the number of forces of Germany was considerably curtailed and a large number of German soldiers were thrown out of employment. The Nazi Party roped in all these soldiers and organised volunteer corps, which served as party army. The party army was divided into two wings. One wing wore brown shirts and red patch on the left arm with *swastika* sign. The other wing, which consisted of the chosen members of the party, wore black shirts. These party army members propagated the programme of the Nazi Party and worked for safeguarding its interests. These cops rendered great service to the popularisation of the Nazi Party in Germany.
7. **Leadership of Adolf Hitler:** The personality of Hitler was one of the major factors in the rise of Nazism in Germany. As historians pointed out, Hitler was an

adept psychologist, a clever demagogue and a master showman. He was a resourceful agitator, a tireless worker and an able organiser. He was convinced that a political revolution must be preceded by a psychological revolution. He tried to create this psychological revolution through his autobiography *Mein Kampf* and mentally prepared the young Germans to avenge the wrong done to them by the Allies in 1918.

8. **Contrast between the Weimar Republic and the Nazi Party:** The Weimar Republic, which was the name given to the parliamentary representative democracy of Germany after the First World War, was dull in working and unable to maintain law and order. Whereas on other hand, the Nazis promised strong, powerful, and decisive government for the restoration of national pride. People were impressed by this irresistible combination of the Nazi party.

Moreover, Germans favoured Nazism as it provided a sense of normality after the Weimar Republic instability. Therefore, any violent act committed by the Nazis, whether directed or aimed against the Jews, Communists or any opposition faction of German society, was legitimised and this in turn led to both active and passive consent from the German population, whose attitudes were already finely tuned by propaganda. The success of Nazis, whether in foreign policy, matters of economy or the creation of a sense of national community explains peoples' active consent throughout most of the Nazi regime or period. The impact or effect of Nazism was so much on the German population that even when the tide began to turn against the Nazis in 1942–43, Nazism was not actively resisted by the German population; instead, they remained passive with some informal resistance.

Although many different interpretations concerning the extent of Nazism's social-political impact are there, it is unreasonable to state that partial inroads were made into wider German society. Significant and important changes took place in mentality among the general population as well as the creation of a national community, but at the same time there was no change in the basic class structure. These inroads can be explained by the successes of the Nazi regime in the fields or areas of foreign policy, increased economic prosperity and political stability, as these were manipulated by Nazi propaganda and there was terror to create a society that either actively supported the regime, or was too afraid to openly resist it. For millions of Germans, the feeling of insecurity and instability of Weimar was replaced by a sense of normality and strong leadership, and for rest of the world this was the violence and injustice of the Nazi regime or period. The rise of Nazi Germany and the aggressive policies pursued by it encouraged the growth of revisionist sentiments strengthened the status quo forces. This led to a division of the world in two hostile camps, which ultimately culminated in the Second World War.

SUMMARY

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Check Your Progress

8. Fill in the blanks.
- (a) Hitler got the dictatorial powers through the _____.
- (b) Hitler attempted to overthrow the _____ government at a coup in 1933.
9. State whether the following statements are true or false.
- (a) In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler repudiated the Parliamentary practice of majority rule in Germany.
- (b) The Treaty of Versailles was greatly resented by the German people and was one of the factors that led to the rise of dictatorship.

- In the post-First World War era democracy received a great boost in the world and in the European countries in particular. In most of these countries, monarchies were abolished and demand rose in favour of democracy, representative assemblies, universal suffrage and people friendly representative governments.
- The concept of modern totalitarianism arose in the 1920s and 1930s. It was a new kind of state. Even today many scholars have trouble defining it. According to the early writers it originated with the total war efforts of the First World War, and that the War called forth a tendency to subordinate all institutions and classes to the state so as to achieve the supreme objective—victory.
- Various factors were responsible for the rise of dictatorship or totalitarianism in Europe. In the first place, the democratic governments established after the First World War proved a miserable failure as they failed to solve the social, economic and political problems facing their countries in the post-war period. Their failure was fully exploited to establish dictatorial regimes. Also, the worldwide Economic Depression of 1929 caused enormous hardships and sufferings to the people and gave rise to frustration, despondency and despair among the people.
- Totalitarianism emerged in Italy in the shape of Fascism under the leadership of Benito Mussolini. The word Fascism had its origin from the Roman word *Fascio* which means a bundle of rods which was once the emblem of the Roman authority.
- Mussolini was born in 1883 as the son of a blacksmith in the Romagna. Politically he was a socialist but began to make a name for himself as a journalist, and became the editor of the socialist newspaper *Avanti*. He fell out with the socialists because they were against Italian intervention in the War and started his own newspaper, *Popolo d'Italia*. Before the formation of the fascist party, he was not well known in Italy and outside Italy. During the First World War period, he joined the army and took active part in it. The War greatly aroused his patriotic feelings. To change the fate of Italy, Mussolini carried out administrative reforms and balanced the national budget. He took measures to stall further devaluation of the Italian currency. He tried to eradicate illiteracy by making elaborate provisions for education.
- The leader of the Nazi party and Nazi movement in Germany, Adolf Hitler was an Austrian citizen. He began his career as a political agitator after the First World War.
- Hitler and his associates formed the Nazi party in 1920 after the end of the First World War. In the same year the party announced the Twenty-five Point Programme, which emphasised the need of scraping the Treaty of Versailles which had been imposed on Germany, establishment of vast German empire after bringing back the lost colonies of Germany, increase in the military power of the country, non-recognition of Jews as German citizens and their removal from all important positions, ban on the entry of foreigners into Germany, imposition of ban on parties which propagated against nationalism, opposition to communism and opposition to parliamentary system of government which was detrimental to the interest of the country, etc.

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- In the economic sphere, the party stood for increasing incomes, limitation of profits from wholesale enterprise, land reform, nationalisation of all trusts, departmental stores and ban on land speculation.

KEY TERMS

- **Pravda:** It is a Russian political newspaper and official mouthpiece of Communist Party of the Russian Federation.
- **Totalitarianism:** It is the concept of modern totalitarianism arose in the 1920s and 1930s. It was a new kind of state.
- **fasci di combattimento:** The local party units in Italy were known as *fasci di combattimento* or fighting groups. The word *fasces* meant the bundle of rods with protruding axe which used to symbolize the authority and power of the ancient Roman consuls.

ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

- 1 (a) League of Nations; (b) Fascists
- 2 (a) True; (b) True
- 3 (a) Enabling Act of 1923; (b) Bavarian
- 4 (a) True; (b) True

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What were the benefits of the Fascist rule?
2. Compare the ideologies of Benito Mussolini and Adolph Hitler.

Long-Answer Questions

- 1 Explain the causes for the rise of dictatorship or totalitarianism in Europe with special reference to the rise of Fascism in Italy.
- 2 Evaluate the causes of the rise of Nazism in Germany.

a. FURTHER READING

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UNIT IV WORLD WAR II

NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

Three factors were responsible for the expansion of imperialism which were very significant to the start of the First World War. These factors included the demand for raw materials by the European nations, the emerging sense of nationalism, and military expansion. The demand for raw materials was the main reason for the growth of imperialism.

The First World War and the subsequent Great Economic Depression considerably weakened many erstwhile European powers but it also led to the rise of dictatorship in several countries. The tensions and resentments resulting from the First World War and the interwar period in Europe made a bigger conflict unavoidable. The culmination of all these events led to the outbreak of the Second World War. Unlike the 1914–18 (First World War), the Second World War was a much more complex affair with major campaigns taking place in the Pacific and the Far East, in North Africa and Russia as well as in Central and Western Europe and the Atlantic. This War later turned out to be even more horrific and disgraceful compared to its earlier version. Many historians still believe that the Second World War was Hitler's personal war, and that he always intended to fight a war—as a re-run of the First World War. He did not believe that Germany had lost fairly. However, it is difficult to accept that the Second World War started only because of Hitler's assault on Poland. In fact, it was a continuation of the First World War and the chain of political crisis that followed from 1919 to 1939. The main cause of the two World Wars was definitely the desire of Germany to become the greatest world power. But the Second World War was also a war of revenge initiated by Germany. It cannot be denied that Germany stood first and foremost for revenge. It also stood first for rearmament and then for loot and German domination. But historians like A. J. P. Taylor do not agree. According to them, 'Hitler never intended a major war, and at most was prepared only for a limited war against Poland.' However, many historians believe that the policy of appeasement adopted by England and France towards the dictatorial powers, largely contributed to the commencement of the War.

NOTES

From the mid-1920s until 1937, there was a mistaken notion that War must be avoided at all costs, and Great Britain and even France drifted along, accepting the various acts of aggression and breaches of the Treaty of Versailles.

In May 1937, when Chamberlain became the British Prime Minister, he gave a new drive to appeasement. He took the initiative to find out what Hitler wanted and further wanted to show him that reasonable claims could be met by negotiation rather than use of force. Chamberlain went to the extent of observing at the time of Locarno treaties that, 'no British government would ever risk the bones of a single British grenadier in defense of the Polish Corridor', the German's thought that Great Britain had turned her back on Eastern Europe. Appeasement reached its climax at Munich, where Britain and France were so determined to avoid war with Germany that they made Hitler a present of the Sudetenland, setting in motion the destruction of Czechoslovakia. This act of Britain and France emboldened Hitler even more who had decided to destroy Czechoslovakia as part of his *Lebensraum* (Living Space) policy as he hated the Czechs for their democracy as well as for the fact that their state had been established under the controversial Versailles settlement.

This unit discusses the causes and effects of the Second World War. It also discusses the growth of colonialism and nationalism in Burma, Indonesia and Vietnam.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the causes of the Second World War
- Assess the significance of the Munich Conference, 1938

SECOND WORLD WAR: CAUSES AND EFFECTS

The Treaty of Versailles was being seen by Germany as a mark of humiliation. When Hitler came to power in Germany, he decided not to honour the treaty that was a source of mortification for Germany. Under Hitler, Germany had become an aggressor and a totalitarian regime. Hitler had his own expansionist plans and he had strengthened his army and navy to carry on his plans. But the Great Britain and France wished to avoid a repetition of World War I, and so adopted the diplomatic policy of appeasement. Under this policy, they allowed Hitler to capture territories. The Treaty of Versailles allowed the demilitarization of Rhineland. Hitler gave excuses of Germany feeling threatened and so sent the German forces to capture Rhineland. He feared the interference of France and Great Britain, and had ordered his forces to retreat if they faced resistance by France. But both France and Great Britain failed to act and Hitler was encouraged to capture more territories. The Treaty of Versailles also forbade Germany to capture Austria, but Austria was Hitler's birth country. So, Hitler decided to integrate Germany and Austria. And even here, Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Allied Powers adopted the appeasement policy to secure peace, which the League of Nations had clearly been failed to do. Part of this inaction can be attributed to the economic slump that most economies were facing at this time. This inaction by the Allied Powers instilled more confidence in Hitler.

The Treaty of Versailles had made provisions for the creation of Czechoslovakia that also comprised the Sudetenland. Sudetenland was mainly occupied by the German population. The Nazi influence had spread even in Sudetenland, and in April 1938, a demand for autonomy came from the Sudeten Nazis. At this point, Chamberlain feared German invasion of Czechoslovakia. So, he issued a warning of Britain's interference to Hitler if Czechoslovakia was captured by him. Hitler ordered his military forces to launch an attack on Czechoslovakia.

Chamberlain tried to hold peaceful negotiations with Hitler to prevent the invasion of Czechoslovakia. But Hitler had a new demand—that of absorbing Sudetenland into Germany. The Czech President was advised by Britain and France to hand over all German territories that had a majority of German population. But this meant a huge loss to Czechoslovakia.

Hitler warned that he would occupy Sudetenland and will expel the Czechoslovaks living there. Soon, events turned in a different direction, and a four-power conference was held on 29 September, comprising Hitler, Chamberlain, Édouard Daladier (the Prime Minister of France) and Benito Mussolini (the Prime Minister of Italy) in Munich. They allowed Hitler to carry on his invasion of Sudetenland, but allowed that an international commission would be established to decide the fate of other disputed areas. Czechoslovakia was denied support from all other countries, and so, it had no alternative but to comply. A peace treaty was signed between the United Kingdom and Germany. Chamberlain believed that he was able to establish peace now that the peace treaty had been signed. But he could not be more wrong as a month later, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist, and was divided among Germany, Hungary, Poland and an independent Slovakia. (See Figure 5.1)



Fig. 5.1 Map of Sudetenland Showing its Integration with Germany

The act of appeasement and capitulation before Germany that unfolded in Munich exposed the vulnerability of the erstwhile European powers like Britain and France, and paved the way for more such acts of aggression. The policy of appeasement helped in temporarily averting the War but it gave Hitler an apparently effortless way of furthering his policy of aggression through the 1930s. In his book *The Origins of the Second World War* (1961) A. J. P. Taylor argues that, 'Appeasement was a logical and realistic policy, but the mistake made by Chamberlain was of abandoning it which brought the war on'.

Propaganda Campaign in the Sudetenland

Hitler's excuse for the opening propaganda campaign in the Sudetenland was that 3.5 million Sudeten Germans under their leader Konrad Henlein, were being discriminated against by the Czech government. It is true that unemployment was higher among the Germans, but apart from that they were probably not being seriously discriminated against. The Nazis organised huge protest demonstrations in the Sudetenland, and clashes occurred between the Czechs and the Germans. The Czech President, Benes, feared that Hitler was stirring up the disturbances so that the German troops could march in to restore order. The British Prime Minister Chamberlain and the French Prime Minister Daladier were afraid that if this happened, war would breakout. They were determined to go to almost any lengths to avoid war and they put tremendous pressure on the Czechs to make concessions to Hitler. Chamberlain flew to Germany twice to confer with Hitler, but no progress could be made.

The Munich Conference, 1938

In a conference held in Munich, Germany, an agreement was negotiated among the major powers of Europe without the presence of Czechoslovakia. This Agreement was signed by Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy. The main aim of the Munich Conference was to discuss about the Sudetenland's future in the face of territorial demands that were made by Adolf Hitler. In other words, it was an Agreement that permitted Nazi Germany's annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland. Sudetenland comprised areas along the borders of Czechoslovakia, which were mainly inhabited by the ethnic Germans. These areas were of immense strategic importance to Czechoslovakia, as most of its border defenses and its banks were situated or located there. When it seemed that war was inevitable, Chamberlain and Daladier were invited by Hitler to a Four-power Conference which met in Munich on 29 September 1938. Here a plan that was actually written by the German Foreign Office was produced by Benito Mussolini and it was accepted.

According to the plan unveiled at the Conference, Sudetenland was to be handed over to Germany immediately, but Germany along with the other three powers had to assure the rest of Czechoslovakia will remain intact. Neither the Czechs nor the Russians were invited to the Conference. The Czechs were told that if they resisted the Munich decision, they would receive no help from Great Britain or France, even though France had guaranteed the Czech frontiers at Locarno. The state of Czechoslovakia which was not even invited to the Conference felt betrayed by this act of the United Kingdom and France, and the Czechs and Slovaks called the Munich Agreement the 'Munich Dictate'. Sometimes, the phrase Munich Betrayal is also used because the military alliance which Czechoslovakia had with France and the United Kingdom was not honoured. The Government of Czechoslovak realising the hopelessness of fighting the Nazis alone reluctantly agreed to abide by the rules mentioned in the Agreement. According to the Settlement, Germany got the Sudetenland starting 10 October 1938 and also had de-facto control over the rest of Czechoslovakia as long as Hitler agreed to go no further. After some rest on 30 September, Chamberlain went to Hitler and asked him to sign a peace treaty between the United Kingdom and Germany. After this was interpreted to Hitler, he happily agreed. When Chamberlain came back in Britain, he was given a rapturous and joyful welcome by the public who thought war had been averted. Chamberlain himself remarked, 'I believe it is peace for our time'.

Though the British, the French, the Nazi military and the German diplomatic leadership were pleased, Hitler was furious. He felt as if he was forced into acting like a bourgeois politician by his diplomats and generals. He shouted furiously soon after the meeting with Chamberlain and said, 'Gentlemen, this has been my first international conference and I can assure you that it will be my last'. However, everybody was not so enthusiastic like Britain and France. Churchill called Munich 'a total and unmitigated defeat'. Duff Cooper, the First Lord of the Admiralty, resigned from the Cabinet, saying that 'Hitler could not be trusted to keep the agreement'. Later, it was proved that they were right.

The German Occupation of Czechoslovakia, 1939

As a result of the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia was crippled by the loss of 70 per cent of its heavy industry and almost all of her fortifications to Germany. Slovakia began to demand semi-independence and it looked as if the country was about to fall apart. Hitler pressurised the Czechoslovakian President, Hacha, into requesting Germany for help to restore order. Consequently in March 1939 Germany troops occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France protested but as usual took no action. Chamberlain said the guarantee of the Czechoslovakian frontier given at Munich did not apply, because technically the country had not been invaded rather Germany troops had entered by invitation. However, the German action caused a great rush of criticism. Even for the first time the appeasers were unable to justify what Hitler had done because he had broken his promise and seized non-Germany territory. Even Czechoslovakia felt this was going too far and for that it hardened its position. After taking over the Lithuanian port of Memel, Hitler turned his attention to Poland.

Hitler's Demand for the Return of Danzig

The German resented the loss of Danzig and the Polish Corridor at Versailles, and now that Czechoslovakia was safely out of the way and Polish neutrality was no longer necessary. In April 1939 Hitler demanded the return of Danzig and a road and railway across the Corridor, linking East Prussia with the rest of Germany. This demand was not unreasonable, since Danzig was mainly German speaking. However, after the seizure of Czechoslovakia the Poles were convinced that Germany demands were only the preliminary to an invasion. Already strengthened by the British assurance of help in the event of any action which threatened Polish independence the Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck rejected the German demands and refused to attend a conference. The British pressure to surrender Danzig had no impact on the Poles.

The only way to save Poland could have happened through a British alliance with Russia but the British response was slow and they were hesitant in their negotiations for an alliance, which allowed Hitler to reach out first and sign a non-aggression pact with the USSR. It was also agreed to divide up Poland between Germany and the USSR. Hitler was convinced now that with the Russian neutrality, Britain and France would not risk intervention. When the British ratified their guarantee to Poland, Hitler took it as a bluff. When the Poles still refused to negotiate, a full-scale German invasion began on 1 September 1939. Even on this situation the British Prime Minister Chamberlain had still not completely thrown off appeasement and suggested that if Germany troops were withdrawn, a conference could be held, but Germany preferred to remain silent on this. Only when pressure mounted on him in the parliament and in the country Chamberlain did send an ultimatum to Germany.

When this expired on 3 September, Britain declared war with Germany. Soon afterwards, France also declared war.

Causes of the Second World War

The Second World War which began in 1939 lasted for 6 years. Major powers of Europe were involved in this War, battles were staged in all corners of the world and 'it was the most widespread war in history, with more than 100 million people engaged in the military exercise that ensued'. In a state of total war, the major participant countries placed their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities and abilities at the service of the war effort, and this erased the distinction between the civilian and military resources. This War was marked by many significant events involving the mass death of civilians, which included the holocaust and the only use of nuclear weapons in warfare. The War resulted in 50 million to over 70 million fatalities. Because of these deaths, the Second World War is considered as the deadliest conflict in all of human history. Although the immediate cause for the outbreak of the Second World War was the invasion of Poland by Germany but the real causes were much deeper and diverse in nature.

1. The Follies of Victors in the First World War

The Second World War origins were contained in the First World War itself. At the end of the First World War, many of the disputes were outstanding which still needed to be settled. When Germany surrendered, the Germans felt a huge amount of resentment for other countries interfering in their matters. The ill-feeling and divide between Germany and other countries was so massive that Germany was not even invited to participate in the peace treaties that were put in place at the end of the War. The Treaty of Versailles that specifically dealt with Germany's future left no room for discussion on the part of the Germans. The consequence was that Germany was left bitter and full of hatred for those who had sought to demean it as a race-hatred that would be exploited by Hitler in the 1930s during his rise to power. 'Hitler stood under the banner of revenge against other countries for Germany's defeat. His desire for power was justified by claims that he wanted to get rid of the government that surrendered in the First World War, and replace it with his own organization, the National Socialist German Workers' Party, which became known as the Nazi party, so that he could have full control of the European powers that had subjugated Germany after 1918.' Thus, it is justified to conclude that the First World War was the major cause of the Second World War as it was the first in the chain of events that finally led to the declaration of war in 1939.

2. The Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was concluded in 1919 immediately after the First World War but the same angered the German people for several reasons. The first was that it was a Diktat or Dictated Peace settlement and Germany had no say in the preparation of the Treaty. Germany was forced to agree to the terms of this harsh Treaty and the mass opinion which was decisively not in favour of it. Over the period of time, other European powers realised that the original terms had been very strict. The basis of the Treaty was mainly spirit of revenge. Germany was deprived of her colonies, territories and natural resources and was also burdened with reparations which were beyond its capacity or control to honour. This factor of dictation and humiliation led to the spirit of revenge. Germany started looking for a chance to tear off the Versailles treaty and finally when Hitler broke the Treaty after many years, it was taken as an indication that many people agreed with Hitler that the Treaty had been wrongly thrust on the Germans.

The consequence of the Treaty of Versailles was that it did not settle any dispute; it created more conflicts between countries which were already restless and were trying to recover from the previous war. If the Treaty of Versailles was drafted with magnanimity, and foresight, and Germany was meted with a light treatment, the Second World War might have been turned away. Thus, the short sighted and selfishness of the winners was one of the main causes that paved the way for another World War.

3. Aggressive Nationalism of Germany

Another reason was the desire of the German leaders to make her a world power and to take on the policy of militarisation greatly added to the Second World War. After Hitler's position was consolidated, he embarked on the path of expansion of German empire. He occupied Rhineland, Czechoslovakia and annexed Austria. After this, he casted his eyes on Danzig and Poland. Hitler could pursue aggressive policies due to an attitude of indifference on the part of Great Britain and France. This 'aggressive nationalism' of Germany ultimately led to the Second World War.

4. Rise of Fascism in Italy

The growth of extreme nationalism in Italy in the form of Fascism was another factor responsible for the Second World War. Benito Mussolini, the Fascist leader glorified war. He said, 'war alone bring to their highest tension all human energies and puts the stamp of nobility upon people who have the courage to meet it'. It was under Mussolini that Italy began to think of restoring the glory of the Old Roman Empire. Italy annexed Abyssinia and in Spain the Italian volunteers were able to place General Franco in the saddle. In 1937 Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact to strengthen its position and concluded a 10 years alliance with Germany in 1939. It was agreed by both the countries to help each other if any of them was involved in war.

5. Japanese Imperialism

Another cause of War was the Japanese imperialism. After the First World War, Japan obtained many concessions at the Peace Conference. However, these were to some extent taken away from Japan by the Washington Conference of 1921–22. But Japan had decided to dominate the Far East. In 1931, Japan intervened in Manchuria and in spite of opposition from the League occupied it. Japan started an undeclared war against China in 1937 and conquered many cities one after other. When the Second World War began the Chinese war was still going on. Japan had joined Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis, and this gave a further momentum to the Japanese programme of expansion and conquest. A war was inevitable under such circumstances.

6. The Great Economic Depression

An economic strife throughout the world was caused due to the Economic Depression which was triggered by the stock market crash in America in the late 1920s. America could not finance Germany to meet the obligations of reparations, and instead they wanted the money back from Germany. As a result of this America went into isolation as it wanted to nurse its own economy and avoided being dragged into another costly European war. Economic crisis was being faced by countries all over the world, and distrust started to develop again between countries. There was unemployment all over the world, and this problem was solved by countries by creating large armies. In Germany,

Adolph Hitler's Nazi Party sought to establish a fascist government. With the beginning of the Great Depression, domestic support for the Nazis rose and, Hitler was appointed the Chancellor of Germany in 1933. In the aftermath of the Reichstag fire, a totalitarian single-party state was created by Hitler and it was led by the Nazis. During that time in order to overcome the serious problem of unemployment some of the countries started arms manufacture, but this gave a serious setback to disarmament efforts and promoted military competition among the states. Therefore, the global Economic Depression which surrounded the world for some years after 1929 was also a contributing cause of the Second World War and this gave Germany an excuse to break away from the Treaty of Versailles and establish larger armed forces on their own turf.

7. Failure of the League of Nations

In 1919 the League of Nations, an international organisation, was set up to help keep peace in the world and eliminate war as an instrument of policy. The intention was that all countries would be members of the League and that in case of disputes between countries they could be settled by negotiation rather than by force. If this was not successful then countries would stop trading with the aggressor country and if that too did not work out then countries would use their armies to fight. Theoretically, the League of Nations was a good idea and did have some early successes. But finally it turned out to be a failure.

In the late 1920s the whole world was hit by a depression. A depression is when an economy of the country falls, trade decreases, businesses lose income, prices drop and unemployment rises. Japan was hit badly by the Economic Depression in 1931. People lost confidence in the government and turned to the army to find a solution to the problem. Manchuria in China, an area rich in minerals and resources was invaded by the army. China appealed to the League of Nations for help and solution. The dictatorial Japanese government was told to order its army to leave Manchuria immediately. However, the army took no notice of the government orders and continued its conquest of Manchuria.

Then the League called for countries to stop trading with Japan but due to the Economic Depression many countries did not want to risk losing trade and disagreed to the request. After this the League made a further call for Japan to withdraw from Manchuria but instead Japan left the League of Nations. Italy invaded Abyssinia in October 1935. The Abyssinians were unable to withstand an attack by Italy and appealed to the League of Nations for help. The League criticised the attack and called on member states to impose trade restrictions with Italy. But these trade restrictions were not carried out as they would have little effect because Italy would be able to trade with non-member states, particularly America. Furthermore, Great Britain and France did not want to risk Italy attacking them. A meeting was held to stop Italy's aggression by the leaders of Great Britain and France and it was decided that Italy could have possession of land in Abyssinia only if there were no further attacks on the African country. Although Benito Mussolini accepted the plan, but there was a public outcry in Great Britain and the plan was ultimately dropped. In 1935 Italy occupied Ethiopia and Albania in 1936. Though economic sanctions were imposed by the League upon Italy yet the other members did not apply them.

Encouraged by these developments Germany defied the Treaty of Versailles in 1936 and rearmed itself. In 1938 Germany occupied Austria and Czechoslovakia by using force. The League remained silent. In 1939, Russia attacked Finland, and this led to Russia's expulsion from the League.

There were many reasons for the failure of the League of Nations. These were as follows:

First, though the idea of formation of the League of Nations came from the American President Woodrow Wilson, there was a change of government in the United States before the Treaty was signed and the new Republican government refused to join it. An early blow was suffered by the League when the US could not join it. Germany was not allowed to join the League as a punishment for having started the First World War and Russia was also not included due to a growing fear of Communism. Some of the other countries decided not to join and some joined but later left the membership. The main idea of collective security was that when one country attacked another, the aggressor would have sanctions imposed against it. First there would be material sanctions and then military sanctions. The trading with that country would be stopped. This process was known as collective security, as all the other countries were supposed to support the League and contribute to stopping the aggressive country from waging a war. Even those states who accepted membership of the League showed indifference to this principle of collective security.

Second, the League of Nations was powerless. The main weapon or tool of the League was to ask member countries to stop trading with an aggressive country. However, this did not succeed as countries could still trade with non-member countries. When the Economic Depression in the late 1920s hit the world, countries were unwilling to lose trading partners to other non-member countries.

Third, the League had no army of its own. Member states were to supply the soldiers. However, countries were reluctant to get involved and risk provoking an aggressive country into taking action directly against them and failed to provide troops.

Fourth, the League was not able to act quickly. The Council of the League of Nations only met four times a year and its decisions had to be agreed by all nations. When countries called for the League to intervene or mediate, the League had to organise an emergency meeting, hold discussions and gain the agreement of all its members. This process meant that the League could not act quickly or rapidly to stop an act of aggression.

And finally, as the League of Nations was unable to maintain international peace, the European countries lost faith in its efficacy and entered into mutual political and military alliance. Therefore, the weakness of the League of Nations was a major cause for the outbreak of the Second World War because if it had worked, then there would have been peace within Europe, and there wouldn't have been a Second World War. However, as it was unable to fulfill its promise to protect member states, countries broke the rules to get what they wanted or desired.

8. Failure of Disarmament

Another major cause, intimately connected with the League of Nations was the failure of disarmament. The Cold War between the United States of America and the Soviet Union led to the beginning of an arms race. America knew that it had become a superpower mainly because it was able to crush Japan's imperial designs by dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Moreover, the rising feeling of insecurity among nations after World War II made them find new ways of establishing supremacy and avoid containment. The two World Wars had made it clear that annihilation of countries was possible with bombs, and so efforts were made to establish peace in the world by following the policy of disarmament.

NOTES

Thus, the Security Council was created in the United Nations. The council tried to enforce the policy of nuclear disarmament. But the Soviets and the Americans did not trust each other, and entered an arms race. Article 8 of the Covenant had restricted the member states to take steps for the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety. But as the League members had no faith in the system of collective security guaranteed by the League they entered into a race of rearmament. Due to mutual distrust of the members the various conferences for disarmament failed to achieve much both within and outside the League. Apart from Germany, which was compulsorily disarmed, the other country to reduce arms was Great Britain. After 1935 even Germany introduced conscription in violation of the Treaty of Versailles. The other totalitarian states also followed the principle of 'guns before butter'. This race for armaments had disastrous results for the security of peace loving countries.

9. Ideological Conflict

Another major cause of the Second World War was the ideological conflict between Dictatorial States of Germany, Italy, Japan and Democratic States like Great Britain, France and the US. Commenting on the ideological conflict Mussolini remarked, 'The struggle between the two worlds can permit no compromise—either We or They'. This conflict was inevitable due to the different approaches and worldviews clashing with each other and trying to outwit each other. While the democratic countries stood for maintenance of status quo, the Fascist countries were keen to expand. Japan was land hungry and was determined to establish its supremacy in the Far East. Germany and Italy also wanted to expand their territories. This inevitably invoked a clash with the powers who were not willing to sacrifice their colonial empires.

10. Attitude of the Western Powers towards Russia

The Western powers continued to treat Russia as an outcast. They were scared of Bolshevism and encouraged the Fascist and the Pro-Fascist politicians in the West against Bolshevik expansion. The Western powers failed to realise that the Fascist aggression was directed not only against Russia but also against them. It was a folly on the part of the Western powers to have spurned the offers of friendship and truce made by Russia. Ultimately Russia got frustrated with the attitude of Western powers and concluded a no war pact with Germany.

11. Failure of the Policy of Appeasement

The policy of appeasement adopted by Great Britain and France towards the Dictatorial States also contributed largely to the outbreak of Second World War. During the 1930s, many protagonists of appeasement policy and politicians in both Britain and France came to see that the terms of the Treaty of Versailles had placed restrictions on Germany that were unfair and the dictators had a real cause of grievance. Actions of Hitler were seen as understandable and justifiable. In 1934, when Germany began rearming, many politicians felt and believed that Germany had a right to rearm in order to protect itself. It was also argued or maintained that a stronger Germany would prevent the spread of Communism to the West.

In 1936, Hitler argued that as France had signed a new treaty with Russia, Germany was under threat from both France and Germany, and it was important for Germany to provide security for troops stationed in the Rhineland.

France was not strong enough to fight Germany without the help from British and Britain was unwilling to go to war at this point. Furthermore, many people believed that since Rhineland was a part of Germany it was reasonable that the German troops should be stationed there.

Chamberlain became the prime minister of Britain in May 1937. According to him the Treaty of Versailles had treated Germany badly and that there were many issues associated with the Treaty that needed to be corrected. According to Chamberlain giving in to Hitler's demands would prevent another war. This policy that was adopted by Chamberlain's government was known as the Policy of Appeasement. The most notable example of appeasement was the Munich Agreement of September 1938. The Munich Agreement was signed by the leaders of Germany, Britain, France and Italy, and it was agreed that the Sudetenland would be returned to Germany and that Germany would make no further territorial claims. The Government of Czech was not invited to the Conference and it protested about the Sudetenland loss. They felt that both Britain and France with whom alliances had been made, had betrayed them. But, the Munich Agreement was generally viewed as a triumph and an excellent way of securing peace through negotiation rather than war. In March 1939, when Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia, the terms of the Munich Agreement were broken by Hitler. Although it was realised that the Policy of Appeasement did not work out, according to his statement Chamberlain was still not willing to take the country to war, 'over a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing'. Instead, he made a guarantee to come to Poland's help if it was invaded by Hitler.

According to the critics of the Policy, this Policy was based on wrong assumptions and should have been disposed of as soon as the designs of Axis powers became clear. It was a folly to have persisted or continued with this Policy after 1937 when the designs of Nazi Germany became clear. However, according to the defenders of the Policy of Appeasement the Policy was necessary and important to postpone the war to gain time for the Western powers to grid themselves for the expected struggle. By perusing this Policy after 1937, Chamberlain played for time and made available the Western powers the much needed time for preparing for the struggle against the Fascist power. This no doubt gave the Western powers the time to increase the military strength. But, at the same time Germany and other Axis powers were not sitting idle. The time was more in favour of the Axis powers rather than the Allies as Germany was able to increase the number and strength of its army relatively in a more effective way. According to some historians if war had started in 1938 it was almost certain that Germany would have been quickly defeated. By their inaction countries like Great Britain and France created a situation under which the democracies had to go to war under much worse or bad conditions.

Thus, the Second World War was the result of the follies of the victors, rise of Fascism in Italy, Japanese imperialism, collapse of collective security, failure of disarmament, ideological conflict and the Policy of the Appeasement persuaded by Great Britain and France. Above all the Second World War was a 'war of revenge initiated by Germany and definitely the growing ambitiousness of Germany to become the greatest world power'. In 1937, although Japan was already at war with the Republic of China, the Second World War is generally said to have begun on 1 September 1939, when Poland was invaded by Germany, without a declaration of war. Great Britain and France declared war on Germany on 3 September and all the members of the Commonwealth of Nations, except Ireland, quickly followed suit.

Check Your Progress

1. Fill in the blanks.
 - (a) In his book
A. J. P.
Taylor argues that,
'Appeasement was
a logical and
realistic policy, but
the mistake made
by Chamberlain
was of abandoning
it which brought the
war on'.
 - (b) The phrase
is used
because the military
alliance which
Czechoslovakia had
with France and
United Kingdom
was not honoured.
2. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - (a) If the Treaty of Versailles was drafted with magnanimity, and foresight, and Germany was meted with a light treatment, the Second World War might have been turned away.
 - (b) The main weapon or tool of the League was to ask member countries to stop trading with an aggressive country.

SUMMARY

- The First World War and the subsequent Great Depression considerably weakened many erstwhile European powers but it also led to the rise of dictatorships in several countries. The tensions and resentments resulting from the First World War and the interwar period in Europe made a bigger conflict unavoidable. The culmination of all these events led to the outbreak of the Second World War.
- The main cause of the two world wars was definitely the desire of Germany to become the greatest world power. But the Second World War was also a war of revenge initiated by Germany. It cannot be denied that Germany stood first foremost for revenge. It also stood first for rearmament and revenge and then for loot and German domination.
- In a conference held in Munich, Germany, an agreement was negotiated among the major powers of Europe without the presence of Czechoslovakia. This Agreement was signed by Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Italy. The main aim of the Munich Conference was to discuss about the Sudetenland's future in the face of territorial demands that were made by Adolf Hitler.
- As a result of the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakia was crippled by the loss of 70 per cent of its heavy industry and almost all of her fortifications to Germany. Slovakia began to demand semi-independence and it looked as if the country was about to fall apart. Hitler pressurised the Czechoslovakian President, Hacha, into requesting Germany for help to restore order. Consequently in March 1939 Germany troops occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France protested but as usual took no action.
- The Second World War which began in 1939 lasted for 6 years. Major Powers of Europe were involved in this War, battles were staged in all corners of the world and 'it was the most widespread war in history, with more than 100 million people engaged in the military exercise that ensued'.
- In a state of total war, the major participant countries placed their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities and abilities at the service of the war effort, and this erased the distinction between the civilian and military resources. This War was marked by many significant events involving the mass death of civilians, which included the holocaust and the only use of nuclear weapons in warfare. The War resulted in 50 million to over 70 million fatalities.
- Although the immediate cause for the outbreak of the Second World War was the invasion of Poland by Germany but the real causes were much deeper and diverse in nature. Like the follies of victors in the First World War, the Treaty of Versailles, aggressive Nationalism of Germany, rise of Fascism in Italy, Japanese imperialism, the Great Economic Depression, failure of the League of Nations, failure of disarmament, ideological conflict, attitude of the Western powers towards Russia, failure of the Policy of Appeasement.

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- Many factors were responsible for the development of national consciousness in Asian countries. These were: popular education, popular press, conscription armies, industrial revolution, and foreign danger. The Asian nationalist leaders adopted different methods and strategies in different countries to achieve their nationalist aspirations.

KEY TERMS

- **Diktat:** It is an order imposed by a powerful authority without popular consent.
- **Imperialism:** It refers to a policy of extending a country's power and influence through diplomacy or military force.
- **Munich Dictate:** The state of Czechoslovakia which was not even invited to the Conference felt betrayed by the act of the United Kingdom and France, and the Czechs and Slovaks called the Munich Agreement the 'Munich Dictate'.
- **Budi Utomo:** It was the first apolitical cultural organization in 1908 under the leadership of Dr Wahidin Sudiso Husudo, who was a retired government physician.
- **Strek as Islam:** It is an organization based on the principles of the Islamic religion, formed to organize the small indigenious industrialists.
- **Valksrad:** It is a consultative body which was an ineffective body but provided the Indonesians a common platform to unite.
- **Perhimpunan Indonesia:** It was a party formed under the leadership of Dr Mohd. Hatta.
- **Linggadjati Agreement:** The Linggadjati Agreement was brokered by the British and concluded and signed in November 1946, and it saw the Netherlands recognize the Republic as the *de-facto* authority over Java and Sumatra.
- **Darlan-Kato Agreement:** It was an agreement signed on July 1941, by which Indo-China was fully integrated into the Japanese military system, even though France continued to administer the country.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. (a) *The Origins of the Second World War* (1961); (b) Munich Betrayal
2. (a) True; (b) True
3. (a) Sultan Radja of Mataram; (b) *Strek as Islam*
4. (a) True; (b) True

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. List the causes of the Second World War.
2. Write a note on Hitler's demand for the return of Danzig.
3. State the factors that led to the failure of the Policy of Appeasement.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the propaganda campaign in the Sudetenland.
2. Explain the Munich Conference, 1938.
3. Describe the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, 1939.

FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 POST-WAR MOVEMENTS

Structure

- Introduction
- Unit Objectives
- Colonialism and Nationalism in Asia
- Growth of Nationalism in Indonesia
- Growth of Nationalism in Vietnam
- Growth of Nationalism in Burma
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- Questions and Exercises
- Further Reading

INTRODUCTION

Three factors were responsible for the expansion of imperialism which were very significant to the start of the First World War. These factors included the demand for raw materials by the European nations, the emerging sense of nationalism, and military expansion. The demand for raw materials was the main reason for the growth of imperialism.

The First World War and the subsequent Great Economic Depression considerably weakened many erstwhile European powers but it also led to the rise of dictatorship in several countries. The tensions and resentments resulting from the First World War and the interwar period in Europe made a bigger conflict unavoidable. The culmination of all these events led to the outbreak of the Second World War. Unlike the 1914–18 (First World War), the Second World War was a much more complex affair with major campaigns taking place in the Pacific and the Far East, in North Africa and Russia as well as in Central and Western Europe and the Atlantic. This War later turned out to be even more horrific and disgraceful compared to its earlier version. Many historians still believe that the Second World War was Hitler's personal war, and that he always intended to fight a war—as a re-run of the First World War. He did not believe that Germany had lost fairly. However, it is difficult to accept that the Second World War started only because of Hitler's assault on Poland. In fact, it was a continuation of the First World War and the chain of political crisis that followed from 1919 to 1939. The main cause of the two World Wars was definitely the desire of Germany to become the greatest world power. But the Second World War was also a war of revenge initiated by Germany. It cannot be denied that Germany stood first and foremost for revenge. It also stood first for rearmament and then for loot and German domination. But historians like

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A. J. P. Taylor do not agree. According to them, 'Hitler never intended a major war, and at most was prepared only for a limited war against Poland.' However, many historians believe that the policy of appeasement adopted by England and France towards the dictatorial powers, largely contributed to the commencement of the War. From the mid-1920s until 1937, there was a mistaken notion that War must be avoided at all costs, and Great Britain and even France drifted along, accepting the various acts of aggression and breaches of the Treaty of Versailles.

In May 1937, when Chamberlain became the British Prime Minister, he gave a new drive to appeasement. He took the initiative to find out what Hitler wanted and further wanted to show him that reasonable claims could be met by negotiation rather than use of force. Chamberlain went to the extent of observing at the time of Locarno treaties that, 'no British government would ever risk the bones of a single British grenadier in defense of the Polish Corridor', the German's thought that Great Britain had turned her back on Eastern Europe. Appeasement reached its climax at Munich, where Britain and France were so determined to avoid war with Germany that they made Hitler a present of the Sudetenland, setting in motion the destruction of Czechoslovakia. This act of Britain and France emboldened Hitler even more who had decided to destroy Czechoslovakia as part of his *Lebensraum* (Living Space) policy as he hated the Czechs for their democracy as well as for the fact that their state had been established under the controversial Versailles settlement.

This unit discusses the causes and effects of the Second World War. It also discusses the growth of colonialism and nationalism in Burma, Indonesia and Vietnam.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the growth of nationalism in Indonesia
- Evaluate the Japanese occupation of Indonesia
- Explain the growth of nationalism in Indo-China and Vietnam
- Describe the growth of nationalism in Burma

COLONIALISM AND NATIONALISM IN ASIA

A dictator would be a strong nationalist because nationalism is described as a strong feeling of pride for one's country and a strong identification with a nation. In this unit, you will study about nationalism in Indonesia. In 1905 victory of Japan over Russia gave an impetus to the rise of nationalism in many Asian countries. It showed that an Asian country, which had an organized army and relevant equipment, could face and withstand a strong and aggressive Western power. However, nationalism reached Asia after changing the structure of various governments in Western countries.

The growth and rise of nationalism in various parts of Asia proceeded on different lines and depended on the political and economic conditions. In Asia nationalism became an important social force where the nation faced competition, rivalry or danger from other nations. In a country like Japan, nationalism developed and grew under conditions of unusual economic growth over a long period of time. But in other countries where there was foreign danger and no growth in economy, nationalism played an important role in trying to free the country from foreign domination.

Many factors were responsible for the development of national consciousness in Asian countries. These were: popular education, popular press, conscription armies, industrial revolution and foreign danger. The Asian nationalist leaders adopted different methods and strategies in different countries to achieve their nationalist aspirations. The Turks, in order to win their freedom, fought with a crusading zeal. India is the only striking example where people did not resort to force in gaining their independence. Consequently, India attained Independence in 1947 with the least amount of bloodshed. The success of nationalist movements in Asiatic countries brought stability and prosperity where there were foundations for liberal democracy and modern nationhood. But in some cases the unifying forces of the old order were destroyed quickly without adequate planning for its substitute. In such circumstances, there existed political chaos in the country.

Growth of Nationalism in Indonesia

Though the rise of nationalist movement in Indonesia is popularly dated from 17 August 1945 when the Proclamation of Indonesian independence was made, but the Indonesians had started some sort of sustained struggle about three centuries earlier when the Dutch started ruthless warfare to annex certain independent kingdoms. However, during the initial stages the struggle took the form of isolated attempts at resistance against local oppression. The anti-imperialist struggle in the sense of a mass movement aiming at complete independence of Indonesia from the colonial rule started only in the early twentieth century.

Early Anti-imperialist Struggles

The first to raise voice against the unfair and discriminatory policy of the Dutch was Prince Diponegoro, popularly known as the Sultan Radja of Mataram. Prince Diponegoro, who had good relations with the masses, was greatly agitated over the Dutch malpractices and policy of discrimination in the fields of politics, religion, social, and cultural spheres. He wrote a letter to the Dutch authorities against their policy of terrorism and exploitation. Authorities were not willing to change their policy he led the entire population of East and Central Java in a revolt against the people. But when the Dutch against the common Dutch and with it the War of Independence, which soon spread to various parts of Java, started in 1825. Prince Diponegoro succeeded in retaining control over the territory of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, and inflicted heavy loss of life on the Dutch. The Dutch could not suppress the power of Prince Diponegoro so, they resorted to trickery in 1830, and in the pretext of a negotiation treacherously arrested him and exiled him to Celebes. In 1875, the people of Aceh (northernmost Sumatra) revolted against the Dutch and it continued for almost 30 years. Apart from these, numerous other uprisings in various parts of the country kept the anti-imperialist struggle alive in Indonesia.

National Movement in the Twentieth Century

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With the dawn of the 20th century the spirit of nationalism grew stronger in Indonesia and the movement entered a new phase. The growth of nationalism in Indonesia became possible due to the Western education. The Western education had exposed large number of Indonesians, especially those studying in abroad to Western developments and modern thinking, and these Western educated people took initiative to form the first apolitical cultural organization *Budi Utomo* in 1908. Under the leadership of Dr Wahidin Sudisohusudo, a retired government physician, this organization was founded, with a view to work for the advancement of the masses. However, shortly this apolitical organization assumed political character and lost its membership to the nationalist organizations.

Soon another organization based on the principles of Islamic religion known as the *Strek as Islam* was formed with a view to organize the small indigenous industrialists. However, in course of time the party developed political tendencies and in 1913 put forward the demand for self-government for Indonesia within the Dutch empire. As the Dutch authorities did not respond positively, the *Strek as Islam* declared its goal as attainment of complete independence, by force if necessary.

In the meantime, during the First World War, the Dutch government provided certain concessions and in 1916, they provided a Peoples' Council or *Volksraad*, a consultative body. This was an ineffective body but it provided the Indonesians a common platform to unite. The members bitterly criticised the lapses of the Dutch administration in the field of education and social reforms.

Causes of the National Movement

Various factors were responsible for motivating the Indonesians to launch a massive struggle against the colonial Dutch administration.

Firstly the Western ideas and the native intellectuals played a great role in realising that each human being has a right of human dignity in social, economic and other spheres. These intellectuals due to their education abroad discovered lot of discrepancy between the liberal thoughts of the West and practical realities in Indonesia. Contrary to the belief in equality, the colonial administration actually practiced discrimination in jobs, pay, educational opportunities, etc.

Secondly, the developments in other countries also provided great motivation to the national movement. The emergence of Japan as a great world power, the Chinese Revolution of 1911, the upsurge of nationalism in India, the Russian Revolution of 1917, etc., were some of the events abroad which exercised profound influence on the Indonesians. Even the peace treaties concluded at the end of the First World War provided an impetus to national movement by emphasising the principles of national self-determination.

Thirdly, the post war Economic Depression in Indonesia also contributed to the growth of nationalism in the country. The Dutch in order to salvage their own financial interest completely neglected the interests of the native. This was greatly resented by the Indonesian people, and there were sporadic uprisings and movements in various parts of the country.

Finally, the colonial government in order to deal with the growing violence resorted to ruling through ordinances and martial law. It deported most of the political activists along with their families to an internment camp set up in Boren Digoel, in the heart of Dutch New Guinea. A number of persons were also killed or hanged to serve as a warning to others. The Dutch government itself admitted that over 13,000 adults were taken into custody in November 1926 alone. Therefore, the violence of the colonial government further aggravated the common people of Indonesia and forced them to join the national movement.

Formation of Indonesian Nationalist Party

Despite the policy of repression pursued by the colonial Dutch government, the national movement could not be crushed. To free the nation from the clutches of the Dutch government some of the young national revolutionaries under the leadership of Achmed Sukarno founded the Indonesian nationalist party (Perserikatan Nasional Indonesia or PNI), in 1927, which advocated complete independence. Soon the Party, due to the oratory skills of its leaders like Sukarno, gained mass following. This greatly alarmed the Dutch authorities. It therefore, dissolved the Party and imprisoned Sukarno and three other leaders.

In the meantime, the Indonesian students studying in Holland and other European countries founded *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, another party under the leadership of Dr Mohd. Hatta. This Party believed in the policy of building-up nationalism gradually with the support of the elite and then enrolling the support of the uncoordinated masses. Dr Hatta represented Indonesia in the League of anti-imperialism, and Colonialism, an Asian Students Organization set up for the propagation of national freedom. It was at this forum that he came in contact with the Indian freedom fighter Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a prominent leader of this movement.

These political parties, especially the PNI, laid great emphasis on the idea of Indonesian unity and gave a call for one nation, one flag, and one language. The Party also adopted the emblem and symbol of free Indonesia and used national anthem at its meeting. To deal with the growing nationalistic feeling, the Dutch government took to repression and in 1929 arrested Sukarno, Hatta and other top leaders. These leaders were subjected to trial and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. This sent a wave of indignation throughout the country. After their release, Sukarno, Dr Hatta, Sjahrir joined hands and provided a fresh momentum to the revival of anti-imperialist forces, which lay dormant for some time. The Dutch government again adopted repressive measures and locked up these political leaders after arrest.

Japanese Invasion and the National Movement

In 1942, in view of the danger of Japanese attack, Dr Hatta, Sjahrir suggested the Dutch government to initiate an emergency programme of training of Indonesians or permit to open independent defence units for the defence of their homeland. However, the colonial government did not respond favourably and refused to permit the Indonesians to form their own defence units. Even the attitude of the government did not show any sign of

change, rather they resorted to more police force, increased political arrests and further restrictions on the nationalist leaders. As a result, the tension between the people and the colonial Dutch government greatly increased. In view of this tension the Dutch government could not offer any effective opposition to the Japanese when they attacked Indonesia, and on 9 March 1942, just within a week of Japan's attack, made a complete surrender to them.

Japanese Occupation of Indonesia and New Direction to Nationalist Struggle

Though the occupation of Indonesia by the Japanese did not lead to the emancipation of the Indonesian people, it gave a new direction to the Indonesian national struggle. The Japanese soon after their occupation of the country released all the national leaders. They also declared their faith in the principle of 'Asia for the Asians' and 'Greater Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'. The Japanese administrators did everything possible to build up Indonesian antagonism towards the Dutch in particular and the white man in general. They organized an all-inclusive political party, youth groups, and labour organizations. The Indonesians keeping the requirement of time in view divided themselves into two sections and strategically worked according to the plan. While one section extended passive cooperation to the Japanese, the other group continued to struggle from underground. However, these sections maintained close co-ordination in their movement.

The Japanese occupation proved to be a boon for the Indonesians. As the Japanese did not have sufficient number of men to run the administration in Indonesia, they appointed the Indonesians to various administrative, technical and supervisory posts. This provided the Indonesians the first real opportunity of self-government and gave them the confidence that they could very well govern their own country. With a view to promote their own interests the Japanese also provided the Indonesians extensive training in techniques of military warfare, which further enhanced the power and confidence of the Indonesians. However, later the Japanese proved to be more ruthless rulers and worst exploiters than the Dutch, who even taught the people to steal and cheat. In the words of Sjahrir, 'during the period of three and [a] half years of Japanese occupation, everything spiritually as well as materially was taken loose from its old mooring'. But despite the fact that the period of Japanese occupation was a terrible period, it produced number of good results. To quote Dr. Hatta, 'While the people groaned under Japanese excesses, they began to take stock of the Dutch and the consequence of Dutch rule. With sharper insights, they were able to perceive how ineffective and valueless the Dutch administration had been. From that movement Indonesia awakened to the truth and there was a sudden upsurge of nationalism stronger and deeper than ever before'.

Growth of Nationalism in Vietnam

As the Second World War drew closer and the prospects of Japanese defeat became imminent, nationalism in Indonesia was at its ultimate state and the Indonesian leaders prepared themselves to declare their independence from the Netherlands crown. Whereas the Dutch sought to re-establish their authority in Indonesia and asked the Japanese army to 'preserve law and order' in Indonesia, the Japanese, however, were in favour of helping the Indonesian nationalists prepare for self-government. On 7 September 1944, with the War going badly for the Japanese, Prime Minister Koiso promised independence for Indonesia, but no date was set.

In the meantime, representatives consisting of all political parties set up a preparatory committee in June 1945 to draft the Constitution for the Republic of Indonesia.

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Ultimately, on 17 August 1945 Sukarno made the proclamation of independence, which read, 'We the people of Indonesia hereby declare Indonesia's independence. Matters concerning the transfer of power and other matters will be executed in an orderly manner and in the shortest possible time'. A Red and White flag was hoisted and the national anthem was for the first time sung in an independent Indonesia. The following day the Central Indonesian National Committee elected Sukarno as the president, and Dr Hatta as the vice president.

This marked the first step towards the creation of greater Indonesia. The Proclamation electrified the whole nation and all the Indonesian civil servants, police and military groups immediately declared their allegiance to the new Republic. After the formal surrender by Japan when the British forces landed in Indonesia on behalf of the Allies they found that the Indonesians had already set up a working government. Therefore, in view of the political realities the British government decided to accord *de facto* recognition to the Republic. Later the Dutch who returned to Indonesia after Japan's exit agreed to negotiate with the Indonesians under pressure from Britain. After prolonged negotiations the *Linggadjati* Agreement, brokered by the British and which was concluded and signed in November 1946, saw the Netherlands recognise the Republic as the *de-facto* authority over Java and Sumatra. Both parties agreed to the United States of Indonesia formation by 1 January 1949, which was a semi-autonomous federal state with the Monarchy of the Netherlands at its head. The Central National Committee of Indonesia did not consent to the Agreement until February 1947. Neither the Republic nor the Dutch were satisfied with it.

On 25 March 1947, the Lower House of the Dutch parliament approved of a 'stripped down version of the Treaty, as it was not accepted by the Republic. Both sides accused each other of violating the terms of the Agreement. At midnight on 20 July 1947, Operation Product was launched by the Dutch and it was considered as a major military offensive, with the intention of conquering the Republic. The Dutch claimed violations of the *Linggadjati* Agreement, and described the campaign as 'police actions' to restore law and order. In the meantime, the United Nations Security Council became directly involved in the conflict, established a Good Offices Committee to sponsor further negotiations, and this made the Dutch diplomatic position particularly difficult. At the same time, the United Nations Security Council brokered the Renville Agreement in an attempt to correct the collapsed *Linggadjati* Agreement. In January 1948, the Agreement was ratified and recognised a cease-fire along the so-called 'Van Mook line', an artificial line which connected the most advanced Dutch positions.

The final breaking point came on 19 December 1948 when the Dutch launched their Second Police Action and attacked the Republican capital. They captured President Sukarno, Vice-President Dr Hatta and a host of other important political leaders. This action aroused the people against the Dutch and they refused to offer any co-operation to the Dutch government. Due to strong resistance, the Dutch were finally forced to retreat. With the pressure from the UNO, India and other countries the Dutch agreed to release the Republican leaders in May 1949. On 30 June 1949, the Dutch withdrew from Yogyakarta and the Republican government moved in. The hostilities between the two ended on 1 August 1949. After a round table of the representatives of the Dutch, the Republic, the non-Republican territories and the United Nations Commission for Indonesia which was held at Hague on 23 August 1949 and the formal transfer of sovereignty took place on 27 December 1949 at Hague and Djakarta. This marked the culmination of Indonesia's anti imperialist struggle and paved the way for the emergence of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia on 17 August 1950.

Growth of Nationalism in Indo-China

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Indo-China, which comprised Cambodia, Annam, Tongking and Cochin-China came under the colonial rule of France towards the close of the nineteenth century. Its early history shows many different groups of people living in this area under the shadow of the powerful empire of China. Even when an independent country was established, Vietnam continued to maintain the Chinese system of government as well as Chinese culture. Vietnam was also linked to the maritime silk route that brought in goods, people and ideas. The French intervention in Indo-China goes back to the year 1786 when a catholic bishop led a group of soldiers into Cochin-China. For the first time the French acquired territorial control in Indo-China in 1862. However, it was only towards the close of nineteenth century that France succeeded in establishing its domination over the three eastern provinces of Cochin-China. France also established protectorate over Tongking, Annam, Cambodia and Laos. This system of colony and protectorate virtually existed in theory because all the parts of Vietnam were under the control of a highly centralised system of the French administration.

Early Nationalist Movement

The nationalist movement in Indo-China started almost at the same time when the French succeeded in establishing their domination. Frequent plots for the overthrow of the foreign rule were prepared but the French put down these plots ruthlessly. The liberal policy followed by the Governor General Paul Doumer from 1897 to 1902 and the Governor General Albert Sarraut from 1911 to 1917, gave a further momentum to the nationalist movement in Indo-China. The writings of the French scholars like Montesquieu and Rousseau also exercised profound influence on the people and contributed to strengthen the nationalist movement. The victory of Japan over Russia also influenced the nationalist movement. However, it was the First World War, which brought the people of Indo-China in direct contact with the Western country. During the War over one lakh, Indo-Chinese troops were sent by the French government to take part in the War and they got an opportunity to experience the democratic system.

In the meantime, the French continued to exploit the territories of Indo-China. They obtained rubber, coal, rice and all precious items from this land. From the inception, they carried on the government in an oppressive manner without caring about the interests of the people. The local people engaged by the French government were paid minimum wages and the general public was subjected to a heavy dose of taxation. This was naturally irritating to the people and they were keen to get rid of the foreign rule.

These feelings against the foreign rule reinforced the movement and particularly in the post First World War period, the nationalist movement gained momentum and grew stronger in Indo-China. During the War period France made very generous promises to the people to win their support and to maintain peace in the country. At the end of the War, France refused to redeem these promises. This naturally wounded the feelings of the people and provided an impulsion to the growth of the subversive activities. The elite and the intellectuals of Indo-China, who were greatly stirred by the doctrine of self-determination proclaimed by the Allies during the War, deplored the French policy of denying political and economic responsibilities to the local people. Various political parties like Tokinese Party and the Constitutionalist Party also made demands for reforms. However, the government turned down the demand for reforms. This gave a serious setback to the Moderates and the Extremists succeeded in stealing the limelight.

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Revolutionary Movement in Indo-China

In 1925, the Revolutionary Party of Young Annam was founded but the Party was paralyzed due to internal conflicts. In 1927, the Nationalist Party modelled on the Kuomintang Party of China, was formed at the instance of Phan Boi Chau a revolutionary leader. The Party maintained contacts across China's Kwangtung province border and sponsored to eliminate the French Governor General in 1929. In February 1930 the Party staged a rebellion known as the Yen Bai Mutiny and on its directions the Vietnamese soldiers revolted and killed their French officer at the fortress of Yen Bat situated on the river North of Hanoi. However, the French ruthlessly suppressed this rebellion. Most of the leaders were arrested and force was used even against unarmed demonstrators. Also, its pro-Chinese organization was another reason, which prevented the popularity of the party amongst the people. After some time a peasant uprising was organized against the French but it was also ruthlessly suppressed. This greatly undermined the prestige of the Party and after some time it was dissolved.

Emergence of Communist Leadership

Another notable feature of the nationalist struggle in Indo-China was the emergence of Communist Movement. Nguyen Ai Quoc, popularly known as Ho Chi Minh, started this Movement in the 1920s. He advocated a liberal programme for Indo-China, which included self-rule, civil liberties, equality of rights, end of French mercantilist policies in Indo-China, etc. In 1930, Ho Chi Minh organized the Communist Party of Vietnam. Soon after its formation, the Party organized a small army mutiny. It also organized demonstrations in urban centers and abortive peasant uprising in Tongking. In view of the severity of the police action, the Communist Party went underground. However, on account of highly effective nature of the organization of the Party, it was able to survive the repression and continued its activities underground. But due to this repressive policy of the government the Party could not gain in numbers.

Second World War and its Impact on Nationalist Movement

The outbreak of the Second World War produced a great impact on the nationalist movement in Indo-China. It convinced the people that the Europeans were not invincible and it provided new direction to the nationalist movement. France after the defeat at the hands of Germany in 1940 was forced to make certain concessions to Japan. In September 1940, France granted to Japan its right to station aircrafts in Indo-China. By the Darlan Kato Agreement of July 1941, Indo-China was fully integrated into the Japanese military system, even though France continued to administer the country. Thus the people of Indo-China had to wage struggle at two fronts. On the one hand, they organized a number of popular risings against the France authorities, even though these were effectively brought down by the French. On the other hand the common people of Indo-China also started an anti-Japanese movement under Ho Viet Minh.

In the meantime an important change took place in Vietnam on 9 March 1945, when the Japanese ousted the French Admiral Decona and interned the French troops and personal. The Japanese also encouraged Bao Dai, the Emperor of Annam to declare independence and acknowledged him as the head of the independent state of Vietnam, created by uniting Tongking, Annam, and Cochin-China. Similarly the king of Cambodia and Laos were also permitted to declare their independence. All this convinced the people of Indo-China that Europe was not invincible and greatly contributed to the nationalist movement.

Nationalist Movement in Post Second World War Period

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As the Second World War drew closer, it became evident that the French shall have no troops to send to Indo-China to organize the territories surrendered by Japan. Anticipating that the Allies decided at the Potsdam Conference that pending the return of France, Indo-China should be temporarily occupied by China to the north of the six-tenth parallel and by the British to the south of the said line. Meanwhile, in the hills of the Tongking Viet Minh founded a provisional government for Vietnam. As soon as the Japanese were defeated, Bao Dai abdicated the throne and handed over the power to the provisional government. On 2 September 1945 Vietnam declared its independence. After overcoming his rivals Ho Chi Minh announced the policy of less taxes, lower rents, no forced labour, more food, better health and better school.

On 28 February 1946, an agreement was reached between Ho Chi Minh and the French. Under this Agreement, the Chinese troops were to leave Vietnam. By another agreement of 6 March 1946, France recognized Vietnam as a free state with its own government, parliament, army and finances, forming part of the Indo-Chinese Federation and the French Union. A referendum was to be held in Cochin-China to decide whether it should join the Republic. It was also agreed that further conference would be held to decide matters pertaining to the diplomatic relations of the Republic, the future status of Indo-China and the French cultural interests in Vietnam. The conference was held at Dalat in April 1946. At this Conference France and Vietnam offered different interpretations about independence. As a result no agreement could be reached. The things assumed serious dimensions following announcement by the French Admiral d'Argenlieu creating an autonomous Republic of Cochin-China. This was contrary to the assurance given to the nationalists, so, naturally this decision met with resentment. However, the French and the Vietnamese agreed to the cessation of hostilities on 14 September 1946 and also settled a number of cultural and economic questions.

The ceasefire between the two did not last long and soon hostilities broke out. The Vietnamese leaders were not willing to accept anything less than full sovereignty to Cochin-China. On 19 December 1946, the Vietnamese staged a surprise attack on the French garrison in Tongking and Annam. With this, the hostilities developed into full scale war. For the rigid stand of both the parties the War continued to drag on for almost 8 years. One of the main obstacles in arriving at any negotiated settlement was Ho Chi Minh, the leader of Vietnam who was a Communist and the French were not willing to enter into negotiations with him. Ultimately, on 20 May 1948, France proclaimed the Central Provisional Vietnam government with the President Nguyen Van Xuan as head of French sponsored states of Cochin-China. In March 1949, the French succeeded in persuading Bao Dai to become the head of the new French dominion consisting of Cochin-China, Annam and Tongking. However, the French retained control over foreign affairs and defence.

The things got further complicated with the emergence of Communist rule in China. The Peoples' Government of China immediately accorded recognition to the government of Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. Soon the USSR and its European satellites also accorded recognition to Ho Chi Minh's government. On the other hand, Great Britain and the US proceeded to accord formal recognition to Bao Dai government. With this Vietnam got embroiled in the 'cold war'. Now the French continued the war with American money. However, with passage of time the hope of France victory became dim. The US insisted France to adopt a bolder plan but the France plans were shattered when the

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Vietnamese inflicted a crushing defeat on the French at Dien Bien Phu on 6 May 1954. In view of the growing public opinion against the French involvement in France, Mendes decided to bring this hopeless and costly colonial war to an end.

The Geneva Conference

The Geneva Conference was held in 1954, to conclude the Armistice Agreement with regard to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Cambodia, Laos, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the USSR, China, the US and Britain attended the Conference. Under the Geneva Agreement, it was decided to partition Vietnam. While the north portion went to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and south portion went to the Saigon Government. However, the partition was envisaged purely as a provisional arrangement and general election was to take place in July 1956 under the supervision of International Commission to unify Vietnam. To supervise and control Vietnam an International Control Commission consisting of India, Poland and Canada was set up.

At the Conference, the two governments (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Saigon Government of Vietnam) had agreed to hold discussions about the arrangements for holding elections in the country. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam faithfully worked for holding the proposed elections. But in view of the non-helpful attitude of the Saigon regime the elections could not be held and the Geneva Agreement was buried. After this incident, the American involvement in Vietnam continued to grow. America backed the Diem government in South Vietnam but due to its anti-Buddhist policy, it was unpopular with the people. The growing resentment against the Diem regime culminated in the formation of the National Liberation front of South Vietnam in Cochin-China with an objective to overthrow the dictatorial Diem regime. The growing resentment found outlet in a popular revolt in 1963 in which the Diem government was over-thrown. However, America continued its help in terms of military equipment as well as military advisers to South Vietnam. Despite this help, America could not check the growing influence of the Communists. Ultimately, America decided to send full-fledged combat troops into Vietnam to crush the National Liberation front of South Vietnam, which was receiving arms and men from North Vietnam. Because of the American intervention, the civil war in South Vietnam was transformed into a full-flagged war between America and Vietnam.

The Soviet Union immediately issued a stern warning stating, 'Soviet Union will be compelled, together with the Allies and friends, to take further measures to ensure the security and strengthen the defence capacity of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam'. China went a step further and publicly offered help to North Vietnam. Despite all this America continued the bloodbath for 3 years and finally agreed to stop bombardment and hold peace talks at Paris. At the Paris peace talks, USA and North Vietnam agreed on an unlimited ceasefire. In addition, they recognised the right of the people of the South Vietnam to self-determination. It was also agreed that an international conference to acknowledge the signed agreements, to guarantee the ending of the war and to maintain peace would be held within 30 days of the signing of the cease-fire. The Agreement was hailed all over the world and brought peace to Indo-China almost after 30 years of struggle. On 2 July 1976, the newly elected national assembly announced the unification of the country under the name Socialist Republic of Vietnam with Hanoi as its capital. This marked the culmination of the anti-imperialist struggle in Vietnam.

Growth of Nationalism in Burma

Like Ceylon (presently Sri Lanka), Burma was also liberated from British control in 1948. After freedom, the Burmese patriot pioneers were embroiled in battles within their state with the military. In 1989, the name of the nation was formally changed to Myanmar, drawing on the conventional relationship, just as Ceylon was renamed Sri Lanka. In the same year, Aung San Su Kyi, the daughter of the early pioneers of the patriot development against the Japanese in Burma, was put under house arrest for her leadership in the fair resistance.

SUMMARY

- Many factors were responsible for the development of national consciousness in Asian countries. These were: popular education, popular press, conscription armies, industrial revolution, and foreign danger. The Asian nationalist leaders adopted different methods and strategies in different countries to achieve their nationalist aspirations.
- Though the rise of nationalist movement in Indonesia is popularly dated from 17 August 1945 when the Proclamation of Indonesian independence was made, but the Indonesians had started some sort of sustained struggle about three centuries earlier when the Dutch started ruthless warfare to annex certain independent kingdoms.
- With the dawn of the twentieth century the spirit of nationalism grew stronger in Indonesia and the movement entered a new phase. The growth of nationalism in Indonesia became possible due to the Western education.
- As the Second World War drew closer and the prospects of Japanese defeat became imminent, nationalism in Indonesia was at its ultimate state and the Indonesian leaders prepared themselves to declare their independence from the Netherlands crown. Whereas the Dutch sought to re-establish their authority in Indonesia and asked the Japanese army to 'preserve law and order' in Indonesia, the Japanese, however, were in favour of helping the Indonesian nationalists prepare for self-government.
- Indo-China, which comprised Cambodia, Annam, Tongking and Cochin-China came under the colonial rule of France towards the close of the nineteenth century. Its early history shows many different groups of people living in this area under the shadow of the powerful empire of China. Even when an independent country was established, Vietnam continued to maintain the Chinese system of government as well as Chinese culture.
- Vietnam was also linked to the maritime silk route that brought in goods, people and ideas. The French intervention in Indo-China goes back to the year 1786 when a Catholic Bishop led a group of soldiers into Cochin-China. For the first time the French acquired territorial control in Indo-China in 1862. However, it was only towards the close of nineteenth century that France succeeded in establishing its domination over the three eastern provinces of Cochin-China.

NOTES

Check Your Progress

3. Fill in the blanks.
 - (a) The first to raise voice against the unfair and discriminatory policy of the Dutch was Prince Diponegoro, popularly known as the the.
 - (b) Another organization based on the principles of Islamic religion known as the was formed with a view to organize the small indigenous industrialists.
4. State whether the following statements are true or false.
 - (a) As the Second World War drew closer, it became evident that the French shall have no troops to send to Indo-China to organize the territories surrendered by Japan.
 - (b) The liberal policy followed by the Governor General Paul Doumer from 1897 to 1902 and Governor General Albert Sarraut from 1911 to 1917, gave a further momentum to the nationalist movement in Indo-China.

NOTES

- The nationalist movement in Indo-China started almost at the same time when the French succeeded in establishing their domination. Frequent plots for the overthrow of the foreign rule were prepared but the French put down these plots ruthlessly.
- The outbreak of the Second World War produced a great impact on the nationalist movement in Indo-China. It convinced the people that the Europeans were not invincible and it provided new direction to the nationalist movement. France after the defeat at the hands of Germany in 1940 was forced to make certain concessions to Japan. In September 1940, France granted to Japan its right to station aircrafts in Indo-China.
- As the Second World War drew closer, it became evident that the French shall have no troops to send to Indo-China to organize the territories surrendered by Japan. Anticipating that the Allies decided at the Potsdam Conference that pending the return of France, Indo-China should be temporarily occupied by China to the north of the six-tenth parallel and by the British to the south of the said line.
- The Geneva Conference was held in 1954, to conclude the Armistice Agreement with regard to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Cambodia, Laos, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the USSR, China, the US and Britain attended the Conference. Under the Geneva Agreement, it was decided to partition Vietnam. While the north portion went to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and south portion went to the Saigon Government.
- Like Ceylon (presently Sri Lanka), Burma was also liberated from British control in 1948. After freedom, the Burmese patriot pioneers were embroiled in battles within their state with the military. In 1989, the name of the nation was formally changed to Myanmar, drawing on the conventional relationship, just as Ceylon was renamed Sri Lanka.

KEY TERMS

- **Valksrad:** It is a consultative body which was an ineffective body but provided the Indonesians a common platform to unite.
- **Perhimpunan Indonesia:** It was a party formed under the leadership of Dr Mohd. Hatta.
- **Linggadjati Agreement:** The Linggadjati Agreement was brokered by the British and concluded and signed in November 1946, and it saw the Netherlands recognize the Republic as the *de-facto* authority over Java and Sumatra.
- **Darlan-Kato Agreement:** It was an agreement signed on July 1941, by which Indo-China was fully integrated into the Japanese military system, even though France continued to administer the country.

ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. (a) Sultan Radja of Mataram; (b) *Strek as Islam*
2. (a) True; (b) True

QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What motivated the Indonesians to launch a struggle against the colonial Dutch administration?
3. Write a note on the revolutionary movement in Indo-China.
4. Write a note on the significance of the Geneva Conference.
5. State the similarities between the growth of nationalism in Ceylon and Burma.

Long-Answer Questions

1. Assess the growth of nationalism in Indonesia.
2. Evaluate the significance of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia in the Indonesian national struggle.
3. Discuss the growth of nationalism in Indo-China.

FURTHER READING

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