Answer all questions. Try to answer in your own words.

A) DCQ: Answer the following in about 500 words each.

1. Write an essay on the socio-cultural traits of the East Asian region.

Ans: East Asia is an area usually considered to include China, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea. These countries all have their own distinct cultures. But they do have a few things in common: their strong sense of hierarchy, their respect for authority, and conventions about how to behave in public. The countries of East Asia also share language roots (both verbal and written), and their cuisines are similar. But that’s where the similarities end.

Japan is a democracy that has been rated as having a high level of personal freedom. Behavior and outward appearance are important to the Japanese, especially in matters of business. Age gives you seniority, and determines how much weight your words are given and who is served first, among other things. In general, Japanese culture is less individualistic, and the needs of the group are paramount.

Life in China depends on where you live. The country is a land of poor farmers and the cities of rich, westernized capitalists. The country is huge but densely populated, and the cities especially so. China puts emphasis on groups rather than individuals and respects age, much like Japan. In China’s case, this comes from the popularity of Confucian ideas. China has recently introduced free-market reforms, but the people are still rated near the bottom in rankings of personal and political freedom, mainly due to the strict rule of their communist government.

South Korea is similarly influenced by Confucianism. They have a lot of respect for age, social position, and marriage. Related to this respect for age is the common belief that your loved ones stay with you when they die. Ceremonies to honor the ancestors are common. South Korea, especially in cities like Seoul, is being influenced a lot by the West: fashion, food, television; you name it. But this western influence is also present in politics. South Korea rates highly in measures of the freedom of its citizens.

North Korea couldn’t be more different to South Korea in its political system. North Korea is a communist dictatorship, more so even than China. The borders of North Korea are closed, and citizens get few freedoms or control over their lives. People often suffer from malnutrition and poor living conditions, and international aid is often needed. The East Asian respect for authority makes regimes like these more likely, but that doesn’t mean that the people don’t rebel in their own, little ways. Rules are often broken without punishment, and fashion and trade do exist... just behind closed doors.

OR

on the response of the East Asian region to Western Colonial intervention in the 19th century.

Ans: on the impact that colonialism produced on various areas of Indian life and people. Indian economy gradually got linked to British economy in particular and world capitalist economy in general. The British colonialism, in turn, penetrated into every area of Indian society. Let us see the content and nature of this intervention.

1. Intervention in Social and Cultural Fields

Along with British rule also came a link with the West; and ideas which were developed in Western Europe made their entry into India. Through trade and travel, India had for centuries contact not only with the countries of Asia but also with Europe. Through these sources new of events and happenings in Europe and elsewhere and details of the new thinking taking place in the West were already reaching India in the 18th century. British rule not only hastened their arrival in India but the very nature of the foreign domination quickened these influences with a local meaning charged with immediacy and relevance. The intellectual life of the Indian people were influenced by such ideas as democracy and sovereignty of the people, rationalism and humanism. These ideas helped Indians not only to take a critical look at their own society, economy, and government, but also to understand the true nature of British imperialism in India. These ideas spread through many channels - education, the press, pamphlets and the public platforms. The spread of modern education, however, was very limited. If the foreign government initially neglected primary and secondary education, it turned hostile to higher education soon after 1858. As many of the educated Indians began to use their recently acquired modern knowledge to analyse and criticise the imperialist and exploitative character of British rule and to organise an anti-imperialist political movement, the British administrators began to press continuously for the curtailment of higher education. The structure and pattern, aims, methods, curricula and content of education were all designed to serve colonialism. A few other aspects of Indian education arising out of its colonial character should be noted. One was the complete neglect of modern technical education which was a basic necessity for the rise and development of modern industry. Another was the emphasis on English as the medium of instruction in place of the Indian languages. This not only prevented the spread of education to the masses but also created a wide linguistic and cultural gulf between the educated and the masses. Government’s refusal to allocate adequate funds of education gradually reduced the educational standards to an extremely low level.

2. Intervention in Economy

The exact nature of the colonial intervention in the indigenous Indian economy can be grasped by studying its influence separately in different units of the economy like agriculture, trade and industry. Impact on Agriculture: The British brought about important transformation in India’s agricultural economy out this was not with a view to improving Indian agriculture but rather to obtain for hemse elves in the form of land revenue, all surplus available in agriculture and to force Indian Agriculture to play its assigned role in a colonial economy. Old relationships and institutions were destroyed and new ones were born. But these new features did not represent a change towards modernisation or its movement in the right direction. The British introduced two major land revenue and tenurial systems. One was the Zamindari system. (Later, a modified version of the same Zamindari system was introduced in North India under the name of the Mahalwari system). The other was the Ryotwari system. Whatever the name of the system, it was the peasant cultivators who suffered. They were forced to pay very high rents and for all practical purposes functioned as tenants-at-will. They were compelled to pay many illegal dues and cesses and were often required to perform forced labour or begar. What is more important, whatever the name or nature of the revenue system, in effect the Government came to occupy the position of the landlord. Much later, especially after 1901, revenue rates were gradually reduced but then the agrarian economy had been ruined to such an extent and the landlords, moneylenders, and merchants had made such deep inroads into the village that it was of no practical use to the peasant cultivators themselves.