Lesson 1 Colonial Rule in Southeast Asia

I.A. Europeans saw Asia and Africa as sources of raw materials and as markets for manufactured goods.

I.B. Instead of seeking colonies and trading posts, the “new imperialists” sought direct control over vast territories.

II.A. Great Britain established Singapore as a colony and took over Burma (Myanmar). France controlled Vietnam, Cambodia, Annam, Tonkin, and Laos.

II.B. King Mongkut and his son King Chulalongkorn promoted Western learning and maintained friendly relations with both France and Great Britain.

III.A. The Dutch administered the colony but retained indigenous leaders to rule at the local level.

III.B. The French imposed direct rule in southern Vietnam, but ruled indirectly through the emperor in northern Vietnam.

III.C. Colonial rule stressed the export of raw materials and plantation agriculture, with peasants working in unhealthy conditions for poverty wages with high taxes. However, colonial governments also built infrastructure and developed export markets, which helped create an entrepreneurial class.

IV.A. The Burmese fought Western domination with the help of their king. The Vietnamese fought the French without the emperor’s help.

IV.B. Early nationalist movements pursued local economic interests and sought respect for local customs and beliefs. Later resistance movements sought national independence.

Summary and Reflection

A complete answer should include: colonized people were subject to the economic interests of their conquerors; colonized people did gain infrastructure built by the colonizers, but peasants labored under harsh conditions and did not profit from their efforts; even entrepreneurs found very limited opportunities; Asian cultural traditions were discouraged in favor of Western customs; revolts were often violently suppressed.