

Class VII
History chapter 1
Tracing Changes through A Thousand Years
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Objectives For The Lesson:

- a. You'll learn about the changes that has happened since the past thousand years
- b. The lesson offers you an insight into how the social and political structures have changed over time.
- c. You'll understand the importance of the coins, monuments and forts and how these sources are used by the historians to frame history.
- d. You'll learn about how history in India is divided.

Expected Learning Outcome

- a. With the end of the chapter, you will have an answer to many of your curious questions, of how the present society of today is shaped.
- b. The religions and the practices that they follow, have been a result of continuous evolution of the Indian society. A little research might help you learn that many of the practises do not even exist today.
- c. The empires and dynasties that existed in a lane of years left their legacies and architectural evidence, which are used to make histories.

Focus Point: The focus of the chapter relies completely on the idea of evolution of the Indian society, and tracing the changes that have been occurring for the last thousand years, shaping it into what it is today.

Things to answer after reading the context

- How old is human civilization?
- Was the society back then different from the society now?
- Who were the famous people in the world back then?
- How do we know about the existence of those people today?

ANALYSING THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

Since we're discussing the medieval period dating back to almost a thousand years, there must have been many changes. Changes in technology, changes in lifestyle, changes in

people. Sounds pretty interesting to know what was different back then, right? Well, let's find out!

- How did the language change over the years?
- Is the native language we speak today the same as the native language we said back then?
- Talk to a family member of yours and ask them about the old lifestyle of your family before the technology came. What changes do you think have occurred?

1. The Terminologies used then vs the new-gen terminologies.

As children, you must have played the game of "Chinese whisper". Isn't it surprising how the word said by the first person differs so much from the word spoken by the last person? Something similar happened with the terminologies used back then. They were passed through generations; they were twisted and moulded. Hence, the languages used then and now differ by a significant margin. For instance, take the word "Hindustan". Our country was called Hindustan long back, and however today, we call our country "India". The word India finds its roots in "Hindustan" itself. The term "Hindustan's" first known usage dates back to the 13th century as it was found in a Persian book written by Minhaj-i-Siraj. King Babur used the term in the 16th century. He used it to describe the vast stature and the culture of the people hailing from the subcontinent. Similarly, Amir Khusrau, a famous poet, used the word "Hind" to refer to India.

- Well, did they have elections back then?
- Who handled the administration of the country?
- Did the army exist?

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SCENARIO: NOW VS THEN

Indian history has seen a few of the most outstanding warrior communities. Few of them include the Rajputs, the Marathas, Sikhs, Jats, Ahoms, and Kayasthas. Between 700 and 1750, India's rulers' status was highly dynamic. Since India was a land of riches, several foreigners came to India to make conquests and loot. Hence, there was no political stability, and the reigns kept shifting from one ruler to another. Unlike today, there was no concept of democracy back then. Society was split into several castes, and there was a lot of casteism in practice. Brahmins were treated as the most superior caste due to the possession of Sanskrit knowledge. One's occupation was decided by the caste he belonged to, and women were encouraged to stay indoors and look after children and household. The idea of Bhakti gained quick popularity, and people were staunch believers of religion. The teachings of the Quran

were brought to India by the foreign conquerors, and the population of Muslims started increasing. The Muslims also had two sects, the Shias and the Sunnis. The period saw the rise of a few of the first Muslim prophets, called the "khalifas". During this period, forests were being cut rapidly and were converted into agricultural land. Before this, the predominant occupation was that of a "forest gatherer"; however, with the boom in the population, agriculture gained quick popularity.

THE VAST INDIAN HISTORY AND THE LANE OF EMPIRES

Now, we live in a democratic country where we elect our leaders. However, back then, there was a strict monarchy. During this phase, India saw several kings and empires. For instance, the Cholas, the tughlaqs, the Delhi Sultanate. The Delhi Sultanate had a vast kingdom stretching from Goud(present-day Bengal) to Ghazni(Present-day Afghanistan). The Cholas predominantly ruled the south (Dravida). Occasionally when conflicts arose between empires, all the ruling dynasties from different parts of the country would hold a conference. However, all the kingdoms were short-lived due to their decreasing stability and solid foreign forces. By the 18th century, the last surviving dynasty, the Mughal dynasty, fell, and the British Raj began.

- How has humankind evolved over the years?
- Who discovers all these changes with time?

With time, we grow up. Your height and weight last year wouldn't be the same as now. Similarly, with time there have been drastic changes in the economic and social stature of the society. The country has been through a lot and then has emerged in the modern form it is today. It has seen the great civilizations like the Indus and Vedic, has been one of the richest and one of the most powerful countries. It has grown under the knowledge of Vedas, saints and who gave decimals, zero, astronomy, ayurveda and yoga to the country. It has been looted and plundered by the Ghoris and Ghaznis, was ruled by foreigners like the Delhi Sultans and then was a colony or must we use the word "slave" for the British for hundreds of years. Indian history could be broadly divided into three parts:

- a. The Ancient Indian History
- b. The Medieval Indian History
- c. The Modern Indian History

As India has progressed through these eras, the culture and people have adapted. These three periods are responsible for shaping the country and bringing it to the form it is in today. Today, India is still in the trap of the division that the British created, and it is that division of the Hindu Muslim sentiments, that led to the horrors of the partition, something that still gives people goosebumps.

Find out about the horrors of the partition of India.

All in all 1000 years is a huge period of time. It saw several changes and advancements.

Mankind had its transit from the phase of hunters and gatherers to the phase dominated by agriculture and trade! We have come a long way. When India started building, it was on the values of the Vedas and we followed the tradition of “Vasudev Kutumbh” and “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah Sarve Santu Niramaya”. We have progressed a lot and we still follow these values.

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