

Tracing Changes Through A Thousand Years | Notes for class 7th

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Introduction:

The World we see today was totally different thousand years back. Not only Geographically but changes took place in economical, political and cultural nature too. So let's discuss some of the changes over thousand years.

Changes In Indian Map:

You can see the difference in both Maps (Map 01 and 02).

- The names of geographical places are different.
- There is change in the direction of Subcontinent.
- Also 1st Map and 2nd Map have huge time difference.
- Difference in the Language written.

1. **12th Century** : Arab geographer [Al-Idrisi](#) made a Map (1) in 1154.
2. **18th Century**: French cartographer made a Map (2) in the 1720s.

Not only maps but change was seen in the terminologies. Therefore, historians need to be very careful while gathering information about the past.

New and Old Terminologies:

- Historical records exist in a variety of languages. They have changed considerably over the years.
- For Example: Medieval Persian is different from Modern Persian.
 - Grammar, Vocabulary and meanings of words have changed.
- Terms like '**Hindustan**' and '**foreigner**' have changed.
 1. **Hindustan**: Though, It is India today(The Modern Nation State).
 - In **13th Century**: Minhaj-i-Siraj (a chronicler) used the term in political sense (The term stood for land under the Delhi Sultan).
 - He meant the areas of Punjab, Haryana and lands between The Ganga and Yamuna.
 - The term not included South India.
 - Although, In **16th Century**:

Babur used Hindustan to describe the geography:-

- The Fauna and culture of inhabitants.

2. **Foreigner:** It means someone who is not an Indian (Modern Day meaning).

- However, in [medieval period](#), it meant someone who was not a part of that society or culture.
- *Pardesi* in Hindi and *Ajnabi* in Persian.

Historians and their Sources (700 to 1750)

- Historians use different **types of sources**.
 - Coins, Inscriptions, architecture, textual records.
- Textual records increased in this period.
 - Since, the paper became cheaper and more widely available.
- People used it to write:-
 - holy texts, chronicles of rulers, letters and teachings of saints, petitions and judicial records.
- **Challenges faced by Historians :**
 - There was no printing press. So, People would write manuscripts (preserved in archives) by hand. They were called Scribes.
 - Thus, It was not easy to copy exactly the same words.
 - Same texts were found different from other.
 - Historians had to remain dependent on the copies.
 - For Example: Historians did not know about first version of **Ziyauddin Barani** until 1960s.
 - Although, it was first made in 1356. (14th Century)

New Social and Political Groups:

Period of economic, political, social and cultural changes.

- Some of the new **technological changes** appeared –
 - The Persian wheel in irrigation
 - The spinning wheel in weaving
 - and firearms in combat.
- **New foods and beverages** arrived –
 - Potatoes, corns, chillies, tea and coffee.
- Also, The Time of **travelling and exploration** –
 - People would travel long distances in search of opportunity.
 - Since, the subcontinent held immense wealth.
- **Important groups:** Rajputs (Group of warriors).
 - Other Important groups: Marathas, Sikhs, Jats, Ahoms and Kayasthas. (also tried to become politically strong)
- **Changes in habitat:** (From forest to villages)
 - Gradual clearing of forests and extension of agriculture.
 - Led to **migration of forest-dwellers**.
 - So, as a result, new **peasant groups**

formed.

- Peasants began to be influenced by regional markets, chieftains, priests, monasteries and temples.
- They became the part of large complex societies.
- Also, they were required to pay taxes and offer goods and services to local lords.
- Although, Some possessed more productive land.
- Others had kept cattle.
- Some people had combined artisanal work with agricultural activity during the lean season.
- People were grouped into **jatis or sub-castes**.
 - They ranked on the basis of their backgrounds and their occupations.
- However, the Status of the same jati could vary from area to area.
- Jatis framed their own rules and regulations.
- An assembly of elders (Jati Panchayat in some areas) would enforce regulations.
- They were also directed to follow the rules of their villages.
- Chieftain governed several villages.

Region and Empire:

- Many dynasties emerged.
 - For Example: Cholas, Tughluqs, Khaljis, and Mughals.
- Thus, rulers claimed to have control over different parts of subcontinent.
 - For Example: Delhi Sultan **Ghiyasuddin Balban**.
- Dynasties like Cholas, Khaljis, Tughluqs and Mughals
 - They were able to build an empire that was **pan- regional** -the areas of empire spanning diverse regions.
 - Therefore, Most of the regions across the subcontinent were left with the legacies of the big and small states that had ruled over them.

Old and New Religions:

- Important changes occurred in Hinduism (Religion).
- People began worshipping new deities.
- Royalty constructed temples.
- Brahmins (due to knowledge of Sanskrit texts) and priests got importance.
- Thus, they became dominant groups in society.
- New idea of Bhakti emerged.
- New religions appeared such as Islam(7th Century).
 - Merchants and Migrants introduced teachings of the Holy book Quran.

Thinking about time and Historical Periods:

- Historians does not see time just as a passing of hours, days or years.
- Time also reflects changes :
 - in social and economic organization.

- in the persistence and transformation of ideas and beliefs.
- To make the study of time easier, Historians have divided the history into periods.
 - For Example : In **Mid 19th Century**: British Historians divided the history of India (based on religion of rulers) into three periods:-
 - Hindu
 - Muslim
 - British.
 - Although, Modern *historians focus in economic and social factors*. They divided history into:-
 - Ancient
 - Medieval
 - Modern period.

Transformation in societies and economies led Subcontinent to the level of prosperity. Hence, It attracted the interest of European trading companies. So, in further chapters we will study all these above mentioned topics in detail.

Category

1. Class 7th

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