

Ch 1 Tracing Changes Through a Thousand Years

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Let's recall

1. Who was considered a "foreigner" in the past?

Answer

Any stranger who was not a part of that society or culture was considered a "foreigner" in the past. A city-dweller, therefore, might have regarded a forest-dweller as a "foreigner".

2. State whether true or false:

(a) We do not find inscriptions for the period after 700.

▶ False

(b) The Marathas asserted their political importance during this period.

▶ True

(c) Forest-dwellers were sometimes pushed out of their lands with the spread of agricultural settlements.

▶ True

(d) Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban controlled Assam, Manipur and Kashmir.

▶ False

3. Fill in the blanks:

(a) Archives are places where ----- are kept.

(b) ----- was a fourteenth-century chronicler.

(c) ---, ----, ----, ---- and ---- were some of the new crops introduced into the subcontinent during this period.

Answer

(a) Archives are places where manuscripts are kept.

(b) Ziyauddin Barani was a fourteenth-century chronicler.

(c) Potatoes, corn, chillies, tea and coffee were some of the new crops introduced into the subcontinent during this period.

4. List some of the technological changes associated with this period.

Answer

The technological changes associated with this period are:

- (i) The Persian wheel for irrigation.
- (ii) The spinning wheel in weaving.
- (iii) Firearms in combat.

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5. What were some of the major religious developments during this period?

Answer

The major religious developments during this period:

- (i) Important changes occurred in the Hinduism religion which included the worship of new deities.
- (ii) Hindus started the construction of temples by royalty.
- (iii) Importance of Brahmanas and the priests grown and they became dominant groups of the society.
- (iv) There was also the emergence of the idea of bhakti i.e. of a loving, personal deity.
- (v) During this period, new religions like Islam appeared in the subcontinent who brought the teachings of holy Quran.
- (vi) Many rulers were patrons of Islam and the ulama.

Let's understand

6. In what ways has the meaning of the term "Hindustan" changed over the centuries?

Answer

The meaning of the term "Hindustan" changed over the centuries:

- (i) In the 13th century, Minhaj-i-Siraj, a chronicler who wrote in Persian used "Hindustan" in a political sense for lands that were a part of the dominions of the Delhi Sultan.
- (ii) In 13th century, Hindustan never included south India. It meant the areas of Punjab, Haryana and the lands between the Ganga and Yamuna.
- (iii) In 14th century poet Amir Khusrau used the word "Hind" for the culture and the people of Indus river.
- (iv) But in the early 16th century Babur used Hindustan to describe the geography, the fauna and the culture of the inhabitants of the subcontinent.
- (v) Earlier, the term "Hindustan" never carried the political and national meanings which we associate with it today. But now this term is used for nowadays India.

7. How were the affairs of jatis regulated?

Answer

- (i) The affairs of jatis were regulated by an assembly of elders which is also known as jati panchayat in some areas.
- (ii) Jatis framed their own rules and regulations to manage the conduct of their members.
- (iii) Jatis were also required to follow the rules of their villages governed by a chieftain.

8. What does the term pan-regional empire mean?

Answer

The term pan-regional empire mean the empires which were spanning diverse regions which was expanded to a larger area or regions like dynasties of Cholas, Khaljis, Tughluqs and Mughals.

Let's discuss

9. What are the difficulties historians face in using manuscripts?

Answer

Difficulties faced by historians in using manuscripts:

- (i) There was no printing press in those days so scribes copied manuscripts by hand which were difficult to read and understand.
- (ii) During copying, scribes also introduced small changes in a word or sentence which grew over centuries of copying.
- (iii) Original manuscript of the author rarely found today so they are totally dependent upon the copies made by later scribes.
- (iv) Historians have to read different manuscript versions of the same text to guess what the author had originally written.

10. How do historians divide the past into periods? Do they face any problems in doing so?

Answer

Historians divide the past into periods on the basis of economic and social factors to characterise the major elements of different moments of the past.

- (i) The historians faced a lot of problems because time itself reflects changes in social and economic, organisation, in the persistence and transformation of ideas and beliefs.
- (ii) Therefore, describing the entire period as one historical unit is not without its problems.
- (iii) "Modernity" also carries a sense of material progress and intellectual advancement.
- (iv) The study of time is made somewhat easier by dividing the past into large segments periods which possess shared characteristics.