

Class –VII Social Science
NCERT Solutions
History Chapter 1
Tracing Changes Through A Thousand Years

Q1. Who was considered a “foreigner” in the past?

Ans: In the past, a foreigner was someone who was not part of a certain society or culture. A city dweller might have regarded a forest dweller as a foreigner, but two peasants living in the same village were not foreigners to each other, even if they had different religious or caste backgrounds. But today, a foreigner is someone who is not an Indian. A foreigner is known as *pardesi* in Hindi and *ajnabi* in Persian.

Q2: State whether true or false:

- a. We do not find inscriptions for the period after 700.
- b. The Marathas asserted their political importance during this period.
- c. Forest-dwellers were sometimes pushed out of their lands with the spread of agricultural settlements.
- d. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban controlled Assam, Manipur and Kashmir.

Answers: (a) False (b) True (c) True (d) False

Q3: 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.

Answers: (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.

Q4: List some of the technological changes associated with this period.

Ans: Some of the technological changes associated with this period were - the Persian wheel for irrigation, the spinning wheel in weaving and firearms in combat. A Persian wheel is a machine to lift water from moving water sources such as a river or large spring. A spinning wheel is a device for spinning thread or yarn from natural or synthetic fibres. Firearms are used in offensive role mostly by military force. All these innovations came along with people, who also brought other ideas with them. These technological changes occurred between 700 and 1750 A.D.

Q5: What were some of the major religious developments during this period?

Ans: Some of the major religious developments during this period were:

- the inclusion of new deities in Hinduism, the construction of temples by royalty and the growing importance of Brahmanas, the priests, as dominant groups in society.
- Brahmanas earned a lot of respect in the society due to their knowledge of Sanskrit.
- New rulers searching for prestige extended their patronage to these priests.
- the emergence of bhakti, of a loving personal deity that people could reach out to without the aid of priests or elaborate rituals.

- Merchants and migrants introduced Islam to the subcontinent through the teachings of the Holy *Quran*. Many rulers were patrons of Islam and the *ulama*.
- Islam was interpreted in many ways by its followers.
- There were other important differences between the various schools of law, theology and mystic traditions.

Q6: In what ways has the meaning of the term “Hindustan” changed over the centuries?

Ans: Over the centuries, there has been a distinct change in the meaning of the term “Hindustan”.

- In the thirteenth century, the term stood for the lands under the Delhi Sultanate. It never stood for the region covering south India. It meant the areas of Punjab, Haryana and the lands between the Ganga and Yamuna.
- The fourteenth century poet, Amir Khusrau referred to "Hind" for the culture and people of the Indus river.
- In the early sixteenth century, Babur used the term to describe the geography, culture and fauna of the subcontinent.
- The term Hindustan did not carry the political and national meanings which are associated with it today.
- Now, it represents the modern nation state of India.

Q7: How were the affairs of jatis regulated?

Ans: The period between 700 and 1750 A.D saw a diversified society because people took up different occupations., like farmers, rich peasants and artisans. Jatis were sub castes based on the occupations of the people. Ranks were not fixed permanently and varied according to the power,

influence and resources controlled by members of the jatis. Jatis framed their own rules and regulations to manage the conduct of their members. The affairs of the jatis were regulated by an assembly of elders, known in some areas as the jati panchayat. But, jatis were also required to follow the rules of their village. Several villages were governed by a chieftain.

Q8: What does the term pan-regional empire mean?

Ans: The term pan-regional empire is a nation which influences other nations' actions completely or partially. It also refers to an empire which stretches over many diverse regions. The Mughal empire, Tughlaqs, Khaljis and the Chola empire are good examples of pan-regional empires.

Q9: What are the difficulties historians face in using manuscripts?

Ans: While using manuscripts, historians face a number of difficulties.

- Before the advent of the printing press, Manuscripts were written with hand. It was not legible and so one would be forced to guess what is written. As a result, there were small but significant differences between any two copies. Also, it was difficult to read handwritten manuscripts.
- The scribes who copied them introduced changes. So the original manuscripts were very rare to find. As a result, historians have to read different versions of the same text to guess what the authors had originally written. This discrepancy in different versions of manuscripts may lead to inaccurate historical information.

Q10: How do historians divide the past into periods? Do they face any problems in doing so?

Ans: British historians divided Indian history into three periods - Hindu, Muslim and British. It was based on the idea that the religion of rulers was the only important historical change. Historians divide the past into periods based on the economic and social factors which characterize them. In doing so, they are faced with two problems. First, economic and social changes keep taking place hence, definite boundaries cannot be drawn. Second, these periods are compared with modernity. Modernity gives a sense of progress. This implies that there was no progress before, which is not true.

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