

Chapter

1

How, When and Where

How Important are Dates

History is definitely about changes which have taken place over a period of time. It identifies how things were in the past and how have they changed in the present. The Past is referred to as 'before' and present is known as 'after'.



Brahmins offering the shastras to Britannia frontispiece to the first map produced by James Rennel, 1782

Dates in history are like the skeleton system, without which the body would be shapeless. A recollection of historical facts would be a meaningless heap unless the events were arranged in the sequence of dates of their occurrence.

Some dates and events in history act as landmarks because of their long-term impacts. For instance, the year 1526 is a landmark in Indian history because this is when the first battle of Panipat was fought.

More importantly, it marks the end of the Delhi Sultanate and the beginning of the Mughal Empire in India.

The importance of dates depends on the aspect from which history is studied. Political history deals with rules, administration, wars, etc.

Social history, economic history, cultural history and religious history deal with their respective developments. Some dates record events in the lives of rulers, including birth, occasions, wars, administrative actions and death. These are significant for political historians.

How do we Periodise

In 1817, James Mill a Scottish economist and political philosopher, published a massive three-volume work, *A History of British India*. In this, he divided Indian history into three periods—Hindu, Muslim and British. This periodisation came to be widely accepted. Historians have broadly divided Indian history into 'ancient', 'medieval' and 'modern periods.'

The division of history into three periods, i.e. ancient, medieval and modern is done to show that a lot features of society, economy, culture and politics of each period were different from those of the preceding period. You have already learnt about the first two periods of history of India. Let's now turn towards the modern history of India which covers the period from 1707-1947. Before coming to that period let's have an overview in retrospect. In 1453, the Turks took control of the overland trade routes connecting Europe to the east.



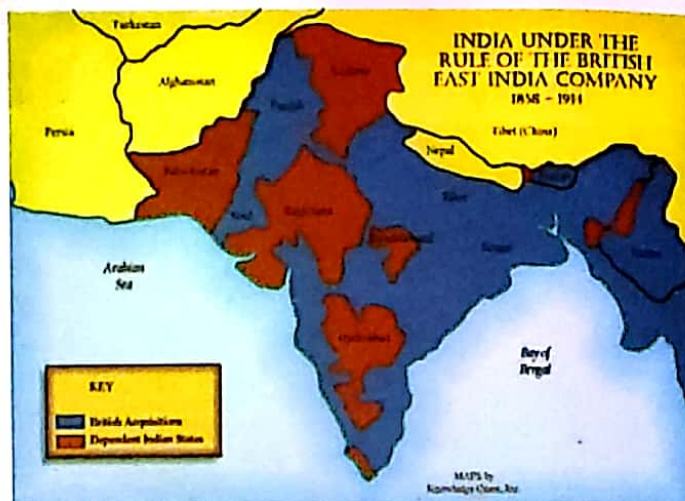
Vasco-da-gama

In 1482, Vasco-da-Gama of Portugal had landed at Calicut along the west coast of India and later on other European sailors reached India. Primarily they all came for trade. Later

on they captured land, made their forts and fought between themselves. Finally the English defeated their rivals i.e. the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French.

Changes under the British in India

Till the closing of the 19th century British were changing their position from traders to masters of Indian subcontinent. Acquisition and expansion of territorial possession in India increased the involvement of the East India Company in tax collection, particularly revenue from land. The different British policies like creation of colonial state had a profound effect on the Indian society.



Sources of History of the Modern Period

The sources of information about the period can be divided into two categories – primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include literary sources like government reports, literary and artistic evidences or proofs i.e. files, books, paintings and archaeological remains such as monuments and artifacts. Secondary sources include articles, reports, books and reviews.

These literary and documented sources of modern period distinguish it from the earlier periods, which depended on sources like archaeological excavations, fossil remains, cave paintings, pottery, coinage, biographies of the rulers, travellers etc.

Written sources are available not only in Hindi and English but also in regional languages. These sources illumine administrative, political, constitutional, social, economic, cultural and religious aspects of Indian history from the early days of the British settlements in India till they left in 1947.

The archival records of Government of British and India are available in the National Archives of India at New Delhi. Many travellers, traders, missionaries and civil servants who came to India in the 18th and 19th centuries kept and left accounts of their experiences of the country.

- The importance of dates depends on the aspect from which history is studied.
- Political history deals with rules, administration, war etc.
- Social history, economic history, cultural history and religious history deal with their respective developments.
- Historians have broadly divided Indian history into 'ancient', 'medieval' and 'modern periods'.

Exercise



A. Answer the following question ?

1. Describe how the Portuguese captured land in India?
2. What are the sources of studying modern period of Indian History?
3. How do we paradesia?
4. What major changes occurred in India during British Rule?
5. Describe the primary sources of history of modern period.
6. What is the importance of date in history? Explain.

B. Fill in the blanks with correct words :

1. British extended their political control over _____.
2. The England defeated their _____.
3. _____ emerged as the basis of economy.
4. The _____ of information about the period can be divided into two categories.

C. Tick (✓) the correct statements and cross out (X) the wrong ones :

1. Industrial Revolution had to emergence of Capitalism in Europe.
2. The concept of India as one nation began to take shape under the Mughals.
3. The archival records are source of the British history in India.

D. Match the following :

Column A

1. Vasco-da-Gama
2. Modern history of India
3. James Mill
4. The Turks took control of the over land trade routes

Column B

- (a) 1707-1947
- (b) Scottish economist
- (c) In 1453
- (d) Portugal

E. Tick (✓) the correct options :

1. In 1498, Vasco-da-Gama landed at :
 (a) Madras (b) Calicut (c) Bengal (d) Chennai
2. British Rule in India is called :
 (a) Government (b) Honorary (c) Commercial (d) Colonial
3. The invention useful for sailors :
 (a) Steam engine (b) Flying shuttle (c) Binoculars (d) None of these

Project & Activity

- Mark the following places on an outline map of India. : Goa, Pondichery, Mangalore, Mysore, Panipat