

CLASS- 8 HISTORY

CH-1 HOW, WHEN AND WHERE?

Question.1. State whether true or false:

- (a) James Mill divided Indian history into three periods – Hindu, Muslim, Christian.
- (b) Official documents help us understand what the people of the country think.
- (c) The British thought surveys were important for effective administration.

Answer.

- (a) False
- (b) False
- (c) True

Question.2. What is the problem with the periodisation of Indian history that James Mill offers?

Answer. James Mill divided Indian history into three periods – Hindu, Muslim and British. This periodisation has its own problem. It is difficult to refer to any period of history as 'Hindu' or 'Muslim' because a variety of faiths existed simultaneously in these periods. It is also not justified to characterize an age through the religion of the rulers of the time. What it suggests is that the lives and practices of others do not really matter. It is worth-mentioning that even rulers in ancient India did not all share the same faith.

Question.3. Why did the British preserve official documents?

Answer. The British believed that by preserving official documents, it would be easier for them or any other persons to know about the decisions taken in the past. One

can study the notes and reports that were prepared in the past. Their copies may be prepared and used in present time if needed so.

Question.4. How will the information historians get from old newspapers be different from that found in police reports?

Answer. The information printed in newspaper are usually affected by the views and opinions of the reporters, news editors etc. But what historians find in police reports are usually true and realistic.

Question.5 (i) A History of British India was written by

- (a) Charles Darwin
- (b) James Mill
- (c) Albert Einstein
- (d) Thomas Hardy

(ii) The first Governor-General of India was

- (a) Lord Dathousie
- (b) Lord Mountbatten
- (c) Lord William Bentinck
- (d) Warren Hastings

(iii) The National Archives of India came up in the

- (a) 1920s
- (b) 1930s
- (c) 1940s
- (d) 1950s

(iv) The word 'Calligrapher' means

- (a) One who is specialized in the art of painting.
- (b) One who is specialized in the art of music.
- (c) One who is specialized in the art of beautiful writing.
- (d) One who is specialized in the art of public speaking.

(v) Census operations are held

- (a) Every five years
- (b) Every seven years
- (c) Every ten years
- (d) Every twelve years

Answer. (i)(b), (ii)(d), (iii)(a), (iv)(c), (v)(c).

Question.2. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words to complete each sentence.

- (i) The colonial government gave much importance to the practice of
- (ii) Historians have usually divided Indian history into ancient, and
- (iii) A History of British India is a massive work.
- (iv) Mill thought that all Asian societies were at a..... level of civilization than Europe.
- (v) The British established specialized institutions like and to preserve important documents.

Answer.

- (i) Surveying
- (ii) medieval- modern

(iii) three-volume

(iv) lower

(v) archives- museums

Question.3. State whether each of the following statements is True or False.

(i) The British were very particular about preserving official documents.

(ii) Printing began to spread by the middle of the 20th century.

(iii) The periodization of Indian history offered by James Mill was not at all accepted.

(iv) The British carried out detailed surveys by the early 19th century in order to map the entire country.

(v) James Mill glorified India and its culture in his book A History of British India.

Answer. (i) True, (ii) False, (iii) False, (iv) True, (v) False.

Very Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Name the events for which specific dates can be determined.

Answer. The year a king was crowned, the year he married, the year he had a child, the year he fought a particular battle, the year he died, etc.

Question 2. What was an important aspect of the histories written by the British historians in India?

Answer. The rule of each Governor-General was an important aspect.

Question 3. Who was James Mill?

Answer. He was a Scottish economist and political philosopher and is known for his book A History of British India.

Question 4. What was Mill's opinion about the Asian societies?

Answer. In Mill's opinion all Asian societies were at a lower level of civilisation than Europe.

Question 5. What evil practices, according to James Mill, dominated the Indian social life before the British came to India?

Answer. According to James Mill, the evil practices that dominated to the Indian social life were religious intolerance, caste taboos and superstitious practices.

Question 6. How did paintings project Governor- General?

Answer. Paintings projected Governor-Generals as powerful figures.

Question 7. Why do many historians refer to modern period as colonial?

Answer. It is because, under British rule people did not have equality, freedom or liberty—the symbols of modernity.

Question 8. Mention one important source used by historians in writing about the last 230 years of Indian history.

Answer. The official records of the British administration.

Question 9. What is done under census?

Answer. It records the number of people living all the provinces of India and gathers information on castes, religions and occupation.

Question 10 . What do official records not tell?

Answer. Official records do not tell what other people in the country felt, and what lay behind their actions.

Question 11. Why do we try and divide history into different periods?

Answer. We do so in order to capture the characteristics of a time, its central features as they appear to us.

Short Answer Type Questions

Question . Historians divide Indian history into ancient, medieval and modern. But this division too has its problems. What are these problems?

Answer. This periodization has been borrowed from the West where the modern period was associated with the growth of all the forces of modernity such as science, reason, democracy, liberty and equality. Medieval was a term used to describe a society where these features of modern society did not exist.

It is difficult for us to accept this characterization of the modern period. Here, it is worth-mentioning that Indians did not have equality, freedom or liberty under the British rule. The country also lacked economic growth and progress in that period. It is therefore many historians refer to modern period as colonial period.

Question. How did the British conquer India and establish their rule?

Answer. The British conquered India in the following ways:

They subjugated local nawabs and rajas.

They established control over the economy and society collected revenue to meet all their expenses, bought goods they wanted at lower prices and produced crops they needed for export.

They brought changes in rulers and tastes, customs and practices.

Thus, they molded everything in their favor and subjugated the country very soon.

Question. How did surveys become important under the colonial administration?

Answer. The British gave much importance to the practice of surveying because they believed that a country had to be properly known before it could be effectively administered. Therefore, they carried out detailed surveys by the early 19th century in order to map the entire country:

They conducted revenue surveys in villages.

They made efforts to know the topography, the soil quality, the flora, the fauna, the local histories and the cropping pattern.

They also introduced census operations, held at the interval of every ten years from the end of the 19th century. They prepared detailed records of the number of people in all the provinces of India, noting information on castes, religions and occupation separately.