



# WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND HOW?

## HISTORY

**H**ritik entered the house excitedly. Mother asked, "What happened?" "An accident between a car and a wagon", replied Hritik. "Where and When?" "At Rambagh Circle, 2 p.m. "But how?" mother was eager to know.

Whenever an event takes place, we enquire about its details by asking the questions—What, Where, When and How? **An event that has taken place, has become the part of the past.** Past could be just a minute before or a year before. It could also be several years before or several thousand years before. **History** is the study of the past.

### What did People Do ?

We are curious enough about what was people's life like before we came to this world, i.e., before our birth. We can ask our parents and their parents. But what about the life of the people several hundred years back or several thousand years back. What people ate, what kinds of clothes they wore, what types of houses were in which they lived? What type of lives the hunters, herders, farmers, rulers, merchants, priests led? What type of games children played, what type of songs they sang, what type of stories they heard, what type of dramas they watched?

History tells us about the life of the common people, the rulers, the battles won and lost, the games the children played and the type of food they ate.

### Where did People Live and When ?

Man appeared on Earth 15 million years ago, probably in Africa, in the form of an ape-like creature and gradually developed to what we are today—an upright man.

Observe the map of the South Asia subcontinent (including countries India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka). The river Narmada flows along the Vindhya and Satpura ranges in the Central India. People have lived along this river for several hundred thousand

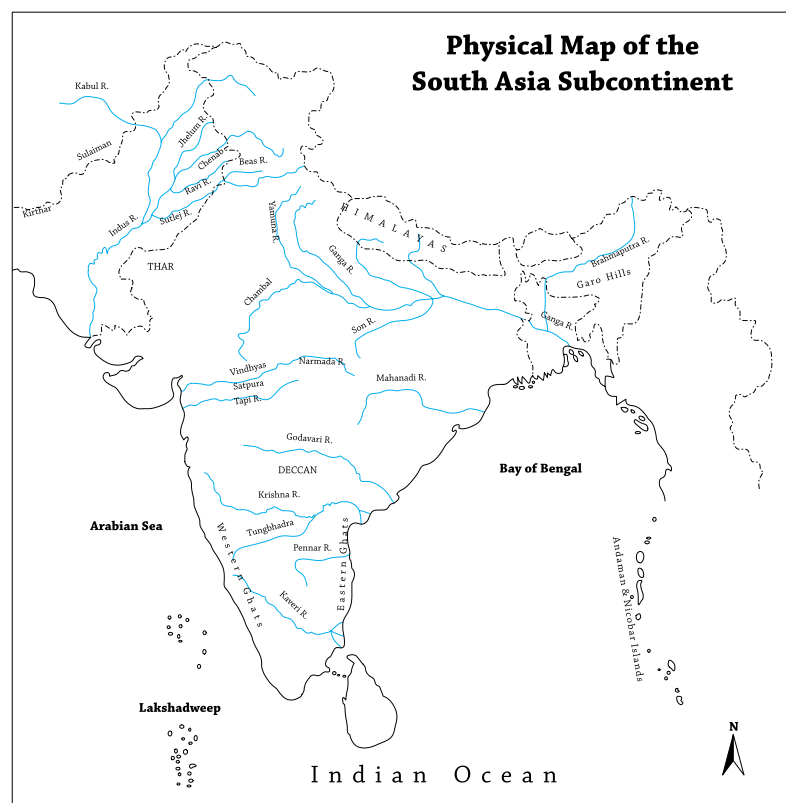
years. The earliest people who lived here knew about the vast wealth of the plants in the surrounding forests. They gathered fruits and other forest produce for their food. They also hunted animals.

You can find the Sulaiman and Kirthar hills to the north-west of the map. About 8000 years ago people started to grow crops here and to rear animals like sheep, goat and cattle by domesticating them. To do this they settled by making a group of small huts which developed into villages. Some of the other areas where agriculture (growing crops and rearing animals) developed were the Garo hills to the north-east and the Vindhyas in central India. Rice was first grown to the north of the Vindhyas.


About 4700 years ago, some of the earliest cities flourished on the banks of the river Indus and its tributaries. Tributaries are smaller rivers that flow into a larger river. The early villages on the banks of these rivers grew bigger in size and turned into cities. These are called as **Indus Valley Civilisation**. Later, about 2500 years ago, cities also developed on the banks of the Ganga and its tributaries and along the sea coasts. The area along the banks of Ganga and its tributary Son to the south of the Ganga was known as Magadha. Its rulers has set up a kingdom which had been extended by its subsequent rulers into a large kingdom. Thus, the area was prosperous and the rulers powerful. At the same time kingdoms had been set up in many other parts of the country. In the course of time the kingdoms had also come up in South India.

### Movement of People

In the course of the above development over time—hunting and gathering, growing crops and rearing animals, development of villages into cities, and development of kingdoms—people moved from one part of the subcontinent to another, a short journey or long journey. The motives to travel were different at different times. **The early groups of hunters and gatherers** were not settled except for a short time stay on the trees or caves near the sources of food and water. Sometimes natural disasters struck at places where they had settled. **To escape** these disasters like floods and droughts people moved to other places. At other times men and women moved in **search of food and water**. These journeys were very dangerous at times, facing the herds of wild animals, crossing the rivers, hills or deserts.



Physical Map of the South Asia Subcontinent



Even after the kingdoms were established, people continued to travel for one purpose or the other. Sometimes, the **rulers wanted to conquer other lands**, so their armies marched conquering others' lands and grabbing their belongings. Besides, **merchants travelled with caravans or ships**, carrying valuable goods for sale or exchange from place to place. When religions developed, the religious teachers walked from village to village and town to town, stopping to deliver lectures and impress people for following a certain faith or idea. People also moved from place to place, **simply driven by the spirit of adventure**, wanting to discover and meet new and exciting places, things and people. All types of movements led to the **sharing of ideas** between people and **learning more about each other**, type of foods, cooking, mode of dresses, type of houses, language, culture, etc.

Those days the means of transport were limited. People travelled short distances on foot. For long distances they travelled on animal backs or carts. Even then they travelled out of need or curiosity. People from across the natural frontiers of the subcontinent also came and settled here. Many people of their lands also followed them. People shared new ways of carving stone, composing music and even cooking. Over hundreds of years, sharing of ideas, cultures and languages resulted into new ways of life. However, **all types of movements enriched the cultural traditions of different places**, voluntarily or forcefully.

### Names of the Land

We call our country as India and Bharat. The river Indus is called Sindhu in Sanskrit language. The Iranians and the Greeks, who came through the north-west about 2500 years ago called the river **Sindhu** as Hindos or Indos. It was because of their **tone and accent of pronunciation**, Indos was turned into Indus, and the land to the east of the river was called India by them. Bharat was the name of group of people living in the north-west who are mentioned in the Rigveda, the earliest composition in Sanskrit (dated about 3500 years ago according to some historians). Later it was used for the country.

### How to Find out about the Past

Scholars write about the animals and plants grown thousands of years ago. What is more interesting is that they can still find out this information even though history books were not written because the human beings at that time simply did not know how to read and write. It is not a mystery as to how the scholars do it. There are several ways of finding out about the past —books, inscriptions and the old things found or excavated (dug under the surface of the earth).



*A palm - leaf manuscript*

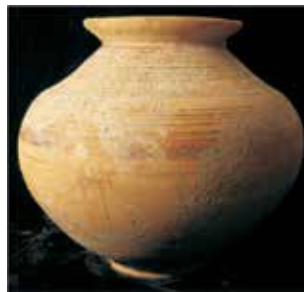
Early man did not know how to read and write. It took a very long time— thousands of years to express through pictures and again thousands of years to make fixed symbols called as letters.

Paper as you read and write on was nowhere these days. People started

to write on the dry palm leaves or specially prepared bark of the birch tree. The birch tree grows in the Himalayas. The books were written by hand and called **manuscripts** (Latin word 'manu' means hand). Over the years many manuscripts were eaten away by insects, many were destroyed by natural changes of weather or disasters. Many of them survived in the temples and monasteries by a long tradition of their care and copying. These books dealt with all kinds of subjects : epics, plays, medicine, science, lives of kings, religious beliefs and practices. Many of these were written in Sanskrit, others were in Prakrit (languages used by common people) and Tamil. By studying these books we can find out about the culture of that time—food, style of clothes, houses, agriculture, trade, battles etc.

**Inscriptions** are writings on hard surfaces like stone or metal. Kings often kept records of victories in battle. They used to get them inscribed in stones on the walls of a building. Sometimes, kings got their orders inscribed so that people could see, read and obey them. Some land documents were recorded on copper plates. Writings on hard surface are difficult to inscribe. But the inscriptions on hard surfaces last longer for hundreds of years, sometimes thousands of years.

The third method to know about the past is to study the things made and used in a certain part of the past. The persons who study about the ancient people by examining , what remains of their buildings, tools, graves, etc. are called **archaeologists**. And their study is called **archaeology**. They study the remains of buildings made of stone and brick, paintings and sculpture. They also explore and excavate (dig under the surface of the earth) to find tools, weapons, pots, pans, coins and ornaments. Some of these objects may be made of stone, others of bone, baked clay or metal.



A pot from an old city  
4700 years ago.



An old silver coin (both sides)  
2500 years ago.

Objects made of hard imperishable substances may survive thousands of years. **Plant remains** survive far more rarely— if seeds of grains or pieces of wood have been burnt partly, they survive in a charred form. Sometimes plant or animal remains may get frozen in cold places or be embedded in rock strata and survive for a long period.

Archaeologists also study the bones of animals (including humans), birds and fish to find out the shape of the body, what the people ate in the past and many other facts.

**Sources** : The information obtained from the study of the manuscripts, inscriptions and archaeology is called **source**. Once sources are found about a certain thing or person of the past, the scholars learn about it and organize the details bit by bit to make its whole form appear. It is like reconstruction. The scholars who study the past are called **historians**. So, archaeologists and historians use all the sources, like the clues by a detective to find out the unknown details of the past.



## Fact File

*I had six honest serving  
men, they taught me all I  
know; Their names were  
Where and What and  
When and Why and How  
and Who.*

—Rudyard Kipling

## Our Pasts

Today 's farmer may have descended from a king long long ago or vice versa. **So the ancient kings and farmers both are our pasts.** The plural word 'pasts' also draws our attention to the fact that the past was different for different groups of people. For example, the lives of herders or farmers were different from those of kings or merchants. Even today, people follow different practices and customs in different parts of the county. People living in the forests are hunter-gatherers even today. The urban population depends on others for agriculture produce. Though archaeology tries to find out about the lives of the rulers as well as the ordinary people, many facets of the lives of common men remains unknown. They did not keep records of what they did, like the kings.

## Dates Given in this Book

In this book, we will refer to dates going back from the present. Unless otherwise stated, the **number of years are estimated / approximated to the nearest hundred years.**

C.E. or CE = Christian Era or Common Era

A.D. or AD = 'Anno Domini' (Latin words meaning 'in the year of the Lord Christ')

So the year 2010 can be written as 2010 A.D. or 2010 C.E.

BC = Before (the birth of) Christ

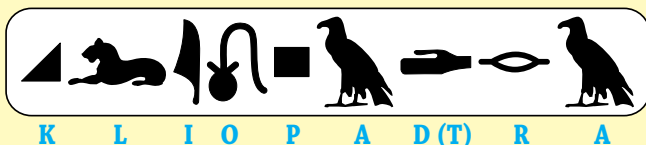
BCA = Before the Christian Era or Before the Common Era

For example, '4700 years ago' does not mean 4700 BC. To change it into BC subtract 2000 (the present year approximated to the nearest hundred), we got it as 2700 BC.

To arrange historical events in an order, in which they happened is called **timeline**. **History** is a systematic record of past events.

## In Other Parts of the World

Many stones with inscriptions written on them has been found in many places. They were written hundreds or thousands of years ago. The scripts and languages of these inscriptions are not in current use. No one knows what they mean today.



**Language** is a system of communication by written or spoken words, which is used by the people of a particular country or area. The set of letters that are used in writing a language is called its **script**.

The old unknown language and script is just like a code (secret). The archaeologists have to find the meaning of them in the current ordinary language. Sometimes they get it rather easily. For example, in 1822, an inscribed stone was found in the town



Rosetta situated on the north coast of Egypt. A French archaeologist named Jean-Francois Champollion discovered the Rosetta stone. The inscriptions were in three different languages and scripts (Greek, and two forms of Egyptian). They compared the letters of the same inscription in different languages and found its meaning. As you can see, a lion stood for L and a bird (avi in Greek) for A. This process is called **Decipherment** or decoding to change a message written in a code into ordinary language so that you can read it. Once the letters are understood, all the inscriptions could be read. The pictograms are enclosed in a little frame, called a cartouche. Such frames are used to show the name of the king and the queen (the king 'Ptolmiis' and the queen 'Kliopadra' or 'Kliopatra' here).

### Key Words

- » Manuscript : a book written by hand.
- » Inscriptions : writings on hard surface like stone or metal.
- » Archaeology : study about the ancient people by examining what remains of their buildings, tools, graves, etc.
- » Historian : the scholar who studies the past.
- » History : a systematic record of past events.
- » Language : a system of communication by written or spoken words which is used by the people of a particular country or area.
- » Script : the set of letters that are used in writing a language.
- » Timeline : to arrange historical events in an order in which they happened.
- » Source : information obtained from the study of the manuscripts, inscriptions and archaeology.

### Time Line

- ◆ *The beginning of agriculture* (8000 years ago)
- ◆ *The first cities on the Indus* (4700 years ago)
- ◆ *Cities in the Ganga valley, a big kingdom in Magadha* (2500 years ago)
- ◆ *The present* (about 2000 AD/CE)

### SUMMARY

- ▶ Whenever an event takes place, we enquire about its details by asking the questions—What, Where, When and How.
- ▶ An event that has taken place, has been the part of the past. History is the study of the past.
- ▶ History tells us about the life of the common people, the rulers, the battles won and lost, the games children played and the type of food they ate.
- ▶ The earliest people living along the river Narmada were hunter-gatherers.
- ▶ About 8000 years ago people started to grow crops and rear animals in the Sulaiman and Kirthar hills of the northwest, Garo hills of the north-east and the Vindhya in central India.
- ▶ About 4700 years ago, some of the earliest cities flourished on the banks of the river Indus and its tributaries.
- ▶ About 2500 years ago, cities also developed on the banks of the Ganga and its tributaries and along the seacoasts.
- ▶ Later, kingdoms were set up in various parts of the country.

- ▶ In the course of the above development over time people moved from one part of the subcontinent to another, a short journey or long journey. The motives to travel were different at different times.
- ▶ The rulers, merchants, religious teachers and adventurers moved with different motives but it led to the sharing of ideas between people and learning more about each other.
- ▶ The Iranians and the Greeks called Sindhu river as Hindos or Indos or Indus and the land to the east of the river was called India.

## Exercise Time

### A. Tick (✓) the only correct choice amongst the following :

1. The earliest people were :
 

a. farmers	b. hunter-gatherers	c. villagers	d. city-dwellers
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2. An event that has taken place, has become the part of the :
 

a. future	b. present	c. past	d. none of these
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3. People started to grow crops about \_\_\_\_\_ years ago.
 

a. 2500	b. 4700	c. 8000	d. 10,000
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4. The first big kingdom was :
 

a. India	b. Iran	c. Greek	d. Magadha
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5. Merchants travelled with :
 

a. armies	b. caravans or ships	c. alone	d. none of these
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### B. Fill in the blanks :

1. The rulers wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ other lands.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ in Latin means, by hand.
3. The scientists who study ancient history by examining the objects, dug up from the ground are called \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The scholars who study the past are called \_\_\_\_\_.
5. CE means \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

### C. Match the following :

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Hunting and gathering       | a. Magadha                   |
| 2. Early agriculture           | b. Indus and its tributaries |
| 3. The first cities            | c. Ganga valley              |
| 4. The first big kingdom       | d. Narmada valley            |
| 5. Cities about 2500 years ago | e. Garo hills                |

### D. Write true (T) or False (F) against the following statements in given brackets :

1. 2010 AD means 2010 years from the birth of Christ.
2. All types of movements led to fight.
3. Inscriptions on hard surfaces last longer.
4. The kings were our pasts and not the farmers.
5. The river Indus is called Sindhu in Sanskrit language.



**E. Define the following terms :**

- |                 |                |                |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Inscriptions | 2. Archaeology | 3. Manuscripts |
| 4. Source       | 5. Historian   | 6. Timeline    |

**F. Identify (Give the term for) the following :**

1. Writing on a stone or metal
2. Old handwritten book on palm leaves
3. Study of the past
4. Information obtained from the study of manuscripts
5. Set of letters that are used in writing of a language

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**G. Answer in one word or one phrase :**

1. Where did the earliest people in India settle ?
2. What do you call the study of the past ?
3. What did the early Greeks and Iranians call Sindhu ?
4. Where were first cities developed ?
5. What all types of movement led to ?

**H. Answer these questions briefly :**

1. What do you mean by the term 'past' ?
2. Why did people travel in the past ?
3. Make a list of all the objects that archaeologists may find. Which of these could be made of stone ?
4. Write two differences between the lives of the kings and farmers.
5. What were the subjects on which books were written in the past ?

**I. Answer these questions in detail :**

1. Write about the developments in the life of people from a gatherer to a ruler.
2. Explain the ways to know the information about past. How are sources used for writing history ?

**PROJECT WORK**

1. Do you have some old coins ? Observe the coins you get and find the year inscribed on them. Find if any coins were issued in the memory of some special event. If the coins are not costly, collect and keep some with you on which years are marked before 2000, e.g., 1980 to 1999.
2. On an outline map of India mark the sites of hunter- gatherers, early agriculture, first cities, first big kingdom.