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SOCIAL SCIENCE

OUR PASTS – II

Textbook in History
for Class VII

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी
NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

ISBN 81-7450-724-8

First Edition

April 2007 Vaisakha 1929

Reprinted

November 2007 Kartika 1929

January 2009 Pausa 1930

December 2009 Pausa 1931

November 2010 Kartika 1932

January 2012 Magha 1933

March 2012 Phalguna 1934

October 2013 Ashvina 1935

December 2014 Pausa 1936

December 2015 Agrahayana 1937

December 2016 Agrahayana 1938

December 2017 Agrahayana 1939

PD 650T+100T RPS

© **National Council of Educational
Research and Training, 2007**

₹ 55.00

*Printed on 80 GSM paper with NCERT
watermark*

Published at the Publication Division
by the Secretary, National Council of
Educational Research and Training,
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016
and printed at Labanya Printing Press,
Chandrakanta Hazarika Path, Tarun Nagar
G.S. Road, Guwahati - 781 005 (Assam)

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Cover and Layout

Art Creations

Cartography

Cartographic Designs Agency

FOREWORD

The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time

available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavor by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

NCERT appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the Advisory Group on Social Science, Professor Hari Vasudevan and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor Neeladri Bhattacharya for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this textbook; we are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations, which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G. P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution. As an organization committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

Director

New Delhi
20 November 2006

National Council of Educational
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the product of a year's cogitation: discussions, sharing comments and rewriting that relied upon the skills and commitment of all the members of the Textbook team. There was much that we learned from each other through this period and we hope that the final product manages to communicate the excitement and joy that went into its planning and production. All the members of the team received support and encouragement from their respective institutions and families and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Professors J.S. Grewal, member of the NCERT Monitoring Committee and Muzaffar Alam of the University of Chicago commented on several chapters and very generously responded to all our queries. Professor Ebba Koch of the University of Vienna was kind enough to give us permission to use many of her photographs and illustrations. We are indebted to Dr. Meera Khare of PGDAV College, Delhi University, for her promptness in responding to our questions and providing us help with information and visuals.

Shyama Warner's copyediting and proof reading skills improved the book dramatically. It is certainly a visual delight thanks to the designing and lay out expertise of Ritu Topa of *Artr Creations*. Albinus Tirkey's technical and administrative help eased the burden at the last stages of production. Satish Maurya produced the maps for the book. We are grateful to him for his patience, promptness and efficiency. Shveta Uppal oversaw the final editing and production of the volume with great care and customary professionalism.

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 Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. *The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama*, (Ch. 6, fig. 9);
 Thackston, Wheeler M. translated, edited and annotated, *Jahangirnama, Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, (Ch. 4, fig. 8);
 Welch, Stuart Cary. *India, Art and Culture: 1300-1900*, (Ch. 7, figs. 4, 6, 7; Ch. 8, fig. 5);
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Schwartzberg, J.E. *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, (Ch. 1, maps 1, 2);

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 Bayly, C. A. *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, (Ch. 10, map 1, 2);
 Frykenberg, R.E. ed. *Delhi through the Ages*, (Ch. 3, map 1);
 Habib, Irfan. *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, (Ch.7, map 2);
 Kumar, Sunil. *Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate*, (Ch. 3, map 2);
 Schwartzberg, J.E. *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, (Ch. 1, map 3);



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IN THIS BOOK

Each chapter is divided into sections. Read, discuss and understand each section before proceeding to the next. Look out for the following in each Chapter.

1

Definition Box

Some chapters contain definitions.

2

Additional Information

Many chapters contain boxes with interesting, *additional information*.

3

Source Box

Many chapters contain a portion from a *source*, clues from which historians write history. Read these carefully, and discuss the questions they contain.

Many of our sources are visual. Each *illustration* has a story to tell.

4



You will also find *maps*. Look at these and try to locate the places mentioned in the lessons.

5



In each chapter there are intext *questions and activities* that are highlighted. Spend some time discussing these as you go along.

6

ELSEWHERE

All chapters end with a section titled *Elsewhere*. This tells you about something that was happening in another part of the world.

7



Imagine

And there is a small section titled *Imagine*. This is your chance to go back into the past and figure out what life would have been like.

8

KEYWORDS



At the end of each chapter, you will find a list of *keywords*. These are to remind you of important ideas/ themes introduced in the lesson.



9

You will also find different kinds of activities listed at the end of each chapter — **Let's recall, Let's discuss, Let's do** and **Let's understand**.

There is a lot to read, see, think about and do in this book. We hope you will enjoy it.

