

Modern Indian History Class 12

29th October, 2023 at 9:00 AM

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

ORIENTALISM (09:12 AM)

- Refer to the handout- British Imperial Ideology for more details.
- Many Englishmen honestly considered themselves as the trustees of India.
- Men like William Jones studied ancient Indian culture and languages and proposed that European and Indian languages are part of the same family (i.e. Sanskrit, Greek and Latin). Thus elevating the status of Indian civilisation to that of the West. This ideology led to Orientalism.
- Institutions were established to study Indian languages and Indian scriptures viz-
- Calcutta Madrasa (1781)
- Asiatic Society of Bengal (1784, pioneer William Jones)
- Sanskrit College (also known as Hindu College), Benaras (1791)
- Warren Hastings (¹⁷⁷³~~1792~~-85) adopted Orientalist policies. i.e. the idea that Indians need to be ruled by Indian laws and customs. Thus he sanctioned the gathering of as much knowledge of Indian traditions as possible.
- Thus Orientalism involved the Rhetoric of Love (Benevolent Colonialism) to reduce opposition to colonial rule.

AUTHORITARIANISM (10:07 AM)

- Orientalism of the 1700s soon gave way to Authoritarianism as the study of ancient India strengthened the realisation that the past was glorious and the present was degenerated. Thus, it is only through the authority of the British that the Indians can be civilised via the imposition of the British political culture.
- Cornwallis (1786-93) was an authoritarian who imposed a British Politico-administrative culture.

LIBERALISM, UTILITARIANISM, EVANGELICALISM (OF THE 1800s) (10:22 AM)

- Its theme was that the British had conquered India through acts of sins and now it is time to transition to the motto “civilise and not conquer”. Macaulay was a liberal.
- Its motto is “Civilise via good laws and good government with a focus on maximising the good for the majority”. Thus, the focus is on using the tools of policy, law and administration to effect socio-political reforms.
- Its motto is that Christianity is the path to civilisation. They also believed that the English had conquered India through acts of sin. The Charter Act of 1813 allowed unrestricted entry of Missionaries in India.

IMPACT OF THE 1857 REVOLT (10:46 PM)

- The violence by Indians led to the belief that Indians were beyond redemption.
- Thus authoritarianism increased. India was inferior and also different.
- Now there was to be more separateness between Indians and the English. The rise of racial sciences in Europe led to a focus on physical features rather than language as the criteria for classifying races and civilisations.

LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS OF THE BRITISH (11:08 AM)

- Refer to the Land Revenue handout for details.
- Farming system of 1772
- Similar to the Ijaradary system of the Mughals.
- The right to collect LR was auctioned to the highest bidder.
- Permanent Settlement (PR) system
- Cornwallis brought this system.
- Applied to Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Banaras and North Madras.
- Zamindar was made the legal owner of the land.
- The land also became hereditary.
- Reasons for bringing the PR system
- Authoritarianism of Cornwallis.
- PR created a loyalism Zamindari class.
- Impact
- Some Zamindars lost their land.
- Zamindar became a loyalist class.
- Ryots were oppressed and became tenants at will.
- Security of income for the government.

TOPIC OF THE NEXT CLASS- LAND REVENUE SYSTEM (TO CONTINUE)