
Chapter-12

Colonial Cities

- Sources:
 - (I) Records of the East India company.
 - (II) Census reports
 - (III) Municipal reports.
- The urban population increased from about 10 % to 13 % during the period 1900-1940.
- During the end of the 18th century Madras, Bombay and Calcutta had developed into important ports.
- The ruling elite built racially exclusive clubs, race courses and theatres.
- The development of new modes of transportation such as horse drawn carriages, trams, buses etc. facilitated peoples to live at distant place from the places of their work.
- The rulers everywhere try to express their power through buildings. Many Indian adopted European styles of architecture as symbols of modernity and civilisation.
- The settlement of the local peoples was named “Black Town”. A fortification was built around the “White Town” to separate it from the “Black Town”.
- Difficulties in collecting datas:
 - (i) Peoples were unwilling to give correct information’s.
 - (ii) Figure of mortality and diseases were difficult to collect.
- Ports: Madras, Bombay and Calcutta
- Forts: St. George in Madras and Fort William in Calcutta.

TOWNS AND CITIES IN PRE- COLONIAL TIMES

What gave towns their character?

- Towns were defined in opposition to rural areas.
 - Towns represented specific forms of economic activities and cultures.
 - The people lived by cultivating land, foraging in the forest, or rearing animals.
 - Towns by contrast were peopled with artisans, traders, administrators and rulers.
 - Towns dominated over the rural population
 - Towns and cities were often fortified by walls which symbolized their separation from the countryside.
 - When towns were attacked, people often sought shelter in the countryside.
 - Traders and pedlars took goods from the towns to sell in the villages.
 - There was a revenue flow of humans and goods from towns to villages
 - The towns build by the Mughals were famous for their concentration of populations, their monumental buildings and their imperial grandeur and wealth.
 - Agra, Delhi and Lahore were important centres of imperial administration and control.
 - Artisans produced exclusive handicrafts for the households of nobles.
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- Grains from the countryside was brought into urban markets for the town dwellers and the army.
 - The treasury was also located in the imperial capital.
 - Within these towns were gardens, mosques, temples, tombs, colleges, bazzars and caravanserais.
 - The focus of the town was oriented towards the palace and the principal mosque.

Towns in south India

- In the towns of south India such as Madurai and Kanchipuram the principal focus was the temple.
- These temples were the important commercial centres.
- Religious festivals often coincided with fairs, linking pilgrimage with trade.
- The ruler was the highest authority and the principal patron of religious institutions.
- The relationship that he had with other group and classes determined their place in society and in the town.

Changes in the Eighteenth century

- The old towns went decline and new towns developed in the 18th century.
- The growth of new regional powers was reflected in the increasing importance of regional capitals- Lucknow, Hyderabad, Seringapatam Poona, Nagpur, Baroda, and Tanjore.
- Trade, administrators, artisans and others migrated from the old Mughal centres to these new capitals in search of work and patronage.
- In some places there was renewed economic activity, in other places war, plunder and political uncertainty led to economic decline.
- The European Commercial Companies had set up base in different places early during the Mughal era the Portuguese in Panaji in 1510, the Dutch in Masulipatam in 1605, the British in Madras in 1639 and the French in Pondicherry in 1763.
- By the end of 18th century the land based empire in Asia were replaced by the powerful sea based European empires.
- Forces of international trade, mercantilism and capitalism now came to decline the nature of society.
- Commercial centre such as Surat, Masulipatam and Dhaka which had grown in the 17th century had declined when trade shifted to other places.
- Maras, Bombay, Calcutta rapidly emerged as a new economic capitals and colonial administration and political power
- New buildings, occupations, institutions developed.

FINDING OUT ABOUT COLONIAL CITY

Colonial record and urban history

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- Colonial rule based on the production of enormous amount of data
 - The British kept detailed record of their trading activities in order to regulate their commercial affair.
 - They carried out regular survey, gathered statistical data, and published various official report.
 - The top map gives information regarding the location of hill, river and vegetation, all important for planning structure for defense purpose.
 - They know the location of ghats, density and quality of house and alignment of roads, used to gauge commercial possibilities and plan strategies of taxation.
 - The municipal corporation with some popular representative were meant to administer essential services such as water supply, sewerage, road buildings and public health

Problem faced while collecting the Census

- The first all- India census was attempted in 1872. From 1881 decennial (conducted every ten years) censuses became a regular feature.
- The people often refused to cooperate or gave evasive answers to the census officials.
- The people were suspicious of census operation and believed that enquiries were being conducted to impose new taxes.
- Upper caste people were also unwilling to give any information regarding the women of their household.
- Women were supposed to remain secluded within the interior of the household and not subjected to public gaze or public enquiry.
- Census officials also found that the people were claiming identities that they associated with higher status.
- The figures of mortality and disease were difficult to collect for all deaths were not registered and illness was not always reported, nor treated by licensed doctors.
- Historians have to use sources like census with great caution, keeping in mind their possible biases, recalculating figures and understanding what the figures do not tell.

Trends of change

- The smaller towns had little opportunity to grow economically.
 - Calcutta, Bombay and Madras on the other hand grew rapidly and soon became sprawling cities.
 - The introduction of railways in 1853 meant a change in the fortunes of towns.
 - Economic activities gradually shifted away from traditional towns which were located along old routes and rivers.
 - Every railway station became a collection depot for raw materials and distribution point for important goods.
 - Railway towns like Jamalpur, Waltair and Bareilly developed as a trading center.
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What were the new towns like?

Ports, forts and centers for services

- Madras, Calcutta and Bombay had become important ports
- The English East India Company build its factories because of competition among the Europeans companies, fortified the settlement for protection.
- In madras, Fort St. George, in Calcutta Fort William and in Bombay the ort marked out the areas of British settlement.
- There were separate quarters for Europeans and Indian, which came to be labeled in contemporary writings as the “White Town” and “Black Town”.
- Two Industrial cities, Kanpur specializing in leather, woolen and cotton textiles and Jamshedpur, specialize in steel.
- India never became a modern industrialized country as discriminatory colonial policies limited the levels of Industrial development.
- Madras, Calcutta Bombay grew into a large city but did not signify any dramatic economic growth.

A new urban milieu

- Colonial cities reflected the mercantile culture of the new rule.
- Political power and patronage shifted from Indian rulers to the merchants of the East India Company.
- Indians who worked as interpreters, middlemen, traders and suppliers of goods also had an important place in these new cities.
- Economic activities near the river of the sea led to the development of docks and Ghats.
- Around the periphery of the fort, Europeans merchants and agents built garden houses, racially exclusive clubs, racecourse and theatres for the ruling elite.

The first hill stations

- The hill stations were a distinctive feature of colonial urban development.
- The hill stations were initially connected with the needs of the British army.
- Hill station became strategic places for billeting troops, guarding frontiers and launching campaigns against enemy rulers.
- The temperate and cool climate of the Indian hills was seen as an advantage.
- British associated hot weather with epidemics, Cholera and malaria and attempts were made to protect the army from these diseases
- Hill stations were also developed as sanitariums i.e. Place where soldiers could be sent foe rest and recover from illness.

Settlement and segregation in Madras

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- In 1639 they constructed a trading post in Madraspatam and the settlement known as chenapattanam.
 - The company had purchased the right of settlement from local Telugu lords, the Nayaks of Kalahasti.
 - Rivalry with French East India Company led the British to fortify Madras.
 - Chintadripet area meant for weavers, Washermanpet colony of dyers, Royapuram was settlement for christain boatmen.
 - Dubashes were Indians who could speak two languages the local language and English.
 - Triplicane Hindu religious centres.
 - San Thome with cathedral was the centre Roman catholics.

White Town Fort St. George

- Fort St. George became the nucleus of the White Town where most of the Europeans lived.
- Colour and religion determined who was allowed to live within the fort III. The Company did not permit any marriages with Indians.
- Other than English, the Dutch and Portuguese were allowed to stay because they were European and Christian.

Black Town

- The Black Town developed outside the Fort.
 - It was laid out in straight lines, and housed weavers, artisans, Middlemen and interpreters who played a vital role in the company trade.
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