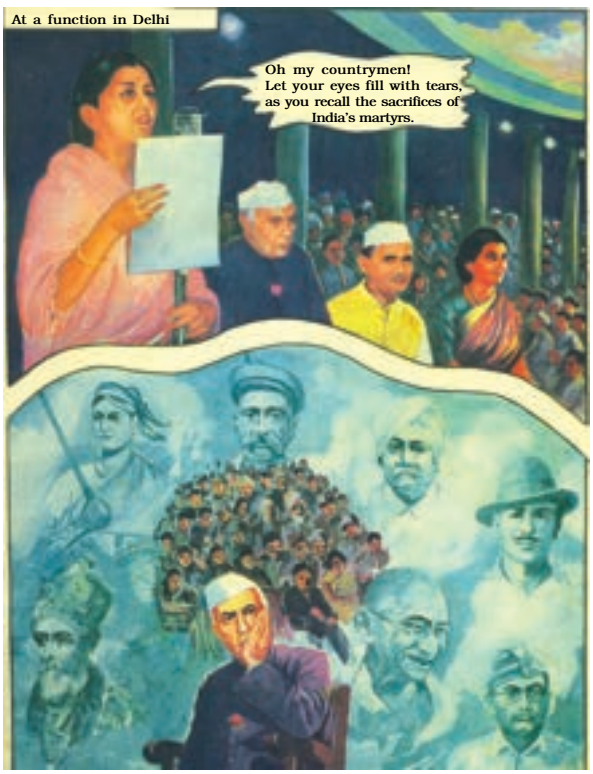
3 Glimpses of the Past

Before you read

Here are some pictorial glimpses of the history of our country from 1757 to 1857. These pictures and 'speech bubbles' will help clarify your understanding of the conditions that led to the event known as the First War of Independence in 1857.

1. The Martyrs



2. The Company's conquests (1757-1849)

With its superior weapons, the British East India Company was extending its power in 18th century India.



Indian princes were short-sighted.



The people had no peace due to such constant fights.

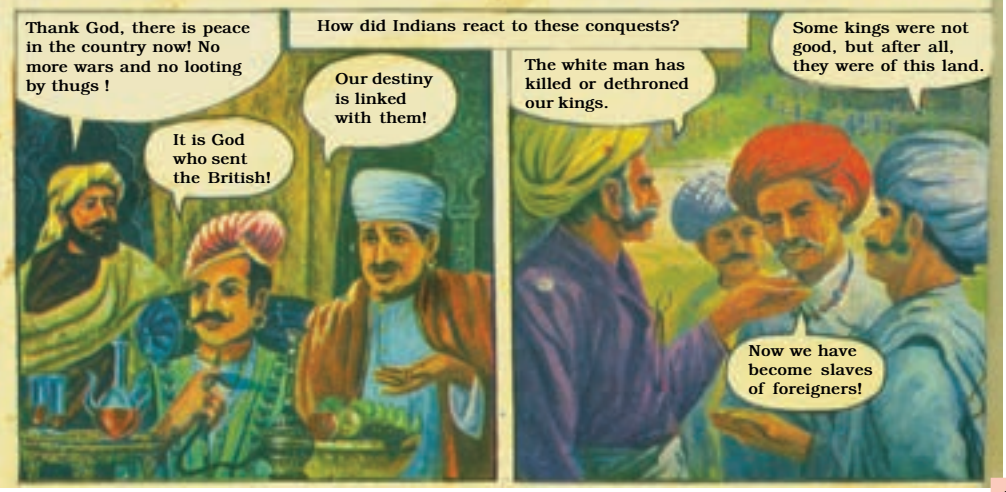
The rivalries helped the East India Company and it could easily subdue Indian princes one by one.



A far-seeing ruler like the brave Tipu of Mysore fought the British till he died fighting!



How did Indians react to these conquests?



3. British Rule (1765-1836)



4. Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)



5. Oppression (1765-1835)

But the British continued to oppress Indians. In 1818, they had passed Regulation III. Under it, an Indian could be jailed without trial in a court.



All the time British officers in India drew big salaries and also made fortunes in private business.



By 1829, Britain was exporting British goods worth seven crore rupees to India.



The British prospered on the Company's loot while Indian industries began to die.

Governor-General Bentinck reported back home –

"The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India."



6. Dissatisfaction (1835-56)

Education in India was in Persian and Sanskrit. In 1835, a Englishman named Macaulay suggested a change.

We should teach the natives through the English language.

I agree.

English education produced clerks to whom the British gave petty jobs under them. Incidentally, it also produced a new generation of intellectuals.

We must educate our brothers.

And try to improve their material conditions.

For that we must convey our grievances to the British Parliament.

By 1856, the British had conquered the whole of India.

States

British area

They cared little about the needs of Indians.

Our kings have become puppets, and we have lost our old jobs.

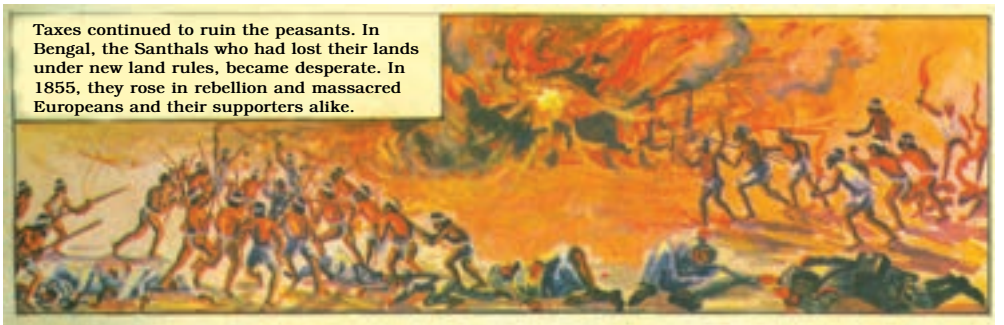
And lands.

They are converting our brothers!

You only talk! Do something to drive then out!

7. The Sparks (1855-57)

Taxes continued to ruin the peasants. In Bengal, the Santhals who had lost their lands under new land rules, became desperate. In 1855, they rose in rebellion and massacred Europeans and their supporters alike.



Discontent was brewing in the East India Company's army too.

The white soldier gets huge pay, mansions to live in, servants.

While we get a pittance and slow promotions !

The Angrez asks us to cross the sea which is against our religion. Who is the topiwala to abolish our age-old customs?

We must drive out the Angrez.

Sepoy Mangal Pande attacked the adjutant of his regiment and was executed.

Thousands of other sepoys revolted. They were stripped of their uniforms,



humiliated and put in irons.

Few Englishmen had cared to understand Indian customs or the people's mind.

Oh, proud Brahmin soldiers, do you know that the grease on the bullet you have to bite is made from the fat of cows and pigs?

What ?

The white man has deceived us too!

Soon, chapaties were sent from village to village to tell the people that their emperor would want their services.



Yes, all my village men will be ready.

Similarly lotus flowers circulated among Indian soldiers.

Death to the foreigner !



The masses gave all help and shelter to the patriots.

8. Revolt (1857)



9. The Fight for Freedom (1857)



from *Our Freedom Movement*
S.D. SAWANT

Comprehension Check

1. *Look at picture 1 and recall the opening lines of the original song in Hindi. Who is the singer? Who else do you see in this picture?*
2. *In picture 2 what do you understand by the Company's "superior weapons"?*
3. *Who is an artisan? Why do you think the artisans suffered? (picture 3)*
4. *Which picture, according to you, reveals the first sparks of the fire of revolt?*

working with the text

Answer the following questions.

1. Do you think the Indian princes were short-sighted in their approach to the events of 1757?
2. How did the East India Company subdue the Indian princes?
3. Quote the words used by Ram Mohan Roy to say that every religion teaches the same principles.
4. In what ways did the British officers exploit Indians?
5. Name these people.
   (i) The ruler who fought pitched battles against the British and died fighting.
   (ii) The person who wanted to reform the society.
   (iii) The person who recommended the introduction of English education in India.
   (iv) Two popular leaders who led the revolt (Choices may vary.)
6. Mention the following.
   (i) Two examples of social practices prevailing then.
   (ii) Two oppressive policies of the British.
   (iii) Two ways in which common people suffered.
   (iv) Four reasons for the discontent that led to the 1857 War of Independence.

working with language

In comics what the characters speak is put in bubbles. This is direct narration. When we report what the characters speak, we use the method of indirect narration.

Study these examples.

First farmer: Why are your men taking away the entire crop?

Second farmer: Your men have taken away everything.

Officer: You are still in arrears. If you don't pay tax next week, I'll send you to jail.

- The first farmer asked the officer why his men were taking away the entire crop.
- The second farmer said that their men had taken away everything.
- The officer replied that they were still in arrears and warned them that if they did not pay tax the following week, he (the officer) would send them (the farmers) to jail.

1. Change the following sentences into indirect speech.

   (i) *First man*: We must educate our brothers.

   Second man: And try to improve their material conditions.

   Third man: For that we must convey our grievances to the British Parliament.

   The first man said that _____

   _____

   The second man added that _____

   _____

   The third man suggested that _____

   _____

   (ii) *First soldier*: The white soldier gets huge pay, mansions and servants.

   Second soldier: We get a pittance and slow promotions.

   Third soldier: Who are the British to abolish our customs?

   The first soldier said that _____

   _____

   The second soldier remarked that _____

   _____

   The third soldier asked _____

   _____

speaking and writing

1. Playact the role of farmers who have grievances against the policies of the government. Rewrite their 'speech bubbles' in dialogue form first.

2. Look at the pictures.



Fox accidentally falls into a well



"How do I get out of here?"



"Hello! Is this water sweet?"



"Too sweet! I've had so much, I might faint."



"Let me taste it."



"Thanks for the help. Come out when you can."



"My mother used to say: Be careful how you take the advice of people you don't know."

(i) Ask one another questions about the pictures.

- Where is the fox?
- What is the fox thinking?
- What does she want to know?
- What happens next?
- Where is the fox now?
- How did it happen?
- Who is the visitor?
- What is the fox's reply?
- Where is the goat?
- What is the goat thinking?

(ii) Write the story in your own words. Give it a title.

_____

_____

3. Read the following news item.

History becomes fun at this school

Mumbai: Students in the sixth grade of a certain school in Navi Mumbai love their history lessons thanks to a novel teaching aid. It is not surprising given the fact that their study material includes comic books and they use their textbooks for reference to put things into perspective. Besides, students are encouraged to tap other sources of information as well. During history classes, students pore over comic strips of historical periods, enact characters of emperors and tyrants, and have animated discussions on the subject. History has become fun.

In the class students are asked to read the comic strip aloud, after which they break up into groups of four, discuss what they have heard and write a summary. Each group leader reads his group's summary aloud and the whole class jumps into discussion and debate, adding points, disagreeing and qualifying points of view. A sixth grade student says, "It's a lot of fun because everyone gets a chance to express themselves and the summary takes everyone's ideas into account."

According to the school principal the comic strip format and visuals appeal to students. A historian feels that using comics in schools is a great idea. Comics and acting help students understand what characters in the story are actually thinking.

(adapted from *The Times of India*, New Delhi, October 2007)

Based on this news item, write a paragraph on what you think about this new method of teaching history.

4. Find the chapters in your history book that correspond to the episodes and events described in this comic. Note how the information contained in a few chapters of history has been condensed to a few pages with the help of pictures and 'speech bubbles'.

5. Create a comic of your own using this story.

Once the Sun and the Wind began to quarrel, each one saying that he was stronger than the other. At last they decided to test each other's strength. A man with a cloak around his shoulders was passing by. The Wind boasted, "Using my strength I can make that man take off the cloak." The Sun agreed. The Wind blew hard. The man felt so cold that he clasped his cloak round his body as tightly as possible.

Now it was the turn of the Sun which shone very hot indeed. The man felt so hot that he at once removed the cloak from his body. Seeing the man taking off the cloak, the Wind conceded defeat.