

# CHRONICLE

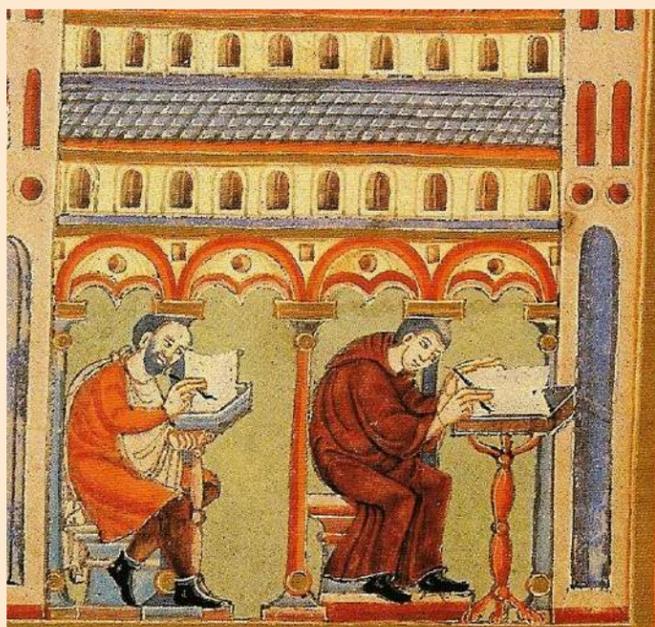
Annual newsletter of Department of History, Kamala Nehru College

Issue 2 | 21 Feb 2017



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*"History will be kind to me; for I intend to write it." - Winston Churchill*



Writing History has been a blessing in disguise to the world. Although the early History writings do have their prejudices and flaws, yet it has been an important record of the world's past. Knowing History has become even more essential in the current socio-political scenario and as History students, who knows this better than us!

However, even in History, there have been certain subjects that haven't been given as much attention as they deserve. With this aim, we bring the second edition of **CHRONICLE**, the annual newsletter of the Department of History, Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi. Our theme '**Unusual Histories of the Medieval World**' focusses to bring to the attention of the readers important aspects of the medieval period throughout the World that are less popular. From new inventions to new cuisines, the middle age was surely not the Dark Age but rather a dynamic one which left its imprint even in the Modern and Contemporary world.

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## WHAT'S INSIDE?

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# FOOD HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

- Shradha Anand IIIrd Year

*[India] was like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously . . . Though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, everywhere there was that tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past, whatever political fate or misfortune had befallen us.*

*Jawaharlal Nehru, the Discovery of India (1946)*

The Indian culture has often been labeled as an amalgamation of diverse language, religion, race, tribes, customs and – CUISINE. A country's cuisine contains the deepest impression of transformations that took place within the country. From Ancient times, foreign travelers have marveled at the country's agricultural bounty. From the time of the Indus Valley civilization in the third millennium BCE, it was the center of a vast network of land and sea trade routes that were a conduit for plants, ingredients, dishes and cooking techniques from and to Afghanistan, Persia, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, China, Southeast Asia and the Indonesian archipelago. Thus layers upon layers were added to constitute the 'Palimpsest', of Indian cuisine.



One of the major challenges of writing about the history of Indian food is the absence of cookbooks. According to Arjun Appadurai, cooking in India was deeply embedded in moral and medical beliefs and prescriptions. Ingredients and raw materials are mentioned in food texts, sometimes in connection with their effect on the doshas or their seasonality, but very little importance was given to their usage in the dishes. Colleen Taylor Sen believes that a reason for the same may be that the emphasis on the moral and medical aspects of food prevented it from becoming a source of independent gustatory pleasure. But with the onset of the Middle Ages, there are evidences of several texts and commentaries across the country referring to culinary habits of local people and their kings. Food habits were becoming more sophisticated and a process of recording details in literature was initiated.

A meal was now expected to have six components of quality and taste- **MADHURA (sweet); AMLA (sour); LAVAN (salty); KATA (pungent); TIKTA (bitter); KASAYA (astringent)**

One of the first Non-medical culinary texts was the *Manasolassa*. It was a composition in Sanskrit verse by King Somesvara III (1126-38), of the Western Chalukya dynasty, a region that today includes Karnataka, Goa and parts of Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The land was rich and fertile producing rice, lentils, black pepper, cardamom, betel nuts and leaves, coconut and sugar, and the kingdom had strong commercial ties with

Southeast Asia, Central Asia and China. In the *Manasolassa*, cuisine is covered in the section called *Annabhoga* and describes a variety of dishes, especially in western and southern India. The most common spice as it appears in the text was, Asafoetida, followed by ground ginger, turmeric, black pepper, rock salt, mustard seeds, coriander, cumin and occasionally camphor and cardamom, whereas onion and garlic were involved only in few recipes indicating their limited use. In keeping with the prescriptions of Ayurveda, food was to be appropriate to the seasons.

The dietary staple was rice, in the region. Somesvara identifies eight varieties including the Red rice, large grained rice, fragrant rice, rice produced in Kalinga, thick coarse rice, small rice and 60-day rice. A typical royal meal started with hot cooked rice and green lentils mixed with ghee, followed by tender pieces of meat prepared with lentils and then some kind of curry (spiced stew). The next course was meat mixed with sour leaves and seasonal fruit and vegetables flavored in different ways. Midway through the meal, *payasam* (rice and milk pudding) and sweet and sour fruit were served. Throughout the meal the king sipped water, fruit juice (*panakam*) and spiced buttermilk. The meal ended with yoghurt to promote digestion.

According to K T Achaya, rice was probably added as an ingredient in the thirteenth century. Some of recipes of meat dishes described in *Manasolassa* are highly complex and aromatic which challenge the notion that meat recipes were introduced into India only with the arrival of Muslims. According to a poet at the court of, Prithviraj Chauhan

(1149-1192), meals at the royal palaces included meat flavored in various ways. The food of the common people lacked richness and variety. An Arab geographer Al-Idrisi wrote that their food included rice, chickpeas, haricots, beans, lentils, fish and animals that died a natural death. Another Arab traveler commented that Hindus disapproved of the drinking of wines, not on religious grounds but because of its intoxicating effect.



Eastern Indian Cuisine was in some ways different. Typical flavorings included turmeric, mustard seeds, dried ginger, cumin seeds, long pepper, cloves, coriander seeds and asafetida. Both betel creepers and betel-nut trees were cultivated, and the chewing of paan was common. Coconut trees were ubiquitous, and both the kernel and the water of the nut were consumed. With exception of some orthodox Brahmins, widows and Jains, most Bengalis were not vegetarians. Law-writers of the middle Ages found it necessary to sanction the eating of fish (provided it had scales) and meat, except on certain days each month. Although alcohol was prohibited, songs written in the twelfth century show that there were many taverns in Bengal selling not just intoxicating beverages but also cannabis. In Western India, especially in Gujarat, vegetarianism was prevalent from ancient times. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE, King

Soon after building started in 1173, the foundation of the Pisa tower settled unevenly. Construction was stopped, and was continued only a 100 years later. Therefore, the leaning tower was never straight.

Kumarapala supported Jainism and banned the slaughter of animals in his kingdom. Jain literature composed between the seventh and fifteenth centuries mentions many Gujarati

vegetarian dishes that are still eaten today, including dukkia (*dhokla*), vedhami (*puranpoli*), kacchhari (*kachori*), kosamri (*a lentil salad spiced with mustard seeds*), sarkara (*a round sweet made of khoya – thickened milk – and sugar*) and ghrtapura (thevara).

The Central Asian and Afghan tribes mesmerised by the stories of fabulous wealth of India, regularly invaded the north-west of the country between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. By 1225, all of Northern India was under Islamic rule, collectively called the Delhi Sultanate. Their culture, literature and habits too had a great extent on Indian Cuisine. Hindus were co-opted into the administration, as well as the Royal kitchen, thus forming the North Indian *Kayastha* caste. The Sultans, to enhance their prestige, emulated the traditions of *Shahs of Persia*. There were private kitchens, *Matbakhs*, managed by the officer called *Chashnigir*. They usually dined in the company of their nobles and courtiers from a common Dastarkhan (*lavish meal of many dishes, often from the same plate*). A detailed account of Royal banquets was left by Ibn Battuta. Meals started with thin, round breads (parathas), followed by roast meat cut into large pieces, served with round dough cakes made with ghee, stuffed with sabuniya and topped with another sweet called khisht. Meat cooked with onions, ghee and green ginger was served in large

Porcelain bowls, and followed by four or five sambusak (*Samosa*, a triangular pastry filled with minced meat and nuts) for each person. Next came a dish of rice cooked in ghee with a roast chicken on top, and finally sweet items were served, such as halwa and al-qahirya, an almond pudding named after a tenth-century Baghdadi ruler.

The variety of extant vegetables did not differ much, until the arrival of the Portuguese. It was with the entry of the Portuguese that a floodgate of new vegetables entered the Indian kitchens. They brought potato, tomato, tapioca, groundnuts, corn, papaya, pineapple, guava, avocado, rajma (kidney bean), cashew, sapota (chiku), and of course capsicum and chili in all its forms. A particular form of cottage cheese also did come from the Portuguese. It was this that became the Chena of Bengal and Orissa — the base for many Bengali sweets (Sandesh in its modern form, and of course inventions called Rasogolla, Kheermohan, Mouchak, Pantua, Sitabhog, Chena Puda, and so forth).

The next major influence on the Indian cuisine came with the Mughals, starting with Babur in 1526. While he remained aloof to the Indian supper-tables, his son Humayun took to them easier and also introduced a few new items to it. It is with Akbar, and through the book *Ain-i-Akbari*, that the knowledge of many new dishes, ovens and recipes came into India through the Mughal court. The Royal kitchen was a department of state reporting directly to the Prime minister. Food was served in gold, silver, stone and earthenware dishes. Ice, used for cooling and making frozen desserts was brought daily from the Himalayas, through an elaborate system of couriers. The kitchen commanded the finest ingredients from every part of the empire. Akbar brought horticulturists from Central Asia and Iran to supervise his orchards.

In his chronicle, Abul Fazl lists three categories of dish. The first were vegetarian, called Sufiyana. They included khushka (plain boiled rice) pahit (lentils cooked with ghee, ginger, cumin seeds and asafetida), khichri. Dishes in the second category were made with meat, served with rice or other grains. They include qabuli (a mixture of rice, chickpeas, onions and spices), qima pulao (rice and ground meat) shulla, halim, a porridge of meat, cracked wheat, turnips, carrots, spinach and fennel leaves and many more. The third category meat dishes include Yakhni (meat stock). Some of the dishes were Muasamman (stuffed roast chicken), dopiazza (meat prepared with large quantities of onions), and Dampukht (meat cooked slowly with aromatic spices in a pot with sealed lid).

Jahangir, unlike his father, enjoyed meat, but will be remembered for popularizing falooda (a jelly made from boiled wheat strainings mixed with fruit juices and cream). Aurangzeb was very puritanical and often fasted. He mainly ate a vegetarian diet and had a passion for fruit, especially mangoes. When he seized power, Aurangzeb imprisoned his father, but he offered to let him eat his favorite dish every day for the rest of his life. The prison cook advised Shah Jahan not to choose a complicated dish but to ask for dal, assuring him that he could make a different dish out of it every day of the year.

With the Mughal introduction of the varieties of bread, meat dishes and the ovens to make them, and their methods to make ice locally, the cuisine of much of North India transformed forever. However the decline of Mughal Empire began under Aurangzeb and accelerated after his death. Thus with the decline of the Mughals, there was emergence of new cuisines on the foundation of diverse cultures, enriching the palimpsest.

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#### WHO AM I?

A wonderful warrior exists on earth. Two dumb creatures make him grow bright between them.

Enemies use him against one another. His strength is fierce but a woman can tame him.

He will meekly serve both men and women. If they know the trick of looking after him

And feeding him properly.

He makes people happy.

He makes their lives better. But if they let him grow proud

This ungrateful friend soon turns against them.

## WITCHCRAFT IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

- K. Sai Prathyusha

To understand witchcraft we must descend into the darkness of the deepest oceans of the mind. In our efforts to avoid facing the realities of human evil, we have tamed the witch and made her comic, dressing her in a peaked cap and setting her on a broom for the amusement of children at Hallowe'en. Thus made silly she can easily be exorcised from our minds, and we can convince our children-and ourselves –that “there is no such thing as a witch.” But there is or at least there was. A phenomenon that for centuries gripped the minds of men from the most illiterate peasant to the most skilled philosopher or scientist, leading to torture and death for hundreds of thousands, is neither a joke nor illusion.

Witch craft is a human comedy in which the prophetic spirit can discern the essential and immutable folly of our race. The study of witchcraft is therefore of fundamental significance for understanding of man. It illuminates theology. It adds to the understanding of individual and social psychology. It is of particular significance in the history and sociology of ideas, in the study of folk religion, in the history of social protest, in the history of the church, and in that of religious suppression. The history of folklore and folk religion helps us grasp European witchcraft in the context of the sociology of knowledge. Witch craft also has an important part in the history of social protest. Towards the end of the Middle Ages, the simultaneous appearance of numerous movements—flagellants, dancers, millenarians, mystics, and others – indicates that powerful currents of social unrest existed in the period of Plague, famine, war, and rapid social change. As always in a society all the religious values are expressed in religious terms. Later, when in the Western mind money replaced Christ at the right hand of God, popular discontent more frequently expressed itself in economic terms. During the middle Ages, these socio-religious protests were directed against the church. In the history of Christianity, witchcraft is an episode in the long struggle between authority and order on the one side and prophecy and rebellion on the other. The development of witchcraft is closely bound to that of heresy, the struggle for the expression of religious feeling beyond the limits tolerated by the church.

To obtain a relatively precise idea of witchcraft, we must place it in the context of an ambient magical world view, but we must also distinguish it from high magic, black magic, low magic, white magic and religion. Witch craft appears as a phenomenon located in the areas of two other phenomena: religion and the magical world view. Anthropologists and historians have often perceived magic as a kind of superstition, but it is difficult to see how this helps. High magic, at least, was not superstitious. It formed a coherent world view that was related to both sciences and religion, particularly the latter, but independent of both. The essence of the magical world view is belief in a homocentric universe. Man is literally the microcosm reflecting the macrocosm, so that the macrocosm in turn is a projection of man. Hence all things—stars, herbs, stones, metals, planets, the elements and elementals—mesh with man, his longings, his lusts, his desires, his fears, and even his physical appearance and health. The attitude of medieval Christianity was that all magic, benevolent or not, is evil, because it relies upon evil spirits and sets itself against God by trying to compel the powers of the Universe.

In medieval times people were put to death for being witches. One anthropologist conjectures as many as 600,000 "witches" lost their lives.

The connection of witchcraft with low magic is close; its connection with high magic is much more tenuous. A theologian named Alexander of Hales distinguished clearly between high and low magic. Low magic is practical and aimed at obtaining immediate effects, for example, urinating into a ditch to cause rain or sticking a wax doll with a pin to cause pain; high magic is akin to religious, scientific, and philosophical speculation, and reaches out through occult knowledge to understand, grasp, and ultimately control the universe. Hugh Trevor-Roper argues that in the Middle Ages and Renaissance the two were encouraged by separate and distinct philosophical traditions, high magic drawing its sustenance from Platonism and Neoplatonism, and low magic its strength from Aristotelianism.

Witchcraft's important connection was with low magic, which could be used for either benevolent or malevolent purposes. European witchcraft however, is closely analogous to sorcery in other societies and deeply rooted in the traditions of low magic. Yet witchcraft goes beyond magic. One distinction between European witchcraft and low magic is that witches tended to rely upon the help of spirits. The European witchcraft is best viewed as a religious cult of the Devil, built on the foundations of low magic and folk traditions but formed and defined by the Christian society within which it operated. The action of Christianity on European witchcraft produced, among other characteristics, the sabbat, or witches' meeting, usually under the presidency of the Devil and entailing some form of reverence to the Devil coupled with a renunciation of Christ. The conception of witchcraft as an organized cult is another product of the Christian environment that made witchcraft a form of perverted religion. European witchcraft is best considered a form of heresy, for in order to worship the Christian Devil one must first be a Christian. The scholastics and inquisitors defined all demonolatry as heresy making witchcraft inseparable from heresy.

When we look into the conditions of the medieval society during the prevalence of witchcraft, people were apprehensive of many natural phenomena and lived in perpetual fear. Then there were family problems such as impotency, infertility and infant deaths. In some parts, people believed in supernatural powers of the Satan and demons. For all these problems, the blame was put on evil spirits brought upon by witchcraft. Witches came to symbolize the superstitious mentality of popular religion. In the middle Ages, there was a store of folklore of superstitions among the peasants—spells, evil spirits, magic-and many believed that the witches had the power to fly or change shape and they formed a part of a satanic conspiracy to undermine Christianity and Christian beliefs. Witch-craze grew alarmingly during the sixteenth century. Women in particular, in both Protestant and Catholic religions, became the victims of witch hunts. A large number of rural and poor women were prosecuted and many put to death for practicing witchcraft. In 1486, two Dominican inquisitors, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger wrote a book 'The hammer of the witches' with the backing of Pope Innocent VIII. Sex orgies were seen as a part of witchcraft. It is believed that nearly 1, 00,000 people were tried and about 60,000 were executed for witchcraft. The largest trials and prosecution took place between 1560 and 1660.

Historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries find the European witch hunt a perplexing phenomenon as the period after Renaissance was a period of progress. The psychologists see witch hunt as a product of collective psychological trauma and hallucination. According to Norman Cohn, witchcraft based on devil-worship did not constitute popular culture and remained confined to a smaller group of clerics. These ideas began to penetrate society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many of the church officials and theologians started believing in the cult of Satan and witches and saw them as a threat to the Christian order. According to Cohn, the four separate and independent elements—folklore, witchcraft, ritual magic and devil-worship—were all grouped as religious dissenters by intellectuals and theologians. The concept of black magic and devil-worship assumed a menacing form by the late-fifteenth century. Catholic leaders and legal scholars began to advance theories but in the seventeenth century, both Catholic and Protestant elite projected a witch as not only someone who might cast harmful spells but also a heretic. Trials were conducted and the legal procedures of that period allowed the use of torture to extract confessions. Christian dogma and contemporary writings portrayed woman as morally weaker than man and the poverty of the common people, particularly single and old women, made them more vulnerable to the charges of devils' enticements and witches. It was alleged that witches cast spells of misfortune, caused abortion in animals and human beings, raised storm and created havoc. Burckhardt in his work on the Italian Renaissance provides interesting information on magic and other forms of superstition. According to him, witchcraft had a German origin and that witchcraft was commonly practiced in rural Italy while sorceresses were seen more in urban places. The practice of witchcraft was not confined to the Catholic countries. The Puritans in England were actively involved in hangings. Many people, like the Witch-finder General, Matthew Hopkins, made large fortunes from witch-hunting. In England, witchcraft remained a crime against the church. The famous French peasant woman, Joan of Arc played a leading role in repulsing the English forces during the Hundred Years War. She was captured by the English, accused of being a witch, and was condemned and burnt at the stake. In Germany, Martin Luther and Melanchthon firmly believed in the power of spells.



This degrading social practice almost died out by the end of the seventeenth century as the social and intellectual climate shifted away from religion to scientific thought. Some individuals like the German Jesuit, the Friedrich and French scholar F. Bouvot protested through their writings against the practice of witch-hunting and many scientists highlighted the irrationality of such practices. Voltaire in his typical satirical style ridiculed this practice and saw as a means of alleviating the boredom of the nobility during the long winter nights. Noble et al; write (In their Western Civilization: The Continuing Experiment) that the witch hunts are both the last chapter in the history of the Reformation and the first chapter in the history of modern state.

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## WHO AM I?

When I am alive I do not speak.

Anyone who wants to takes me captive and cuts off my head.

They bite my bare body

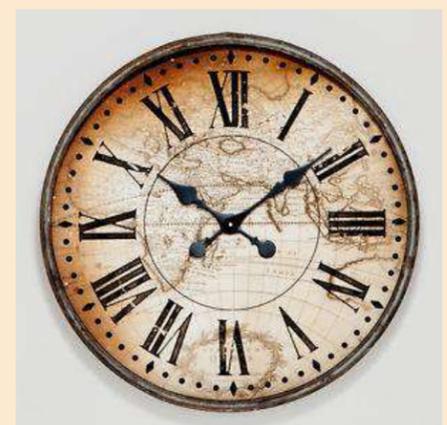
I do no harm to anyone unless they cut me first.

Then I soon make them cry

## MEDIEVAL CLOCKS

- Isha Srivastava , IIIrd Year

Time is the most precious thing that humans have. With the world now coming to a stage where everything is done according to deadlines and schedule given, time has become even more significant in our lives. Searching for the truth about time has been a complicated business, and basically the earth is the reason. For many centuries, the irregularities—the tilted axis, the less than round orbit, the 365.25636-day year—have complicated the search for accurate ways to measure time. After the invention of any number of ingenious devices and instruments, only in the latter half of the 20th century did scientists develop the atomic clock, which runs endlessly and precisely in exact time—and periodically must be reset, because the regular, perfect changing of its digits gets out of sync with the imperfect, irregular course of the earth. With constant vigilance, then, we achieve what previous civilizations did not. Our timepieces can reflect the solar system's movements, but time comes down to us from the distant past from the ancient world by way of the European middle ages.



The process of measuring time had been such a difficult task for our ancestors unlike today where we just look at our wristwatches or digital watches or wall clocks to know the time. Human beings from ancient times were seeking ways to measure time. People of a Pre-Celtic culture erected Stonehenge, some archeologists believe, to designate the summer and winter solstices and mark the equinoxes in spring and autumn. Many centuries later, In New Mexico's Chaco Canyon, ancient Puebloan builders set the mud-brick walls of several major buildings in alignment with the sun's positions at solstices and carved a spiral onto the canyon wall to trace the nineteen year cycle of the moon.

The late Greco-Roman World did not depend on earthen mounds, standing stones, or the walls of building to mark the movements of the heavenly bodies. In 1900, the remnants of a geared machine were discovered near the island of Antikythera. The instrument was found to be dated around 85 A.D. and came to be known as the Antikythera Mechanism. With thirty interlocking gear wheels, the instrument could predict eclipses, as well as show the movements of the sun, the moon, and the five planets known to the ancient Greeks. However, this device was not one of its kind, remnants of another ancient geared device, the Byzantine Sundial Calendar from c.250 A.D. has been found. From these two examples, Scholars assume the existence of other mechanical astronomical instruments in the ancient world.

Sundials were more sophisticated instruments and were possibly invented before 1500 B.C. correctly built, a sundial can be dependable enough for setting a modern watch, at least at noon on sunny days. Working with only these tools-sundials, shadow clocks, and shadow sticks-the Egyptians were first to divide the day into 24 equal hours and first to learn how to calculate the month and day of an individual's birth. They also divided the year into 12 months, a practice the Greeks and Romans adopted in later centuries. By the 2nd century A.D. and probably long before, the majority of the Roman population depended on the sundials erected in public places. Made in numerous shapes and sizes, these public sundials might be installed flat on the ground, placed on pedestals, or built vertically onto the walls of the buildings. Among the Romans, knowing the hour was assign of education and social status, perhaps because upper class citizens owned small, portable sundials (Modern writers tend to describe these as "pocket dials" even though the Romans did not have pockets. As a feature of clothing, the pocket dates from the 18th century in France or perhaps in England. It evolved from pouches either carried or tied around the waist, sometimes beneath the clothing for security.)As an instrument of time and not merely a pretty garden ornament, the sundial continued to be useful for many centuries. Apart from Sundials, there were water clocks and candle clocks which were used to measure. However, no matter how well constructed these celestial timepieces were, they had limitations.

By the mid-6th Century A.D., knowledge of the ancient world's mechanized water clocks and geared astronomical devices had apparently been lost in Italy and the West. Once again, knowing the time of day depended on sundials and the simpler water clocks. The origins of modern timekeeping belong two ideas that more or less govern our lives, punctuality and the schedule. Both of these concepts are in his Rule of the Order, and while St. Benedict never used the term "schedule", he was explicit about punctuality throughout the monastic day. With Roman Christian world, and they may well come as much When Benedict wrote his detailed set of daily regulations for monastic life, he most likely never imagined he would influence the distant future, for the Rule's basic idea was not a new one. For two hundred years, Christians before him had prayed several times a day, much like the Moslems and the Jews. In addition, some early- third- century monasteries and churches advised prayers not only at morning and evening, but also at the times when the Roman guard changed-the third, sixth, and ninth hours of prime(around 9:00 A.M.),sext(noon),and none(about 3:00 P.M.). From an ideal as from implements and devices. Very possibly, our clocks and our system for thinking about time go back to the motivation of one devout man. For his monastery at Monte Cassino around 530 A.D., Benedict of Nursia introduced two ideas that more or less govern our lives, punctuality and the schedule. Both of these concepts are in his Rule of the Order, and while St. Benedict never used the term "schedule", he was explicit about punctuality throughout the monastic day.

Although Rome's central administration was long gone by the 6th century, the customs lingered in people's habits. For centuries, upper-class Romans had certain things had certain things at specific hours, probably in managing their private affairs and certainly in public life. Ordinary citizens, too, were accustomed to such events as the changing of the guard in the Roman army at regular intervals during the day. In designating the hours for prayer, Benedict's Rule combined the times significant in the natural world –dawn, sunrise, sunset, darkness-with three of the hours when the Roman guard changed-terce, sext, and none .At Monte Cassino, the earliest devotions, matins, came at dawn and a couple of hours later at sunrise, the first prayers of the day, called "prime". The next three years-terce, sext, and none-were the Roman hours. Benedict's monks met again at sunset for vespers, and the day's worship ended with compline, when the sky was dark and night fully arrived. In accordance with the older practices of the older practices of the Middle Eastern abbots and bishops, St. Benedict later added the observance of the "night watch" or vigils, based on scriptural warning that Christ might return at midnight and must not find his followers sleeping. Later still, some monasteries combined vigils with matins, while in others, matins were joined with lauds. Like the York masons more than 800 years later, Monte Cassino was using a mixed system for telling time. Two elements distinguished Benedict's Rule from earlier practices. The first was punctuality, and that for the entire day, not for prayers only. The rule designated specific hours for rising, meals, study, physical work, and rest, as well as prayer and worship.

In 1917 Margaret Sanger was jailed for one month for establishing the first birth control clinic.

The Roman Church adopted the Rule and spread its practices throughout Western Europe. Along with St. Benedict's refinement of the monastic day went the desire, or rather the need, to know accurate time. Water- clocks, dampened ropes, marked candles, sundials-although reasonably accurate sometimes, none worked with anything close to precision. Still, with the best information available from these timepieces and their observations of the heavens, medieval clerics calculated dates by means of the "computus". The computus was a method, a procedure-a mathematical formula used by medieval cleric –astronomers to calculate the position of the earth in relation to the heavenly bodies. Originating in the 3rd century A.D. and refined during the 4thcentury, the computus was widely adopted by St. Benedict's lifetime in the 6th century which was used by medieval monks to discern the hours and dates of Christian holy days, particularly of Easter.

Despite its usefulness, the role and influence of the computus began to wane by the late tenth century. Around that time, northern Europeans acquired two devices from the Spanish Moslems, the astrolabe and the solar quadrant. Both instruments simplified astronomical and mathematical calculations, though neither did away with the need for geometry, arithmetic, and astronomy. For some time, historians have speculated that more than Greek books and implements reentered Western Europe through Arabic, Spain, and in his article "Fragmentary Knowledge" in the May 14, 2007, issue of The New Yorker, John Seabrook reminds readers of this theory. Seabrook cites current reasoning that the ancient knowledge of the principles of gearing may well have passed from the Spanish Moslems into the north during the 13th century-the time when David Landes believes the earliest mechanical clocks appeared. The technical expertise that produced the Antikythera Mechanism and the Byzantine Sundial calendar was once again available to the west.

The next phase in the History of Clocks came with the invention of clocks which was invented in the end of 13th century, however David Landes argues for a date closer to 1260. In the oldest working clock in the world is in Salisbury Cathedral. It dates from 1386 and it has no dial. Instead it chimes the hours. The word 'clock' comes from the Latin word 'clocca' which means bell. Another clock that has survived is located in Wells Cathedral in England. It's dated between 1386 and 1392. The clock's original face has three dials, one atop the other. The largest shows the twenty four hour day in roman numerals, while the middle sized disc mounted on top of it displays the sixty minutes of the hour in Arabic numbers. The third and smallest disc represents the Ptolemaic, geocentric universe with the sun, moon, and planets revolving



around the earth. When the clock's face and its mechanism were installed, the single hand indicated not the hour, but the current phase of the moon in its thirty-day cycle. These early clocks were normally located in churches as they were very heavy. However by about 1450 the coiled spring was invented and it made possible portable clocks. The first watches were made in 1510. In the 16th century some rich people had clocks in their homes but they were very expensive. In a society with a low literacy rate, the clocks taught simple lessons, the clocks taught simple lessons, in religion when the figures were saints, angels, or church fathers, and in astronomy when discs on the clocks represented the heavenly bodies. Whatever their social roles, the bells of the town clocks tolled the half-and quarter-hours as closely as their builders could manage, usually within fifteen minutes either way. Accuracy had to wait for the pendulum clock in the seventeenth century. Aside from precise timekeeping, the clocks owned by the towns probably helped, more even than those of the religious institutions, to accustom

people to the regular, equal "hours of the clock".

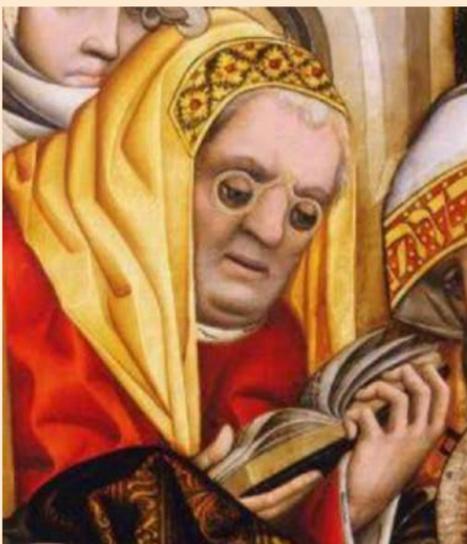
Although the invention of Mechanical clocks was a landmark in history yet the old ways survived alongside the convenient orderly hours of the clock. For many people time continued to be organized by light. Yet, without any doubt, the journey of timekeeping from celestial timepieces to the mechanical clocks has been extraordinary making the lives of people easier than ever before during the medieval period. It is in this light that David Landes calls the mechanical clock perhaps the most readily adopted invention in History.

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## SIGNIFICANCE OF EYEGLASSES IN MEDIEVAL TIMES

- Priya Pokhriyal, IInd Year



Eyeglasses are not an unfamiliar object. It is something which has become part of our daily lives. You go out for a walk and you can easily see people wearing glasses or even you might be the one wearing them. It is an object of daily use but have you ever wondered where it came from or who invented it or who even thought of inventing it? The problem is, today we are so busy memorizing dates and events in the name of studying history that we forget these objects which are very much part of our daily life do hold an interesting past we is worth knowing.

Before coming to their role in medieval times it is important to know who invented such a utilitarian object and for what purpose. Though there is no name for the inventor but Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations do hold the credit for this invention. This view finds its evidence in many depictions from that time of people using magnifying stones to enlarge text and print. There is another view, a more conservative one, according to which eyeglasses were initially invented in dark ages around A.D. 1200-1300. "Reading Stone" was a magnifying glass made with transparent quartz or some other similar material. These reading stones were believed to be based on the theories of the Arabic astronomers and mathematician Alhazen, by many scholars. According to a source the oldest lens in use is called the 'Nimrud Lens' (attributed to Assyrian Civilization). Yet again we have some scholars who believe that the notable Roman philosopher Seneca was known to have used water-filled objects as a means to magnify text for studying and reading as early as 4 B.C.

One can notice that there seems to be no formal invention but at most every other view or explanation talks about the use of magnifying technology for the purpose of vision correction and enhancing smaller images. This technology further takes form of eyeglasses.

Coming to the use of these glasses, it is believed that it was mostly worn by monks and scholars. It was prevalent in Europe and from there it went on to be used in various other regions. This process was further facilitated by the trade. Even though the magnifying technology was used and there was reading stone developed in the antiquity, one must be aware of the fact that the first ever form of eyeglasses came from Italy. It was produced in (most probably) 1286 by monks or craftsmen in Pisa (or perhaps in Venice. This was a Rivet spectacle made of two convex lenses, surrounded by two circles of wood, connected by nail. Venice, Italy according to some researchers was one of the most advanced centers of medieval glass industry. It had even developed its own guild of crystal workers which was officially created in November 1284. There were only glasses for farsightedness and nearsightedness at first and later came the bifocal glasses which could be used for both the problems.

But why the invention of eyeglasses? This seems to be a simple question but it holds a very interesting answer. One would believe, as did the English Franciscan Friar Roger Bacon (through his convex lens theory), that people with weak eyesight could be facilitated with eyeglasses.

This is one of the first thought that must've come to many of the readers who first read the above mentioned questioned. This might be the reason for the invention but the popularity and the use of eyeglasses which became immense has a different story to tell. After many years of invention, especially in the medieval times or even before it, these glasses were considered to be signifying knowledge, learning, wisdom and sometimes even wealth.



This view is clearly evident in the work of many artists who painted their patrons or other famous personalities wearing glasses even though they had lived before the time of invention. One of the oldest examples of this is a fresco in the Chapter House of the Dominican Monastery attached to the Basilica of San Niccolo in Treviso painted by Tommaso da Modena (1325-1379) in 1352 and shows Cardinal Hugh of Provence (1200-63) wearing a pair of rivet spectacles. The interesting thing to note about this pictorial depiction of eyeglasses is that Cardinal died before glasses were invented but the painter added spectacles to his fresco as a sign of old age and scholarship.

One of the other factors that added to the popularity of the eyeglasses was the invention of printing press in 1452 by Johann Gutenberg. Eyeglasses were already used by artisans as well monks and other religious scholars.

But with the invention of printing press and increase in the number of printed books and it becoming available to the masses, the demand and popularity of the books rose immensely. All this happened in fifteenth century hence it is considered to be a crucial time for the development of eyeglass production. By the early 16th century, spectacle peddlers who were selling glasses were a common sight on the streets and throughout the countryside of Western Europe. People would try out the glasses and but the one that would fit best. This demand for eyeglasses increased after 1665 more dramatically, when the first newspaper, the London Gazette, appeared. All the classes of Spanish people thought that wearing spectacles made them look more dignified and important. Since, early eyeglasses had been the prized possessions of churchmen, wealthy scholars, artisans, and high-class individuals of the medieval world, now the people in Spain, Italy, and even China started regarding eyeglasses as a sign of superior intelligence and nobility. Due to this fact, there came a time when people would wear glasses even when they were not required to. The possession of Florentine glasses was also considered a status symbol since they were so well made. Here comes the role of Florence in adding further to the development of eyeglasses.

The city of Florence by the middle of the fifteenth century led in innovation, production, sale, and spread of spectacles within and outside Italy. Published evidence comes in the form of letters of the dukes of Milan, Francesco and Galeazzo Maria Sforza, dated 1462 and 1466 respectively, and they reveal the first detailed information about spectacles since their invention. It has been concluded from these evidences that Florence was producing in large quantities not only convex lenses for presbyopia, but also concave (diverging) lenses for myopia (i. e., about a half century before the latter were thought to have been developed) and that it had become the leading manufacturer of readily available and affordable good-quality spectacles. Florentine spectacle makers were well aware of the fact that visual acuity declines gradually after the age of thirty, and were constructing lenses progressively on the basis of the theory developed related to myopia and presbyopia. There is even mention of dukes of Milan ordering prestigious Florentine glasses by the hundreds to give them away as gifts to their courtiers. The massive documentation available only in Florence for this early period has revealed the name of fifty-two spectacle makers between 1413 and 1562 and the location of their shops. But the first ever proper optical shop came in 1799 which was established by John McAllister, Sr. in Philadelphia, America. Eyeglasses developed and obtained different shapes and forms and were used for different purposes in different situations. Their development could be seen even in 1700s, when Benjamin Franklin made a breakthrough improvisation by introducing bifocal glasses in 1784. Martin's Margins (developed by Benjamin Martin), Wig spectacles and Scissor spectacles are some other development that took place in 1700s. Even Lorgnette (a type of glasses which had to be held by hand) was invented in 1780. They were especially useful for women who did not wanted to wear glasses all the time. Folded glasses were developed in 1830 by French manufacturer.

After this entire study one can conclude that the development of eyeglasses which started as a mere utilitarian product and went on to become somewhat of a status symbol has happened through a long period of time. And it is still an ongoing process. With each and every day we come across some new development in eyeglasses. A lot developments have taken place and a lot will take place in future, what one needs to do is grab the significance of these developments and give it much needed importance.

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Officially, the longest war in history was between the Netherlands and the Isles of Sicily, which lasted from 1651 to 1986. There were no casualties.

#### WHO AM I?

I am all on my own, Wounded by iron weapons and scarred by swords.

I often see battle. I am tired of fighting.

I do not expect to be allowed to retire from warfare before I am completely done for.

At the wall of the city, I am knocked about and bitten again and again.

Hard edged things made by the blacksmith's hammer attack me.

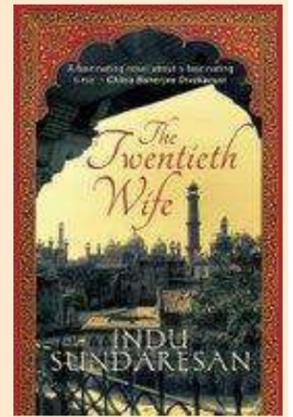
Each time I wait for something worse.

I have never been able to find a doctor who could make me better. Or give me medicine made from herbs.

Instead the sword gashes all over me grow bigger day and night

## THE TWENTIETH WIFE

- Muskan Garg, 1st Year



“The Twentieth Wife” by **Indu Sundaresan** tells the story of one of the most controversial Empress, **Mehrunnisa**, who later became known to us as Empress Nur Jahan of the Mughal Empire. The author skillfully and brilliantly follows the life of Mehrunnisa from her birth in a nomadic camp in 1577 till her marriage to Emperor Jahangir on May 25, 1611. The daughter of a refugee who fled from Persia to escape creditors, was born in the most unfortunate time when her parents didn’t have any resources to raise her along with her siblings. Left on the roadside for some wanderer to find her and bring her up as her own, tiny Mehrunnisa was discovered by Malik Masud, a merchant who was travelling with Ghias Beg, father of Mehrunnisa, to India. When he found her he reunited the child with her parents and gave money to the family so that they could raise the child. From this moment the life of Mehrunnisa starts, who one day will become the most beloved wife of Emperor Jahangir and will be remembered as Nur Jahan which means “The Light of the World”.

Mehrunnisa was brought up around the court of Emperor Akbar. Her first encounter with Prince Salim was at his wedding where she too wishes to become his wife. During the wedding she becomes noticeable to Ruqaya Sultan Begum, first wife of Emperor Akbar and Padshah Begum. From then onwards she becomes one of the companion of the Empress. From a small age of eight years old she became one of the constant visitor of royal zenana. While giving companionship to the Empress she observed the life of royal zenana. Through her eyes readers get a look into the life of royal zenana- the daily happenings of the palace, the power politics among the wives, concubines and slave girls, the important role and position of royal eunuchs- and we get to know what a complex system it was. The author also portrays the restrictions put on girl at that time- how from childhood only she is taught that she is a temporary member of the family and one day will leave her home. She is taught proper manner in which a girl should conduct herself in front of others and how one inappropriate action from her side will ruin the reputation of not only her but also her family. Being a part of royal zenana Mehrunnisa finally had an encounter with Prince Salim but at that time she was already betrothed to another man, Ali Quli Khan Istajlu, who was a soldier at Emperor Akbar’s court. Mehrunnisa and Jahangir have one private meeting in the palace garden and share a kiss and although it breaks her heart Mehrunnisa tells Jahangir that she must keep her word to her father and marry Ali Quli.

The story also highlights the love-hate relationship between Emperor Akbar and Prince Salim. The author describes the various attempt made by Prince Salim to usurp the throne from Akbar-from poisoning of Akbar to murder of Abul Fazal. The rebellious nature of Prince Salim alienated him from his father and the courtiers but he was the only suitable heir to the throne as his brothers were unsuitable and unfit to rule. This rocky relationship between the father and son was mended at the deathbed of Akbar where he declares Prince Salim as the Emperor of Hindustan.

As for Mehrunnisa she was married to a common soldier Ali Quli Khan Istajlu even though she and Prince Salim were in love with each other. The story continues with her marriage to a man whom she doesn’t love, her miscarriages, her being constantly looked down upon by her husband as she was unable to produce any heir to him and her finally giving a birth to a girl child. The author follows the life of Mehrunnisa highlighting all the major events in her life and through this description we gets a glimpse of a women’s life and position in the household during that period. The marriage continues for a number of years with Mehrunnisa longing for home and for Jahangir. Mehrunnisa sees her husband slaughtered by the imperial army and the rumor floats that it was on the order of Emperor Jahangir. Many powerful courtiers protest against the marriage of Emperor with Mehrunnisa but amongst all this Jahangir and Mehrunnisa’s love for each other endures until 1611, when she comes into his harem as his twentieth- and last- wife.

The novel not only highlights the politics that happened in the court but that which happened within the women’s quarter. The hierarchical position of various wives of Emperor is shown here. The dominant position of Ruqiya Sultan Begum is described here. Another important female figure which is mentioned here is Princess Jagat Gosini, the second wife of Prince Salim, who was described as headstrong and spirited lady who were constantly at ire with Ruqaya Sultan Begum. She was one of the biggest rival of Mehrunnisa in royal harem who constantly tried to turn the Emperor against her.

Finally I would like to conclude by saying that this novel is a mesmerizing tale of the life of Mehrunnisa, her love affair with Prince Salim, her struggle in married life and finally her dream becoming true with her marriage to Emperor Jahangir. It is a fictional account of her life before her marriage to Jahangir, but it is rooted in history. The accounts of her were conflicting. She was generous. She was cruel and mean-spirited. She loved Jahangir passionately. She so enamored him that he could no longer think for himself. She dulled his senses with wine and opium. Yet she was the one he turned to illness, not trusting even the royal physicians. She is known to have ruled the empire. She was an enigma.

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Nutella, originally known as pasta gianduja, was created in Italy when hazelnuts were used to stretch the rationed chocolate supply during WWII.

## DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES



The academic session began with the Orientation programme organized by the Department for first year students. The students were made aware of the various activities of the Department. Later in the month of September an informal interaction of the students of all three years was also organized by the newly elected student members of the History Association.

The activities of the History Society **Chrono** began with the inaugural lecture of renowned Labor Historian Dr. Dilip Simeon on **'History, Politics and Truth'** where he highlighted how history has been crucial to the politics. The department also organized an audio-visual lecture by Prof. Radhika Singha of JNU on the topic **"Putting India "in" the Great War: reframing a global conflict, 1914-1920"**. The highlight of this presentation was the rare photographs of Indian soldiers who fought abroad during the First World War for the Britishers. Another highlight of the lecture series was Dr. Jon Wilson's (Kings College, London) talk **'Rethinking the Rise and Fall of British Raj'** based on his new book **'India Conquered: Britain's Raj and the Chaos of Empire'** on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. The department also invited Prof. Vijaya Ramaswamy of JNU in the last week of September to deliver lecture on **"Medieval Woman Saints"**.

### INTACH YOUTH VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP



On 19th Jan'17 a Youth Volunteer Workshop by INTACH was attended by our students regarding heritage awareness and its conservation. The workshop includes two lectures followed by a heritage walk to Lodhi Gardens. Prof. A.G.K. Menon spoke on nominating Delhi as a heritage city. Dr. Narayani Gupta further elucidated the intricacies of heritage preservation. The students were also shown the in-house Art Conservation lab of INTACH. The students got an insight into how paintings and textiles are restored. Finally the students and teachers were taken on a heritage walk to Lodhi gardens with Dr. Swapna Liddle.



HISTORY BOARD 2016-17

Besides lecture series a trip was organized for the first year students to the National Museum. Dr. Archana Ojha and the third year students and Ms. Sonal Singh and students of Second year went on a walk to the Qutub Complex. The History Board was made by IIIrd year students on the theme 'The Mutiny of 1857'. The annual Festival of the Department of History 'CHRONO' is scheduled for March 2017.

## 2016 HERITAGE WALKS

- Dr . Archana Ojha



On 1st Oct 2016 Dr. Archana Ojha conducted heritage walk with the GE students from Political Science, Hindi, Sanskrit, Psychology, Sociology, Mathematics, Journalism, English, Geography and History Honours third year students. The walk began with the understanding of Qutb Complex understanding the meaning of the monuments and progression of building technologies and importance of medieval structures and meaning they convey in the modern times. The students then took a long walk to enter into Mehrauli Archaeological Park where they saw some relatively unknown monuments particularly Tughlaq era madrasa, mosques, bridge, water reservoirs, Lodi era tombs along with Rajon Ki Baoli.



Aim and purpose of this long walk to familiarize students with the 13th and 14th centuries medieval Delhi and its progression into 15th century along with elements of continuity and change. Another walk was conducted on 21st Oct. 2016 with same set of students and this time the walk was around the old Delhi that covered Qila-i Mubarak, Jama Masjid and some lanes of Chandni Chowk in particular Kinari Bazaar, Naughrah that is primarily Jain colony and Chawri Bazaar. The students were explained the changing

composition of the city of Shahjahanabad from 17th to 19th centuries. These walks are aimed to give practical experience to the students and to make them understand history through these walks.



People were buried alive so often in the 19th century that inventors patented safety coffins that would give the "dead" the ability to alert those above ground if they were still alive.

# YEAR AT GLANCE

## CHRONO'16



## FRESHERS'16



## FAREWELL'16



Riddles by: [www.abdn.ac.uk](http://www.abdn.ac.uk)  
Image Sources: Header – Wikipedia; Google Images  
FACTS Sources: List25.com  
Buzzfeed.com  
Communitytable.com

Answers: Fire, Onion, Shield