

## How, When and Where



### Let's Recall

#### 1. State whether true or false:

a) James Mill divided Indian History into three periods- Hindu, Muslim, and Christian.

**Ans:** False

b) Official documents help us to understand what the people of the country think.

**Ans:** False

c) The British thought surveys were important for effective administration.

**Ans:** True

### Let's Discuss

#### 2. What is the problem with the periodisation of Indian History that James Mill offers?

**Ans:** James Mill had divided the entire history of India into three phases which were based on religion. He said, in his book that the Indian History could be classified into the Hindu, Muslim and the Christian ruled periods. However, there were a number of shortcomings into his depiction such as:

- He said that the Asian Civilisations were inferior to those of the European ones, which is false as we have documented evidence of European students coming to Indian Universities, translating the Indian works on Algebra, Geometry, etc into European Languages, etc.
- He also said that the Hindus and the Muslims were not capable rulers which is false as well because without the efficiency of rulers, India could have been unstable and no civilisational development would have been possible. The Indian rulers efficiently administered their territories and pushed back the invaders multiple times.
- James also said that there was no religious tolerance in India prior to the British. This is false too, as no ruler in ancient India was hostile to Buddha and Mahavira. In fact, the Buddhist University of Nalanda was established by a Hindu ruler Kumaragupta. So, ancient India had a higher degree of religious tolerance than modern Indian society.

Hence, we can conclude that what James Mill presented were his views based on ignorance and distortion of facts because he was not educated enough to derive meaningful conclusions from the literary and archaeological sources of Indian history.

### **3. Why did the British preserve official documents?**

**Ans:** The British preserved the official documents due to the following reasons:

- They could use the documents as a reference to track the progress of the decisions and actions taken by them accurately.
- They could also use these documents as citations and avoid the repetition of mistakes.
- They could also create copies of the data of the past and use it in future.

Other than that, they preserved the official documents because they were not based in India and they needed to send the important documents to the British Crown when asked. Hence, preservation and maintenance of an archive was important.

### **4. How will the information historians get from old newspapers be different from that found in police reports?**

**Ans:** The historians get similar information from the news reports as well as the police reports. However, the police reports present the facts alone whereas the news reports provide an analysis of the facts as well. These reports are also influenced by the logical ability of the editor of that report whereas in a police report, the facts are stated as they are.

### **Let's Do**

#### **5. Can you think of examples of surveys in your world today? Think about how toy companies get information about what young people enjoy playing with or how the government finds out about the number of young people in school. What can a historian derive from such surveys?**

**Ans:** There are several examples of surveys in the world as of now. We have various people talking to us at the end of school about our future plans for college, which stream we want to choose in future and so on. The toy companies get information about what young people enjoy playing using the surveys online or by feedback. They ask the young people about their existing experiences and also what they would love to see and, in this manner, they are able to find out the needs of the people.

The government finds out the number of young people in school using the records of each school. The government collects the data from each school and after compiling these records, it can find out the total number of enrolled students, their age, etc. in school.

For a historian, such surveys are an important and valuable source of information. They can tell the level of education prevalent in different regions of the country by analysing these records. The regions with more enrolment of students have more literacy and they would be technologically advanced as compared to other regions.