

# The study of history



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The study of history places too much emphasis on individuals. The most significant events and trends in history were made possible not by the famous few, but by groups of people whose identities have long been forgotten. History literally means the study of past. It gives us details of the past, earlier civilizations, their trends, belief, activities as well as their achievements and failures which help us in understanding their culture, thereby relating it to the present.

Along with this, history places importance on lives and accomplishments of eminent personalities, who made a difference in one way or the other. The issue whether people at large or individuals in particular deserve more emphasis in history is not debatable, as history is a blend of both. First of all, we have to admit that the history consists of the big shot and the groups of people and their behaviors etc. But their relationship is like that between the switch and the power supply of a machine. If either the switch is turned off or the power is removed, the machine cannot run. It is hard to say one or the other contributed more than the other. Actually none of the important events in history is merely caused by an individual.

For instance in the history of India's struggle for independence from the British even the likes of Gandhi and Nehru could not have done much without the support of common men. It was the desire and participation of the whole nation that brought the revolution and gave India her freedom. Another example is the Civil War.

Admittedly, Abraham Lincoln contributes a lot to the victory of the emancipation, but the main fighting force are the masses of workers, peasants and the Negroes. All these examples tell us the fact that history is not decided by any single individual, but it is made by every individual. If so, why it is natural that when we are indulged in the treasure of history, those preponderate names appeal closer than those historical events, trends and so many forgotten people got involved in it because that the study place too much emphasis on individuals. In my opinion, the so-called the study of history is not the real exploration into the objective history. It is merely the study of the previous record of history written by our ancestors. While just as Oscar Wilde said: "Anybody can make history; only a great man can write it". So actually none of the history books and historical studies can revert history to type accurately. Therefore it is to be understood that these impressive few are highlighted because of their catalytic role played in the past.

The few who took initiative, led and helped in accelerating the mass movements were the personalities whose lives, principles and achievements can be a source of inspiration for others. For instance, King Ashoka, a devout follower of Buddhism, is known to have established a golden era owing to peace and prosperity in his empire. Ashoka's achievements are lauded in history because he utilized his power, resources and wisdom to the fullest.

Under the influence of the religion, he not only gave a boost to the spread of Buddhism but also practiced religious tolerance. Just as one of the most essential elements, these highlighted individuals rank equally with the trends and backgrounds of history events. But from the purpose of studying history,

they have more significant meaning. Ultimately, the purpose of historical inquiry is not simply to present facts but to search for an interpretation of the past. Historians try to account for the endurance of tradition, understand the complex historical causality??” how and why change occurs and change, and explain the origins, evolution, and decline of institutions and ideas. After all, understanding of the past is fundamental to an understanding of the present.

Whereas these individuals help us understand the history better. Moreover, it is not feasible to keep a record and discuss each individual of a group. Analogously, each day as it passes becomes a part of history. However, not everyday and not every incident deserves a mention. Actually, most of the passing days have no practical significance to posterity at all. With the acknowledgement of the meaning of studying history, we can view it without any bias.(658 words)