

Primary and secondary sources history essay



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History can be either personal or global. History is past facts that have affected the future. History is the study of the remains of the past from the point of view of the present. History created what we have today. Without history there would be no future. An example of a pivotal moment in our recent history is the World Trade Centre disaster.

To get an idea of what the past was like and what happened, historians and archaeologists look for and study evidence and clues. Historians use primary and secondary sources to help them. Primary sources were created at the time the people being studied were alive. Jewellery, artwork, personal diaries, records, rubbish, graffiti and body remains such as bones are all primary sources. Secondary sources were produced after the person being studied disappeared. Textbooks, movies, television documentaries and other historian's ideas are all secondary sources.

Archaeology is the scientific study of the past by digging up material remains such as bones. Archaeology is not all about digging up bones but actually researching. 70% of all archaeology is done in the library studying either an artefact or books. Archaeology is all about facts. Facts that have evidence to support them. Archaeologists are able to put together a detailed history of an area by simply analysing the layers that are in the ground. An archaeological dig is just one job archaeologists can do. Having a thorough knowledge of different languages whether the language is recent or ancient is very important in classifying and identifying some artefacts archaeologists find. Travelling, researching and gathering artefacts are critical jobs that archaeologist have to be careful with. Archaeology is shown in the movie Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is an exaggeration of archaeology. The movie outlines the basic fundamentals of the profession and makes it more exciting to capture the audience's interests. During the movie parts of archaeology is shown such as finding artefacts and researching them. Travelling places to find the artefacts and returning them to a museum. Keeping a journal and acknowledging other languages. Many elements of archaeology were not shown in the movie because it would make the action blockbuster boring. These elements are digging very carefully to find the artefacts and studying them for long hours. In the movie it shows how the past influences the present.

Significance of the Indus Valley in the development of Northern India

In order to discuss whether or not the civilization was powered by a democratic-like system, we must first examine the cities themselves. Now, if one were to take an aerial picture of any town or city, such as Mohenjo-Daro, one of the twin capitals, one could not help but immediately notice the grid-like layout of the streets and buildings. Much like our modern system of organizing our cities, known as "blocks," this pattern was employed to ensure free-flowing traffic and easy access to any building. Actually, this ancient system is almost identical to its modern cousin. Mohenjo-Daro has even been called a "mini-model of Manhattan" and the "earliest example of town planning." The commercial, governmental, and residential buildings were divided into three clearly separated sections. Throughout the city ran the relatively large main roads, which were about thirty feet wide in most areas and unpaved, and were almost the only route of travel through the city. Off of these main streets by the side of each building were smaller

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roads, almost alley ways, which led to the doors of the buildings on the side of the building. This design avoided any unnecessary congestion in the roads by diverting people down the side roads, and thus greatly increased the safety of the citizens. The cities most often visited businesses and governmental buildings and the more expensive housing lied directly next to these larger roads, while the other buildings were set back on smaller roads behind. The symmetrical and organized road system used in all of the civilizations towns and cities suggests a very organized government that is focused on the well-being of its citizens.

It is well-known that in most monarchical situations where there is one ruler, usually a male, there is most often found royal house, palace, or citadel to house and protect this central ruler. However, in almost no area in the entire civilization had one of these types of buildings been found, except for in the large city of Mohenjo-Daro. On a hilltop there is the base of a large building , the largest in the city, which archaeologists and historians can figure to probably be one of three things - a palace, governmental center, or a priestly college. Of course, it could be a palace, in which case we would have reason to believe that the government was a monarchy. But first, let's examine the other facts. First, in no other place in the entire civilization is a building even resembling this kind found, yet with all monarchies, the head ruler appoints lower-class rulers with other royal housing in other sections to look after their kingdom. There is no evidence of this. Also, in no place in the entire civilization has a tomb of any sort been found, which leads us to believe that there were never any theocratic rulers. Finally, in one little section of each city is an area where the housing is substantially larger and

more luxurious than that in the other parts of the city, where the common folk presumably resided. This suggests that there were several elite citizens - merchants, landowners, architects, etc. - that lived there and possibly ran the city or perhaps the civilization. Based on these facts, I think it's pretty fair to assume that this large building is most likely a governmental center for the democracy or a school to train religious leaders.

The " Great Granary" as it has been dubbed by archaeologists is another feature the suggests democracy in the Indus Valley Civilization. It is the largest building in the monstrous city of Harrapa, not to mention the whole empire, and appears to be a giant holding bin for all types of grain. This suggests that there was a democratic system in place because to take in all the grain from surrounding towns, and then distributing it evenly, which is what historians believe took place, this would have taken much planning. It would have been much more feasible with the natural organization and ingenuity that comes with a democracy. Also, if the common folk were permitted to speak their minds like in the present day, rulers would have been able to divide the grain more precisely.

Probably the most convincing argument that a democratic system of government was in place has to do with the simple standardization of weights, bricks, and buildings. First of all, throughout the entire civilization a system of weights was imposed presumably to assist in the job of trading goods. From one unit to five hundred, each weight was double the size of its predecessor, and then after five hundred, the weights rose in increments of one-hundred up to 13, 000. The system was based on a tiny red and black seed called a " gunja" seed. Eight of these seed weighed . 871 grams, the <https://assignbuster.com/primary-and-secondary-sources-history-essay/>

same as the smallest weights. There were two types of these weights which were both used for the same purposes - the squared-off block type, and the spherical shape with a flattened bottom to prevent rolling. Both types were highly polished to insure accuracy. The smallest weights were incredibly diminutive and accurate. Every one that was weighed equaled approximately one tenth of a gram, and was probably used in jewelry, which require very miniscule weights to weigh their tiny gems. Many of the larger blocks, on the other hand, were so massive and heavy that it would take a pulley system and eight grown men to hoist them onto giant scales. These were most likely used to weigh large amounts of goods or large objects.

Another standard that we know of is the size of the bricks used to build everything from wells to towers. The bricks were made of baked clay, and each were of the standard size of 27.94 cm x 13.96 cm x 5.71 cm. The only structures that deviated from this standard were special structures, all public buildings, which required more complicated masonry. These buildings were extremely organized as every thing else was - in the center of each building was an open-air courtyard that doubled as a marketplace and a public meeting area. This shows that, in addition to being organized, they were also focused on being cost-effective. These were the only structures that didn't follow another standard as well - the design of housing. Every house in each city was exactly the same in the manner of design - the design was focused on the safety and comfort of the residents. In Harrapa, for example, each house, except housing of the more elite, were two stories high, had seven rooms, all of these surrounding a small open-air courtyard in the middle of the development. Every window had screens over them to let air circulate,

but kept foreign objects out, and had boards used to cover them when the temperature. Stairs from the lower stories led up to the rooftop for comfortable sleeping in hot weather. Also, almost every house had a private well which was designed to be safe and sanitary. The well was built on a mound to keep small children from getting near it to prevent them from injuring themselves, and drains were built around to keep dirty water away from the clean. Adjacent from this well was a private bathroom that contained a sink, toilet, and primitive - yet waterproofed the bitumen - bathtub, all equipped with drains in the bottom. These stone drains converged into one under the house and then emptied into a large sewer system underneath the streets of city. This in turn led well outside the city and emptied itself somewhere, perhaps in a river or lake. It really is remarkable how modernized this system was - quick, easy, and completely sanitary. By examining all these facts, especially the standards, it is clear that much public cooperation had to have happened, and this suggests that the government was partly run by the people.

The Indus valley civilization thrived as a result of their stable economy, healthy trade and skill. The rise of the Harappan and Modern Western civilization both concur with Wright's statement... Anthropologists speculate that the decline of the Harappan Civilization was the result of a number of natural disasters. One theory is that a tectonic movement caused a change in the topography of the land which resulted in a change in the salinity of the water. It has also been suggested that the climate of the Indus Valley became much cooler, and the river system disappeared the disruption in climate and environment resulted in widespread devastation. Crops, which

once thrived in the well irrigated lands of the Indus River, could not survive. Due to this, some the inhabitants of the area moved away. Archaeological evidence shows that the quality of the artwork, masonry and building declined since many of the skilled artisans may have left. As fewer and fewer people inhabited the cities, the government became crippled and weak. Historians suspect the Aryans to be responsible for the final collapse, while others suggest that a large flood destroyed the cities, and buried them under layers of sediment.

he Indus civilization developed out of farming and herding communities that carried on trade with each other. About 2500 B. C., the communities became more unified culturally, and in some places people began laying out carefully planned cities. In time, the Indus civilization grew to cover most of present-day Pakistan and parts of what are now Afghanistan and northern India. The heart of the civilization was the vast flood plain of the Indus and Hakra rivers. The Hakra River (also known as the Ghaggar River or Sarasvati River) is now dried up. It once flowed east of-and parallel to-the Indus River, in what are now India and Pakistan. The civilization developed a standardized system of weights and measures and a system of writing that used pictographs (simple drawings representing words).

In the early 1800's, British scholars learned that people had found ancient artefacts buried in huge earthen mounds in the region. But it was not until the 1920's that archaeologists began excavating these sites and realized that they contained the remains of cities from a previously unknown civilization. Hundreds of Indus sites have been found.

The Indus people planned their cities carefully. They built many of their buildings on mud-brick platforms that protected the buildings from seasonal floods. Houses were made of baked or sun-dried brick. Many houses had two storeys. Most homes had a bathing area that was supplied with water from a nearby public well or from a well in the courtyard of the house. In larger communities, each house was connected to an elaborate city-wide drainage system. Other structures include large buildings that may have been used for storing grain and for other purposes.

The Indus people traded extensively with one another. City people traded with nearby agricultural communities and with distant mining and other areas. Goods traded probably included cotton, timber, grain, and livestock. For transport, people used pack animals, river boats, and ox carts. The Indus people also traded with other civilizations, including cultures in central Asia and Mesopotamia and along the Persian Gulf.

Hinduism, Islam and Caste system impact of South Asia

Impact Hinduism has had on modern India's Society
In India religion is extremely important while there are several types of religions being practiced in India Hinduism is definitely the most predominate to date. Over 82 percent of the population of India practices Hinduism. The Asian information organization (2007) stated, " In India, religion is a way of life. It is an integral part of the entire Indian tradition" (para. 2). Other religions practiced in India include Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

In India people are divided into what is called a " Caste System" a caste system is a system of defining how social classes are established and

includes religious, tribal, and cultural differences. While caste systems are a little more relaxed in today's society in some parts of India the caste system rules are still rigid and very much alive. Caste systems can define who marries whom, what jobs individuals will get, and it plays a significant role in Indian politics.

For instance Hinduism and the caste system has had an impact on the political landscape of India stemming directly from the rise of Hindu nationalist parties. According to Elango (1999), all political parties in India are controlled by caste Hindus. In addition, in Indian politics many political parties are identified based on the castes that support them. During elections politicians appeal to the public based on caste affiliations. However, today India is the largest democracy in the world.

Revisiting the caste system and its association to Hinduism gives us the biggest picture of how Hinduism affects modern Indian society. In today's modern Hindu society the caste system still prevails. Some examples are caste based organizations and associations still exist in India, there are often caste conflicts that lead to violence, caste systems are prevalent in educational institutions. According to V (2008), Indian temples are still under the influence of caste chauvinism. In India caste systems are comparable to discrimination there are still people in different regions that will not allow things such as people in lower castes drinking from the same wells or eating the same food. According to V (2008), inter caste marriages are not approved in traditional and rural families.

The caste system may have had relevance or served a purpose in historical India, but in modern times it really has no place as it causes discrimination, violence, and segregation. Modern caste systems are also not alignment with or uphold the values of modern Hinduism. Modern Hinduism advertises itself as a religion that accommodates all people regardless of race, creed or color. Engaging in caste systems does not support this theory. It should also be outlawed that caste systems have any affect on political outcomes within the country of India it seems that the politicians pray on the upper class citizens to help get them elected and discriminate against the lower class citizens. In order for Hinduism to be in alignment with modern India the caste system has to be re-evaluated or maybe abolished.

ven during the heyday of Muslim power in North India during say the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was common to find individual Muslim scholars embroiled in bitter and often very personal intellectual disputes. But the polemical fervor of the late 19th century was also quite different from previous eras in important ways. Most prominently, the period following the 1857 mutiny saw the emergence of antagonistic 'ideological constellations' (masālik, sing. maslak) within Sunni South Asian Islam that were opposed to each other not on grounds of affinities to disparate Sufi orders or schools of law but because of competing understandings of how the prophetic norm (sunna) must manifest in the every day practice of the masses and guarded against the threat of heretical innovations (bid'ah, sing. bid'ah). Moreover, even until the early half of the 19th century, intra-Muslim polemical activity predominantly took place between scholars on an individual basis. This is best exemplified in the well-known contestation during the 1820s between

the prominent Delhi scholars Shah Ismāʿīl Shāh (d. 1831) and Mawlānā Fazl-i ʿaṣṣāq Khayrābādī (d. 1852) over the legitimacy of prophetic and saintly intercession. However, the birth of the Deoband movement in 1867 and soon after that of the Bareilly (n7) and Ahl-i ʿaṣṣādīth (n8) ideologies decisively altered the intellectual landscape of Sunni South Asian Islam. From now on, the production and dissemination of knowledge took on an unprecedented group-centered orientation. The concept of *maslak* which in its Urdu modality can best be rendered as “ideology” flowered in the latter half of the 19th century like it had never before in Muslim India.

The ideological reification of Sunni Islam in North India was accompanied by intensified debates over the boundaries of normative practice in the religion. In this regard, the Deoband-Bareilly polemics represent the most well-known context that pitted major Bareilly scholars such as the founder of the school Aḥmad Razvī Khan (d. 1921) against their Deoband counterparts including the pioneers of Deoband Qāsim Nāṭhī (d. 1877) and Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī, and their later successors such as Khalīl Aḥmad Saharanpūrī (d. 1927) and Ashraf ʿAlī Thānī (d. 1944). (n9) Despite being affiliated to the same ʿaṣṣanafī school of Sunni law, these two groups were bitterly opposed in the way they imagined the limits of the Prophet’s normative model (*sunna*) and its institution in the public sphere. As Louis Dumont has commented in the context of Hindu communalism in modern India “With the replacement of the king as sovereign, Dharma is replaced by the People as a collective individual mirroring itself in a territory.” (n10) Similarly, in the context of Islam in

colonial India, the sunna of the Prophet emerged as a synecdoche representing the entirety of law. The central locus of normativity was now firmly grounded in the figure of the Prophet. In the absence of any sovereign authority, the imagination of the Prophet's normative example became the primary arena where opposing moralizing discourses were contested and sacralized. Moreover, in the context of DeobandÄ«-BarelvÄ« polemics, competing subjectivities ascribed to the persona of the Prophet translated into much broader arguments for competing social imaginaries(n11) and ideal public spheres.

The Mughal rule

The invasion inevitably came. The leader of this legendary force was Babur, the son of Shaikh Mirza a man who was able to trace his bloodlines all the way back to Timur and his connection to Genghis Khan. Babur's initial holdings were of a small kingdom north of the Oxus in Ferghana, east of the modern city of Tashkent. His first conquest was to be Samarkand however the Uzbek tribes in the area quickly drove him off the land all the way to Kabul. He didn't much care for Kabul but Timur himself had launched his invasion of Samarkand from Afghanistan. From there he would make repeated assaults on Samarkand in which both times he would be driven back. Once Babur's position in Kabul is secured he seeks to explore out new lands. At this point Babur make's a few raids into the Hindus valley via Kyber pass in search of plunder. What he found was forces that he deemed weak, he chose to stay. In 1525 Babur launches his successful bid for " Hindustan". Babur's forces were highly mobile and were veterans of his exploits in central Asia, they numbered around twelve thousand men. The task at hand

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surely required more men than that, however Babur had several advantages. One of these advantages was the fact that he had acquired and toyed with firearm technology and implementation in the past, something that the Lodi Indians were gravely lacking. It is unlikely that the Lodi's were even familiarized with cannons much less matchlocks, both of which Babur possessed. Though his talent lay in traditional archery, he had studied the use of artillery in his central Asian campaigns. His enrollment of Turkish gunners and his close interests in the casting of the siege-canon as well as the transport of field guns gave him quite an advantage over his adversaries. "It was told that what his forces lacked in number they compensated with a capacity, terrifying alike to man, horse and elephant, for deafening and increasingly lethal bombardments". The other advantage he had to his dashing occupation of "Hindustan" was that the Lodi kingdom lived in anything but harmony, the rivalry and squabbling between eased Babur's appearances in India. The battle finally came at Panipat, about 50 miles north of Delhi. Sultan Ibrahim at that time had possession of the throne at Delhi, considered the capital of "Hindustan". Delhi's standing army was rated at 100,000 men with an elephant cavalry numbering 1000. However Babur was not discouraged for he had nothing but contempt for the Lodi. Though outnumbered 10 to 1, Babur made many strategic moves. His Lodi adversary on the other hand had limited battle experience and was still a novice at battle-craft. After a week long stand off he was harassed into action by Mughal warriors. When Ibrahim finally did make his move, it was one lacking any afterthought and his forces of 100,000 men were decimated, as Babur put it "By God's mercy and kindness this difficult affair

was made easy for us". And thus a permanent presence was established in India, though it still faced many adversities on the way.

In 1530 Babur died, he left his kingdom to his son Humayun. Humayun ruled with his aristocratic Mughal nobility. Humayun's reign did not last long however and in 1540 Humayun was dislodged from power by Islamic nobles from the old Lodi regime who were allied with the Afghans. The leader of these nobles was Shir Shah Sur; he took over the administration of what was then known as the Mughal Empire. Humayun went into exile and eventually allied himself with the Safavid regime in Iran. Humayun eventually built up a force of 14, 000 men and began to retake lost territory. In 1545 he captured Kabul. Shir Shah Sur had died and the weakness of his regime at Delhi softened by the incessant fights over succession, allowed Humayun to recapture all of the empire that he had initially lost.

Humayun's successor is arguably considered one of the most premier emperors of his time. Akbar was his name, and at birth they knew he was special, though he was dyslexic stories written about him tend to emphasize his wisdom beyond year as if to say that his dyslexia had not affected him adversely. Akbar initially held a tight grip over the land stretching from Kabul to Delhi and a hundred miles north and south of Delhi. What Akbar didn't know was that he was about to revolutionize India. His reforms were regarded as ahead of their time. Akbar attempted to diffuse any kind of resistance to his empire, and made a strong attempt at bringing the Muslim and Hindu world's closer and as such married a Rajput princess. During the 50 years of his reign, he extended the boundaries of his empire far beyond Delhi and Punjab. It was the first time a united India was visible.

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Akbar's influence on India quickly became visible. Taking great care to maintain a peaceful and flourishing state he became concerned with its economic well being as well. He drew up plans that prevented farmers from being taxed more than one third of what they produced. Under Akbar's rule revenues exceed his kingdoms expenditures and during his long reign the treasury had seen vast new amounts of wealth in the forms of currency, precious metals, as well as gems. Thought Akbar was said to have been dyslexic, he learned to love. He invested much capital and effort into scholarly work. He called on holy man of different faiths to argue in favor of their religions. Interestingly, the Jesuit missionaries accepted his invitation to discuss theology and perhaps possibly convert him. However Akbar would have none of that, he could not accept the doctrine of Trinity. Besides he wasn't interested in giving up his hundred wives or pleasure in the harem just yet. What Akbar really attempted to do was to create a religion that intermingled ideas from both Islam and Hindu. He ran into many objections from his nobility and even his own children refused to accept the religion, one son even went far enough to rebel against him claiming to be a protector of the Islamic faith. The rebellion failed however Akbar made changes to his thoughts in order to accommodate the Islamic faith. During Akbar's time, his war machine was highly tuned and highly decorated. Akbar was able to combine the use of different types of strategies and units; he employed artillery, mounted archers and infantry with muskets in order to revolutionize the battlefield. Akbar's reign ended in 1605, at the time of his death his domain stretched to Kashmir, Sind, Baluchistan, Kandahar, parts of Orissa, Kandesh, Berar, and Ahmadnagar. Akbar left his empire to one of his sons, Jahangir. Jahangir strived to continue the work of his father, stressing

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his feelings towards equality and helped promote the overall economy; however his son was another story. His son known as Shah Jahan rebelled against his father, Jahangir in 1624. Once his father died in 1626, Shah Jahan took over the Mughal throne. Many attempts were made by Jahan's sons to recover what they believed to be their ancestral home in Samarkand with no avail, leaving the empire weak. For the first time in many years the Mughal Empire began to lose ground. They had been pushed out of Kandahar by the Iranians. Attempts were made to recover lost land but the prohibitive costs of war had pushed the taxes on farmers to fifty percent of his crop. Shah Jahan's reign was an unimpressive one, seeming to make steps backward instead of forward. Under his reign imagination and free expression was rapidly fleeting and certainly not encouraged. Following Jahan's illness, his sons fought over succession. And eventually Aurangzeb took control and proclaimed himself "Alamgir" (Grasper of the Universe). He had killed his competing brother, imprisoned both his father and his other brother. Akbar's once glorious political system was reduced to a mere commonality. Aurangzeb's empire was considerably a lot less liberal than the previous ones. Amongst other things, Aurangzeb forbade Hindu festivals and celebrations; he re-instituted the tax on non-Muslims that his great grandfather Akbar had removed. He was also suspected of backing a Muslim rampage against Hindu temples and sacred shrines. Though hailed as a caliph by the Sunni Muslims he was reviled by people of Hindu faith for the suffering he imposed upon them. Aurangzeb was a very ambitious ruler, seeking to acquire new lands all the time. He sent his armies against the tribal people near the Kyber pass and against Hindus of "Rajputnana", on one push he was just short of Cannanore and Calicut. However Aurangzeb

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was unable to consolidate his empire and with lack of support from the Hindu population as well as his policies having a detrimental effect on Indian bureaucracy and economy, his death in 1707 left the empire near the point of implosion and much more vulnerable to incursions by the Persians and the British.

During the Mughal Empire's time, a new religion was born. This new religion known as Sikh transcended both the Islamic and Hindu faiths. Sikhism rose in the Punjab, led by a man named Nanak. Nanak was born a Hindu but reared on Islamic doctrines. He called for a devotion to one God, his religion being just as monotheistic as Islam. He was strongly opposed the Hindu invented caste system, declaring that all had a right to search for God. Nanak eventually acquired the title of Guru and when he died this title was passed to Guru Angad. This was to be the man who was to write the Sikh holy book known as the Granth Sahib. Sahib time came and he passed on the leadership to Guru Amar Das. Before Guru Amar Das' death in 1574, he made his servant Ram Das his heir. Ram Das was the Sikh who built the golden temple at a site near Amritsar with the blessings of Akbar. Ram Das made several costly mistakes for the Sikhs. Once an heir was chosen, Ram Das got involved in Mughal politics. Jahangir had Ram Das tortured to death for supposedly having aided a rebellion against him. Jahangir noticed this growing Sikh movement. In response the Sikhs coming under fire by the Mughals the new guru would need to be able to assume a military role as well. For the first time the Sikh movement made a devotion to its own self-defense. The new Guru, Har Rai was a supporter of Dara Sikoh who was Aurangzeb's brother destined for leadership until Aurangzeb's armies had

captured and beheaded him. Succession of Sikh power had moved from person to person, each of the guru's faced fierce oppression from the Mughals until eventually in 1675 the then Guru Tegh Bajadur was executed for not accepting Islam as his faith. His successor, Guru Gobind Rai vowed to avenge his death and combat the Mughal oppression. Combat ensued and the Mughals where never able to crush the Sikhs in military confrontations. Guru Gobind Rai felt much satisfaction from being able to outlive Aurangzeb who died in 1707.