

IHS - History Exam

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Question One

1.a

The two errors that the author seeks to redress towards the beginning of the passage are two views that are somewhat contradicting:

The perception of Gandhi, and the demonstrations he organized and led, that we have are somewhat utopian and idealistic in that we believe that Mahatma Gandhi miraculously and effortlessly united the entirety of the subcontinent's peoples and demographics in an effort towards the independence of the region. But the reality is that this isn't the case. The agitations organized by Gandhi were often left out by many of the subdivisions of the Indian subcontinent's population. One example that the author highlights in the passage is that of the working classes in Bombay, especially the textile workers that did not participate in the Rowlatt Satyagraha.

The author also points to a certain scholarly trends that depict nationalist politics in a light that makes it seem as if it was "elitist" and only concerned with unpopular grievances. They continue to highlight the importance of the villages and cities that held great importance in the freedom struggle.

The actuality despite not being aligned with our dreams and visions of the past remains to be slightly true in that Gandhi's demonstrations despite not having an absolutely universal appeal among the subcontinent's population, is in fact a product of loose alliances among various sects of the community that constantly changed between the various agitations organized by Gandhi.

1.b

The Indian Subcontinent is a region that comprises more than just India as a country. The subcontinent is a region that stood up to the British Raj together and then parted ways. The subcontinent is in fact a collection of regions consisting mainly of present day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. The author's adamant referral to the subcontinent as the "subcontinent" and not just "India" demonstrates and

understanding of the geopolitical status quo of this region in the 19th and 20th century. The author is probably a historian and is enthusiastic to share with us the differences between now and then. The text, being all about Gandhi's impact in the Freedom Struggle and his ability, or lack thereof, in uniting the people towards a cause, bears a factual, reported feel to it and remains a stoic interpretation of the facts and not muddled by a view of the past that is optimistically taught in schools and classrooms across India. The author is almost definitely from the subcontinent himself and in all probability, from a country that proceeded to separate from India - maybe Pakistan or Bangladesh. The slightly critical view of Mohandas K Gandhi also reinforces this guess.

1.c

Events of the independence up to the Civil Disobedience of the 1930s are mentioned in the text. As mentioned in the first paragraph, the "hagiographical" views that we, present day people, continue have of Gandhi even now are indicative of a more modern date for this text. These views slowly evolved from leader to hero to an almost godlike figure and especially after independence. The author specifically distinguishing the subcontinent as well indicates to a date post-partition and thus post-independence. The slightly archaic reference to "Behari" and the not-so-modern language narrows it down to a time before the turn of the millennium.

Question Two

2.a

The author of this passage seeks to inform the reader about the status of the region of Baroda in "Guzerat", now Gujarat. The factual, report style of the passage makes it out to be the work of an inspector or governor, maybe even a town planner. Various parts of the passage indicates a writing some time before the 20th century, A good guess would be that the work is meant for the British higher authorities to coordinate colonization and administration of the region. Parts of the passage mentioning an already established British governance indicates that the passage may have been for some other purpose.

2.b

The passage mentions events up to 1840, the rite of Suttee being abolished. The document is clearly written after this date. The archaic and anglicized spellings of the names of cities point to a time pre independence. The passage seems to be written between the years of 1840 and the 1940s.

2.c

The foreigners in Baroda are the Arab soldiers that the Britishers have loaned to the ruler. The passage mentions their disbandment and that their services were no longer needed.

2.d

The events and statements described in this paragraph can be corroborated in various ways. The records of the rulers of the region kept by the British administration and the various interactions between the rulers and the British, say the request for troops and the communication that mentions the disbandment. News and announcements of the abolishment of the Rite of Suttee and witness accounts of the events in the region can also be used to corroborate the text.

An opinion the author extends is that of calling Annund Rao a "prince of weak intellect". Various verifiable facts are mentioned in the document - the deaths and successions of various rulers such as the death of Annund Rao in 1819 and his succession by Syajee Rao.

Question Three

3.a

Explicitly, the letter informs GI Edmonstone of the failure of the earlier agreed upon plan to incite the "Hindoo" population against the "Muhomedans". And that the sum of 50,000 rupees remains unspent.

Implicitly, it shows that the Chief Commissioner indeed intended to incite the Thakoors against the Muhomedans, possibly, in an attempt to destabilize the nation. The failure of this also tells of the attitude the Thakoors have towards the Britishers.

3.b

The letter seems to originate from the National Archives of India that keep records of these letters sent between British Officials. Its perspective is that of a lower level clerk to the Chief Commissioner of the Oudh region.

In the context of the recent failure of the earlier planned incitement of the Thakoor population, the letter is addressed to the higher officials of the Government to inform them of the status of these plans.

3.c

The reliability of these sources can best be confirmed by finding subsequent or previous letters that follow the story of the plan for incitement. Maybe the meeting record at which the plan was conceived. The request for the funds, the 50,000 rupees, that was needed to carry it out or even bank records and financial statements that mention this amount for this reason can be used to confirm the source.

Accounts of the events of the attempt to carry out the plan and the aftermath can also be used.