

Grade 9 Answer

Source Utility Question

8
Marks

Question:

How useful is Source A to a historian studying British expansion in India?
(8 marks)

Answer:

Source A is useful to a historian studying British expansion in India as it offers insight into British attitudes, particularly following the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Published in Punch in 1858, the cartoon shows Queen Victoria and Mr. Punch riding an elephant, symbolising British control over India. The elephant represents India, and Queen Victoria's presence highlights how Britain assumed direct control over the country that same year, marking the start of the British Raj. This shift occurred due to the Indian Rebellion, which prompted the British government to take over from the British East India Company to better manage the colony. The provenance of the source adds to its usefulness. Punch was a satirical magazine reflecting the views of the British middle and upper classes, often supporting the conservative establishment. Published in 1858, just after the Government of India Act, the cartoon reflects how the British public saw their empire - particularly the belief that Queen Victoria's rule would bring stability to India after the rebellion. The British felt justified in taking control of India, and the elephant's obedient posture reinforces this narrative of British superiority and guidance.

However, the source has clear limitations. It represents only the British viewpoint and glorifies their role in India, disregarding the brutal reality of the 1857 uprising, where British forces violently suppressed Indian rebels, leading to widespread massacres. The cartoon doesn't acknowledge the economic exploitation of India, which was a key factor driving British expansion.

In conclusion, Source A is useful for understanding British attitudes toward their empire in 1858, particularly the justification for direct rule. However, its bias and omission of Indian perspectives limit its value, so it should be used alongside other sources to gain a balanced understanding.

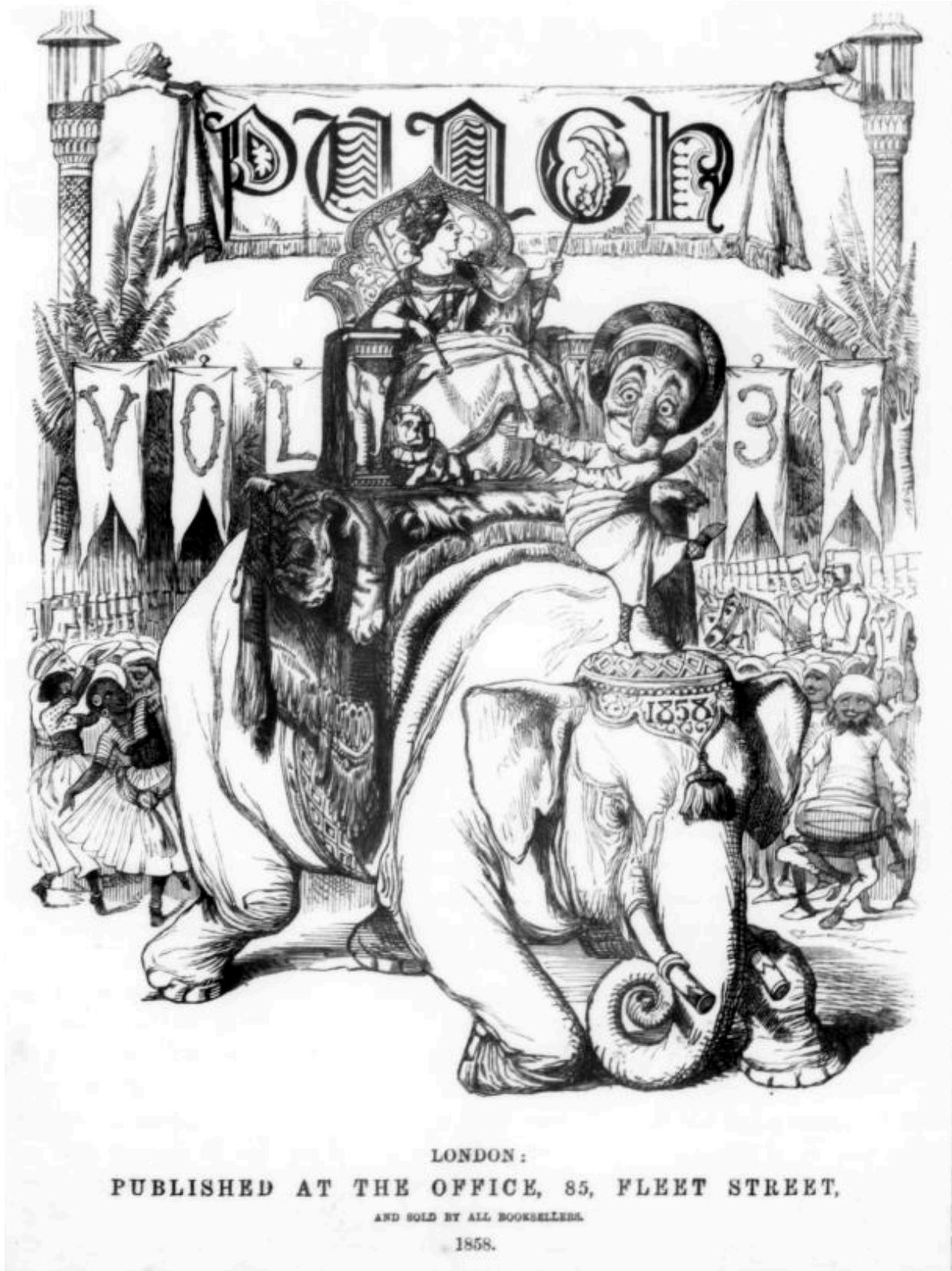
Feedback:

This answer would get 8/8 marks because the pupil has given a judgement of the utility of the source, giving supporting factual knowledge and commenting on the provenance of the source. They have explained each point in depth, kept a focus on the question, and given an overall judgement.



Source A

Source A: A cartoon published in Punch Magazine in 1858. Mr Punch and Queen Victoria are riding an elephant. Punch was a satirical magazine that often reflected conservative views.



[<https://magazine.punch.co.uk/image/I0000Q7cvnyx9kcs>]