

**PAPER M111 (C ):  
PRINT AND ELECTRONIC SOURCES AND LITERATURE  
IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**UNIT III: INFORMATION SOURCES AND EVALUATION**

**TOPIC: PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY SOURCES**

**By**

**Manish Kumar**



# NON- DOCUMENTARY AND DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

- Non - Documentary sources : Non – Documentary sources are oral or verbal communication.
- Documentary sources : Documentary sources are the formal sources. These sources are written or recorded information.
- The documentary sources of information such as books, periodicals, articles, dictionaries, newspapers, dissertations, guidebooks, directories etc. are organized into quite basic and fundamental categories based on their information contents. Depending upon their contents and organizational level, these can be grouped into:



# PRIMARY SOURCES

- These are original materials on which other research studies are based. Primary sources report a discovery or share new information; they present first hand accounts of the events, practices, or conditions being researched and created by a person who directly experiences that event.

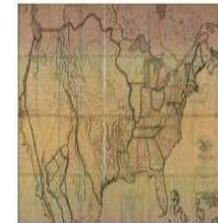
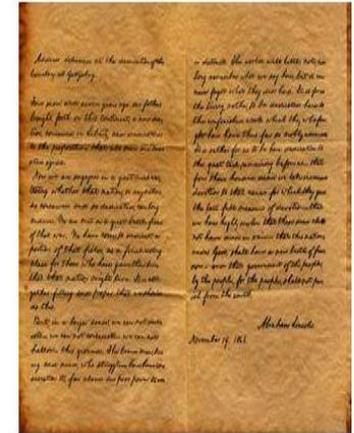


# PRIMARY SOURCES

- Original sources of information
- First-hand accounts
- Created by participants or witnesses
- Created during the time period

## Examples :

- i. Diaries
- ii. Autobiographies
- iii. Letters, e-mails
- iv. Eyewitnesses
- v. Oral histories
- vi. Interviews
- vii. Literary works
- viii. Journals Articles
- ix. Speeches
- x. Photographs



## CONTD...

- xi. Personal narratives
- xii. Census records
- xiii. Artwork, Artifacts, etc.
- xiv. Civil records (birth, marriage, death, etc.)
- xv. Patents, Standards, Technical Reports, etc.
- xvi. Blogs articles, tweets, etc.
- xvii. Records of organizations and government agencies.
- xviii. Original works of literature, art and music



# SECONDARY SOURCES

A secondary source of information is one that is based on the primary sources. It describe, analyze, interpret, evaluate, comment on and discuss the evidence provided by primary sources.



# SECONDARY SOURCES

- Based on primary sources and
- Compile from, interpretation, analysis, summarize, or critique on primary sources.
- Written after the events took place.

## **Examples:**

- Textbooks
- Encyclopedias
- Dictionaries
- Biographies
- Handbooks
- Textbooks and monographs on a topic
- Literary criticism and interpretation
- History and historical criticism
- Political analysis
- Almanac



## CONTD...

- Indexing service
- Abstracting service
- Review of progress
- Reference work
- Magazine and newspaper articles



# TERTIARY SOURCES

- These sources consists of information which is distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources. Generally, tertiary sources are:
- 1. Works which lists primary and secondary resources in a specific subject area.
- 2. Works which index, organize and compile citation to, and show secondary ( and sometimes primary) sources.
- 3. Materials in which the information from secondary sources has been 'digested'- reformatted and condensed, to put it into a convenient, easy-to-read form
- 4. Sources which are once removed in time from secondary sources.



# TERTIARY SOURCES

- Examples of tertiary source
- Directory
- Encyclopedia
- Dictionaries
- Guides- Guide to social science literature
- Bibliography of bibliographies.



# DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

## Primary

- Periodicals
- Research paper
- Research monograph
- Patent
- Standard
- Trade literature
- Dissertation
- Unpublished sources :  
notebook, diaries, oral histories, state paper, portrait coins, letters and archives .

## Secondary

- Indexing service
- Abstracting service
- Review of progress
- Reference work
- Text book
- Monographs
- Encyclopedias
- Magazine and newspaper articles

## Tertiary

- Yearbook and directories
- lists of abstracting and indexing services guides
- Lists of research paper
- Guide to professional organisation
- Bibliography of Bibliographies

# INFORMATION SOURCES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

- Primary sources :Survey Research [e.g., market surveys, public opinion polls]
- Internet communications on email, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms
- Journal: Indian Social Science Review : A Multidisciplinary Journal(ISSR)

**Examples of secondary sources:** Books, other than fiction and autobiography

- Encyclopedias :International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences
- Magazine and newspaper articles
- Textbooks [also considered tertiary]
- Web site also considered primary
- Interpretive blog posts
- Web of Sciences: Social sciences citation index



- **Examples of tertiary sources**
- **Guide: The Social Sciences: A Cross-Disciplinary Guide to Selected Sources**
- **Directories: Directory of published proceedings**  
.Series SSH, Social sciences/humanities
- **Biography: American Men and Women of Science: Social and Behavioral Sciences.**
- **Yearbook: Europa Year Book: A World Survey**
- **Statistical compendiums: Statistical Resources on the Web [<http://gort.ucsd.edu/mtdocs/ssdc/index.rdf>]**



# INFORMATION SOURCES OF HISTORY

- Some examples of primary sources include:
  - Memoirs, writings, correspondence
  - Papers of a political party, agency, or association
  - Official documents such as congressional hearings and reports
  - Contemporary magazine and newspaper articles
  - Contemporary art works, films, and music
  - Contemporary artifacts, coin, maps .
- Personal records also include things like student identification cards and drivers' licenses.
- **Letters:** Soldiers during wars wrote to their families about war events they experienced. Those letters are considered primary sources.



## Memoirs and autobiographies

- These are personal written accounts of events in the author's life. There are different levels at which these authors seek to represent the past with complete accuracy. However, sometimes they may change details or names in order to protect privacy or to make the story more interesting. In general, autobiographies are considered to be more accurate than memoirs, although in either case the author is relying largely on their own memory (as well as perhaps primary sources like diaries and other records) and seeking to write an engaging story while perhaps furnishing their reputation
- **Autobiographies:** Mohandas K. Gandhi wrote his autobiography about events in his life called “My Experiments with Truth”.

• **Diary-** Anne Frank was a teenager during World War II. She kept a diary or journal the years before she died in a concentration camp. Her diary was later published as the “Diary of Anne Frank”.



Diary of Anne Frank

- **Oral histories:** Oral histories are accounts given by a person of events earlier in their life. Often, they are taken by family members, historians, archivists, or others who interview older people in an attempt to document events and lives that might otherwise be forgotten
- **Interviews:** interviews are considered primary resources: During the 2008 election Barack Obama, had many interviews that were televised. Those interviews are considered primary sources.
- **Speeches-** Martin Luther King Jr. “I Have a Dream “.



- **Coin:** coins form an important source of historical information. Ancient coins were mostly made of gold, silver, copper or lead. Some of the coins contain religious and legendary symbols which throw light on the culture of that time.
- Coins also contain the figures of kings and gods. Some contain names and dates of the rulers. Coins also throw significant light on economic life of ancient people. They indicate regarding trade and commerce and help to reconstruct the history of several ruling dynasties.
- **They throw light on religious, political, economic and commercial conditions**
- **Maps :** Maps are symbolic representations of a part of the earth's surface. They can reveal how places – a college campus, a city, a street – changed over time. They often reflect changing political realities and understandings, as well as advancing degrees of knowledge about the spaces represented



Two Gold coins of Chandragupta



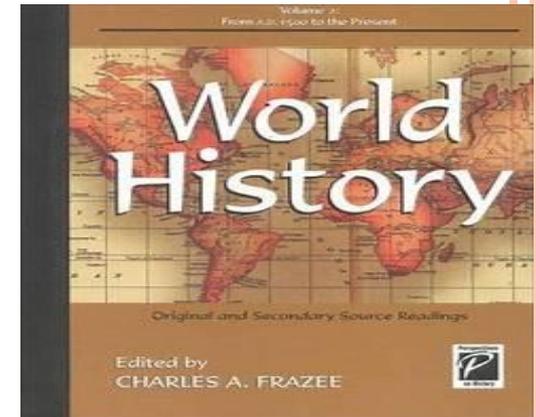
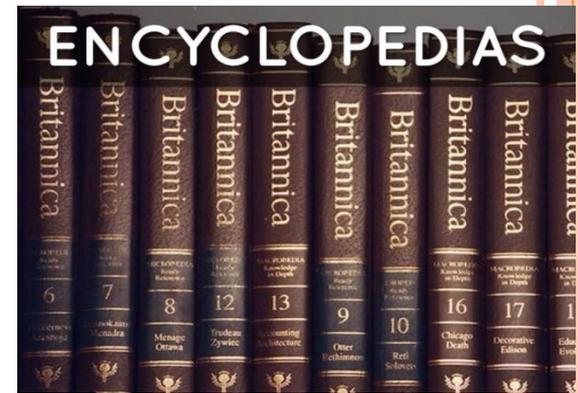
Ashoka Punch-Marked Coin



Asia historical map

## Secondary Sources

- Biographies: A biography is when you write about another person's life. Alice Fleming wrote a biography on the life of Martin Luther King Jr. This is a secondary document. It was written about him after he died.
- Encyclopedias
- History books
- Textbooks
- Abstracting And Indexing: *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs: An Interdisciplinary Journal*
- Tertiary :
- Directory : Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies in the United States and Canada,
- Guide to Department of History Records, 1932-
- **Chronology of World History: A Calendar of Principal Events from 3000 Bc to Ad 1976,**



# INFORMATION SOURCES OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

**Primary sources are original, uninterrupted information (Original = Primary = First)**

- Diaries, Letters, Speeches, Interviews, Legal Cases
- Memoirs And Autobiographies
- Records Of Organizations And Government Agencies
- Journal And Newspaper Articles Written At The Time
- Photographs, Audio Recordings, Video Recordings
- Public Opinion Polls Conducted At The Time
- Research Reports Or Articles Reflecting The Results Of Scientific Experiments Or Studies
- Constitutions

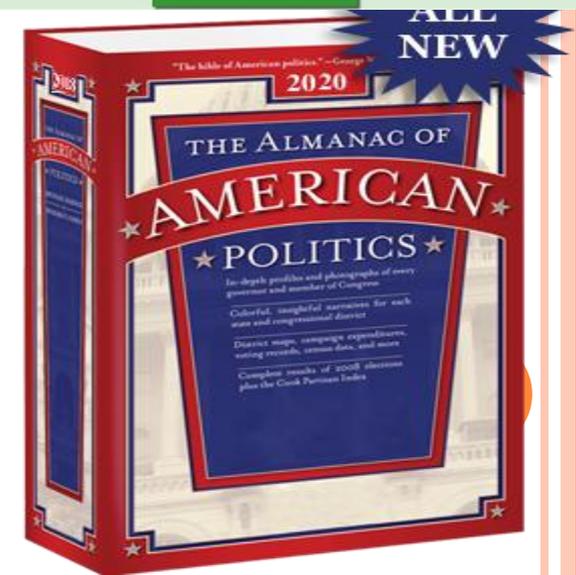
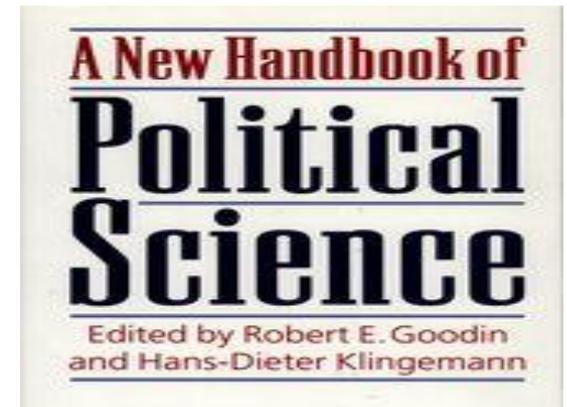
**Secondary sources interpret, analyze, or summarize (Not original = Secondary = Not first)**

- Textbooks
- Magazine and newspaper articles
- Indexing and Abstracting : *International Political Science Abstracts*



# Tertiary Sources:

- Bibliographies
- Chronology



# INFORMATION SOURCES OF ECONOMICS

- Websites and Journal articles
  - EconLit: <https://www.aeaweb.org/econlit/>
  - JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org> (great “starter” journals: *Journal of Economic Literature* and *Journal of Economic Perspectives*)
- **Working papers**
  - Research Papers in Economics (RePEc): <http://ideas.repec.org> (also has links to published journal articles)
  - Social Science Research Network (SSRN): <http://papers.ssrn.com>
  - National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER): <http://www.nber.org/papers/>
- Statistical data : [American Fact Finder \(Census.gov\)](https://www.census.gov) Data about people, housing, business, and industry in the U.S
- Statistical compilations of economic
- Records of government expenditures and finances



# Primary sources: examples

- The Economist: <http://www.economist.com>
- NYTimes: <http://www.nytimes.com>
  
- **Secondary Source**
- American government, politics, public policy, and current affairs, <https://library.cqpress.com/>
- Gale Reference Complete- provides access to primary and secondary sources.

## Tertiary

- [CountryWatch](#) Provides current statistics and trends (political, economic, etc.) for over 200 countries.
- Sage Reference Collections.



# EXAMPLES OF SOCIOLOGY SOURCES

- 1. Sociology. Guides at Middlebury College- LibGuides
- 2. Socioweb – An excellent source of sociology related articles and essays, learning sociology, online directories, online journals, surveys and statistics, etc.
- 3. Guide to Sources in Sociology - Social Sciences, Health and Education Library(SSHEL)
- 4. Journal- *Contributions to Indian Sociology*
- 5. Journal – *Current Sociology of International Sociology Association*
- 6. Sociology Resources: Subject Guides. The University of Iowa libraries,



# CONCLUSION

- Primary sources are more current and accurate than secondary and tertiary.
- The sources helps to satisfy the varied approaches of a users regarding information search.
- A good number of primary, secondary and tertiary sources are easily available in electronic format to be accessible round the clock from anywhere.



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