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**Core Paper X
HISTORICAL THEORIES & METHODS**

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ଦୂରନିରନ୍ତର ଶିକ୍ଷା ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶାଳୟ, ଉତ୍କଳ ବିଶ୍ୱବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ
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Core Paper X

HISTORICAL THEORIES & METHODS

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1. Sources of History: Written, Oral. Visual & Archaeological.
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4. Historical Objectivity

Suggested Text Books:

1. B. Sheik Ali, History: Its Theory and Method, Macmillan, Reprinted, 1996.
2. E. H. Carr, What is History? , Penguin Books, Reprinted, 1983.

Reference Reading:

1. E. Sreedharan, A Text Book of Historiography, Orient Longman, Reprinted, 2004.
2. Marc Bloch, The Historians Craft.
3. R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History
4. G.T.Reiner, History: Its Purpose and Method.
5. K.Rajayyan, History: it's Theory & Method

Unit-I: Meaning and Scope of History

Definition, Nature and Scope of History.

Object and Value of History.

History, Science and Morality.

Introduction

History is often described as the mother or queen of social sciences. It outdates all other social sciences. It is the basis of all subjects of study which are grouped under Humanities or social sciences. It is considered an indispensable subject in providing man's complete education. We are already in the twenty first century, an expanding new era, thus, the complex meanings, intrinsic qualities, purposes, and value of history require serious attention. For the diverse and rich social foundations of life, whether language, material culture, national identity, or the organization of work and politics, are the palpable inheritance of a resilient human past, and if humanity is to plot a realizable future, we need to understand through history how it has achieved its present. The usefulness of history, therefore, is not only that it constantly offers new ways of viewing and understanding the grip of the past: it is also a means of generating the confidence about, and absorption of, critical knowledge, to produce a changing consciousness. In bringing the potential of human action to the center of investigation, the dynamics of historical understanding can contribute actively to the shaping of our future, always emphasizing that it can be one of possibilities and alternatives. History, then, is a form of inquiry which is never prescriptive or rigidly predictive about the impact of systems or of events. This chapter will discuss the meaning, nature and scope of history as a subject in general and in this changing scenario in particular.

Meaning of History

In its very earliest known uses in human society, history was simply a narrative account of past events. As a word, it entered the English language from the French formulation of *histoire*, the Latin notion of *historia*, and the Greek construction of *istoria*, each of which represented the basic sense of a knowledge of the past. In these early concepts, the sense of history encompassed both an imaginative story of events and a narrative or chronicle of past events. In its early English usage, history and story were generally applied equally to any account of the past, whether of imaginary events or of incidents which were held to be true. Such use of history for imagined or invented events is, of course, a practice which has persisted, at diminishing levels, up to the present. It continues to be embedded especially in imaginative literature, such as the novel. This can take the form of an attempt at fictional realism, as in J. G. Farrell's 1970s story, *The Singapore Grip*, which recreates the Japanese invasion of Singapore in 1941, blending established historical facts with an invented story. Or, it can be the deliberate novelistic fabrication of a "counterfactual" history, as in Robert Harris's 1980s story, *Fatherland*, which is based on the premise of Nazi Germany having won the Second World War.

From roughly the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards, the meaning of history moved more emphatically towards an account of past real events, and the notion of story drifted towards a set of uses which included less documented accounts of past events, and accounts of purely imagined events or fantasy. History now began to take on the distinctive character or sense of an organized knowledge of the past. The notion of some organization of knowledge of the past was a general extension of the earlier sense of a specific written or oral account. Through the development of this sense of history emerged the distinctly modern meanings and role of historian, historical, and historic.

Writers on historiography and culture confirm that in contemporary English, this has become the predominant and lasting general sense of history. At the same time, it is important to note the growth of a further significant conception of history which goes beyond the basic meaning of an organized knowledge of past life. It is difficult to date or to define its intellectual source exactly, but it is the

sense of history as something continuous, as human or self-development. This particular stage of thinking is increasingly evident in European thought from around the eighteenth century, and saw early expression in the emergence of new forms of universal histories or world histories, based on the imperial sense of a “discovery” or physical charting of the world. Adopting the argument of the cultural critic, Raymond Williams, the clearest way of projecting this newer post-eighteenth century sense of history is to say that past events are viewed not as specific or bounded histories, but as a continuous and connected process.

For historians, various modern systemizations and interpretations of this continuous and connected process then become history in a new general and increasingly abstract sense. Moreover, in view of the prevailing new stress on the workings of history as human self-development, history in many of its wider uses sheds its exclusive association with knowledge of the past, and becomes directly connected not only to the present, but also to the future. Thus, in a language such as German, the terminology of *Geschichte* for history carries the verbal connotation of a process which means an amalgam of past, present, and future.

In turn, history encoded in this contemporary sense has drawn on several evolving versions of more recent intellectual systems. One has been the European Enlightenment awareness of the progress and development of civilization. Another has been rooted in an idealist sense, as reflected by the philosopher Hegel, of an ineluctable process of world-historical movement over time. A third sense of process, especially important since the nineteenth century, has been sharply political. Here, through a strong association with, first, the French Revolution, and subsequently with Marxism and variants of socialist thought, history has been construed as a range of mass historical forces. In this systemic sense of history, its forces are products of the past which are not only active and influential in the present, but which will live on as imperatives, destined to shape the future in knowable or patterned ways. Naturally, there has always been scholarly dispute between such varying understandings of history as a structured process. Furthermore, there has always been controversy between advocates of history as a systemic movement, and others who have continued to view history as an account, or a series of accounts, of actual but quite random past events. In this looser conception, the sweep of history carries no clearly discernible design or implication of the shape of the future.

An influential twentieth century derivation from history is “historicism,” or the identification of study of the past as being historicist. One of its functional usages has been both basic and neutral, as a description of a method of scholarly study which is based upon the assembling of facts of the past, and the tracing of visible precedents to explain current events. A second sense of historicism has been more ideological in intent and controversial in record. Here, it has been used abrasively, to discredit the deeper meaning of history as a continuing sequence of productive human stages, a process with ineluctable implications for the future. At this level, it has been used in critiques not only of Marxism, but also of Idealist and Enlightenment definitions of history as an upward process.

Some scholars have also suggested that it is not always easy to distinguish attacks on history as historicism, which essentially rejects the notion of history embodying a necessary or probable future, from associated attacks on the notion of any predictive future (in the sense of an improved or more developed life), which uses the idea of a lesson or of lessons of history in arguing against an uncritical hope or faith in human progress. This second, cautionary perspective on history as a forward or optimistic process has been a particularly striking feature of the twentieth century in particular. In contrast with the buoyant sense of positive achievement or promise of earlier versions of historical movement, history since the earlier twentieth century has commonly been used to indicate a generally negative pattern of frustration, breakdown, or defeat, or of some explosion or implosion of the gains of civilization.

Lastly, we know that behind human ignorance of the present and uncertainty of the future, the historical forces which have shaped the world are continuing to operate. Equally, at present, it is

probably no longer as easy as it once was to confirm which sense or meaning of history is dominant. "Historian" remains a fairly exact description, as in its earlier understanding. "Historical" relates generally to a recorded sense of the past. "Historic" is largely used to imply the dimension of a large or deep process or destiny. "History," on the other hand, retains something of the variety of meanings and range of uses it has acquired across human time.

At the same time, today it can be said that, in an almost universal sense, history has come to mean an organized knowledge and interpretation of the past, a defining feature which it shares with archaeology. In this respect, while it has a different and more scientific character as a scholarly discipline, archaeology may also be recognizable as a variant of history. As a distinctive and well-established scholarly discipline, history has developed its own range of methods and discourses. Its field of study continues to be potentially limitless, in that it encompasses the totality of past human experience. That field is also one of critical debate between varying approaches to history. There are major differences and even controversies between some who regard it as an account of an actual past, and others who view it in postmodern terms, as entirely imagined or subjective constructions of the past, a projection of the identity and location of the historian as author.

On the other hand, the matter and manner of history is something which can be readily validated. History shares with literature, art, history of art, and other laboratories of the spirit and the mind, a probing preoccupation with exploring the many hopes, wonders, fears, and darker contradictions of the human condition. Historical understanding turns on the movement of time and space, on the living tissue which provides us with a sense of the workings of cumulative forces, teaches us about the workings of cause and effect, and, most simply, enlightens us about the past. That provision of knowledge is of a particularly special kind, because it shows not only that history has brought humankind to a particular point, but how and why. While the sense of what history is may continue to differ among scholars, it is a primary analytical lens which can teach or show us most kinds of the knowable human past, and virtually every kind of imaginable-if not predictable- human future.

Definitions of History

The origin of the word History is associated with the Greek word '*Historia*' which means 'information' or 'an enquiry designed to elicit truth'. History has been defined differently by different scholars. At this juncture, it will be advisable to refer to some of the definitions of history given by some of eminent scholars:

- History is the study of the human past as it is described in the written documents left by human beings. Here are a collection of more history definitions-*Kris Hirst* .
- History is a narration of the events which have happened among mankind, including an account of the rise and fall of nations, as well as of other great changes which have affected the political and social condition of human race-*John. J. Anderson. 1876.*
- History is the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another- *Burckhardt:*
- The value and interest of history depend largely on the degree in which the present is illuminated by the past- *V.S. Smith.*
- History is a connected account of the course of events or progress of ideas- *Rapson.*
- History is the story of Man's struggle through the ages against Nature and the elements; against wild beasts and the jungle and some of his own kind who have tried to keep him down and to exploit him for their own benefit- *Jawaharlal Nehru.*
- History not used is nothing, for all intellectual life is action, like practical life, and if you don't use the stuff well, it might as well be dead-*Arnold J. Toynbee.*
- History is and should be a science. History is not the accumulation of events of every kind which happened in the past. It is the science of human societies-*Fustel de Coulanges*
- History is nothing but a pack of tricks we play on the dead-*Voltaire*

- Most events recorded in history are more remarkable than important, like eclipses of the sun and moon, by which all are attracted, but whose effects no one takes the trouble to calculate-*Henry David Thoreau*.
- History in its broadest sense is everything that ever happened-*Henry Johnson*.
- History is a veritable mine of life experiences and the youth of today studies history that he may profit by the experiences of the race-*Jones says*.
- History is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts. It is an unending dialogue between the present and the past-*Carr says*.

The above definitions explain History as a significant records of events of the past, a meaningful story of mankind depicting the details of what happened to man and why it happened. Mainly it deals with the human world.

The Value of History

There would seem to be at least three possible viewpoints of the value of history. Clearly such a statement calls for the qualification that the positions represented by these viewpoints are unlikely to be sharply demarcated, but will generally merge into one another.

The first is the view that history is bunk, often positively harmful, and that we should have as little to do with it as we can manage. Such an opinion would fit a strong belief that all that matters is the future, that preoccupation with the past can only hold us back, and indeed that lessons learned from the past are highly likely to be wrong and to lead us on to worse mistakes in the future. Support, of a sort, for these opinions may be sought from Hegel's comment that people and governments have never learned from history, although any further investigation of Hegel will result in that support drying up rapidly, since his whole philosophical position puts history into a pre-eminent position. Holders of this negative view of the value of history may among other things point to the disasters arising from the tendency among army generals to attempt to re-fight the battles of earlier wars, while ignoring the opportunities and dangers presented by subsequent advances in technology.

Others who might find themselves in this camp are those with a particularly strong conviction of the impossibility of disentangling historical truth from propaganda, or at least from the views and prejudices of those who write history, a subject discussed in detail in the first essay, on objectivity.

There are many incontestable truths in these views, and they should certainly inform any position that might be held on the value of history, but to hold them exclusively seems indicative of a certain poverty of overall outlook. Perhaps the real value of this position is that it obliges those who do not hold it constantly to examine their own views, to ensure that they are not vulnerable to such negativism.

A different position on the subject, and one that in practice is likely to be held at least to a limited extent by all but the most diehard negativists, is the belief that there are certain utilitarian uses to which history can be put. There is much support to be found for this view, and a great deal of evidence. Take for example the role of history as a social lubricant. "An acquaintance with history is agreeable to us as sociable and conversable creatures" wrote Joseph Priestley, and John Locke believed not only that history was a great moral and political teacher, but was a proper study for a man of business in the world" and "a gentleman".

E H Carr wrote, "the function of the historian is to master and understand, and the past as the key to the understanding of the present". And Hegel, in the remark quoted above, does not say that we cannot learn from the past, only that we do not, and it is not difficult to find instances where he is right. Very recently there were those who, perhaps with Vietnam or Afghanistan in mind, warned that going into the Balkans militarily would be a great deal easier than coming out. No, no said our leaders, six months should do it. Less obvious are the cases where we just may have learned something. There were for example many who felt that Saddam should have been toppled after the Gulf War. Failure to do so may not have left an ideal situation, but neither is the West tied to the appalling task of trying to

govern Iraq, as it is Kosovo.

The fact is that a large number of influential people has always believed that there is a very great deal to be learned from history. We have noted Locke's view, and Collingwood points out that Polybius, writing in the Rome of the late republic, thought history worth learning because it provided a training ground for political life, not, it is true, because it would enable us to prevent things happening, but because it would teach us how to respond to them when they did happen. All those who for centuries have studied Machiavelli, must have believed that they could get some things right, or less wrong, by observing the apparent consequences of certain courses of actions. The art of statecraft and diplomacy all over the world is heavily influenced by the study of history. Is it credible that the relative peace of the world between 1815 and 1914, and again since 1945, owes nothing to an awareness of history by statesmen and diplomats? Doubtless the wisdom sought by our political leaders could be taught purely theoretically, but as Seneca said, "the journey is long by way of precepts, but short and effective through examples."

There is in addition a large number of what we might call "special pleaders" who make use of historical events to pursue their own aims. A small sample of these could include Labour Party stalwarts keeping their flame alive by reference to Tolpuddle Martyrs and Jarrow Marchers; the Victorian Samuel Smiles using the lives of such great past figures as Newton and Watt to convince his own age of the virtues in which he believed; feminism, constructed at least in part out of a particular interpretation of the history of women down the centuries; and Ulster Unionism maintaining its strength by annual appeals to history represented by the Orange Marches.

On an even more mundane level, we may care to note in passing the highly practical values placed on history by those whose livelihoods depend on having some understanding of past trends in share prices or the past performance of race horses and their blood lines. Indeed the very existence of the phrase "track record" is an indication of the extent to which awareness of the value of history permeates mankind's consciousness.

That is no bad cue to start to move away from the second, or utilitarian position towards the final view, which takes a far deeper view of what history means to us as human beings. Arguably this is the area in which philosophy should primarily interest itself.

A simple, if uncompromising expression of this viewpoint is that history is simply representative of our whole culture. That need not be seen as an extreme position, but even among those who do find it so, many will agree that history is an inescapable part of what it is to be human. Awareness of our place in time is part of what we call consciousness. We are creatures who Plan the future and who remember and assess the past. We do it as individuals and we do it collectively, and we have done so since folk tales were told and sung around the campfires of our distant past. Those who are cut off from the past, by loss of memory or other conditions of the brain, are regarded as ill, unable to function as normal people, lacking human identity; without knowledge of our past we are incomplete. The purpose of history, says Tolstoy, is to teach nations and humanity to know themselves. One of the first things many people do when they retire is to lay siege to the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, in order to discover, and perhaps to write their own history. "History is us".

Those who have little difficulty accepting these sentiments may also find it easy to share the rather unfashionable view that says simply that history is of the greatest possible value for its own sake. The notion is not quite dead even in our own utilitarian age, and is grounded in a powerful Victorian attitude concerning knowledge generally. This attitude is well expressed by Cardinal Newman's mid-century belief in "liberal knowledge" as an end in itself, although Newman saw himself as following Cicero, who considered the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake to be the first of what he called "heads of moral excellence".

What could it be about history that makes such a basic appeal to us? As descendants of those early humans around their campfires, we still have a weakness for a good story, and history, narrative

history at least, meets that basic need. History, Cicero said, gives pleasure. Our liking for a good story may be one reason why the "kings and battles" school of history proves so resistant to the efforts of would-be reformers, who would rather we studied the lives of people — "ordinary" people for choice. The Battle of Waterloo is simply a much better story than the calorific intake of a mediaeval peasant. Kings and battles history is not always helpful to the more didactic schools, but it is of inestimable value not only to those who love a good yarn, but also as a golden treasure trove of inspiration for the world's greatest artists and writers. History as source material for great art can only with difficulty be described as valueless.

Of course this deeper view of the value of history is not without its own utilitarian aspects, its role as provider of the raw material for so much of the world's great art being only one example. To name another, a fairly logical extension of the thoughts expressed brings us to a consideration of nationalism. Some two hundred years ago Gottfried Herder made it crystal clear how important was the presentation of history in creating awareness of the new German nationhood. Many countries (the United Kingdom an interesting exception), reinforce their national identity with holidays that recall important events in their history; the Fourth of July and Bastille Day come to mind.

A further example of value being taken from history by those who certainly subscribe to the fundamental importance of the subject is to be found in the work of both Hegel, already mentioned, and Karl. Marx. Their philosophies of history have already been discussed in the previous essay, which covered causation in history, but it is worth referring here to the very special role played by history in the formulation of Marxism, an ideology which played such a momentous part in the history of the twentieth century, although there is obviously room to question its value. Marx's entire economic system rests on his interpretation of the historical struggle of the labouring classes.

Religion, another great human preoccupation, is steeped in history. Religious instruction is in effect the teaching of history, history with some very precise aims it is true, light years from Lord Acton's view that history should be all but purposeless, and history which may at times be thought to blur the distinction between itself and mythology, but grounded nevertheless in the description of past events. Bede made liberal use of miracles in his writings, but they were historical miracles, and the Gospels themselves, when they were written, set out to provide the new religion of Christianity with some historical credibility. The value of history to the world's great religions seems incontestable. Without it, would they even exist?

Perhaps the most extreme version of a belief in the value of history may be found in what is an interesting footnote to the role of history in religion. This is the view held by some, that with the decline in religious faith, history should be seen as the real route to truth, perhaps even the sort of truth which was previously found in religion. As noted above, some of the difficulties associated with the congruence of history and truth were looked at in the first of these essays, that on objectivity in history. We can be confident that Kierkegaard, for one, would strongly object to any idea that history could be some sort of replacement for religion, and his objections would in part rest on the matter of objectivity. For in developing his views on what he called subjective truth, he claimed for example that Christian belief in the Crucifixion could not be justified if it depended on belief in the Crucifixion as an historical event. This is because we can never be entirely sure of the accuracy of any historical report; because, he maintained, mere probability about events, (which is in any case continually being updated as new scholarship uncovers new facts about the past), is not enough to justify religious belief; and because the detachment necessary required for a historical approach is totally at odds with the Passion which is inseparable from religious faith.

If, however, we believe with Henri Bergson that what we are is to a great extent made up from our memories of the past, and with Alexander Pope that "the proper study of mankind is man", then denying history the mantle of religion need not prevent us from according it a very high value.

Scope of History

History is one of the oldest subjects of study. In simplest terms, history is the story of the human experience. While history teaching originally focused on the facts of political history such as wars and dynasties, contemporary history education has assumed a more integrative approach offering students an expanded view of historical knowledge that includes aspects of journalism, geography, religion, anthropology, philosophy, economics, technology, art and society. This wider embrace is sometimes reflected in the vague but ubiquitous term, "social studies."

Thus, by history we understand the breadth, comprehensiveness, variety and extent of learning experiences, provided by the study of a particular subject. The growth of history has accompanied with the growth of human race. Thus history and man are inter-related or that history is a story of human race from beginning up to the present day. History at present is no more confined to the study of political activities of man but it also includes a study of his achievements in the physical, Social, Economic, Religious, Philosophical. Literary, artistic, cultural industrial, technological and scientific fields, starting from ancient times upto the modern age. In this way its scope is very wide and varied-in fact as wide as the world and as long as the existence of man on earths. History links the present of mankind with his past. We cannot say that future is outside the scope of history. Experiences of history will from the history of tomorrow and in this way history is connected with future as well.

The most interesting fact about the extent and comprehensiveness of history is that today we hear of "History of Art," "History of Culture", "History of Civilization", "History of Religion", "History of Music", "History of Geography", "History of Physics", "History of Philosophy", "History of Education ", "History of Biology", "History of Atom", "History of Literature", "History of Mathematics" and History of what not. A learned speaker on a political, religious, literary or any other platform connected with any field of human activity, will place before his audience pure and simple history, connected with the life and achievements of some past of great human beings and nothing else. This makes the scope of history almost limitless, which knows no ends and also speaks of the importance of history as a teaching subject in schools and colleges.

With the passage of time the scope of history has been widened and new areas are included in it. History is generally assuming all the three dimensions, as its main job is to narrate what happened, to discuss how it happened and to analyze why it happened. It is growing in its extent as well.

The purpose of historical inquiry is not simply to present facts but to search for an interpretation of the past. Historians attempt to find patterns and establish meaning through the rigorous study of documents and artifacts left by people of other times and other places.

The study of history is vital to a liberal arts education. History is unique among the liberal arts in its emphasis on historical perspective and context. Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms; any historical phenomenon-an event, an idea, a law, or a dogma for example-must first be understood in its context, as part of a web of interrelated institutions, values, and beliefs that define a particular culture and era. Among the liberal arts, history is the discipline most concerned with understanding change. Historians seek not only to explain historical causality- how and why change occurs within societies and cultures. They also try to account for the endurance of tradition, understand the complex interplay between continuity and change, and explain the origins, evolution, and decline of institutions and ideas. History is also distinguished by its singularly broad scope. Virtually every subject has a history and can be analyzed and interpreted in historical perspective and context; the scope of historical inquiry is bound only by the quantity and quality of surviving documents and artifacts.

It is commonly acknowledged that an understanding of the past is fundamental to an understanding of the present. The analysis and interpretation of history provide an essential context for evaluating contemporary institutions, politics, and cultures. Understanding the present configuration of society is not the only reason to study the past; history also provides unique insight into human nature and human civilization. By demanding that we see the world through the eyes of others, that we develop a

sense of context and coherence while recognizing complexity and ambiguity, and that we confront the record not only of human achievement but also of human failure, cruelty, and barbarity, the study of history provides us with a richly-textured, substantive framework for understanding the human condition and grappling with moral questions and problems. History is essential to the traditional objectives of the liberal arts, the quest for wisdom and virtue.

As the society developed the scope of history has been undergoing constant change. The scope of history is now comprehensive, because every aspect of human activities is covered. Now a day's historians are studying government laws, legends, folklore and art and they also cover every phenomena whether philosophical, material, emotional, social or political which has concerned with men. The main concern of a historian is to study human achievements whether it is in science, technology or invention. He is not satisfied only by describing the role of dynasties but also studies art, science and economics. On the whole scope of history has become so comprehensive that no activity of human being is left untouched.

In the present age micro history writing has gained significance. The scholars now are attracted by intensive study of the rural system and institution. They show their keen interest in the social and economic development. The historian also show their interest in labour movements, class struggle art, craft, industry and other changes in the society. the status of women is also a field of discussion among the scholars. Now more emphasis is being given to writing of philosophy of history. Marx, Hegel, Spengler and Comte are eminent scholars who painted out the progress and decline of societies. At least it is quite clear that history has wide area of study and its scope is widening day by day.

Some scholars point out that historians are presenting history in two ways. First they collect data about the event and secondly they interpret and describe the causes of these events. So it is clear that the first way of writing history concerns with objectivity and there is subjectivity in the latter. Trevelyan says that a historians is required to perform three functions which include scientific, imaginative and literary. Now the scope of history covers whole aspect of mankind, whether it is nature or man. In fact study of nature has significant role in the history. Because big mountains, rivers and hills influence human advancement. So while writing history one cannot ignore their importance.

The scope of history has now widened after the discovery of many ancient coins and inscriptions. These inscriptions paved way for widening the scope of history. In the 19th century geology and archaeology further widened the knowledge of ancient history. These provide an account of ancient man and his life style. The archaeologists opened new grounds for historians through their excavations in many parts of the world. They now conclude that human life could be traced back the period much earlier than commonly held. Thus these discoveries are responsible for the pushing back the history by millions of years.

History is now assuming a universal character. Because earlier world was divided into a social, political and cultural units and these units considered themselves superior. As civilizations of India, China and Iran considered themselves superior than others. But after advancement of communication many countries of world came closer to each other. They knew each other and a feeling of oneness developed. As a result a unified culture developed and history assumed universal character.

At present great emphasis is given on systematic and exhaustive collection of source materials as well as adoption of a critical attitude in making their assessment. Till nineteenth century study of history is limited only to political events. But now social, moral, economic and literary life of the people are also studied. At last whole outlook and approach has changed, they are moving towards close to common men. Approach has changed, they are moving towards close to common men. A new concept of historical relativism has widened the scope of history.

Nature of History

Earlier history was considered only the record of the past events. But with the passage of time it is studied with critical approach and scientific manner. A historian is required to study the events

objectively and his main job is to know the past and to evaluate the events. Historian's view explains the significance of past events and happenings. The historians is not only required to express his thoughts but also to present them in proper manner. It is expected that he may gather facts, evaluate them and also express in presentable manner. He is not allowed to mix his personal ideas into historical facts. In facts, while writing historians cannot be impartial and his works are influenced by his biases. The biases influence the historians because he is to view past happening in the background of his social, religious, philosophical and economic surroundings. He studies the past in the light of present. The developments of present age effect the past, therefore, historians is required to be free from biases and explain the event clearly. In fact, historian gathers facts from other fields and interpret them. So far as the smple meaning of history is concern, we know that history is the story of human experience. But, this tells us little about the nature of history. Again several question arise in one's mind while studying history such as does history describe all of human experience? Where does it get its information? Is history accurate and believable? To know the answer of all these question we probably should have some conception of the nature of history. Followings are the primary nature of historical facts.

History Repeat Itself

History is the record of events that happened in the past. Every country or nation has its own history. And the world itself has its history. If we analyze closely all those historical events have something in common whether it is war, peace, progress or revolution, they all have some common characteristics. They have a general tendency to repeat themselves. For example, we may consider the terrible wars of recent past. But on close analysis, all of them had started from some trivial incident. Such common factors in turn make history repeat itself. Revolutions are further examples. Revolutions have always been the part and parcel of misrule. Discontent among people has always culminated in riots and finally in revolution. These revolutions and wars are important aspect of history. In fact, they really make history. But at the same time, they are all repetitions of what had happened earlier. Thucydides, the Greek historian is said to be the originator of this saying although not in the present form. In one of his books, he says that, his record of events will be useful to the world as history has a tendency to repeat itself.

There are some historians who believe that history repeat itself from time to time. On the other hand others do not agree to this theory. The historians who believe this idea, argue that human mind is alike all over the world and forces that influence the events, are also alike. In this way the events are co-related to one another and they always react in a particular manner, because they have basic unity. On the other hand truth always wins and one cannot deny it. First World War and Second World War are good examples of this view of point. Aggressive policy of Napoleon or Hitler were not lasting and it had to be brought down. Similarly, Kalinga war of Ancient Indian history shows that might can never become right. All these point out that history always repeat itself.

There are other historians who agree that history never repeat itself. They point out that history means a record of important events and human deeds. Every event in history is unique and it has no uniformity. If we accept the theory of repetition of history, it means that there is no advancement in society. every individualistic deed is unique in itself. In some countries different culture develop and each has its own customs. They express that changes in society witnessed their view points. This controversy does not seem to be discussed again. The basic nature of history is constant change. The historical events are not uniform as the historian suggest. Though some events may have uniformity, but it cannot be said that history repeat itself.

Cyclic or Linear Nature of History

Some historians believe that the historical forces are linear. They agree that historical events have continuity and there is link between the past and the present. This continuity shapes linear nature of history. On the other hand some scholars hold that nature of historical forces are cyclic. They believe

that the history moves in a circle. Every event has a starting point, a climax and after that downfall. This process begins again and again. They hold that rise and fall of civilizations and dynasties confirm this nature of history.

Unending dialogue

E.H. Carr have held the idea of unending dialogue. According to him history is the unending dialogue between the present and the past and value of a historians does not lie in cataloguing of events but in solving as many controversies relating to the past event as possible and bringing these to focus of the society. He says that a historian does not know the past fully but he can only know it partially. The historian has to use his imaginative power.

All history is contemporary History

According to some scholars historical facts are co-related to one another. Thucydides believe that all the historical facts have relation with them in some rational way and permanent manner, which is effect means that entire march of history is one continuous whole. Callingwood is of the view that historians while writing past are not free from compulsions of their age, so their writings are largely influenced by modern ideas. In this way the present and the past are related to one another. Croce believes that all history is one supreme spirit which is indivisible but has four different aspects, namely arts, ethics, logic and economics. The basic unity of spirit is emerged by these aspects and this spirit is the main spring of all the historical forces. He also remarks that since human nature is same in all the ages, therefore the action of this human nature cannot vary in substance. These scholars hold that there were uniformity of the messages of Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus Christ and Gandhiji. This fact supports the contemporary nature of history.

Roots of Historical Phenomena

Foreign policy of the country is now a day's influenced by the past events. In fact, the country learns from the past experiences and predicts. Sometimes their prediction proves true. In this way history becomes prophecy and prepares the ground for the future. The historical events happen at a particular time and because of the human nature it can be easy to make a guess about the causes and course of future events. The nature of historical forces are temporal. So unforeseen factors influence to the historical events at least to some extent.

Variation in History

History varies not only according to the time but also from historian. It is quite clear that nature of history is largely influenced by the philosophy of the age. The history written during the colonial rule varies from that is written by the historian after the freedom. It is because of philosophy of that surroundings. A contemporary historians present historical events from his view point and a patriot will point out different look of history. The social, economic and religious factors also effect the historical outlook.

History is a verb, not a noun.

Historians, are the generalizers, the synthesizers. They look at an event or series of events and try to bring relevant knowledge from all fields to bear on understanding the situation. Viewed in this light, history is a verb, not a noun - an approach rather than a subject. This approach is sometimes termed the "historical method," which is generally involves trying to identify all relevant information about an historical development, critically examining sources for validity and bias, then selecting and organizing this information into a well-constructed narrative that sheds some light on human experience.

Knowledge of the past is incomplete

To better understand the nature of history we shall have to take a closer look at the historical method and particularly at its shortcomings. The method begins with an attempt to identify all relevant information about an historical episode. Because the historian cannot study the past directly, he must rely on available evidence. And here we must make a distinction between actual history and known

history. Actual history is everything that actually occurred at the time and place of the historical event under study, while known history is merely the scanty evidence left behind.

The known past is infinitely smaller than the actual past.

People die taking their memories with them. Few human artifacts survive the centuries. We have little or no evidence from many historical periods. Therefore, the known past is infinitely smaller than the actual past. Consider the difficulty of accurately understanding any important contemporary issue, and think how much more difficult it is to piece together a valid picture of a situation from the past. The difficulty becomes magnified as we move farther back in time. Thus, the historian can illuminate only fragments of the past, not the past itself.

Our view of the past keeps changing

History is not static; our views of history are constantly changing as new discoveries are made that cast doubt on previous knowledge. Before 1900 the Trojan War was considered entirely a myth; Machu Picchu and China's terra cotta army were unknown. New interpretations of historical events frequently come along to challenge older views. Was Winston Churchill the grand statesman of his age or, as has more recently been suggested, a less admirable figure? Such newer, alternative explanations are termed revisionist history. Even a popular film can do much to change public awareness and attitudes about the historical past.

History is subjective

Evidence about the past can include remains such as bones, architectural ruins, pottery shards and art works or written accounts including government records, diaries, histories and insights gleaned from the various academic disciplines, which themselves rely heavily on historical evidence. Artifacts are mute and require human interpretation. Written accounts reflect the point-of-view and the biases of the author. In both cases, the evidence reflects perceptions of the past, not the reality of the past.

The historian, following the historical method, tries to determine if the evidence is real, accurate or biased. After making these judgments, the historian selects some evidence to include in his narrative, and rejects other sources. The finished product reflects the judgments, point-of-view, biases and errors of the historian himself. This is a highly subjective process throughout. "In fact, one might even say that any history we read is as much a product of the historian who wrote it as of the people who actually lived the events it attempts to describe.

History is a search for truth

While some philosophers might argue that history is too subjective to be of much value, it should be remembered that history did happen, and without it we would be largely ignorant of the workings of the world and of the human animal. Absolute truth is a rare commodity; it is no less available from history than from other academic fields. Even "truths" revealed by that most empirical of disciplines, science, often turn out to be wrong when viewed from the perspective of newer discoveries.

Conscientious historians are aware of the pitfalls in their search for historical truth, and they try to avoid them. Students who are aware of the inherent limitations of history will be better prepared to evaluate the validity of historical evidence and historical accounts and consequently more adept at evaluating the conflicting evidence and opinions surrounding the important issues of their own time.

Thus, it is clear that the study of history is not an easy job. History is an unending dialogue between the present and past, but it is partial in a sense. Historical forces are both linear as well as cyclic. A historian must be selective, through writing in record. He is required to write down the past events through relevant records.

Why Study History.

People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been? Given all the desirable and available branches of knowledge, why insist-as most American educational programs do-on a good bit of history? And why urge many

students to study even more history than they are required to?

Any subject of study needs justification: its advocates must explain why it is worth attention. Most widely accepted subjects-and history is certainly one of them-attract some people who simply like the information and modes of thought involved. But audiences less spontaneously drawn to the subject and more doubtful about why to bother need to know what the purpose is.

Historians do not perform heart transplants, improve highway design, or arrest criminals. In a society that quite correctly expects education to serve useful purposes, the functions of history can seem more difficult to define than those of engineering or medicine. History is in fact very useful, actually indispensable, but the products of historical study are less tangible, sometimes less immediate, than those that stem from some other disciplines.

In the past history has been justified for reasons we would no longer accept. For instance, one of the reasons history holds its place in current education is because earlier leaders believed that a knowledge of certain historical facts helped distinguish the educated from the uneducated; the person who could reel off the date of the Norman conquest of England (1066) or the name of the person who came up with the theory of evolution at about the same time that Darwin did (Wallace) was deemed superior-a better candidate for law school or even a business promotion. Knowledge of historical facts has been used as a screening device in many societies, from China to the United States, and the habit is still with us to some extent. Unfortunately, this use can encourage mindless memorization-a real but not very appealing aspect of the discipline. History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty. There are many ways to discuss the real functions of the subject-as there are many different historical talents and many different paths to historical meaning. All definitions of history's utility, however, rely on two fundamental facts.

History Helps Us Understand People and Societies

In the first place, history offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave. Understanding the operations of people and societies is difficult, though a number of disciplines make the attempt. An exclusive reliance on current data would needlessly handicap our efforts. How can we evaluate war if the nation is at peace-unless we use historical materials? How can we understand genius, the influence of technological innovation, or the role that beliefs play in shaping family life, if we don't use what we know about experiences in the past? Some social scientists attempt to formulate laws or theories about human behavior. But even these recourses depend on historical information, except for in limited, often artificial cases in which experiments can be devised to determine how people act. Major aspects of a society's operation, like mass elections, missionary activities, or military alliances, cannot be set up as precise experiments. Consequently, history must serve, however imperfectly, as our laboratory, and data from the past must serve as our most vital evidence in the unavoidable quest to figure out why our complex species behaves as it does in societal settings. This, fundamentally, is why we cannot stay away from history: it offers the only extensive evidential base for the contemplation and analysis of how societies function, and people need to have some sense of how societies function simply to run their own lives. History Helps Us Understand Change and How the Society We Live in Came to Be The second reason history is inescapable as a subject of serious study follows closely on the first. The past causes the present, and so the future. Any time we try to know why something happened- whether a shift in political party dominance in the American Congress, a major change in the teenage suicide rate, or a war in the Balkans or the Middle East-we have to look for factors that took shape earlier. Sometimes fairly recent history will suffice to explain a major development, but often we need to look further back to identify the causes of change. Only through studying history can we grasp how things change; only through history can we begin to comprehend the factors that cause change; and only through history can we understand what elements of an institution or a society persist despite change.

The Importance of History in Our Own Lives

These two fundamental reasons for studying history underlie more specific and quite diverse uses of history in our own lives. History well told is beautiful. Many of the historians who most appeal to the general reading public know the importance of dramatic and skillful writing—as well as of accuracy. Biography and military history appeal in part because of the tales they contain. History as art and entertainment serves a real purpose, on aesthetic grounds but also on the level of human understanding. Stories well done are stories that reveal how people and societies have actually functioned, and they prompt thoughts about the human experience in other times and places. The same aesthetic and humanistic goals inspire people to immerse themselves in efforts to reconstruct quite remote pasts, far removed from immediate, present-day utility. Exploring what historians sometimes call the "pastness of the past"—the ways people in distant ages constructed their lives— involves a sense of beauty and excitement, and ultimately another perspective on human life and society.

History Contributes to Moral Understanding

History also provides a terrain for moral contemplation. Studying the stories of individuals and situations in the past allows a student of history to test his or her own moral sense, to hone it against some of the real complexities individuals have faced in difficult settings. People who have weathered adversity not just in some work of fiction, but in real, historical circumstances can provide inspiration. "History teaching by example" is one phrase that describes this use of a study of the past—a study not only of certifiable heroes, the great men and women of history who successfully worked through moral dilemmas, but also of more ordinary people who provide lessons in courage, diligence, or constructive protest.

History Provides Identity

History also helps provide identity, and this is unquestionably one of the reasons all modern nations encourage its teaching in some form. Historical data include evidence about how families, groups, institutions and whole countries were formed and about how they have evolved while retaining cohesion. For many Americans, studying the history of one's own family is the most obvious use of history, for it provides facts about genealogy and (at a slightly more complex level) a basis for understanding how the family has interacted with larger historical change. Family identity is established and confirmed. Many institutions, businesses, communities, and social units, such as ethnic groups in the United States, use history for similar identity purposes. Merely defining the group in the present pales against the possibility of forming an identity based on a rich past. And of course nations use identity history as well—and sometimes abuse it. Histories that tell the national story, emphasizing distinctive features of the national experience, are meant to drive home an understanding of national values and a commitment to national loyalty.

Studying History Is Essential for Good Citizenship

A study of history is essential for good citizenship. This is the most common justification for the place of history in school curricula. Sometimes advocates of citizenship history hope merely to promote national identity and loyalty through a history spiced by vivid stories and lessons in individual success and morality. But the importance of history for citizenship goes beyond this narrow goal and can even challenge it at some points.

History that lays the foundation for genuine citizenship returns, in one sense, to the essential uses of the study of the past. History provides data about the emergence of national institutions, problems, and values—it's the only significant storehouse of such data available. It offers evidence also about how nations have interacted with other societies, providing international and comparative perspectives essential for responsible citizenship. Further, studying history helps us understand how recent, current, and prospective changes that affect the lives of citizens are emerging or may emerge and what causes are involved. More important, studying history encourages habits of mind that are vital for responsible public behavior, whether as a national or community leader, an informed voter, a petitioner, or a simple observer.

History Is Useful in the World of Work

History is useful for work. Its study helps create good businesspeople, professionals, and political leaders. The number of explicit professional jobs for historians is considerable, but most people who study history do not become professional historians. Professional historians teach at various levels, work in museums and media centers, do historical research for businesses or public agencies, or participate in the growing number of historical consultancies. These categories are important—indeed vital—to keep the basic enterprise of history going, but most people who study history use their training for broader professional purposes. Students of history find their experience directly relevant to jobs in a variety of careers as well as to further study in fields like law and public administration. Employers often deliberately seek students with the kinds of capacities historical study promotes. The reasons are not hard to identify: students of history acquire, by studying different phases of the past and different societies in the past, a broad perspective that gives them the range and flexibility required in many work situations. They develop research skills, the ability to find and evaluate sources of information, and the means to identify and evaluate diverse interpretations. Work in history also improves basic writing and speaking skills and is directly relevant to many of the analytical requirements in the public and private sectors, where the capacity to identify, assess, and explain trends is essential. Historical study is unquestionably an asset for a variety of work and professional situations, even though it does not, for most students, lead as directly to a particular job slot, as do some technical fields. But history particularly prepares students for the long haul in their careers, its qualities helping adaptation and advancement beyond entry-level employment. There is no denying that in our society many people who are drawn to historical study worry about relevance. In our changing economy, there is concern about job futures in most fields. Historical training is not, however, an indulgence; it applies directly to many careers and can clearly help us in our working lives.

The Ability to Assess Evidence

The study of history builds experience in dealing with and assessing various kinds of evidence—the sorts of evidence historians use in shaping the most accurate pictures of the past that they can. Learning how to interpret the statements of past political leaders—one kind of evidence—helps form the capacity to distinguish between the objective and the self-serving among statements made by present-day political leaders. Learning how to combine different kinds of evidence—public statements, private records, numerical data, visual materials—develops the ability to make coherent arguments based on a variety of data. This skill can also be applied to information encountered in everyday life.

The Ability to Assess Conflicting Interpretations.

Learning history means gaining some skill in sorting through diverse, often conflicting interpretations. Understanding how societies work—the central goal of historical study—is inherently imprecise, and the same certainly holds true for understanding what is going on in the present day. Learning how to identify and evaluate conflicting interpretations is an essential citizenship skill for which history, as an often-contested laboratory of human experience, provides training. This is one area in which the full benefits of historical study sometimes clash with the narrower uses of the past to construct identity. Experience in examining past situations provides a constructively critical sense that can be applied to partisan claims about the glories of national or group identity. The study of history in no sense undermines loyalty or commitment, but it does teach the need for assessing arguments, and it provides opportunities to engage in debate and achieve perspective.

Experience in Assessing Past Examples of Change.

Experience in assessing past examples of change is vital to understanding change in society today—it's an essential skill in what we are regularly told is our "ever-changing world." Analysis of change means developing some capacity for determining the magnitude and significance of change, for some changes are more fundamental than others. Comparing particular changes to relevant examples from the past helps students of history develop this capacity. The ability to identify the continuities that always

accompany even the most dramatic changes also comes from studying history, as does the skill to determine probable causes of change. Learning history helps one figure out, for example, if one main factor—such as a technological innovation or some deliberate new policy—accounts for a change or whether, as is more commonly the case, a number of factors combine to generate the actual change that occurs. Historical study, in sum, is crucial to the promotion of that elusive creature, the well-informed citizen. It provides basic factual information about the background of our political institutions and about the values and problems that affect our social well-being. It also contributes to our capacity to use evidence, assess interpretations, and analyze change and continuities. No one can ever quite deal with the present as the historian deals with the past—we lack the perspective for this feat; but we can move in this direction by applying historical habits of mind, and we will function as better citizens in the process.

Thus, the answer to the question *why study history?* is because we virtually must, to gain access to the laboratory of human experience. When we study it reasonably well, and so acquire some usable habits of mind, as well as some basic data about the forces that affect our own lives, we emerge with relevant skills and an enhanced capacity for informed citizenship, critical thinking, and simple awareness. The uses of history are varied. Studying history can help us develop some literally "salable" skills, but its study must not be pinned down to the narrowest utilitarianism. Some history—that confined to personal recollections about changes and continuities in the immediate environment—is essential to function beyond childhood. Some history depends on personal taste, where one finds beauty, the joy of discovery, or intellectual challenge. Between the inescapable minimum and the pleasure of deep commitment comes the history that, through cumulative skill in interpreting the unfolding human record, provides a real grasp of how the world works.

Conclusion

In conclusion we may quote B. Sheikh Ali who writes "Moreover history is reflective thought because of the nature of historical material. History describes the changing patterns of human activity in several walks of life and it is not like science dealing with dead matter which physics, chemistry, geology and others would study. Historical events are unique and unclassifiable, unlike natural sciences like zoology and botany which classifies each species into group and categories historical events are not subject to direct observations unlike all other branches of sciences where direct observation, experimentation, verification and generalizations are possible.

Objective

This chapter deals with the scientific aspect of history. Here a discussion on real status of history as a natural science and relationship of history with moral science has been attempted. After reading this chapter, you will be able to;

- *trace the development of debate on the concept of scientific history;*
- *describe the hypotheses supporting history as a natural science;*
- *discuss the differences and similarities between behavior of history and natural sciences;*
- *trace the role of moral judgment in historical study and research.*

Introduction

Aristotle says History, is an account of what individual human beings have done and suffered. In a still wider sense, history is what historians do. Is history then a natural science like physics or biology or chemistry? And if not, should it seek to be one? And if it fails to be one, what prevents it? Is this due to human error or impotence, or to the nature of the subject, or does the very problem rest on a confusion between the concept of history and that of natural science? These have been questions that have occupied the minds of historians since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Again if history is in what extent related to morality. All these question will be answered in this chapter.

The Concept of Scientific History

In nineteenth century certain serious problem relating to the study of History have emerged. Scholars hold different opinion about the study of history and they express themselves in their own fashion whether history is science or an art. Some of the historian vehemently describe history as a science, while other do not agree to this point of view and condemned their view with equal vehemence. Many scholars opine that History should take its place as one of Science, as the purpose of both history and science is one and the same. Both lay stress on the pursuit of truth. As the essence of science was the search, 'unhasting, unresting an undeviating for objective truth, in the same way record were to be searched, authorities to be appraised, testimonies to be weighed in history.' Hence in the beginning of the twentieth century some definite ideas were formed to put history into the field of science.

The Debate

Ever since this doctrine of what was and what was not a science was articulated, some have tried to show that history could be made respectable by being assimilated to one of the natural sciences, others declared that history was indeed a science, but a science in some different sense. Still there were those who defiantly declared that history was indeed subjective, impressionistic, incapable of being made rigorous, a branch of literature, or an embodiment of a personal vision and opined history laid no claim to universal and eternal objectivity and preferred to be judged as an interpretation of the past in terms of the demands of the present, or a philosophy of life, not as a science. Still others have tried to draw distinctions between sociology, which was a true science, and history, which was an art or something neither a science nor an art, but a discipline with its own structure and purposes, misunderstood by those who tried to draw false analogies between it and other intellectual activities.

Nevertheless it remains surprising that philosophers pay more attention to the logic of such natural sciences as mathematics and physics, which comparatively few of them know well at first hand, and neglect that of history and the other humane studies, with which in the course of their normal education they tend to be more familiar.

J.B. Bury is the high priest of this concept that history is a science. In his inaugural address at Cambridge university in 1903 he said. ' if year by year history is to become more and more powerful for stripping the bandages of error from the eye of men, for shaping public opinion and

advancing the causes of intellectual and political liberty, she will best prepare for disciples for the performance of the task. Not by considering the immediate utility of next week or next year or next century, not by accommodating her ideas or limiting her range but by remembering always that though she may supply material for literary work of philosophical speculation, she is simply a science, no less than and no more.'

Throughout the nineteenth century this trend of thought that history is science continue. The great German historian Leopold Von Ranke, the father of modern historical writing was also of opinion that history is not just the past or instruct the present for the benefit of the future. Its business is only to show that actually happened.

Prof. Seeley has also emphatically supported the theory that history is science in the following words, "History was a science and had nothing to do with literature" in the same way this view was upheld in France by Auguste Comte. He names history to be positive philosophy. Comte was basically a mathematician so he prove his view point in these words, "Just as a curve can be traced where its algebraical formula is determined. The course of mankind can be traced where you have found the law by which it is directed."

G.M.Trevelyan opposed the view of Burry and Siley and remarks that History was not only a science but also an Art. He mention, "the discovery of historical facts should be scientific in methods. But that, the exposition of them for the reader partook of the nature of Art. The arts of written words commonly called literature"

Geoffrey Barraclough also say "to reduce history to a natural science, is deliberately to leave out of account what we know to be true, to suppress great position of our most familiar introspective knowledge of altar of false analogy with the sciences."

A.L.Rose also support the view that history is an art and writes that "however much historical writings may be supplemented by scientific methods and acquisition there will always remains history as an Art"

Hypothesis supporting history as a Science

Whatever it may, it is not difficult to see why there has been a strong desire to regard history as a natural science. History purports to deal with facts. The most successful method of identifying, discovering and inferring facts is that of the natural sciences. This is the only region of human experience, at any rate in modern times, in which progress has indubitably been made. It is natural to wish to apply method successfully and authoritative in one sphere to another, where there is far less agreement among specialists. The whole trend of modern empiricism has tended towards such a view. History is an account of what men have done and of what has happened to them. Man is largely, an object in space and time, subject to natural laws: his bodily wants can be studied empirically as those of other animals. Basic human needs for, say, food or shelter or procreation, and his other biological or physiological requirements, do not seem to have altered greatly through the millennia, and the laws of the interplay of these needs with one another and with the human environment can all in principle be studied by the methods of the biological and, perhaps, psychological sciences. If only we could find a series of natural laws connecting at one end the biological and physiological states and processes of human beings with, at the other, the equally observable patterns of their conduct- their social activities in the wider sense - and so establish a coherent system of regularities, deducible from a comparatively small number of general laws, we should have in our hands a science of human behaviour. Then we could perhaps afford to ignore, or at least treat as secondary, such intermediate phenomena as feelings, thoughts, volitions, of which men's lives seem to themselves to be largely composed, but which do not lend themselves easily to exact measurement. If these data could be regarded as byproducts of other, scientifically observable and measurable, processes, then we could predict the publicly observable behaviour of men without taking the vaguer and more elusive data of introspection much into account. This would constitute

the natural sciences of psychology and sociology, predicted by the materialists of the French Enlightenment, modern behaviourist, positivist and 'physicalist' since their day.

If science is supposed to be knowledge based on careful examination of available sources, then history can be accepted as a science because the main function of the historian is that of investigation, to find out what had happened at a given time and place. Many historical facts which are accepted by the people cannot be altered without some more credible documents which might disapprove the previous theory.

Historian generally assumed certain economic, social, physical law in order to draw a conclusion in a particular event. In the same way scientist also assumed law and order to reach the conclusion. But the difference between the two is the evidence of a scientist can be verified but the law assumed by a historian either definitely formulated nor they are précised. Hence in spite of the facts that both are science, there exist some difference between the two.

Scholar like Vico, Comte, Spengler, who supported the view that history is a science, held that certain developmental laws of history exist and the civilization must pass through these stage. But some of the historians have raised a number of objection to these laws and point out that no two nation are known to have gone through exactly the same career. The historian also different from a natural scientist in so far as he focused attention on description rather than a systematic deduction from assumed principle. A prominent scholar remarks, "the historian may generalize to determine what happened, why it happened and when it happened. It is not his primary concern to established law." To prove that history is a science following arguments were advanced by the historian and scholars.

History deals with Unique and Particular

Science deal with general and universal events, but history describe unique and particular. Actually there is tendency among the historians that they draw a picture of generalization from similar events and test their evidence accordingly. Carr remarks, "the readers, as well as the writer of history is chronic generaliser, applying the observation of historians to other historical context, with which he is familiar of perhaps to his own time. It is nonsense to say that generalization is foreign to history, history thrives on generalization." Elton a prominent scholars is also of the opinion what distinguishes the historian from the collector of historical facts is generalization.

History Teach Lesson

It also not true that history does not teach any lesson. Actually on the account of result of generalisation, we try to apply the lesson learned from the set of events to another set of events. The principle of the French Revolution taught great lesson to the revolutionaries of Russia. In the same manner the delegates of the Paris peace conference of 1919 were also greatly influence by the congress of Vienna of 1815. Thus it is completely wrong that history teach no lesson 1.2.4.3.**History does predict**

It is also wrong allegation that history does not predict. B. Sheikh Ali mention, "the aim of science is to predict the future and history will not failed to this respect. It ought to be possible for historian to predict what human beings will do in given circumstances." According to the prominent historian Buckle "historian have failed to do so because they have concentrate so long on individual rather on masses, on isolated incidents rather on an average and on unique event rather than on general movements. B. Sheikh also write "to explain the character of mass of men their geographical position, their climate, their general physical environment, their intellectual background, and the pressing need either for a political or social or economic change should be take into account. As these facts come within the compass of empirical consciousness, history cannot be excluded from science." A prominent scholars also remarked it is true that specific events cannot be predicted in history and element of accident can enter it to it. But it cannot be denied that from its specific knowledge of the course of revolution, a historian can predict on the basis of prevailing conditions, that a revolution is likely to at an early date." Actually great man are mere accident and exception rather than the

general. Had there be no Newton, some other person would have invented the law of gravitation, and in absence of Napoleon some other French man would have raised sword against the English. Such prediction are possible in history on the basis of similar event. E.H Carr also remarked "this does not mean that inference drawn from history about the future are worthless, or that they do not possess a conditional validity which serve both as a guide to action and a key to our understanding of how things happen..the human beings is on any view the most complex natural entity known to us and the study of his behavior may were involve difficulties different in kind from those confronting the physical scientist.

Although the ultimate objective in scientific exploration is the formulation of a scientific law, but there are no general laws in history scientific knowledge provides the power of prediction; the historian cannot predict. The latter point is in some ways a bit of a red herring: the historian's concern, by definition, is with the past; he may well, as a result of his expertise, make some intelligent predictions about the present and future, but that is not strictly his business. E.H. Carr has given an example of the kind of prediction the historian might indulge in:

"People do not expect the historian to predict that revolution will break out in Ruritania next month. The kind of conclusion which they will seek to draw, partly from specific knowledge of Ruritanian affairs and partly from a study of history, is that conditions in Ruritania are such that a revolution is likely to occur in the near future if somebody touches it off, or unless somebody on the government side does something to stop it; and this conclusion might be accompanied by estimates, based partly in the analogy of other revolutions, of the attitude which different sectors of the population may be expect to adopt. The prediction, if such it can be called, can be realised only through the occurrence of unique events, which cannot themselves be predicted; but this does not mean that inferences drawn from history about the future are worthless, or that they do not possess a conditional validity which serves both as a guide to action and a key to our understanding of how things happen."

'Inexorable logic of the (historical) facts

The confidence that history can, at least in principle, be transformed into a natural science is based on the concept of the 'inexorable logic of the (historical) facts' or the 'wheels of history', which it is idle to try to stay. We speak of the futility of defying the 'forces of history', or the absurdity of efforts to 'put the clock back' or to 'restore the past'. We speak of the youth, the maturity, the decay of peoples or cultures, of the ebb and flow of social movements, of the rise and fall of nations. Such language serves to convey the idea of an inexorably fixed time order - the 'river of time' on which we float, and which we must willy-nilly accept; a moving stair which we have not created, but on which we are borne, obeying, as it were, some natural law governing the order and shape of events - in this case, events consisting of, or at any rate affecting, human lives, activities, and experiences. Misleading though such uses of words can be, they are pointers to categories and concepts in terms of which we conceive the 'stream of history, namely, as something possessing a certain objective pattern that we ignore at our peril. It is a short step from this to conclude that whatever has a pattern exhibits regularities capable of being expressed in laws; and the systematic interconnection of laws is the content of a natural science.

Patterns of growth, or of the march of events

The second source of belief which can transformed history as a natural science is that is the patterns of growth, or of the march of events. This can plausibly be represented as a succession of causes and effects, capable of being systematized by natural science. But sometimes we speak as if something more fundamental than empirical connections give their unity to the aspects, or the successive phases, of the existence of the human race on earth. It seems to me that we call them grotesque because they conflict, not just with this or that fact or generalisation which we accept, but with presuppositions which are entailed by our whole thinking about the world- the basic categories that govern such central concepts of our thought as man, society, history, development, growth, barbarism, maturity, civilisation, and the like. These presuppositions may turn out to be false or misleading, but they are not

refuted by experiment or empirical observation. They are destroyed or transformed by those changes in the total outlook of a man or a milieu or a culture which it is the hardest test of the history of ideas to be able to explain.

Sometimes it is a vertical order-succession in time-which makes us realise that the events or institutions of, say, the fourteenth century, because they were what they were, of necessity (however we analyse this sort of necessity), and not just as a matter of fact- contingently- occurred earlier than those of the sixteenth, which were 'shaped', that is in some sense determined (some would say caused), by them; so that anyone who tries to date the works of Shakespeare before those of Dante, or to omit the fifteenth century altogether, fitting the end of the fourteenth into the beginning of the sixteenth century without a break, can be convicted of suffering from a defect different in kind, not degree, from ignorance or lack of scientific method. At other times we conceive of the order as 'horizontal'; that is, it underlies the perception of the interconnections between different aspects of the same stage of culture- the kinds of assumptions and categories that the anti-mechanistic German philosophers of culture, Herder and his disciples, brought to light. It is this kind of the historical sense that is said to enable us to perceive that a certain type of legal structure is 'intimately connected' with, or is part of the same complex as, an economic activity, a moral outlook, a style of writing or of dancing or of worship; it is by means of this gift that we recognise various manifestations of the human spirit as 'belonging to' this or that culture or nation or historical period, although these manifestations may be as different from one another as the way in which men form letters on paper from their system of land tenure. Without this faculty we should attach no sense to such social-historical notions as 'the typical', or 'the normal', or 'the discordant', or 'the anachronistic', and consequently we should be unable to conceive the history of an institution as an intelligible pattern, or to attribute a work of art to its time and civilisation and milieu, or indeed to understand or explain how one phase of a civilisation 'generates' or 'determines' another. This sense of what remains identical or unitary in differences and in change (of which idealist philosophers have made altogether too much) is also a dominant factor in giving us our sense of unalterable trends, of the 'one-directional' flow of history. From this it is easy to pass to the far more questionable belief that whatever is unalterable is so only because it obeys laws, and that whatever obeys laws can always be systematized into a science.

Search for truth

The aim of both history and science is the establishment of truth. Science is systematized knowledge for unfolding the facts underlying phenomena whereas history aims at revealing the reality of the past, reconstructing the past just as it had really happened and holding the mirror up to the past so that its true picture is reflected.

The above few are among the many factors that have made men crave for a natural science of history. All seemed ready, particularly in the nineteenth century, for the formulation of this new, powerful, and illuminating discipline, which would do away with the chaotic accumulation of facts, conjectures, and rules of thumb.

Opinion against history as a natural science

The scientific character of history is also challenged on the ground that history is subjective. The subject matter of history is the study of human being and his action. When a historian make his observation, his own point of view also effects his findings. A scholar remarks, " it cannot be denied that the involvement of the historian in the object of his study is of a different kind than that of a physical scientists and this is so because of the complex relations which exist between the observer and the observed, which keeps on undergoing constant change. The following objection are raised against history to be natural science: History deals only with the ununique, History teaches no lesson, History does not predicts, History subjective because man observe himself, Religion and military are deeply rooted in history.

The study of history cannot be treated as science because religion and morality are given prominence

in its study. Many scholars have sought the help of religion in order to prove their view point on certain things which could have been proved otherwise. Historians who approach history in a scientific manner must endeavour to solve the problems without having recourse to some super historical force. Similarly the historians also possess moral judgments on the individual participating in the historical events which clearly smack of its unscientific character.

Carr, a great supporter of the theory that history is a science remarks, "The scientists, social scientists and historians are all engaged in different branches of the same study; the study of an environment. The object of the study is the same; to increase man's understanding of and mastery over his environment...historian in order to understand the past is simultaneously compelled like the scientists, to simplify the multiplicity of the answer, to subordinate one answer to another and to introduce some order and unity into the chaos of happenings and the chaos of specific cause."

Collingwood also writes that history "is a science of special kind. It is a science whose business is to study events and accessible to our observations, and to study these events inferentially arguing to them from something else which is accessible to our observation and which the historian calls 'evidence' for the events in which he is interested.

Differences and similarities Between History and Natural Sciences

In Francis Bacon's three simple points, the differences stand out very starkly. Historians seek for information of all kinds in the sources, and they record what they have found: if in spirit that is akin to making observations and recording the facts, it is very far from the same in practice. Historians simply do not 'perform many experiments and tabulate the results', nor do they extract rules and laws by induction, though the accounts and interpretations they give certainly are 'by induction', that is to say, from the evidence, empirically. Ernest Nagel's description of scientific method offers stronger analogies with what historians do, but then also points up the differences. On the whole, historical knowledge advances as historians bring in new methods, new approaches, and new sources. The more historians do this the more they, too, 'feel that their knowledge is warranted, that its validity is assured'. Certainly reasoning comes prominently into the historian's activities, but the checking and counter-checking is very definitely not 'by experiment'. Historians do not go in for the sort of statement 'that a particular phenomenon always occurs if certain conditions be present'; there are absolutely no equivalents in history to Boyle's Law or Bode's Law. Scientific laws can often be expressed in the form of mathematical formulae; that is simply not true in history. There are no equivalents in history of the theory of equations, of functions, of numbers, of probabilities, and there are no statements of 'what are held to be the general laws, principles or causes of something known or observed'. Thus, historians operate in the same spirit as natural scientists, always working from the evidence, always basing their generalisations, interpretations, or theses on the evidence. It is noteworthy that the distinguished biologist Lewis Wolpert has said that he sees his activities as resembling those of historians.

Events in the past carry intense emotional charges and inevitably involve value judgments of some sort: describing certain events as 'massacres', for instance, or analysing the motives of a particular politician. Historians should still approach these matters in the spirit of scientific objectivity, but clearly the scope for value judgments, for subjectivity, is much greater in history than in the natural sciences. This point is inexorably entailed in the first of the fundamental differences between history and the sciences, which are as follow:

- There is a fundamental difference in the subject of study: the natural sciences are concerned with the phenomena of the natural world and the physical universe, while history is concerned with human beings and human societies in the past. There is a difference in the phenomena studied, and these phenomena are very different in character.
- Historians do not carry out controlled experiments of the sort typically conducted in a science laboratory.
- While historians may very properly develop theories and theses, they are not concerned with

developing laws and theories in the way that scientists are.

- While scientific laws and theory have powers of prediction, history (though it should equip us to cope more intelligently with the world in which we live) does not have such powers.
- While the relations and interactions studied by scientists are almost always best expressed mathematically, this is not generally so of those studied by historians.
- The contributions to knowledge produced by historians come in the form of extended pieces of prose (articles or books), while major scientific discoveries are often best reported in very terse articles, sometimes in a page or two of mathematical equations.

The physical scientist cannot call for a repeat performance of the past. The scientist, it may be argued further, can preserve an objectivity towards the phenomena he is studying, whereas the historian can never be completely objective. On the whole this distinction must be allowed to stand, though again as one of degree rather than as an absolute. After all, as has often been pointed out, the man who assembles the apparatus for a particular experiment effectively becomes a part of the experiment: even in physical science the human, subjective element can never be entirely excluded.

This is the one about science having use, while history, of course, is 'useless.' 'What is meant, of course is immediate tangible use. The natural scientist working as a scientist would however deny that his researches are directed towards such utilitarian products. The scientist seeks knowledge of the phenomena of the physical universe as the historian seeks knowledge of the human past. If the scientist is anything more than crusty misanthropist he will believe that somewhere sometime his discoveries in 'pure' science will have practical application; that belief is not fundamentally different from that of historians.

All this would suggest that while there is no fundamental distinction between the main aims and methods of the historian and of the physical scientist, nonetheless there are good reasons for the common-sense assumption the differences do exist. The final point which highlights this sense of difference springs from the manner in which, in one form or another, history becomes implicated in the making of value judgments. Most historians would accept Professor Knowlson's neat statement: 'The historian is not judge, still less a hanging judge.' But they also rejoice at the delicate comeuppance which the late Professor Alfred Cobban administered to Professor Michael Oakeshott's pleas for complete moral neutrality:

"It is admittedly difficult," says Professor Oakeshott, "to avoid 'the description of conduct in, generally speaking, moral terms.' This I take to mean that, for example, we cannot help describing the September massacres as massacres. The important thing is to avoid any suggestion that massacres are a bad thing, because this would be a moral judgment and therefore non-historical."

The historian cannot help but moral judgments, if only by implication or by virtue of his selection of the facts: these judgments are of a type not encountered in the natural sciences.

Finally, to recall a point already made if the historian's activities truly are necessary to society, he must communicate the fruits of his labours to that society. There falls upon the historian a duty to write serviceable prose which does not fall on the scientist, whose labours may best be summed up in a few pages of equations.

The most apposite words of all are those of Professor E.E. Evans-Pritchard, the anthropologist: 'When will people get it into their heads that the conscientious historian is no less systematic, exacting and critical in his research than a chemist or biologist, that it is not in method that social science differs from physical science but in the nature of the phenomena they study.' Here surely is the crucial point: the historian is concerned with a different kind of material, human experience in the past, from that with which the natural scientist is concerned.

Historians and scientists are both affected by career pressures and the normal human fallibilities and vanities. J. D. Watson's exuberant, unbuttoned account of the hunt for DNA in *The Double Helix* (1968) has been a classic for years. Steven Rose's wickedly witty memoir of a brain biologist is in the

process of becoming one. To keep the grants rolling in, as Rose explains, scientists have to keep churning out the research papers, sometimes contrived, often trivial, produced at break-neck speed in order to achieve publication ahead of the opposition, bland, and sometimes obsequious, in order to avoid offence to potential referees. Sudden revelations, sudden solutions to problems which have been producing deadlock for days or weeks, come mysteriously to scientists, as they also come to historians. Scientists are at great pains to point out that scientific discoveries do not conform to 'common sense'. The same is actually true of history. While the theories of the postmodernists deny common sense, history is based on common sense. No, history is based on the primary sources, and the primary sources left by past societies can reveal beliefs and actions which totally defy what would today be considered 'common sense'. Common sense might tell us that when misery, and oppression, and injustice are heaped on subordinate peoples. they will rise up in revolt; but this is by no means necessarily the case. Human beings in the past have not always, or even usually, behaved completely rationally so common sense is a poor guide to how, and why, people behaved in the past.

L. B. Namier who once remarked about historical sense that there was no a priori short-cut to knowledge of the past; what actually happened can only be established by scrupulous empirical investigation, by research in its normal sense. What is meant by historical sense is the knowledge not of what happened, but of what did not happen. When a historian, in attempting to decide what occurred and why, rejects all the infinity of logically open possibilities, the vast majority of which are obviously absurd, and, like a detective, investigates only those possibilities which have at least some initial plausibility, it is this sense of what is plausible- what men, being men, could have done or been- that constitutes the sense of coherence with the patterns of life. Such words as plausibility, likelihood, sense of reality, historical sense, denote typical qualitative categories which distinguish historical studies as opposed to the natural sciences that seek to operate on a quantitative basis. This distinction, which originated in Vico and Herder, and was developed by Hegel and Marx, Dilthey and Weber, is of fundamental importance.

Winding up

The great value of the 'Is history a science?' debate is the manner in which it helps clarify the nature of history and to delimit what history can, and cannot do. To the ordinary man, the most striking difference between history and natural science is the degree to which proof can be established of the various contentions made by the scientist and the historian respectively. There is little or no similarity between the scientist's methods and the historian's 'intuition,' between the scientist's empirical expertise and the historian's creative flights. Yet neither 'intuition' nor 'creation' need represent a fundamental divide between history and science. The gifted scientist will usually develop a 'feel' for his subject which may not be greatly different from the intuition of which some historians boast. The scientist of course will attempt empirically to demonstrate the validity of any hunch he may have; his 'feel' will take him in the direction of trying one kind of experiment rather than another, not towards stating untested assumptions. But again this is not terribly different from the way the professional historian sets to work; intuition may suggest certain causal connections but the historian will do his best from the material at his disposal to establish at least the probability of such a casual relationship; better still he may be stimulated to seek for entirely new source materials. On the matter of 'creativity,' it is surely not to be contested that Einstein's theory of relatively is one of the great monuments to human creative thinking. Of course most practising scientists are engaged on much more basic tasks; but then a large number of historians are engaged on pretty mundane work as well.

The historian can only show from his sources that it was likely or at most, probable, that something happened in the way he says it did. But natural science today also deals in probabilities rather than in the certainties of nineteenth century days. Many of those who so vehemently deny that history can have any resemblance to a natural science reveal appalling ignorance of the direction natural sciences are currently taking. With the 'Relatively Revolution,' the Newtonian absolutes were dethroned. The

discovery of 'quanta' contradicted the conception of the continuity of the infinitesimal calculus. The theory of mutations pointed to change coming through leaps, not by gradual process. Today, scientists can, from time to time, be heard calling for a revision of scientific laws. So when the historian fails to establish conclusive proofs for his version of past events he may not necessarily be exposing himself as thoroughly unscientific.

History and Morality

There is a curiosity about the historians' craft. Even if someone doesn't know much about history and their interest is a simple one, they are usually curious about it. History is knowing about experiences that are beyond your own experience-either you were not there or, more likely, you were not alive. Most are eager to find out some root of knowledge about the past and we are happy to give it.

That connection leads to serious questions about how we relay the facts about the past. Outside of the lengthy space of articles and books, we are forced to condense our thoughts and sometimes deal with complicated issues in simple ways. The most problematic are the historical events that reflect on the terrible nature of humankind-the wars, atrocities, the cruelty of one human being towards another. How do historians deal with morality, let alone convey it to others? Is it our place to judge the past?

Marc Bloch, famous French historians, was in a unique place to answer that question. He was a French academic who worked with the resistance during the Second World War and was tragically shot by the Gestapo during the final weeks of Nazi occupation in his native France. Just before Bloch was taken from his apartment and murdered, he had written a chapter that later appeared in his book, *The Historian's Craft*. The chapter was tentatively entitled "Judgment or Understanding." In it, he perceptively asked: is it the historian's job to judge or to understand on the basis of evidence collected from the period? He contrasted what we do as historians with what lawyers do with their evidence. He concluded that lawyers operated differently because they were supposed to pass judgment on people and their actions, whereas the historian needed to be dissociated from moral dilemma in order to make better sense of the issues that faced him/her. Part of the historian's job, therefore, was to avoid moral judgment.

There is still much debate among historians over the question of expressing moral positions in our writing. Bloch is but one opinion against historians as moral arbiters, while there are many who believe it is inescapable. Isaiah Berlin wrote in *Historical Inevitability* that "our historical language-the words and thoughts with which we attempt to reflect about or describe past events and persons is rife with moral presumptions and judgments, as well it should be." Historians are unavoidably tangled in moral dilemmas. The construction of a historical narrative must be defined by some moral framework. How else can our work evoke emotion? If we are charged with communicating some sliver of human history, it is near impossible to separate it from the emotion and the passion of lived experience. In fact, forging a connection between the individual and the past is good writing, so even as we strive to maintain objectivity in our arguments, it is necessarily tempered by the moral nature of emotive narratives. Even if it is our responsibility to avoid moral judgments of the past, we cannot escape the moral nature of our work.

George Cotkin, in his contribution to the debate about history and morality, concluded that "historians can be moral agents. This occurs variously: by the way they frame questions, by the narratives they develop, by the questions they ask, and by their passion. By their complicating of issues and setting those issues within a framework of philosophical erudition tied to historical analysis, they can help the moral conversation to inch forward." Bloch's imperative that we are to understand rather than judge the past does not remove us from morality altogether. Instead, as Cotkin notes, we can be moral agents. Historians can preserve the objectivity of their arguments even as they participate in "moral conversations." Understanding why terrible things have happened or why individuals have committed atrocious acts is an integral part of communicating our shared history. While it is hoped that we as a people can learn from these mistakes, it is not the historians' job to make sure that occurs. If we can at

least better understand them, then it is up to the individual to deal with the moral lessons of past on their own terms.

The results of morality are studied in politics and the same is the subject matter of ethics. As history is supposed to be a past politics, the subject of history is also related with morality. In the absence of morality one cannot distinguish the good and bad aspects of history with similar attitude. No historian is capable to produce correct history in the absence of morality. Rules of morality, are basically connected with ethics but their influence is not alike in all the ages.

The principles laid down in history can only make a man an ideal one and the study of the activities of man is the subject matter of history, therefore history and ethics are intimately related to each other. Toynbee opined that facts should be invented on the basis of morality and reality.

Lord Acton, for instance, was convinced that a historian must "suffer no man and no cause to escape the undying penalty which history has the power to inflict on wrong." All too often, Acton added, historians conceal or justify past evils: "The strong man with the dagger is followed by the weak man with the sponge." In his presidential address of 1903, somewhat misleadingly entitled "Ethical Values in History," Henry Charles Lea argued that historians should seek to repress whatever "righteous indignation" might be aroused by their studies. The past should not be used as "a Sunday-school tale for children of larger growth." Ethical values should not be allowed to undermine the scientific search for truth.

For some of us at least, our search for truth ought to be quite consciously suffused by a commitment to some deeply held humane values. The effort to keep these two goals in balance may be precarious; but if we can manage it, perhaps we will be on the way to re-establishing the role of history as one, and not the least, of what we might fairly call the moral arts.

Our histories do not teach us what moral judgments to make, but they do pose, illustrate, and illuminate moral questions by making us see things as they are. By telling stories about the moral choices men and women must confront and by showing the implications of these choices, history gives us problems to think about. Most morally instructive stories are not about the great catastrophes that are usually mentioned in discussions of history's ethical purposes. After all, one does not need a great deal of historical knowledge in order to recognize that slavery and the Holocaust were moral abominations. Perhaps the most valuable moral lessons can be found in situations where the moral calculus is harder to apply, the difference between right and wrong less obvious, the final balance more elusive. As a moral science, history works best when it stays closest to the contours of ordinary life, where people must face the painful choice between compliance or resistance, greater or lesser evils, inflicting or suffering harm. Among history's moral lessons should be a certain modesty born from the knowledge of how complex "things as they are" often turn out to be.

History takes us to the intersection of principles and practice, the place where ethical ideals uneasily coexist with the necessity of choice. Like historical explanations in general, history's moral lessons are deeply embedded in life's messy specificity. Adding or subtracting a significant detail or shifting the narrative's emphasis can often change the moral analysis in powerful and sometimes unpredictable ways. Only by attempting to get the story as straight as we can, bringing to bear everything we believe to be significant, trying to weigh as many factors as possible, and acknowledging various points of view, can we grapple with what the people we study did and what they might or should have done. Moral principles may be unchanging, but their application varies enormously from one situation to another.

As a moral science, history may be about someone else's past but its purpose is rooted in our present. That is why Carl Becker's comment, seems like an appropriate way to conclude: Knowledge of history cannot be ... practically applied, and is therefore worthless except to those who have made it, in greater or less degree, a personal possession. The value of history is, indeed, not scientific but moral: by liberalizing the mind, by deepening the sympathies, by fortifying the will, it enables us to control

not society, but ourselves—a much more important thing.

History and Archaeology

Archaeology serves to complement history and to support or falsify the historical record. This assumption is an expression of the commonly held priority that is given to literary texts. Literary evidence often sets the agenda for the research of non-literary material culture. The corollary to this assumption is that non-literary material culture is mute, cannot speak, without an appropriate context supplied by literary evidence. Unfortunately, this assumption expresses a naïveté about the role of material culture (symbolic expressions) for constructing meaning about the past.

Indeed, it is because of the inherent deficiencies of historical texts for understanding the society, economy, and religion of an ancient people that archaeology provides such a valuable resource. But the material remains of archaeology are not subordinate to the textual record for historical study. Like texts themselves, material remains are symbolic expressions encoding messages about the past. They similarly require a critical interpretation before they can be used in understanding the past. Material remains are thus not mute; rather, the historian must learn to “hear” what they “speak” about the past in dialogue with the questions posed to them. For example, faunal remains “tell” about the economy of a people, about their vocations, about their diet; architectural structures “give witness” to the social and gender stratification of society and to the kinship structures and relations within a village; cultic artifacts “speak” about the theology and religious practices of an individual, a family, or a community. Archaeology provides a different kind of evidence than literary texts. In contrast to the ancient texts that have undergone several generations of revision and editing, archaeological evidence is analogous to primary sources. It is frozen in time, attesting to the ancient world first-hand. Archaeological evidence has not been subject to the secondary reformulation that is characteristic of the literary process. Archaeological remains are random and unintentional. They constitute, therefore, an external witness to the past. In this way, archaeological evidence is more “objective.”

Because archaeology provides a different kind of evidence than from texts, archaeology cannot be expected to make definitive contributions to several basic historical problems. For example, archaeology cannot contribute to the problems of chronology beyond the broad limits determined by ceramic or radiocarbon dating. Archaeology addresses chronology through typologies of material remains that lack the precision of the chronological framework established by texts. The basis of typology is that human culture changes gradually and within limits. When a broad range of features and artifacts from stratified archaeological contexts are compared, a typological sequence can be established into which new features and artifacts can be placed. This typological sequence then becomes a means for dating the material uncovered in a new excavation. The major artifact used in typological dating is pottery. Moreover, whole pottery vessels were easily broken, leading to the production of more pottery and to rapid changes in the pottery repertoire. As a result, a large database of pottery has enabled archaeologists to establish a typological sequence by which they are able to date layers of human occupation in an excavation. Although this pottery typology is tied to an absolute chronology by occasional dated inscriptions that are found in sealed archaeological contexts, the changes within the pottery sequence provide a chronological precision of no greater than a few decades.

Other historical issues to which archaeology cannot make a definitive contribution include the problem of ethnicity. Archaeology can provide much of the material content of ethnicity, but it cannot finally define the ethnic groups because such a definition also involves shared cultural values and self-perceptions. The interrelation of particular human events in a political history is also beyond the scope to which archaeology can contribute. For many of the problems of political history, archaeology can only remain silent. Finally, archaeology cannot demonstrate the meaning of literary texts. The meaning of the texts is not found in the degree to which the texts correspond to what really happened in the past. Rather, the meaning of the texts is found in the interaction between writers, symbolic encodings

in texts, and readers, and this meaning is beyond the scope of archaeological research.

The focus of archaeology is on the material world, and it is in this regard that archaeology can contribute to the historical study of the past. Archaeology provides the material context for understanding this history by presenting the material remains of a broad spectrum of Middle Eastern peoples and places. This material provides the general setting for the history of its peoples, and through cross-cultural comparison is able to shed light on a people's material culture. Regional surveys allow us to reconstruct settlement patterns and the demographics of particular regions. The faunal and floral remains gathered from excavations enable us to reconstruct the environmental setting and its changes over time.

Archaeology also provides the specific material context for many of the events narrated in literary texts, much of which the narratives themselves do not address. Finally, archaeological remains illuminate the daily life of the ancient peoples, which supplements the literary texts. Only from archaeology can we learn about the planning and defenses ancient towns and cities; the architecture of palaces, houses, temples, and public buildings; figurine, altars, and other cult objects; tombs and the different peoples' treatment of their dead; luxury items such as jewelry, carved ivories, metal and stone vessels, and imported items; and common tools and weapons. Archaeology enables us to reconstruct aspects of the society, economy, and religion of the ancient peoples that are neglected by the textual tradition. Furthermore, because archaeological evidence is random its preservation is by chance, unaffected by human selection-it provides an alternative perspective from which to view the literary narratives.

The relationship between the literary texts and archaeology can be clarified further by noting the role that each may play in history. Following Fernand Braudel and the Annales School, we can distinguish three levels or tiers of history. The deepest level of history can be referred to as "geographical time." It addresses the relationship of humans to their environment. This is history in which all change is slow and undergoes a constant repetition. At this level, we can discuss ecology and human subsistence. We might discuss long-range settlement patterns. This level of history presents the common fate of humans beyond the influence of conscious decision-making.

The second, intermediate level of history can be referred to as "social time." This level addresses the social relationships among human groups. This is the level of cultural changes, and thus is a history with slow but perceptible rhythms.

The final, surface level of history can be referred to as "individual time." This level addresses the rapidly changing history of human events. This is the level of political history; it is at this level that history becomes narrative. In terms of our evidence, the textual record is best suited for addressing historical questions at the surface level of individual time. Archaeology can also contribute to this level of history, but generally only in supplying the material context for the events.

History and Political Science

Prof. Seeley summed up the relationship between history and political science beautifully that, "History without political science has no fruit and political science without history has no root." A historian is not merely concerned with the tracing of the history of the political process by a narration of the episodes.

But he has to learn the nature of fundamental political principles and basic forms of political institution. In the view of this closeness between two subjects, the development of political institutions, rules, regulations, right and duties, law and mode of justice, executive, legislative and administrative functions, economic and financial implications, nature of bureaucracy, fundamental principles of state policy are all defined under the constitution history.

Diplomatic history is a specialized branch of political history which deals with the principles of international relations. Ambassadors are the links between nations and they were custodians and practitioners of diplomacy.

The issue like-balance of power, cold war, international peace, disarmament have assumed great importance in recent times. The military history is an important chapter in political history where in wars, battles, campaigns and conquests figures very prominently. It deals with the causes of a war, strategy and war tactics, war weapons etc.

History is very helpful to politics because the political aspects is a part of the whole range of activity recorded by historian and knowledge of history would enable the politicians to know the politics better and play their role effectively. Prof. Acton has correctly pointed out, "the science of politics is the one science that is deposited by the stream of history like grains of gold in the sand of a river."

The relationship between Political Science and History is very close and intimate. John Seeley expressed this relationship in the following couplet-"History without Political Science has no fruit, Political Science without History has no root." Seeley's emphasis seems to be rather exaggerated, yet no one can discount the dependence of the two disciplines on one another. The State and its political institutions grow instead of being made.

They are the product of history and in order to understand them fully one must necessarily know the process of their evolution: how they have become what they are, and to what extent they have responded to their original purposes. All our political institutions have a historical basis as they depict the wisdom of generations.

History furnishes sufficient material for comparison and induction, enabling us to build an ideal political structure of our aspirations. In the absence of historical data, the study of Political Science is sure to become entirely speculative or a priori. And a priori Political Science, as Laski observes, "Is bound to break down simply because we never start with the clean slate." The writings of historians, in brief, form a vast reservoir of material which a student of Political Science can analyse into meaningful patterns and guide him in understanding the present and outlining the future. Moreover, with its chronological treatment, history offers a sense of growth and development thereby providing a base or an insight into the social changes. Robson is of the opinion that some knowledge of History is clearly indispensable for Political Science and cites the explanation offered by Professor R. Solatu at the Cambridge Conference. Professor Solatu said, "that he had been baffled all through his teaching career, especially during the 20 years he had spent in the Middle East, about how to teach the history of political philosophy to students whose historical background is usually inadequate, and often limited to purely political theory since the French Revolution."

Where Political Science is not approached through History, he remarked, "The student may easily get a confused outline, in which most historical allusions are lost on him, supplemented by a slight acquaintance with a few classical texts of political philosophy, the background of which he scarcely understands." Moreover, knowledge of History is particularly necessary in the sphere of Comparative Government. History, in its turn, has much to borrow from Political Science. Our knowledge of history is meaningless, if the political bearings of events and movements are not adequately evaluated. The history of the nineteenth-century Europe, for example, is an incompletely narration of facts unless full significance of the movements, like nationalism, imperialism individualism, socialism, etc., are brought out.

Both Political Science and History are contributory and complementary. So intimate is the affinity between the two that Seeley maintained: "Politics is vulgar when not liberalised by History, and History fades into mere literature when it loses sight of its relation to Politics." Separate them, says Burgess, and the one becomes a cripple, if not a corpse, the other a will-o'-the-wisp.

History and Economics

History is also closely related to Economics. As the activities of a man in society are very closely related with the economic matters, the historian of any period must possess at least a rudimentary knowledge of the economics. In fact, the economic history of any period is an important branch of history and its understanding is absolutely essential for the proper understanding of history of any

period. There has been a new orientation in our historical outlook from the days of the materialistic interpretation of history by Marx and such class struggle, man's skill in earning, arts and crafts, trade, business and commerce, land revenue, taxes and a host of all other economic activities of the past figure very prominently in history.

No doubt, it is true that during the last few years economics has become very complex and difficult subject, mostly dependent on mathematics, and a modern historian cannot acquire basic working knowledge of economic theory without devoting a lot of time and leaving little time for the study and writing of history. Therefore, a new set of economic history by the use of economic historians have emerged who try to study the economic history by the use of the economic tools. At present, history is so closely interlinked with the study of economic problems that it would not be possible to reconstruct history without knowledge of the relevant economic problems.

History and economics are also closely related to each other. The activities of man in society are intimately related with the economics matters, hence it is essential for a historians to have a proper knowledge of the economics of the period. Almost I every age the knowledge of economic condition is necessary to be known by a historian so that he could be able to draw a proper picture of the contemporary society and in economic condition. B.Sheikh Ali remarks, "Darwin spoke of the struggle for the existence and Mark explained it in terms of economic determinism, economic history, particularly since the Russian Revolution of 1917 has assumed such importance as to over shadow all other branches of man's activity." Undoubtedly, it is true that economics has become very difficult and complicated subject during the last few years. It is chiefly based on the sound knowledge of mathematics. General historians have no close relationship with mathematics, hence in order to acquire basic knowledge of economics, they have to devote a lot of time and energy to the study of economics. They, therefore, have very meager and time to devote themselves to the study and writing of history. As a result new set of historians have emerged which are known as economic historians who are well versed with the study of economics and throw light on the economic conditions of the particular period by making use of economic tools. Other historians merely follow in their footsteps and usually accept their conclusions. In modern times history is quite intimately related with the study of economic problems. It would be impossible for a historians to write down history without proper knowledge of economic and the problems related to it. A modern historians must have through knowledge of a economic crisis of the period, the policies of New Deal and the Economic and trading structures, so that he could be able to construct the history of the twentieth century properly well.

History and Geography

Universally it is accepted that History and Geography have very close ties. In fact it would be practically impossible to study; certain branches of history without rudimentary knowledge of geography e.g., the diplomatic or military history cannot be fallowed without necessary geographical knowledge of the region. Geography is one of the eyes of history the other eye being chronology. Time and space factors give history its correct perspective.

Prof. Michelet was of the opinion that history was in essence found upon geography. He says "Without a geographical basis the people, the makers of history, seek to be walking." German philosopher Kant said, "Geography lies at the basis of history." Herder said that "history is geography set in motion."

There are others like American geographer, Ells Worth Huntington, and Allen Semple who emphasise the importance of climate as having crucial influence on the course of history as well as on race temperament.

It is a fact that many geographical factors such as climate, social, rivers, mountains, sea, coastline and mineral resources aided the development of river in valley. Cultures as in early Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China. Herodotus, the early Greek historian describes that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile".

Even Aristotle and Montesquieu have emphasized the influence of climate on man. The physical formation of the country such as Britain, Japan and Greece with broken coastlines had a very powerful

impact on its history. This facilitated their naval strength and empire building activities.

Similarly, the Himalayas and the jungles of Assam have acted as barriers against invasions from the North and East of India. The Himalayas and the Gobi and Mangolian deserts were responsible for the isolation of China. The geographical discoveries of America and a new route to India determined the character of World History since the Renaissance.

Geography also plays an important role in the national character formation and influence the human behaviour. As we know that climate of a country greatly affected the civilisation of a country. Hence the knowledge of geographical is very essential for historians. It would be wise to accept the limited interpretation of geographical influence on man's conduct or on his history.

Most of the scholar agreed to this fact that history and geography have very close relation with each others. A prominent historians remarks, "geography is the stage on which the drama of history is enacted". Prof. Michelet write in this context, "without geographical basis, the people, the maker of history, seek to be walking on air, as in those Chinese picture where the ground is wanting. The soil, too, must not be looked upon only as the scene of action. It influence appears in hundred ways, such as food, climate etc." in fact, it is almost impossible to go through certain branches of history without knowledge of geography. Diplomatic and military history can not be properly studied without the sound knowledge of history. The study of domestic history is also not an exception to this fact. It also requires good knowledge of geography.

Knowledge of geography is also helpful in understanding the history of early period. Geography proved to of great help in knowing the history of this period for want of authentic documents. The history of this period can be established by observing and analyzing the geographical surrounding, hence the study of geography is essential for the understanding of history. J.R.Green write about the significance of landscape in establishing the history of early period. "It is the fullest and most certain of all documents".

The history of England is largely influenced by the physical geography of the country. Really without the knowledge of geography, it would not be possible to understand the process of industrialization and urbanization in England.

Prominent writers like Montesquieu, Bukle Huntingeon etc, had the opinion that the climate of country greatly affected the culture of a country. Climate, moisture, humidity and weather are all determining factors. Aristotle and Montesquieu emphases the influenced of climate on men. It also influences the human behavior and play a significant role in the formation of national character. To sum up we may say that the study of geography is essential if we wish to study the history of some particular country of region. In all most all the books of history, we find an introductory chapter on the geography of the country which highlights the importance of study of geography and its impact on the study of history.

History and Anthropology

Anthropology deals with man who is not merely a part on nature but also a dynamic creature in terms of biological and social features. It is a theoretical problem to determine the position of anthropology-where the discipline has to be put-whether in the fold of sciences or in the fold of humanities. A group of anthropologists took it as a natural science whereas some other anthropologists placed it as a subject under humanities. In nineteenth century some German idealists and before that in eighteenth century a few French humanists considered anthropology as a branch of history and therefore they placed the discipline strictly under humanity. According to them man is a social creature as they live in a society and lead a social life. Although the biopsychic nature of man is of prime importance, but as man behaves within an organized group of social relatives, it enters into a new level, which is more or less super- psychic and super-organic.

Therefore, in this level he is guided very little by his natural instinct; rather the norms of the particular group dictate him. Starting from the food-habit (what type of food should be taken and the very way to eat them), everything in a man's life-the dress-pattern, family structure, marriage form, religious belief

and so on are decided by the social norm. Within a social system, man is thus more social creature than biological organism. This school of thought also held that the social relations are essentially the products of history, bound together by the moral values and not by the natural forces. Anthropology was viewed as a part of history and the anthropologist's role lay in social reconstruction.

In fact, there is a close relationship between history and anthropology for which controversies are found for a long time. Everything in this world offer a history as their existence is counted by time factor. A sort of historical investigation is essentially required in order to understand the factors and processes of change. Since human is the subject of anthropological investigation, we cannot proceed at all without the consideration of temporal dimension. Both the disciplines aim to unveil the unexplored events of human life situation but differ from one another in tackling the problems. Each of them has developed its own methodological principles. History is chiefly concerned with the events. They count actions and interactions of human, both in individual and group perspectives. Whereas, anthropology takes interest in determination of culture; biological evolution terminates in cultural revolution.

Anthropology and more particularly the social anthropology is indebted to history. Earlier scholars like August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber in studying social phenomena deliberately drew facts from history. Sir J.G. Frazer being first chairman in the school of Social anthropology in Britain gave emphasis on the historical analysis of the anthropological facts. In 1899, Franz Boas as a founder of the First University department of Anthropology at Columbia tried to highlight the life-ways of the primitive communities through historical methods.

A.L. Kroeber in his two important papers, 'History and Science in Anthropology' (1935) and 'Anthropologist looks at History' (1966) attempted to establish the logical ground that the study of preliterate people would be more meaningful if the facts could be analyzed in historical perspective. According to him, anthropology is not wholly a historical science but its large areas are historical in interest. Moreover, he believed that the difference between the two disciplines was for the difference of the nature of insight but they were complimentary to each other.

In a lecture at the University of Manchester in 1961, E.E. Evans Pritchard said, "the main differences between history and anthropology are not aim or method, for fundamentally both are trying to do the same thing". There is no doubt in this point that the continuity of a social process can be clearly estimated if historical methods are applied side by side with anthropological methods.

The subject matter of anthropology is basically historical in character. Anthropologists select different aspects of human culture derived from a common matrix. Since human cultures are not eternal like the subject matters of physics and chemistry, it changes with time. Each and every institutionalized organization viz., technological organization; economic organization, political organization, religious organization etc. are subjected to change. They remain largely relative and restricted to the particular situations. Therefore, all phenomena need a historical analysis.

Many of the institutions studied by the anthropologists deal with such a structure, which is essentially temporal or historical. For example, to study any development anthropologists have to trace the event from the beginning. Naturally such a study gets associated with history. Again, some of the problems have to be understood in the light of early stages, which are completely different from the present form. We can illustrate this point with the structure of feudalism, capitalism or socialism.

Anthropology often employs methods of Historical analysis, which is not always sufficient to deal with any problem of anthropology, but there are different types of historical analysis appropriate to different kinds of problems in anthropological science. In majority of cases historians have accepted the idea that each age will tend to view the past in the light of its own cultural milieu and stress upon the aspects of the past which provide an explanation of the existing problem.

The common features between history and anthropology are, both the disciplines depend for their materials on the actual happenings or occurrences in the natural course of human life. Teamwork is Suitable for both. Both of them differ from other scientists who make and get their data by experiments

as per their needs.

It is true that traditionally the historians differed from the anthropologists; historians were interested in past periods while the anthropologists-were concerned with the primitive people. But now both are inclined to study the contemporary problems of the modern civilizations of the world.

Both of them have been able to account for the whole of a society. They do not remain satisfied after knowing what happened and what happens, their interests have also extended to find out the nature of social processes and associated regulations.

With the advent of the Darwinian theory of biological evolution and also with the introduction of new archaeological evidences, the quest in study of man got a new dimension. Unlike the seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers, the nineteenth century historians and ethnologists became interested in the natural history of cultural development. Tylor, Lubbock, Maine and Morgan took anthropology as a historical discipline concerned with the culture of pre literate people.

Relationship Between Sociology and History

History and sociology are intimately related and a number of sociologists like Auguste Comte are also important figure in the development of historical studies. Karl Marx was also a great historian and sociologist. Both History and Sociology are concerned with the study of man in society and differed only with regard to their approach.

In the recent years it was realized that a fruitful interaction between the two disciplines was possible and Emile Durkheim, Max Weber acknowledge the initial dependence of sociology upon history. Although, history too benefits from the synthesis produced by the sociologists.

Sociologists exercised profound influence on the study of history by developing the certain narrow areas of human activity. They adopted the sampling techniques and develop their tools with a view to minimize the subjective element. In brief, sociology is helping history to study 'social dynamics' which is a study not of society at rest but constantly in social change and development social processes and social causation are giving a new perspective to history. India too our historians are now giving increasing attention to social history.

Sociology and History are very much interrelated. Like political science, sociology is becoming one of the most genuine fruits of history to which it is intimately connected. The two sciences are so close that some writers like G. Von Bulow refused to accept sociology as a science different from history.

History is the reconstruction of man's past. It is the story of the experience of man-kind. It is a record of the human past. It is a systematic record of man's life and achievements from the dim past to the present. The historian studies the significant events of man in the order of time. The historian is interested in what happened at a particular time in the past. Further, a historian is not satisfied, however, with mere description. He seeks to learn the causes of these events to understand the past-not only how it has been but also how it came to be. Nevertheless, he is, in a sense, interested in events for their own sake. "He wants to know everything there is to know about them and to describe them in all their unique individuality". The historian concentrates only on the past. He is not interested in the present and is unwilling to look to the future. Still history provides the connecting link for the present and the future. It is said that history is the microscope of the past, the horoscope of the present and the telescope of the future. Sociology: Sociology as a science of society, on the other hand is interested in the present. It tries to analyse human interactions and interrelations with all their complexity and diversity.

It also studies the historical development of societies. It studies various stages of human life, modes of living, customs, manners and their expression in the form of social institutions and associations. Sociology has thus to depend upon history for its material. History with its record of various social events of the past offers data and facts to sociologists.

History is a storehouse of records, a treasury of knowledge. It supplies materials various social sciences including sociology. History contains records even with regard to social matters. It contains

information about the different stages of human life, modes of living, customs and manners, social institutions, etc. This information about the past is of great help to a sociologist. A sociologist has to make use of the historical records. For example, if he wants to study marriage and family as social institutions, he must study their historical development also. Similarly, if he wants to know the impact of Islamic culture on the Hindu culture, he has to refer to the Muslim conquests of India, for which he has to depend on history. A sociologist is, no doubt, concerned with the present-day society. But the present-day society can be better understood from the knowledge of its past because what people are today is because of what they had been in the past. Further, sociologists often make use of comparative method, in their studies for which they depend on history for data. Historical sociology, one of the fields of sociological inquiry, depends very much on historical data. It is true that the sociologist must sometimes be his own historian, amassing information from all the available sources.

Historian also uses sociology. Until recently it was perhaps from philosophy that the historian took his clues to important problems and historical concepts and ideas. But now these are drawn increasingly from sociology. Indeed, we can see that modern historiography and modern sociology have both been influenced in similar ways by the philosophy of history. Further sociology provides the social background for the study of history. History is now being studied and read from the sociological point of view. It is said that history would be meaningless without the appreciation of socially significant events. Further, it is often remarked that history would be boring, monotonous, prosaic and uninteresting unless the social events are narrated. Historical facts without reference to socially important matters would be like a body with flesh, blood and bone, but without life.

The mutual dependence of history and sociology has made G.E. Howard to remark that 'History is past Sociology, and Sociology is present History'. Peter Worsley says that 'the best history is in fact sociology: the sociology of the past'.

T.B. Bottomore has pointed out that "it is of the greatest importance for the development of the social sciences that the two subjects should be closely related and that each should borrow extensively from the other, as they are increasingly inclined to do.

"Robert Bierstedt Comments. If the past is of as a continuous cloth unrolling through the centuries, history is interested in the individual threads and strands that make it up; sociology in the patterns it exhibits".

History and Literature

Literature being the mirror of a society has close relationship with history but it is also a fact that it cannot be made complete base of history. Johnson has clearly remarked "History began as a part of literature from earliest time". Medieval age history in the form of literature continued to be medium of religion and politics. A historian cannot altogether ignore the imaginative literature of any age, nor he can completely believe it. Perhaps only because of this Napoleon believe that history was nothing but an imaginative story.

The historical works of Herodotus, Livy, Tacitus and Macaulay have always been very interesting and popular from the literary point of view. To Hume mention "History is more interesting than anovel, both history and literary person represent their society. Russo feels that inspite of all success, of scientific methods, history is always remains to be a branch of literature.

The strong relationship of history with literature can also be confirmed with this view that a historical book and literature both are the solid materials for confirmation of truth. Carlyle writes that the soul of future lives in the book. Even many literary book are used as spurces materials fort history writing. Croce mentioned that a historians should give an artistic and literary presentation of the fact of the past. Hence it is quite evident that both history and literature are intimately related to each other.

History and literature have been intertwined since the very beginning. Real events were recounted as stories to teach the younger generation wisdom or lessons about their origins. These stories sometimes stretched the truth to entertain the audience or make them reflect further. The main difference between

history and literature is the purpose of each: History intends to record events as accurately as possible, while literature interprets historical or everyday events in an imaginative way.

Historians' responsibility is to accurately record - as legacy for future generations -- events that produce significant changes in the lives of people living in a community, a nation or the whole world. To support their claims, they collect evidence of milestones as well as everyday life. For example, to relate World War II, historians used documents, books and media such as newspapers, photographs, audio and video recordings of the time.

Literature writers also record events. Their focus, however, even when they truthfully describe historical events, is on communicating the author's intellectual and emotional interpretation of these events to the reader. By using the same example of World War II, a novel such as Kurt Vonnegut's "Slaughterhouse Five" presents a more personal perspective of the cannibalistic horrors of war. The novel depicts the state of mind of a soldier fighting to survive in a prisoner of war camp during the firebombing of Dresden, Germany. In writing the satirical novel, Vonnegut drew on his own experience as a prisoner of war in Dresden.

At times, historians have also distorted reality -- sometimes because they wanted to please their masters; at other times, their countries' dictatorial regimes forced them to bend the truth. For instance, Western countries believed for many decades the communist propaganda that the Soviet regime was setting as historical events. This institutionalized falsehood, however, started to falter with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's "Gulag Archipelago" -- a painstakingly researched chronicle of communist forced-labor camps where millions died from executions or harsh conditions during Joseph Stalin's regime.

Literature authors are well known for using their imagination and creativity to describe fictitious characters, events and realms. They draw their inspiration from myths, legends and history to create a unique, altered reality for readers. For example, George R.R. Martin's popular "A Song of Ice and Fire" is inspired by historical events in medieval England, the Wars of the Roses, but his story portrays an imaginary world of peculiar characters, customs and political games.

Conclusion

In the modern age it has become fashionable to laud 'interdisciplinarity' and 'holistic approaches' while decrying boundaries between subject areas and disciplines. From the above discussion we noticed that in the development of historical studies that historians, depending on their particular specialism, do find it useful, and sometimes essential, to have a sound knowledge of other disciplines. For instance economics: every historian needs a basic knowledge of economics, and every history degree should introduce students to basic economics. Second is political science, through this subject historians come across theories of monarchy, sovereignty, liberalism, democracy, and so on. More generally, it is helpful if historians, given that they are dealing with evolution of human being and human societies, have some knowledge of anthropology both the social and physical anthropology helped historians a lot for reconstruction of human history. Sociology also provide helpful information to the historian while examining various social aspects of past human societies. So far as geography is concerned, for historian geography is inherent component and act as an eye of history. It is self-evident that historians require knowledge of certain aspects of geography. The most important branch provide immense help to the history obviously is archaeology. Archaeology through its various means of investigation retrieve, conserve and interpret material evidence of past human society and thus provide sources of information to historian for rewriting the past. Last but not the least, literature is the mirror of civilization. Every society left its imprint on the literary corpus produce by them during a given time. Thus literature provide immense help to history and act as n important sources for the historical study.

Unit-II: Traditions of Historical Writing

1. Ancient Greek Traditions – Herodotus, Thucydides
2. Ancient Roman Traditions - Polybius, Livy and Tacitus
3. Medieval Understanding: Western – St. Augustine, Arabic – Ibn Khaldun.

Objective

In this chapter we intend to provide you an insight into the Greco-Roman tradition of historiography. This lesson will briefly discuss some of the important trends of history writing and provide information about some important historians within Greco-Roman tradition of historical writings. By the end of this chapter you would be able to:

- *understand the history of the Greco-Roman Historiography;*
- *describe the various aspects of Herodotus and Thucydides as Greek Historians of ancient times;*
- *assess and appreciate the contribution of Polybius, Livy and Tacitus in the ancient Roman school of historical writings;and*
- *discuss the style, sources used and understanding of history by the Greco-Roman tradition of historiography.*

Introduction

Understanding the past appears to be a universal human need, and the telling of history has emerged independently in civilisations around the world. The earliest chronologies date back to Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, though no historical writers in these early civilizations were known by name. The earliest known systematic historical thought in the Western world emerged in ancient Greece, a development which would be an important influence on the writing of history elsewhere around the Mediterranean region. Greek historians greatly contributed to the development of historical methodology. The earliest known critical historical works were *The Histories*, composed by Herodotus of Halicarnassus (484 BC–ca.425 BC) who later became known as the 'father of history' (Cicero). The generation following Herodotus witnessed a spate of local histories of the individual city-states (poleis), written by the first of the local historians who employed the written archives of city and sanctuary. Thucydides was most prominent among them. Thucydides largely eliminated divine causality in his account of the war between Athens and Sparta, establishing a rationalistic element which set a precedent for subsequent Western historical writings. He was also the first to distinguish between cause and immediate origins of an event. Subsequently the Roman subjugated the Greeks city state politically, but the Greeks overpowered the Romans culturally which resulted in the adoption of Greek tradition of historical writing by the Romans. While early Roman works were still written in Greek, in the later period history was written for the first time in non-Greek language that is in Latin, possibly in a conscious effort to counteract Greek cultural influence. It marked the beginning of Latin historical writings. Livy (59 BC–AD 17) records the rise of Rome from city-state to world dominion. His speculation about what would have happened if Alexander the Great had marched against Rome represents the first known instance of alternate history. Tacitus (c.56–c.117) denounces Roman immorality by praising German virtues, elaborating on the topic of the Noble savage. In many ways, the works of Herodotus and his Greek and Latin successors have been regarded as the Greco-Roman tradition. In this chapter we will discuss about some of the historians in ancient Greece and Rome and the historical works written by them.

Prominent Historians And Their Works

The five historians we have selected for study are amongst the best-known in antiquity: Herodotus and Thucydides, who wrote in Greek, and lived in the 5th century BCE and Polybius, Livy and Tacitus, who lived in Roman empire and wrote in Latin. The works of these historians can be located within

these political and cultural contexts. Nonetheless, it is worth bearing in mind that there are no easy correlations between these contexts and the specific forms of historical investigation that emerged. We might expect that these histories were composed to justify, eulogise, or legitimate contemporary political changes. While this expectation is not belied entirely, it is also evident that Livy and Tacitus were highly critical of their contemporaries: these histories are not simply eulogistic but are marked by anxieties about the present.

Herodotus: Father of History

Herodotus was born in Halicarnassus (now Bodrum) in Caria (southwestern Asia Minor) which at the time of his birth (c. 480 BC) was under the rule of the king of Persia. His father, Lyxes, was a member of a distinguished local family, and his uncle, Panyassis, was an epic poet. When, in 461, Panyassis was assassinated by the man in charge of Halicarnassus, who was named Lygdamis, Herodotus abandoned the place, moving to the island of Samos. It is possible that, when Lygdamis later met his end (c. 454), and Halicarnassus joined the Delian League which was under the control of the Athenians, Herodotus went back to Halicarnassus. If he did, his stay there was brief, since he travelled very widely. It appears probable that in many of the cities and towns that he visited he gave lectures and recitations.

One of these cities was Athens, where he received ample remuneration for his public appearances. The active part he played in the intellectual life of the place had a large effect on his writings. Nevertheless, before long he continued his journeys, becoming a member of Athens's Panhellenic settlement at Thurii in south-east Italy in 443. Thereafter, he may well have resumed his travels. But it was seemingly at Thurii that he died, in c. 425. Subsequently, its peoples displayed his tomb and epitaph to visitors. The History in Greek written by Herodotus and probably designed, at first, to be read aloud (so that he was attentive to his listening public)² contained two principal portions. The first tells of the beginnings of the longstanding strife between west and east, the origin and extension of the Persian empire, and the historical background of Greek lands, with particular reference to Athens and Sparta. The second and longer part of the History deals with the Persian Wars: the invasions of Greece in 490 BC by Darius I, culminating and terminating in the battle of Marathon, and the invasion of the country ten years later by Xerxes I, signalled by the battles of Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis, and finally Plataea (479).

Herodotus believed that these invasions, and the Wars that they caused, were the most significant happenings in the history of the world. As we have seen, however, he envisaged them against a much wider survey, which was nothing less than a general historical picture of the Greek world from the mid-sixth century onwards. That was not presented directly, but through the indirect medium of a vast amount of information which, with unique and extreme ingenuity, displayed by the author's roles as explorer, observer and listener, mirrored the varied multiplicity of what was going on. Most of Herodotus's immense store of information appears to have been gathered before 443 BC, but his work also contains allusions to the early phases of the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta (431-404).

In spite of the faulty character of some of his sources, Herodotus managed to achieve the remarkable feat of creating not only Greek prose-which he wrote in a simple, clear and graceful yet artful style-but also something like a chronological sequence in his vast enquiry. Yet, at the same time, his unflinching, unflagging spirit of enquiry prompted an endless succession of spicy, wonder loving anecdotes which make him the outstanding entertainer among Greek and Roman historians. This is a reputation which he owes, as R.W.Macan declared, to his inexhaustible interest, his insatiable curiosity, his infinite capacity for taking notes, his flair for a good story, his power of sustaining a continuous narrative, his delight in digression, aside and bon mot...the lightness of his touch, the grace of his language, his glory in human virtue and achievement wherever to be found, and withal the feelings of mortality, the sense of tears, the pathos of man's fate. It could be added that he was thoughtful and profound, tolerant

as well as wide-ranging. These are great qualities. They may not be enough to make him a really first-class historian in any modern sense of the word, despite his new and broad concept of what this meant, and despite the fact that he has been proclaimed the 'father of history'. But they made him a magnificent writer, and that is what he was—a man, sometimes ironical and humorous, who, despite much ancient and modern criticism, holds a preeminent place in the literature of the world.

Thucydides

Thucydides was probably born between 460 and 455 BC. He was the son of Olorus, who was Athenian although his name was Thracian, and who left him a property in Thrace, at a place named Scapte Hyle. When the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta began in 431 BC, Thucydides was living at Athens, where he caught the disease described as the Great Plague, from which, however, he recovered. In 424 Thucydides, as a result of election, became one of the ten Athenian generals for the year. He was given the command of the fleet in the northern Aegean, probably because of his links with the Thracian region. He proved unable, however, to prevent the capture of the key Macedonian city of Amphipolis by the Spartan commander Brasidas. Requested to return to Athens, Thucydides underwent a trial there, and was condemned to twenty years of exile. During his banishment he travelled over extensive areas and formed a large number of contacts.

After the Athenians had been finally defeated at the end of the Peloponnesian War (404), he was apparently allowed to go back to their city. It is thought that he died c. 400, or not long afterwards. The History of the Peloponnesian War written by Thucydides does not deal with the entire period of the war, since it comes to an end in 411. It is, essentially, something new: a contemporary history, although it includes short but noteworthy accounts of the ancient past and the last fifty years.

However, he does not concern himself with history in general, contemporary or otherwise, but has selected, like Herodotus, a war as his principal subject. He insisted that the Peloponnesian War, not Herodotus's Persian War, had been the most notable warfare in the whole of the world's history. Even if we feel that the actual hostilities hardly justify such a conclusion, it remains true that they 'provided the lethal convulsion which heralded the entire breakdown of the city-state structure and civilization that had been the principal characteristic of classical Greece'.

That is one reason why the History of Thucydides, whatever its numerous defects (of which we shall hear more later), is of permanent importance. That importance is enhanced by his determination to make a distinction between the immediate and the more remote, fundamental, causes of the war with which he was dealing. Unlike Herodotus, whose didactic efforts had been only sporadic, Thucydides, at every juncture, intended to be instructive. He was a social scientist who sought, continually, to deduce general, basic principles and eternal verities from particular events and actions, and who aimed, with profound insight, to make knowledge of these past events a useful, prognostic, permanently valid guide to the future. Meanwhile, although it was a war that principally concerned him, his analysis of Greek society at its zenith was careful and unparalleled.

His method is derived from his exceptional intelligence, and this is the second reason why his History is permanently significant: because he was the cleverest and most deeply thoughtful of all historians. It is this cerebral quality, coolly seeking to reconcile literature and science, that gives him his uniqueness. It emerges from his psychological studies, which are devoted to the analysis of masses and groups as well as to individuals. His idiosyncratic style, despite variations of tone, degree and pace, retains the bitter, austere gravity, the severity, the rapid sharpness and the ruthless, condensed, brooding astringency which is required by this task. However, despite the many vivid pictures he presents, this style has seemed to many too difficult to be easily readable or enjoyable. Yet by means of it he brought his chosen form of literature to a point of perfection never later exceeded, and his work has been described as marking 'the longest and most decisive step that has ever been taken by a single man towards making history what it is today'; since, for all his faults by modern standards, 'he saw more truly, enquired more responsibly, and reported more faithfully, than any other ancient historian'.

He was placed at the head of all ancient historians by the Romantic Revolution.

Greek historiography reached its peak in the fifth century BC with Herodotus and more especially with Thucydides, whose narrative is perhaps the nearest approach to the ideal history of contemporary events the West has yet known. In particular, his survey of causes and effects, his impartiality in securing evidence from both sides, and his rigorous accuracy of detail established scientific standards which one might confidently have expected to be maintained and revered by his successors. Such expectations, however, were scarcely fulfilled.

Herodotus and Thucydides were thus products of what has often been projected as the classical age in the history of Greece in general and of Athens in particular. We know from other sources that this was the age of philosophers such as Socrates, and of playwrights such as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The works of the historians do not, however, directly reflect these cultural developments. What we find instead is a preoccupation, especially in Thucydides, with militaristic activities. In fact, if these histories are rich in detail, they are also marked by an extremely narrow focus. Indeed there are times when the present-day reader cannot help but wishing that these writers had devoted some of their considerable skills to a wider range of issues. This two historian represent classical Greek tradition of historiography.

The ideas of Herodotus and Thucydides spread throughout Europe and the Middle East, as the Greek Empire grew under the expansionistic policies of Alexander the Great. As a consequence, Hellenic culture and Hellenic history dominated much of the Mediterranean world and Southwest Asia between the fourth and first century B.C.E.

When the Romans engulfed the Greek Empire, they too copied the Greek method of historical inquiry, just as they copied many other Greek practices. Ancient Romans had their own biographical tradition of storytelling, but they eventually adopted some elements of Greek methodology. Roman histories generally focused on Rome's rise to power, attributing its success to the character of its political leaders, fair policies, strong political institutions, and fate. Polybius, Livy and Tacitus were located very closely within the contexts of empire. The Roman empire was a unique institution. It spanned parts of three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa), and lasted for nearly five centuries. It was also remarkable for its ruling elite, membership of which was fairly flexible.

Polybius

Polybius was born at Megalopolis in Arcadia in c. 200 BC. His father was Lycortas, a rich landowner who was close to Philopoemen, the leader of the Achaean League. Polybius himself served as a senior cavalry officer (hipparchos) of the League, intending to fight on the side of Rome during its Third Macedonian War, against Macedonia's King Perseus. But the Romans (distrusting the League) rejected the force, and after their victory at Pydna (168) deported Polybius and other Achaeans, amounting to a thousand in number, to Italy.

Polybius became tutor to the sons of Lucius Aemilius Paullus, whose younger son Scipio Africanus the younger (Aemilianus) took a liking to him, and enabled him to remain in Rome rather than in an Italian country town. In 151 he left with Scipio for Spain and north Africa, but in the following year he and 300 other deportees were permitted to go back to Greece. After the Third Punic War broke out in 149, he joined Scipio again in Africa, and was present when Carthage was destroyed (146). But the Romans, at this juncture, suppressed the Achaean League and ravaged its capital Corinth, whereupon Polybius was told to reorganise the region, and did so. But he also travelled extensively, and may have witnessed Scipio's capture of rebel Numantia in Spain. Some fifteen or more years later, he fell off a horse, and died.

His Histories filled forty books, of which the first five have survived intact, and large parts of others are also extant. They are written in a flat style which contrasts sharply with the literary achievements of Herodotus and Thucydides. Or, rather,

Polybius was not indifferent to style; his care is shown in his scrupulous avoidance of hiatuses.... He

did not, as far as we know, follow literary models. To illustrate his dictum and vocabulary we must look not to belles-lettres but to the language of officialdom-decrees and dispatches-and technical treatises on philosophy and science.... Polybius was first of all a man of action.

Nevertheless, it must be repeated that Polybius's style is dreary. However, the *Histories* are of outstanding significance, because no other Greek historian has so much to say about historical method, or describes his own attitudes and intentions at such length and with so much care and thought. Polybius's work was epoch making in the historiography of the Hellenistic age. And he claimed that he was the first to write world history in a systematic manner.

The Hellenistic monarchies were in the end unable to inspire a universal vision of Greek history, which tended increasingly to concentrate on the politics of equilibrium between the great powers. Polybius turned to Rome as the centre of Mediterranean history, following the precocious intuition of Timaeus that what mattered in history was now occurring in the West. This intuition had also been adopted and used by the earliest Roman historians at the end of the third century BC, presenting Rome to the Greek world on the occasion of the clash between Rome and Carthage. It is also worth noting that Polybius added a third element to the polarity between Rome and the Hellenistic monarchies-a third force composed of the Greek federal states.

Polybius remains the unique expression of the moment in which the Greeks for the first time in their history recognized their complete loss of independence. The Macedonian Greek symbiosis of previous centuries had not compelled, or even prepared them for, such a catastrophic admission. Polybius was a time-server of genius....

In the organization of a universal history...the plan of his exposition was his own. His own, too, was the emphasis on the practical use of history with which the skilful presentation of Roman history as inevitable and lasting was connected.

Polybius agreed with Thucydides that the only happenings which seem worthy to be recorded are those that are of contemporary or nearly contemporary date, and he emphasised with unremitting didacticism that, like Thucydides, he was presenting a work of practical value, designed to indicate to public figures how they ought, and ought not, to behave. Moreover, it remains true that he 'understood most of the things which a historian should do'; though not all of them, by modern standards. But he was quite an innovator, was evidently honest, and he meant to be impartial; he was capable, too, of perceiving essential and epoch-making developments.

Without the writings of Polybius we should know very little indeed about the third and second centuries BC. And what he has given us is a remarkable record of the growth of Roman power. Furthermore, one of his doctrines-that of the 'mixed' constitution which, in his view, was responsible for Rome's success-exercised powerful political influence in the early days of the United States of America. John Adams frequently spoke of him, and it is principally because of Polybius that the constitution of the United States contains the separate powers, limited by a system of balances and checks, which have contributed so largely to its continuing strength.

To the general reader who can find pleasure in seeing an age of transition and vital development through the eyes of a contemporary, who could claim to have lived through stirring events of which he was himself no little part, *quorum pars magna fui*, and who believed that they had a meaning, Polybius's *Histories* remain one of the great books in the Greek language and a splendid point of departure from which to set out in the study of Roman history.

Famed Greco-Roman historian, Polybius, directly connects the Greek tradition to Roman historiography. Polybius (c. 200B.C.E.) was born in Greece, but as a young man lived as a well-treated hostage in Rome, while Rome was overtaking the Greek Empire. A great admirer of Rome, in his great work *The Rise of the Roman Empire* Polybius used the methods of Thucydides to explain and justify Rome's rise to power. He proclaimed this a "universal history," a history of the known world, with the Roman Empire at its center. Like Herodotus and Thucydides, his was essentially a

contemporary history and attempted to express a truthful accounting of the subject **2.1.2.4.Livy (c. 64 BCE- 17CE)**

Livy was a contemporary of the most famous imperial figure in Roman history, Augustus. However, he was not part of the senatorial elite, nor was he directly associated with politics. Yet, it is perhaps not accidental that he chose to write a monumental history of Rome, which ran into 142 books. Unfortunately, more than a hundred of these books were lost, and some survive only in summaries written by later authors. In its entirety, the work traced the history of Rome from its legendary origins to c. 9 BCE.

Livy (Titus Livius) was born at Patavium (Padua) in Cisalpine Gaul (north Italy) in 64 or 59 BC. In his early years he proceeded to Rome. He spent most of his remaining years writing his History, and died at Patavium in AD 7 or 12. His History contained no fewer than 142 books. Those that have survived cover the periods 753–243 and 210-167 BC, but 107 books of this vast work are lost, with the exceptions of fragments and extracts and epitomes.

Livy's account of the Second Punic War (218–201 BC) bears striking witness to his unflagging belief in Rome. As to earlier Rome, he himself warns us that his account contains stories which are purely mythological. Indeed, as regards all periods, doubts have been expressed about whether Livy should not be considered a novelist rather than a historian, because of the psychological interpretations and highly charged scenes of desperation and conflict, like flashes of lightning, which are his speciality.

Yet his narrative, drawing lessons from the past, gives us a wonderful, though over-patriotic, picture of a great nation throughout its history, with all its glories, merits and vicissitudes. 'He was the only historian to have composed a full-length, full scale history of the growth and expansion of Rome', covering 744 years and eloquently showing how the Romans thought about the past centuries that had witnessed and created the growth of their power.

Livy writes in an attractive flowing style which abandons Sallust's pointed abruptness in favour of the bland rotundity of Cicero. This is the 'milky abundance' which Quintilian ascribed to him, a broad, urbane, ornate, orderly richness. Furthermore, his story was flexibly and dramatically structured. Livy has merely to add the necessary information, and then concentrate on enhanced literary effects.

This first-rate literary excellence ensured Livy an enormous and immediate success, eclipsing all forerunners and rivals, and providing Europe with its principal information (even if not always accurate) about how the Romans might be supposed to have acted and thought, and how they achieved their massive successes. 'So far as enthusiasm serves... Livy penetrates to the spirit of ancient times.'

2.1.2.5.Tacitus (c. 55-119 CE)

Tacitus was closely associated with imperial administration, and a well known orator. His Annals delineated the history of the Roman empire for about fifty years (between c.14 and 65 CE). The work begins with the end of the reign of Augustus, and represents the concerns of the military/administrative elite, its preoccupations with questions of succession, and the role of the army in political affairs. What distinguishes his account is that, although he was an "insider", he was often critical of imperial policies and intrigues. In other words, his work suggests that the Roman elite was by no means a homogeneous entity.

It seems likely that the family of the writer Publius Cornelius Tacitus were from Cisalpine Gaul (north Italy) or Narbonese Gaul (southern France). His father may have been procurator (representative of the emperor) in Lower Germany and paymaster for the Roman Rhine army.

After studying rhetoric at Rome in c. AD 75, subsequently Tacitus became a highly esteemed orator. In 77 he married the daughter of one of the consuls of the year, Cnaeus Julius Agricola. In the same year, or a little earlier, he served as military tribune in a legion, and shortly after Domitian came to the throne (81) he became quaestor, thus entering the senate. Then he moved up to the praetorship (88), but subsequently left for appointments in the provinces. He was in Rome, however, when Domitian

persecuted the senate during the last years of his reign. Under Nerva (96–98), Tacitus became consul, and towards the end of Trajan's life he was proconsul of Asia (112–113). Whether he survived to witness the beginnings of Hadrian's reign (117) is disputed.

Tacitus wrote the *Germania* (98), about the peoples of that country, and, in the same year, the *Agricola*, in praise of his father-in-law. After a *Dialogue On Orators* (c. 102), he composed his *Histories* (c. 109). They dealt with Roman history from 68 to 96, but only the earlier part of the work has survived. The *Annals* (c. 117), about the earlier period beginning in AD 14, are mostly extant.

Although far from fair, Tacitus is a believer in the lofty dignity and nobility of history, and a writer of outstanding excellence, utilising a highly individual and sometimes ironical manner which imposes his personality upon us. The *Histories* constitute an almost incredible *tour de force*.

The whole period of the Civil Wars, uniquely reproduced and reconstructed by Tacitus, is seen as dominated by wild uncontrollable forces and irrational emotions: greed, lust for power, barbarous mob violence, hysteria, the breakdown of all loyalties except to oneself. The overall impression is of the futility of human behaviour.

However, human beings, Tacitus maintained, are capable of great virtue, courage and perseverance.

The *Annals* are more magnificent and acerbic still, full of extraordinary and gripping stories: a masterly artistic achievement, an achievement very largely the result of his manner of writing. Tacitus wrote in a totally personal, highly individual, knife-edged development of Sallust's anti-Ciceronian style, combined with the Silver Latin 'point' that had been a feature of post-Augustan writing. His vividly abrupt sentences and flashing, dramatic epigrams... terminate in unexpected, trenchant punch-lines.

Even if, by modern standards, the intense, incisive, sombre, full-toned, staccato, allusive, surprising, suspenseful style of Tacitus seems laboured, even precious, with all of its dislocation and point and insinuation, its swiftness and plausibility and suggestive brevity keeps us constantly on the alert. Words are arranged in arresting, and often violent, order and the views of Tacitus are closely linked with these stylistic peculiarities. He himself admitted, and expected, that his work would be more useful than enjoyable.

Yet 'Tacitus', wrote Thomas Jefferson, 'I consider the first writer in the world without a single exception.' That is true, if we are content to see him as a marvellous literary figure and not necessarily, in the modern sense, as a historian.

The Objectives of History-Writing

It is evident that history writing was undertaken with self-conscious deliberation, and with explicitly stated objectives. These could include preserving memories of what were regarded as great, spectacular, or simply important events. Almost inevitably, warfare and battles dominate the narrative. Yet, other goals are also explicitly and sometimes implicitly articulated. We find, for instance, that Herodotus was concerned with providing a narrative that was full, interesting, even fascinating, and included ethnographic accounts that often bordered on the realm of fantasy. His successors were generally more restrained, and, the Latin writers in particular adopt a solemn, moral tone. This has been regarded as a feature of the Augustan age, where the ruler visualised his role in terms of restoring pristine traditions, amongst other things. Most of the writers state their objectives at the outset. For instance, Herodotus begins his work by declaring:

These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he publishes, in the hope of thereby preserving from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and of preventing the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the Barbarians from losing their due meed (share) of glory; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud.

To an extent, this initial assertion is justified by some of his concluding remarks: even while recording and celebrating the victories of the Greeks in general and the Athenians in particular, he recognises the heroism of the Persians as well as the Spartans. It is evident that what was regarded as being worthy of

memorialisation was a great war and its outcome. In a sense, this perspective was shared by Thucydides, whose account begins as follows:

Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians, beginning at the moment that it broke out, and believing that it would be a great war and more worthy of relation than any that had preceded it.

This focus on histories of warfare characterised the works of Livy and Tacitus as well. At one level, this may not seem surprising, given that the expansion of the Roman empire was inevitably marked by warfare, which was duly memorialised. What is perhaps more unexpected is the tone of moral concern that distinguishes these accounts. While we customarily regard the Augustan age as the heyday of Roman imperialism, it is interesting that these contemporary writers voice a sense of discomfort, and even agony at what was perceived to be a state of decline. Livy's prefatory statement is illuminating:

I invite the reader's attention to the much more serious consideration of the kind of lives our ancestors lived, of who were the men and what the means, both in politics and war, by which Rome's power was first acquired and subsequently expanded. I would then have him trace the process of our moral decline, to watch first the sinking of the foundations of morality as the old teaching was allowed to lapse, then the final collapse of the whole edifice, and the dark dawning of our modern day when we can neither endure our vices, nor face the remedies needed to cure them.

The preoccupation with military activities, in a somewhat different context, is evident in the work of Tacitus as well. Yet, Tacitus was not simply attempting to valorise marital heroes: he was also, if not more concerned with offering a critique of the contemporary situation:

My purpose is not to relate at length every motion, but only such as were conspicuous for excellence or notorious for infamy. This I regard as history's highest function, to let no worthy action be uncommemorated, and to hold out the reprobation of posterity as a terror to evil words and deeds.

He was also acutely conscious that what he documented might seem insignificant: Much of what I have related and shall have to relate, may perhaps, I am aware, seem petty trifles to record. But no one must compare my annals with the writings of those who have described Rome in old days. They told of great wars, of the storming of cities, of the defeat and capture of kings, or whenever they turned by preference to home affairs, they related, with a free scope for digression, the strifes of consuls with tribunes, land and corn-laws, and the struggles between the commons and the aristocracy. My labours are circumscribed and inglorious; peace wholly unbroken or but slightly disturbed, dismal misery in the capital, an emperor careless about the enlargement of the empire, such is my theme. Still it will not be useless to study these at first sight trifling events out of which the movements of vast changes often take their rise.

Both Livy and Tacitus regarded their works as educative. The former argued: What chiefly makes the study of history wholesome and profitable is this, that in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experiences plainly set out for all to see, and in that record you can find for yourself and your country both examples and warnings.

And Tacitus, more despondent, wrote: So now, after a revolution, when Rome is nothing but the realm of a single despot, there must be good in carefully noting and recording this period, for it is but few who have the foresight to distinguish right from wrong or what is sound from what is hurtful, while most men learn wisdom from the fortunes of others. Still, though this is instructive, it gives very little pleasure. Descriptions of countries, the various incidents of battles, glorious deaths of great generals, enchain and refresh a reader's mind. I have to present in succession prosecutions, faithless friendships, the ruin of innocence, the same causes issuing in the same results, and I am everywhere confronted by a wearisome monotony in my subject matter.

The dreary weight of the present deterred such historians from venturing into the realm of the fantastic. This was in stark contrast to the work of Herodotus who was evidently fascinated by what he considered to be extraordinary, and took great pains to record these elements, even when he realised

that it could strain one's credulity. His accounts of India, which he never visited, are especially marked by elements of fantasy, as for instance in his story about gold-digging ants.

Writers like Tacitus are far more cautious in their accounts of the fabulous. This is evident, for instance, in his brief digression on the fabled phoenix:

The bird called the phoenix, after a long succession of ages, appeared in Egypt and furnished the most learned men of that country and of Greece with abundant matter for the discussion of the marvellous phenomenon. It is my wish to make known all on which they agree with several things, questionable enough indeed, but not too absurd to be noticed.As to the number of years it lives, there are various accounts. The general tradition says five hundred years. Some maintain that it is seen at intervals of fourteen hundred and sixty one years....But all antiquity is of course obscure.

Sources Used by the Greco-Roman Historians

The question of authorities or sources is something that is addressed both explicitly and implicitly in some of the works that we are considering. Eyewitness observations were valued, but other sources of information, derived from tradition, religious centres, chronicles, interviews, and a range of documentary sources were tapped as well. The possibility of mutually conflicting versions was also recognized and strategies were evolved for resolving such situations. For instance, Herodotus, in discussing the history of the Persian ruler Cyrus states: And herein I shall follow those Persian authorities whose object it appears to Greco-Roman Traditions be not to magnify the exploits of Cyrus, but to relate the simple truth. I know besides three ways in which the story of Cyrus is told, all differing from my own narrative.

The archives and traditions clustering around shrines were obviously important sources that were drawn upon. The classic example of this is provided by the shrine of Delphi, whose oracle was invariably consulted by rulers and states before any major event, e.g., going to battle. Herodotus records several of the predictions of the oracle, often couched in (perhaps deliberately) ambiguous language. He also details the offerings sent to the shrine on the successful completion of an enterprise.

Herodotus also provides the reader with firsthand accounts, the result of his many travels. Here is his description of agriculture in Mesopotamia: Of all the countries that we know there is none which is so fruitful in grain. It makes no pretension indeed of growing the fig, the olive, the vine, or any other tree of the kind; but in grain it is so fruitful as to yield commonly two hundred fold, and when the production is the greatest, even three-hundred fold. The blade of the wheat plant and barley plant is often four fingers in breadth. As for the millet and the sesame, I shall not say to what height they grow, though within my own knowledge; for I am not ignorant that what I have already written concerning the fruitfulness of Babylonia must seem incredible to those who have never visited the country.

First hand observation is also evident in the vivid description of forms of greeting practiced by the Persians: When they meet each other in the streets, you may know if the persons meeting are of equal rank by the following token: if they are, instead of speaking, they kiss each other on the lips. In the case where one is little inferior to the other, the kiss is given on the cheek; where the difference of rank is great, the inferior prostrates himself upon the ground.

Occasionally, Herodotus drew on folk traditions. For instance, he cites a long conversation between Croesus, a king who was supposed to be incredibly wealthy, and Solon, one of the founding fathers of the Athenian constitution. Croesus, according to this story, is confident that he is the happiest person on earth, but Solon gently, but repeatedly demurs, saying that he could be declared to be the happiest only if his end was known. By this argument, only after his death could it be said that a man had lived a happy life. Thucydides deliberates far more self-consciously on his sources and attitudes towards the past. He says: The way that most men deal with traditions, even traditions of their own country, is to receive them all alike as they are delivered, without applying any critical test whatever....So little pains do the vulgar take, accepting readily the first story that comes to hand.

In contrast, he considers his own procedure far more rigorous: The conclusions I have drawn from the

proofs quoted may, I believe, safely be relied on. A system of keeping annual records was evidently in existence in Rome for several centuries. These records, known as the *Annales Maximi*, were compiled and maintained by priests. They contained the names of magistrates who were appointed each year, and chronicled what were regarded as important events. Apart from this, elite families had traditions of funerary orations, which were drawn on by later historians.

Perhaps because such traditions and the works of earlier historians such as Polybius could be drawn upon, Livy and Tacitus seem less overtly concerned about their sources. In the case of Tacitus, we find that his insider status vis-à-vis the ruling elite is virtually taken for granted. Nevertheless, there are occasional references to sources, both written and oral, which he drew on to reconstruct his detailed history of events, including battles, intrigues, senatorial proceedings, building activities and populist measures, that he painstakingly plotted through his *Annals*, a year by year account of the empire. And like Thucydides, he makes a point about sifting through rumours about intrigues and murders in the imperial family, explicitly denying what he considers to be particularly outrageous speculation: My objectisto request all into whose hands my work shall come, not to catch eagerly at wild and improbable rumours in preference to genuine history which has not been perverted into romance.

Style of writing History

The above mentioned historian evidently wrote for an elite, literate audience, although some of their compositions may have been disseminated orally as well. Virtually every sentence was carefully crafted, with consummate skill that often survives even in translations. Thucydides appears to be most self-conscious in this respect. He assumes a tone of deliberate solemnity and warns the reader: Assuredly they will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet displaying the exaggerations of his craft, or by the compositions of the chroniclers that are attractive at truth's expense. This solemn tone was often combined with exemplary precision. Perhaps the most outstanding instance of this is provided by Thucydides' graphic description of the plague that hit Athens during the second year of the war. Here is how he delineated the symptoms: people in good health were all of a sudden attacked by violent heats in the head, and redness and inflammation in the eyes, the inward parts, such as the throat or tongue, becoming bloody and emitting an unnatural and fetid breath. His depiction of the implications of the long-drawn conflict is also incisive: In peace and prosperity, states and individuals have better sentiments, because they do not find themselves confronted with imperious necessities; but war takes away the easy supply of daily wants, and so proves a rough master, that brings most men's characters to a level with their fortunes.

And yet, he incorporates speeches, characterised by Finley as "the most interesting and seductive section" of the text. It is intriguing to read what Thucydides himself declares about these: With reference to the speeches in this history, some were delivered before the war began, others while it was going on; some I heard myself, others I got from various quarters; it was in all cases difficult to carry them word for word in one's memory, so my habit has been to make the speakers say Greco-Roman Traditions what was in my opinion demanded of them by the various occasions, of course adhering as closely as possible to the general sense of what was really said.

An example can perhaps serve to clarify how such speeches were used by the author. This excerpt is from a speech attributed to the Corinthians who apparently tried to win the support of the Spartans against the Athenians. Thucydides uses this opportunity to insert a eulogy of Athenian character: The Athenians are addicted to innovation, and their designs are characterized by swiftness alike in conception and execution; you (i.e. the Spartans) have a genius for keeping what you have got, accompanied by a total want of invention, and when forced to act you never go far enough. ...Further, there is promptitude on their side against procrastination on yours, they are never at home, you are never from it: for they hope by their absence to extend their acquisitions, you fear by your advance to endanger what you have left behind.

Succinct descriptions mark the work of Livy as well. Here is an instance from his description of the

conflict between the common people and the senators (c. 494-493 BCE): Great was the panic in the city, and through mutual fear all was in suspense. The people left in the city dreaded the violence of the senators; the senators dreaded the people remaining in the city.... And Tacitus provides us with a graphic summary in his Histories when he proclaims I am entering on the history of a period rich in disasters, frightful in its wars, torn by civil strife, and even in peace full of horrors.

Understanding Historical Events and Processes

The most apparent concern of these early historians was with providing a detailed narrative of what they regarded as central events. Rarely do they pause in their relentless sequencing of events to speculate on the whys. Events are carefully located in space and time, but beyond that, there is little obvious reflection on why a particular course of events occurred. Yet, it is possible to discern the perspectives that shaped the narrative. On the one hand, beyond the immediate milieu and its political exigencies, the authors worked with a range of ideas that were probably shared by most literate men of their times. These included, in some instances, an acceptance of fate, which was often interwoven with an acceptance of the validity of omens as indices of future events. Others worked with a notion of a long term steady decline in human fortunes from a golden past. But, in yet other instances, we find an implicit if not explicit recognition of the importance of the human agent. Occasionally, the framing arguments are provided by an acknowledgement of the fickleness of human fortune, a fairly commonplace sentiment. Consider, for instance, this statement of Herodotus: For the cities which were formerly great have most of them become insignificant; and such as are at present powerful, were weak in the olden time. I shall therefore discourse equally of both, convinced that human happiness never continues long in one stay.

Related to this is a belief in omens and signs. Herodotus declares categorically: It mostly happens that there is some warning when great misfortunes are about to befall a state or nation....In fact, omens and their implications are strewn across the pages of his narrative. We will cite just one example, a prodigy that was evidently seen by the troops of the Persian ruler Xerxes as he marched towards Greece.

a mare brought forth a hare. Hereby it was shown plainly enough, that Xerxes would lead forth his host against Greece with mighty pomp and splendour, but, in order to reach again the spot from which he set out, would have to run for his life. Other authors, such as Thucydides, noted spectacular occurrences without comment. For instance, he mentions the eruption of the volcanic Mount Etna, in Sicily, but makes no attempt to correlate this with contemporary events. Divine wrath is also occasionally invoked. Livy for instance records how a man named Appius instructed public slaves to perform certain ritual functions. He adds:

The result is wonderful to relate and should make people scrupulous of disturbing the established modes of religious solemnities: for though there were at that time twelve branches of the Potitian family (to which Appius belonged), containing thirty grown up persons, yet they were everyone, together with their offspring, cut off within the year; so that the name of the Potiti became extinct, while the censor Appius also was, by the unrelenting wrath of the gods, some years after deprived of his sight. Yet, we would be mistaken to dismiss these authors as simply superstitious. The human agent, with all his/her failings and triumphs, is also duly acknowledged. Herodotus, for instance, recognized that the Athenian attempt to resist the Persian invasion by creating a formidable fleet was critical. He argues that if the Athenians had opted for peace instead, the rest of Greece would have come under Persian control sooner or later. He writes: If then a man should now say that the Athenians were the saviours of Greece, he would not exceed the truth. For they truly held the scales; and whichever side they espoused must have carried the day....and so, next to the gods, they repulsed the invader.

As interesting is Thucydides' assessment of the past. He argued that fertile lands were more open to invasion, that Attica (the state of which Athens was the capital) was free from invasions owing to the poverty of its soil, and that hence people from other states came here to seek refuge. At another level,

his explanation of the Peloponnesian war is both succinct and telling: The real cause I consider to be the one which was formally most kept out of sight. The growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedaemon (the state of which Sparta was the capital), made war inevitable.

Tacitus rarely allows himself to move beyond the nitty-gritty of the chronicle to speculate on larger issues. On one of these rare occasions he delineated the origins of legal systems from a state of pristine harmony: Mankind in the earliest age lived for a time without a single vicious impulse, without shame or guilt, and, consequently, without punishment and restraints. Rewards were not needed when everything right was pursued on its own Greco-Roman Traditions merits; and as men desired nothing against morality, they were debarred from nothing by fear. When however they began to throw off equality, and ambition and violence usurped the place of self-control and modesty, despotisms grew up and became perpetual among many nations. Some from the beginning, or when tired of kings, preferred codes of laws.

And elsewhere he speculates on fate and its influence on human fortunes: Indeed, among the wisest of the ancients and among their disciples you will find conflicting theories, many holding the conviction that heaven does not concern itself with the beginning or the end of our life; or, in short, with mankind at all; and that therefore sorrows are continually the lot of the good, happiness of the wicked; while others, on the contrary, believe that, though there is a harmony between fate and events, yet it is not dependent on wandering stars, but on primary elements, and on a combination of natural causes. Still, they leave us the capacity of choosing our life, maintaining that, the choice once made, there is a fixed sequence of events.

Conclusion

Greek historiography reached its peak in the fifth century BC with Herodotus and more especially with Thucydides, whose narrative is perhaps the nearest approach to the ideal history of contemporary events the West has yet known. In particular, his survey of causes and effects, his impartiality in securing evidence from both sides, and his rigorous accuracy of detail established scientific standards which one might confidently have expected to be maintained and revered by his successors. Such expectations, however, were scarcely fulfilled. Herodotus and Thucydides were thus products of what has often been projected as the classical age in the history of Greece in general and of Athens in particular. When the Romans engulfed the Greek Empire, they too copied the Greek method of historical inquiry, just as they copied many other Greek practices. Ancient Romans had their own biographical tradition of storytelling, but they eventually adopted some elements of Greek methodology. Roman histories generally focused on Rome's rise to power, attributing its success to the character of its political leaders, fair policies, strong political institutions, and fate. Polybius, Livy and Tacitus were located very closely within the contexts of empire.

Unit-2
Chapter-II

MEDIEVAL UNDERSTANDING:

Western- St. Augustine: Arabic- Ibn Khaldun

Introduction

The Greco-Roman historiography of ancient period was succeeded by Church and the Arab historiography in the middle age. The medieval Church and Arab historiography is characterized by the hold of religion in the mind of man. In the western world by the medieval period, historiography took more dramatic turn way from secular history as a result of the emergence and spread of the Christian religion within the Roman Empire. With its epicenter located in the Roman Province of Judea, Christianity was shaped by Judaism, as well as by Greco-Roman culture, but Christian historians added a unique twist to historiography. From the very beginning, history was essential to the Christian religion, just as it was to Judaism. History helped Christians not only to convert new followers and instruct fellow Christians by telling the history of Jesus of Nazareth and his followers, but also to defend Christianity from its enemies and prove that the ideas of the early Christian church were a direct succession from Jesus' apostles. Christians saw the world as divided into two: good and evil, the sacred and the secular, the age Before Christ (B.C.) and the age of Christ (Anno Domini or A.D.). This duality informed their historical perspectives. These perspectives made Christian history different from its Judaic and Greco-Roman predecessors. As the Roman Empire crumbled and Christianity struggled to survive and spread, Christian historians continued to emphasize the importance of religion, specifically the power of the Christian God, in the history of mankind. As one of the most important Christian philosophers of all time, Augustine of Hippo in North Africa (354–430) had an enormous impact on Christian historiography. During this period, in the Middle Eastern and North African areas of the former Roman Empire, Islam replaced Christianity as the dominant religion after 700 C.E. Muslim historians, however, did not always emphasize God as the primary agent in history. Following more directly in the footsteps of Thucydides and Tacitus, Muslim historians stressed human agency in the rise and fall of civilizations. While there were many important Muslim historians, the most famous of these is 'Abd-ar-Rahman Abu Zaid Wali-adDin Ibn Khaldun (1332–1395C.E.). Whatever may be during this period, Historiography was seen as that which linked the present to the past in an intellectual 'representation' of the past through the narrative contained in the chronica. Thus, from the beginning Christian historiographers were deeply concerned with the proper attribution of facts to their corresponding dates or times and to place them correctly within a continuous chronology. This chapter will discuss the tradition of historical writings in the Christian church and Muslim Arab in the medieval age.

Christian Historiography

The oldest Christian histories were universal histories written for the simple purpose of satisfying the demand to integrate Biblical history into an ancient chronology, involving a vast pre- Christian past and spread over various eras. Contemporary political developments in Europe, principally that of the formation of vast feudal lordships and monarchies also cast their shadows over the writing of history. Historiography, thus also became charged with the task of establishing a concurrence between these various Christian and secular traditions. In the Christian historiography ephemeral nature of history is clearly visible. In this school of historiography, all earthly things were ruled by time. For the medieval chroniclers, historical change was primarily a cycle of growth and decay of regents and kingdoms. The medieval concept of the past thus was determined by an extremely peculiar, ambiguous, even paradoxical, mixture of belief in historical progression on the one hand and its immutability on the

other, of an epochal change and at the same time a continuity of times and historical situations. In the final analysis, it lacked a sense of the truly historical characterisation of the past. However, owing to its emphasis on verifiability of the chronological arrangement, this understanding cannot be classified as being truly timeless, but in various ways it nevertheless lacked a sense of assigning a specific peculiarity to each passing epoch. The past was perceived as a (temporal) development corresponding to the speculum, the earthly time, with an unchanging character and essence. This engendered a widespread tendency to order historical events according to their respective time which was in no way seen as contradictory to the opposing tendency to detach the subject matter of the same events from their chronological order. Regarding the medieval concept of the past, time was an essential part of earthly existence, yet at the same time it was a symbol of the eternal world. Historiographical thinking was combined with the theological needs of history. However, the fact that change occurred was also undeniable.

Even in the Bible the coming and going of three world-empires had been described, and, since St Augustine (354-430) no one would deny the changes that had occurred or were going to occur in consequence of the advent of Christianity. Also, St Augustine had given a perfectly acceptable explanation for historical change. He had argued that only God had perfect ever-lasting stability, whereas change in the temporal world was the consequence of the very imperfection of human existence.

The Bible in the middle ages was seen not simply as a literal description of the unfolding of a Christian religion, but also as a chronicle of a succession of spiritual parts. The diverse texts of the Christian tradition were unified in the Bible, thus giving it a coherent history in a historiographical frame of reference which was blended with a unified system of symbolisms, so uniting history with tradition and representation. The acceptance of Catholicism strengthened this historical homogenisation, for one of its core elements was its character of being a universal religion which had little space for the particularist rules, norms and values of specific groups. The earliest Christian historical works were chronologies designed to link events from scripture with political events, and to create a universal history of humanity. Though the belief in the divine origin of the rulers militated against fundamental principles of Christian theological doctrine, the past was constituted by the narratives which were written down in the Holy Scriptures, and assigned no value to the particularistic traditions which were transmitted within political groups. Also, the Christian Church enforced the rule that believers in the Christian faith had to respect the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate source of both tradition as well as justice. Church history thus could now become universal history.

Changing concept of time and historiography

A conscious concept of time was an essential element in every historiographical work of the middle ages. From the deep interpenetration which existed between theology and history in the middle ages, 'time' became purely 'temporal' (that is, an inseparable condition of earthly existence) because it was directly connected with creation and the essence of having been created by the Creator. Thus, it was situated in opposition to eternity, which, as God's 'time', was timeless and unmoving. This temporality of earthly time was described in the early twelfth century as 'a shadow of eternity; it has begun with the world and will end with the world'. Such a clear separation between God's 'time' and temporal 'time' was crucial in developing the notions of chronology, as a measurable sequence of the passage of time in history. Even more important was the methodological relationship-time was henceforth a necessary constitutive element of historiography. In the prologue of his chronicle, Hugh of Saint Victor (c.1096-1142) named three particular 'circumstances' of historical facts : 'The knowledge of facts particularly depends on three aspects: the persons (personae) by whom they have been done, the places (loca) where they have been done, and the times (tempora) when they have been done. To this can be added the notion of 'action' (negotium). A typical medieval narrative was determined by these four elements. Therefore place, time, and history formed not only the contents of medieval

encyclopaedias, but that some chronicles started with ‘time tables’ or even with theoretical discussions on time. In medieval perception, chronicles were seen as *rerum gestarum* (narration of facts) and, consequently, *series temporum* (sequence of time).

According to the contemporary perceptions, there were five specific reckonings of historical time which delimited the subject of history from other genres:

- By the choice of its facts, in the sense that any author had to choose those which were worth remembering (*memorabilia*), and this made historiography distinct;
- By claiming to recollect the truth (the real facts), it was distinguished from fiction;
- By its examination of the past and, especially, the ‘origins’ (*origines*), it was separated from the prophecies about the future (which nevertheless were also regarded);
- By its intention to hand down the corpus of known facts of the past to posterity (*memoriae commendare*), it was constituted as historiography;
- By its specific manner of representation, the chronological order, it acquired its proper character.

It is significant that this sense of time developed quite early in the west European traditions of history-writing. One of the principal moving spirits behind this novel reckoning of time and its historiographical significance was ‘the Venerable’ Bede (672-735). Once again, the root of this shift lay in the attempts to historicise the Bible. Remarkably, Bede, who had used the word *chronica* as the title for his previous writings on the Biblical traditions, in 731 in entitling his work ‘Ecclesiastical History of the English People’, chose the conventional word *historia* in order to denote his synthetic way of commemorating the past. In doing so Bede was drawing from a pre-Christian tradition, from Latin where the word *historia* had meant a secular account of the past compiled from a variety of sources and describing events of the human world set apart from the divine world. However, Bede expanded the range of the meaning of *historia* by adding a single major qualifying attribute which was to be the cornerstone of medieval European historiography, namely, that his *historia* was to be an ecclesiastical one, thus, integrating the account of the history of the Church into the universalism represented in Biblical traditions. This last purpose of history was always to be forefront in his mind, at least alongside the need to be accurate of which he was so conscious. Additionally, he became the first historian to use the AD, that is, from Christ’s birth, chronology and in doing so set the standard for historiographical time reckoning in Europe. This method was adapted into general use through the popularity of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* and the two works on chronology.

This also enabled him to date the change from Roman universal rule over Britain to the establishment of local rulers through a chronology that was not tied to the Roman administrative institutions but focused on Christ. At a more fundamental level, Bede tried to weigh the relative evidential value of the several sources available to him, thereby initiating a quiet methodological departure from the group-centred oral traditions of contemporary historical thinking. Orally transmitted traditions had retained their validity and authenticity without fundamental change by virtue of being handed down from generation to generation in particularist groups. In contrast, Bede, like the historians of late Antiquity, committed himself to the writing and publication of a text which he expected to be communicated through reading and copying and whose reception,

by virtue of these communicative techniques, would no longer be confined to one particularist group.

St. Augustine and his works (354-430)

As in antiquity, the best medieval works were accounts of contemporary history by men who had participated in the events that they were describing. It is, however, very significant that some of the writers that are prized most highly today survive in only very few manuscripts and were presumably not appreciated by most of their contemporaries.

Among many, one of the most important Christian philosophers of all time, Augustine of Hippo in North Africa (354-430) had an enormous impact on Christian historiography. Augustine’s *City of God*

, written in the fifth century, envisioned all of history as a recurrent conflict between the City of God (the sacred) and the City of this World (the profane). In this way, history was cyclical, but also linear in that God's will for humankind was unfolding from creation toward the Second Coming of Christ (the end). Even more so than Eusebius, Augustine imagined supernatural forces (God and Satan) as primary agents in history. The Augustinian version of the world dominated European scholarship throughout the Middle Ages.

St. Augustine, the greatest figure in the early Christian Church, was a pagan to whom Christianity had come as profound emotional satisfaction. Augustine labored chiefly with pen. Two of his books belong to the classic of the world. The *confession*, his autobiography is written with great honesty and sincerity and address directly to god. The *de-civitat-dei* (City of God) in twenty two book composed between A.D 413 to 426, and, is one of greatest text in the world. In A.D 410 Rome was taken and sacked by the Goth under Alaric. The calamity that the city had suffered was attributed by the pagan to Christianity as a punishment for the neglect of old gods. Augustine deeply felt the challenge to his faith and devoted all the power of his subtle genius to convincing the Roman world that such catastrophe did for a movement impugn Christianity. For thirteen years he labored on his book whose twelve hundred pages dealt with everything from the first scene t the last judgment.

Augustine maintain against the pagan charged that Rome was punished not for its new religion but for its continued sin under paganism. But for his ore substantial answer took the form of a philosophy of history- an attempt to explain the event of recorded time of universal principles. Here he appeared a political thinkers taking for his main theme the contest between temporal and spiritual power. There are two cities. The first city is the *civitat-dei* or the city of God. It is the divine city of the past, present and future worshipper of the one true god. The heavenly city or kingdom was founded by angels and its reflection is the holy church, whose office was to realize that heavenly region on the earth. The second is the *civitat-terrena* or the earthly city of kingdom, also the city of man founded by the rebeliion of *satan*, the earthly city is devoted to the earthly affairs and joy. It is evil. The earthly city is based on physical force, but the city of god is based on divine law. The city of man is relaiive in importance, limited in scope, and transitory in nature, but the city of god is absolute in power, unlimited in scope and permanent in nature, a city that enable man to attained higher knowledge and become perfect. Not until the last judgment will the two city be wholly separated. With this book the (*civitat-dei*) says Will Durant, " Paganism as a philosophy ceased to be an Christianity a philosophy began. It was the first definite formulation of the medieval mind." The book become the basis of catholic theology and formulated the dominant political theory of the middle ages. It was the first effort to propound the relation between the church d state. the catholic church who eventually wave out of Augustine theories the doctrine of a theocratic state, of the subordination of the secular authority to spiritual authority.

The city of god controlled catholic historiography ever since it was written. It put god in history, declaring that god ruled human affairs. Augustine presented the historical process a struggle between good and evil, virtue and vice, and divine and the demonic, and theocratic ad secular. He saw history, sacred or salvation history, as confirming to a divine plan. The Greco-Roman humanistic ideas made man the wise architect of his own fortune, but the Christian doctrine based itself on the human insufficiency and held that man unaided intellect and efforts cannot plan and achive the end without divine grace. Human action is blind, a blindness derive from man original sins. The human achievements are not due to force of human will and it intellect, but due to god's grace. God plan human action and causes them to be execute. Such a view of history placing god at the centre of human affairs is variously called sacred history, salvation history, providential history or patristic history. This view of history govern Europe throughout the middle ages.

In the city of god, observe Herbert Butterfeild, we see Augustine arguing his way out of a cyclic view of history. He cannot allow a that everything that happened will go on repeatating itself endlessly

throughout time. Such a belief would turned the incarnation of Christ into a puppet show.

2.2.2.3. Significance of Christian Historiography

World history came to be established as a computable, finite, yet unstable entity under the control of change in the historiographical traditions of medieval Europe. Memory was an important repository of historical traditions in medieval Europe. In this the cult of saints and the veneration of ancestors occupied a very important place. The earliest political groups in early medieval Europe emphasised tradition in their commemoration of the past. In many of these political groups, rulers were involved in the process of passing on to future generations the inherited traditions which contained norms of behaviour as well as conventional group-related attitudes and perceptions. Therefore oral narratives were and were believed to contain records of the past, whose reliability and authenticity was to be confirmed by the social status of the person narrating them. Therefore these traditions could transmit sanctioned rules, norms and values which, in turn, authoritatively shaped the attitudes and perceptions of the group members. Gradually however, there was a shift towards the use of a wider variety of sources.

One major problem with medieval European historical writing was its perception of history as primarily as a chronological progression. Historical changes were seen in political rise and decline or in change of rulership, possibly complemented by spatial displacement of the centres of power, and historical events were installed in their precise temporal frame. But these changes were not estimated, interpreted, or explained according to their respective historical situations, as structural changes, changes in contemporary attitudes, or, even in the historical conditions. Owing to a linear concept of time, the authors recognized an irretrievability of history, but they did not acknowledge a thorough alteration through the coming of new epochs. Therefore, they completely lacked any sense of 'alternative pasts' or of the historical peculiarity of each epoch. The twelfth century, as a modern historian has remarked, the twelfth century was not simply concerned with 'the pastness of the past' but with 'its timeless edification'. The past and the present were thus fused in one continuous narrative.

One danger of regarding the past with the eyes of the present to such a degree easily was that of anachronism. For instance, Charlemagne was not only presented as a martial Frankish emperor but also as a knight and a crusader. In the account of Caesars (ostensible) conquest of 'Germany' the Roman camps (castella) became medieval castles, the legionaries (milites) were turned into knights, the magistrates into ministerials, and the Germanic peoples became Germans.

The unawareness of the meaning of anachronism helps to explain the strange wanderings of medieval annals and chronicles. If a religious community wanted to acquire a historical narrative, it copied some work that happened to be most readily accessible. A continuation might then be added at the manuscript's new abode, and, later on, this composite version might be copied and further altered by a succession of other writers. Hence there are at least six main versions of the annals known as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. They all derive from the annals kept down to 892 at Winchester, the West Saxon capital. The tendency to link the present time with the period of the Roman Empire and to emphasise a continuity indicates a characteristic feature of the concept (or consciousness) of history in the high Middle Ages that seems to contradict the tendency to determine and record precise historic dates. On the one hand, the authors acknowledged and noted change and development, and they distinguished between epochs or phases in history; on the other hand, their perceptions of the events were imbued with an astounding sense of 'timelessness' that ignored a real difference in the epochal character insofar as this went beyond the political succession of power, reign, and kingdoms. On the contrary, it allowed events that were long past to be applied directly to the present.

Contact with Byzantines and Muslims broadened history writing by showing Westerners other points of view. Byzantine historians also extensively used the genre of writing history in the form of chronicles, although the greater unity of the Byzantine Empire and the persistence of a unified culture

gave a somewhat more literary quality to the Byzantine works. Medieval Islamic historians such as al-Tabari and al-Masudi wrote histories of great scope, often employing sophisticated methods to separate fact from fable. But by far the greatest medieval Arabic historian was Ibn Khaldun, who created an early version of sociological history to account for the rise and decline of cities and civilisations. In the course of the fifteenth century, commemorating the past as the changing history of the world became more directly intertwined with the geographical, specifically maritime, exploration of the world in the quest for the seaway to India or the hypothetical southern continent which was thought to connect Africa with Asia. The extending recognition by Europeans of the pluralism of continents on the surface of the earth made an oddity of the conventional medieval world picture and the medieval way of counting years and commemorating the past.

Though the basis of Western historiographical tradition continued to be classical antiquity and Christianity, the later Middle Ages received that deposit, transmitted it with a wider variety of sources and in a strictly chronological frame. It also adapted it to wider influences which were touching the shores of Europe from outside. Therefore the criticism which has sometimes been levelled that medieval historians showed little awareness of the process of historical change and that they were unable to imagine that any earlier age was substantially different from their own seems inappropriate.

Arabian Historiography

The origin of historiography in Arabic in Islamic civilisation is to be sought in the Quran and Hadis. The detailed references to the Prophets and their followers of the past contained in the Quran created a historical sense among the Muslims, and it grew stronger with the passage of time. It makes its readers conscious of the fact that history is a continuous process, influenced by important ideas of the great men whose appearance on human scene is a great event of history. It also provides historical information concerning the life and actions of the Prophet and the community which he gave leadership. All this created awareness about time among the Muslims who realised the need to compile the history of the life and times of their Prophet and his immediate successors for the benefit of posterity. Every effort seems to have been made by the early writers of Islamic history to ascertain the authenticity of the sources of information, because the Quran teaches its followers to ascertain the truth. The critical method, called Silsilah-i Isnad (chain of narrators) employed in ascertaining the authenticity of report about a historical event helped the historians achieve objectivity in their approach to a great extent. In fact the importance of the source and cross checking it with corroboration from other sources to establish authenticity was first established during the process of the compilation of prophets actions and his sayings (hadis). These compilations were done by scholars for providing interpretations of various events as also for legal purpose. The criterion was to verify the authenticity of a tradition on the basis of the chain of narrators, the teachings of the Quran, the life of the Prophet and also the Arabic language spoken and written during the time of the Prophet. This was an important historical method that explains the change in the character and critical accuracy of historical information amongst the Arab historians.

In fact, this makes the Arabic historiography an important part of Islamic culture. Recognising its significance in the history of history-writing, the Jewish scholar, Bernard Lewis remarks: 'Interest in the past soon became a distinguishing characteristic of Muslim Civilization. Since early times Muslim entities-states, dynasties, cities, even professions have been conscious of their place in history; they have been interested in the deeds of those who went before them and anxious to record their own for those who came after. Almost every dynasty that ruled in Muslim lands has left annals or chronicles of some kind; in many countries, including some of high civilization, serious historical writing begins with the coming of Islam.'

Islamic Philosophy of History: Terminology

Islam is a religion that has a strong sense of history. The Qur'an recognizes two major sources of information, nature and history. The Qur'an narrated stories about the past for the purpose of teaching

lessons to the people. Historiography has always been tantamount to and considered one of the major components in the Muslim intellectual and literary tradition.

Is it Muslim or Islamic philosophy of history? Of course, this question is an intricate one because there are ambiguities or gray areas between the two terms. Both terms refer to different facets of the subject. The term Muslim refers to the person or people who adhere to the religion of Islam. It carries the historical, social, and physical meaning of the community and people whose religion is Islam. One might argue, of course, based on what is commonly perceived: whatever the Muslims do, they do it in the name of Islam. However, we must bear in mind that not everything the Muslims do could be taken as representing or in accordance with the principles of Islam. There are many instances where the Muslim conducts him or herself not in conformity with the basic injunctions of Islam. In this case, that particular conduct, although carried out by a Muslim, should not be taken as Islamic because it does not comply with Islamic principles. The Muslim carried out this conduct on his own wish and free will, which in no way could be connected with Islam.

Conversely, when we refer to something as Islamic, we refer to Islamic principles derived from the teachings of the Qur'an, the sunna and the other authentic Islamic sources. The Muslim, with appropriate qualifications, expresses views and interpretations on aspects of religious teachings and principles. It is quite inappropriate to categorize whatever comes from a Muslim as Islamic because it is humanly fallible, subject to misrepresentations, while the Qur'an is considered theologically divine, sacred, and infallible.

On this basis, it is safer and more logical to refer to a Muslim rather than an Islamic philosophy of history. Although in most cases, the views of Muslim scholars and intellectuals can be considered as representing Islam, it is more appropriate to associate the views and opinions with the person rather than with the religion. This is more reasonable since there would be variations, differences and dispute among scholars. However, in the course of this discussion, the term Islamic philosophy would also be used occasionally and interchangeably whenever appropriate, especially when the discussion deals particularly with the questions of theological and doctrinal matters.

Islamic Concept of History

Is there an Islamic concept of history? To trace the Islamic concept of history is actually to trace the root of the idea of history in Islam. As the primary theological and doctrinal sources of Islam, the texts gathered in the Qur'an contain many narratives about events of different societies over different ages. In fact, one of the suras (chapters) of the Qur'an, sura is called Sura al-Qasas (meaning: history or narration). Apart from this, other verses elsewhere in the Qur'an contain various forms of narratives about ancient generations and civilizations. The purpose is to give lessons to the people. The Qur'anic term for this is 'ibra (example). In one of the verses, the Qur'an reads, "In their history, there is a lesson for those who possess intelligence". The term ibra is also used elsewhere in slightly different context such as in the phenomena of cattle and the succession of day and night. However, the ground is the same, i.e., it carries the principles of education and lesson. In this sense, in so far as the Qur'anic notion is concerned, the concept of 'ibra can be regarded as the most important precept to the later development of the idea of history in Islam. Apart from 'ibra, there are other concepts that imply similar implications. The concept of ayat (signs) for example in the verse "We have set it up as a lesson. Do any of you wish to learn?" and "In Joseph and his brothers there are lessons for the seekers" and the concept of dhikr in "This should be a lesson for everyone who possesses a mind, or is able to hear and witness". Ibn Khaldun was one of the earliest to properly use and utilize this concept.

This can be seen from the very title of his magnum opus, the Muqaddima li-Kitab al-'Ibar. Second to the Qur'an is the Prophetic tradition, sunna or hadith. This is about the sayings and the deeds of the Prophet. The Prophetic tradition gave a strong impetus to the later development of historiography in Islam. Theologically speaking, the deeds and sayings of the Prophet are regarded as the second source next to the Qur'an. It is vital for Muslims to precisely record and document these Prophetic traditions

for later generations to study and derive from their religious teachings and injunctions.

Islam, as inspired by the Qur'anic notions, deals with history, with the past, from the perspective of prescribed laws and principles. It implies that all events are governed by a set of laws known as the law of God (sunnat Allah) and at the same time obey the basic natural principles of cause and effect. The Qur'an also emphasizes the principle of free choice (ikhtiyar) and free will, according to which human beings have the ability and freedom to choose. Human free will should be understood within the scope of a larger and broader spectrum of universal divine will. There are certain limitations that human free will cannot surpass.

Under the principle of free will, human beings have the ability to choose, decide on their conducts and actions. God will hold them responsible for it. God uses events such as successes and failures, victories and defeats, prosperity and decay, to distinguish the good from the bad. People are tested in this life so that they should take the opportunity to show their worth, to prepare for the next life, which is eternal. Certainly, the process of testing requires a person to possess free will and freedom of choice. This would enable him to determine and to choose between what is lawful and what is unlawful, what is good and what is bad and above all, what is permitted and what is prohibited. The concept of khilafa (vicegerent of God) and the principle of free will express these ideas.

Development of Muslim Historiography

The origins of historiography in Islam were doctrinal and theological. Historiography was theological because it was considered as another category of authentic religious source of laws, values, and religious rituals and practices. Biographic stories about the Prophet and his tradition namely the sunna and hadith fit well in this category. From an Islamic point of view, history is also seen as the practical manifestation of the divine plan. Therefore, historiography cannot be perceived as merely a subject acquired for the sake of knowledge alone; it is something that carries a religious thrust in it. In Islam, the spirit and foundation of historiography is to offer lessons for later generations. For this reason, Muslim historiography has had a very close connection with the general development of Islam, including its doctrines, law, and jurisprudence.

The Prophet Muhammad is the central figure in Islam both theologically and historically. His personality, sayings and deeds are regarded as the primary source of Islamic law and jurisprudence next to the Holy Book, the Qur'an. In Islam this doctrine is firmly coined in the concept of sunna (exemplary conduct of the Prophet). Because of this concept, there was a crucial need to acquire and record authentic reports about his life and activities. These reports were gathered, compiled, and preserved for reference by the later generations.

Due to the significance and the theological nature of the Prophet's biography, there was a pressing need to develop a particular method to ensure the accuracy of the reports. Since the narratives and reports were obtained and then collected through a chain of reporters or transmitters, an oral tradition, the trustworthiness and reliability of these transmitters needed to be thoroughly scrutinized. The role of transmitters was so important because if one of the transmitters was not fully reliable, according to a certain set of prescribed standards, the whole report was considered weak. For this reason the traditionalists and historians had to formulate approaches and methods for collecting and authenticating the accuracy of reports and the information transmitted through them. This generated a new science called 'ulum al-hadith (the science of Prophetic tradition).

Muslim historians and jurists set a standard that needed to be met before reports were to be accepted as authentic. This exercise required an extensive knowledge of the background, history, and personality of the transmitters. In 'ulum al-hadith this procedure is called al-jarh wa al-ta'dil (disparaging and authenticating). This method is used to determine the level of reliability of the transmitters of the traditions. This development of the science of transmission is an important milestone for the later development of historiography and historical traditions in Islam. Many modern historians are of the opinion that the biographical literature is the corner stone for the subsequent development of Muslim

historiographic tradition.

The biographical literature had its share in the development of Muslim historiography from the very outset, and eventually achieved a dominant position in it. The biography of the Prophet (sira Rasulallah and maghazi) as the original form of Muslim historiography. Muhammad Ibn Ishaq (d.151/768) was the leading authority in sira literature (Harun 1979: 11). Taking into account all these diverse views, it should be possible to safely conclude that the development of biographical literature in Islam can be dated no later than the second century of the Muslim era, Hijra.

Ibn Khaldun and his works

Muslim philosophy of history reached its zenith in the work of Abdul al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun of Tunis (d.808/1406). Ibn Khaldun, who has also been honored as a father of sociology, developed historiography into a new science of society, namely 'ilm al-'umran. In the hand of Ibn Khaldun, historiography became a critical and essential part of the study of the rise and fall of civilizations and societies. Like his predecessor Ibn Miskawayh, Ibn Khaldun was unhappy with the development of Muslim historiography prior to his time. He found that most of the documentations and reports on historical events were not gathered properly and would satisfy

methodical requirements for reliable historiography. This followed a lack of scientific procedures or appropriate methodological devices to verify the correctness of historiographic reports. As a result, these reports had factual flaws. He realized that the Muslim scientific community at that time was in dire need of a new paradigm, a new approach to the study of history. Hence, the birth of 'ilm al-'umran should be viewed as Ibn Khaldun's attempt to bridge the gap or provide the "missing link" in historiographic procedures and to fill up the methodological vacuum.

Although for some scholars, 'ilm al-'umran is just a system of sociology, for many others, there is much more to it. This "new science" is indeed a system of sociology aiming to explain the nature, the process, and structure of human social and political organization, but Ibn Khaldun's magnum opus, the Muqaddima or Prolegomena, shows that it encompasses more than a mere system of sociology. It stands as general framework of theoretical as well as applied science of human society. In this way, 'ilm al-'umran may be seen as operative and practical approach to historiographic studies of human society.

A forerunner of sociology, Ibn Khaldun, proposes a unique approach in treating historiography as part of a science of society with its own reasoning procedures. He treated historiography as a science and not merely as a narrative. He wrote historiography in light of a new method of explanation and reasoning and developed it into a proper and systematic social philosophy. Despite his active life in political and public affairs, he managed to produce a monumental historiography, dealing particularly with human social development in general. He perceived the historical process as the outcome of interactions between human society and the physical environment. History is a process in which human communities, societies, and institutions transform continuously. History deals with the dynamics of social affairs, which move in a constantly changing cycle. Ibn Khaldun believed that the historical process is dominated by two essential groups of people, whom he termed badawi (the nomads) and hadari (the townspeople). This becomes the foundation of his theory of rise and fall of human civilization.

The dual classification of 'umran into badawi and hadhari parallels sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies' (d.1936) concepts of gemeinschaft and gessellchaft. From 'umran Ibn Khaldun entered into a broader discourse about social and indeed civilizational factors, elements and processes. Human society develops from simple to complex, from badawi to hadari. Historiography should describe the progression line, composed of a myriad of important historical events, experiences, affairs, and incidents. Ibn Khaldun's historiography collects and classifies data, connects and explains it, and then comes up with universal judgments. In so doing, A philosopher of history par excellence, Ibn Khaldun's works possess remarkable originality, criticizing and analyzing history. He rejects the

perception of social historical events as the outcome of a chance. Before the social sciences or European substantial philosophy of history, he argued that social history obeyed rules of its own that had to be discovered and applied in the study of society, civilization, and history.

In his famous Prolegomena, Ibn Khaldun deals with society and its origin, sovereignty, the birth of towns and villages, trades, ways of making a living, and sciences. This is the best and most important part of the book in which he sketches his philosophical outlook on history, analyzing politics, economics, society, and history with outstanding originality and brilliance. He associates the rise of civilization with the growth of villages and towns. He adopts the ancient Aristotelian concept of the “political” nature of human beings. The center of his theory is man’s faculty of rationality (Ahmad 2003: 160). Ibn Khaldun is undoubtedly among the first to attempt to explain the evolution and progress of society. He explains the characteristics of race, climate, and the means of production, and how they affect the formation of man’s mind and sentiment, as well as the formation of society.

Another key component of Ibn Khaldun’s historiography is the emphasis on rationalism. He uses a logical apparatus and rational empirical assumptions as conceptual and theoretical foundations for his new science. He correlates rationalism with civilizational cycles. He asserts that rationalism may bring up civilization and it may also bring it down. For example, rationalism may lead to social corruption. He develops a rationalist approach in understanding socio-cultural phenomena, using classical logic to understand socio-economic realities underlying cultural experience and temporary events. He associates the good cultural life with the interrelationship that must be established between God, the world, and the Hereafter. Ibn Khaldun’s influence in the fields of sociology and historiography was tremendous, chiefly because of his great emphasis on reason and rationalism.

Muslim Philosophy of History and Encounters with the West

The philosophies of history and historiography in the Muslim world after Ibn Khaldun in the fifteenth century were not so remarkable. However, there were still reasonable developments on a moderate scale within a limited scope. This situation continued until the late nineteenth century when Muslim scholarship entered a new phase of its development. This was marked by an increasing interest among western scholars in the study of Islam, Muslim society, and traditions. A growing number of western scholars who engaged in this enterprise had subsequently created a new wave of scholarship, orientalism. Orientalism comes with a new literary style, offers epistemological and methodological assessments and critiques of Muslim literary history and historiography and frequently deconstructs the already established tradition. The orientalist even goes to the extent of questioning the authenticity of the transmitted reports, the tradition, using methods developed initially in Germany in the eighteenth century for the analysis of the Christian scriptures.

Muslim scholars and academics reacted to orientalist scholarship. For example, Muhammad Mustafa Azami has published *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* together with *On Shacht’s Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* as a direct reaction to Joseph Shacht’s work on Islamic law. There are three types of responses. First, some western educated Muslims fully adopted and applied oriental studies methods in their study of Islamic tradition, and presented their studies and analyses in a “westernized” fashion. Second, the so-called “fundamentalists” totally reject orientalism, and embark on sharp criticisms to launch intellectual battles, on religious and cultural grounds. For them orientalism is a stranger to Islamic scholarship and it is just another form of intellectual colonialism. In their opinion, it is more of a political than an intellectual or scholarly movement. Third, some rational scholars appreciate orientalism positively and attempt not only to bridge between tradition and modern scholarship, but also to take advantage of a dialogue for the benefit of the development of better Muslim scholarship. This group can be considered as modernist, its members are mostly trained and educated in the west but have a strong religious and cultural affiliation. They adopt a more accommodative stance but are selective and critical when dealing with orientalism. Overall, this group can be considered the mainstream in contemporary Muslim scholarship.

Conclusion

This chapter has portrayed a general overview of Medieval historiography flourished under the patronization of Christian church in Europe and Muslim philosophy of history in Arab world. It has touched on various questions including its origin, development, and debates. We see that the Christian view of history although overpowered by religion, it had overcome the humanism, substantialism and particularism of ancient Greco-Roman tradition and left a permanent enrichment of historical thought. The medieval Christian historiography introduce chronology in proper sense by dividing history into periods. On the other hand in Arab world a separate historiographic ideas and tradition in Islam was developed. Muslim philosophy of history was based on the best interpretation of Islamic principles. In Islam, history is important because it serves both religious and social functions. History serves as source of Islamic doctrines, law, and jurisprudence as well as ethical values. Although the Qur'an comes with peculiar principles regarding history, philosophers and the historians developed their own ideas and interpretation and were influenced by their own backgrounds and circumstances. Muslim philosophy of history also in one way or another has also been influenced by the previous ancient thoughts and traditions particularly that of the Greeks.

Unit-2
Chapter-III
SCIENTIFIC HISTORY, POST- MODERNIST & TOTAL HISTORY

Vico, Hegel, Ranke, Croce, Collingwood. Comte and Marx, The Annalists of France

Objective

In this chapter we intend to provide you an insight into the growth of modern trends in historical understandings. This lesson will briefly discuss some of the important trends and assumption developed during the post renaissance world of historiography. By the end of this chapter you would be able to:

- *know about the rise and growth of history from Vico to Foucault;*
- *describe the various aspects of modern scientific approach to historical understanding under Ranke, Hegel, Comte etc.;*
- *assess some major formulations of modern historian such as Croce and Collingwood;*
- *discuss the major Assumption of annalist school of Historiography in modern historical thinking; and*
- *elucidate some major aspects of post modernist intervention and interpretations of human history.*

Introduction

Modern historiography emerged in 19th century German universities, where Leopold von Ranke was especially influential. Sources had to be hard, not speculations and rationalizations. His credo was to write history the way it was. He insisted on primary sources with proven authenticity. Hegel and Marx introduced the concept of spirit and dialectical materialism, respectively, into the study of world historical development. Former historians had focused on cyclical events of the rise and decline of rulers and nations. Process of nationalization of history, as part of national revivals in 19th century, resulted with separation of "one's own" history from common universal history by such way of perceiving, understanding and treating the past that constructed history as history of a nation. The French Annales School radically changed the focus of historical research in France during the 20th century. Fernand Braudel wanted history to become more scientific and less subjective, and demanded more quantitative evidence. Furthermore, he introduced a socio-economic and geographic framework to historical questions. Other French historians, like Philippe Ariès and Michel Foucault, described the history of everyday topics such as death and sexuality. Since 1970s a new form of history appeared that is the anti-modern tradition, which has come to be called the postmodern turn. The three decades since then have seen the spread of postmodern ideas throughout the world. The ideologues of postmodernism have criticised and attacked the philosophy, culture and politics which modernity had generated. Thus we see that since the appearance of modern age history changed herself a lot. This chapter will throw lights on the modern historian and their historical understanding.

Giambattista Vico (1668-1744)

Giovan Battista (Giambattista) Vico (23 June 1668-23 January 1744) was an Italian political philosopher, rhetorician, historian, and jurist. He criticised the expansion and development of rationalism and was an supporter of classical antiquity. Vico is best known for his magnum opus, the *Scienza Nuova* of 1725, often published in English as *New Science*.

Vico is a precursor of systemic and complexity thinking, as opposed to Cartesian analysis and other kinds of reductionism. He is also well known for noting that "true itself is fact" or "the true itself is made", a proposition that has been read as an early instance of constructivist. Vico is often claimed to have inaugurated modern philosophy of history, although the term is not found in his text.

Biography

Born to a bookseller and the daughter of a carriage maker in Naples, Italy, Vico attended a series of grammar schools, but ill-health and dissatisfaction with Jesuit scholasticism led to home schooling. After a bout of typhus in 1686, Vico accepted a tutoring position in Vatolla (a Frazione of the comune of Perdifumo), south of Salerno that would last for nine years. In 1699, he married a childhood friend, Teresa Destito, and took a chair in rhetoric at the University of Naples. Throughout his career, Vico would aspire to, but never attain, the more respectable chair of jurisprudence. In 1734, however, he was appointed royal historiographer by Charles III, king of Naples, and was offered a salary far surpassing that of his professorship. Vico retained the chair of rhetoric until ill-health forced him to retire in 1741.

Works of Vico

Vico published several books in his lifetime: two tracts on pedagogical and philosophical matters which appeared under the titles *On the Study Methods of our Time* (1709), and *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians* (1711); the historical biography *The Deeds of Antonio Carafa* (1716); and the compendious study in Roman law, *Universal Right* (1722). In 1725 he published the first edition of his major work, *The New Science*, on which he continued to labor, constantly rewriting and revising the text, and eventually published two more editions in 1730 and in 1744. In 1728 he wrote his *Autobiography*, in which he recounts his intellectual development. Some of his inaugural orations and lectures on rhetoric at the University of Naples, as well as other occasional compositions, were published after his death. Among his admirers were some of the greatest authors and scholars in our times: James Joyce, Georges Sorel, Benedetto Croce, Erich Auerbach, Isaiah Berlin, Hayden White, and Carlos Fuentes.

Yet, Vico's *New Science* remains one of the most difficult texts in the canon of modern cultural history. The full title of the book—*Principles of a New Science by Giambattista Vico concerning the Common Nature of the Nations*—evokes both its subject-matter and enigmatic character. The following observations will thus examine its key terms from theological, philosophical, philological, and historiographical perspectives.

The Scienza Nuova: *The New Science* (1725, original title *Scienza Nuova*) is his major work and has been highly influential in the philosophy of history, and for historicists like Isaiah Berlin and Hayden White.

The verum factum principle: Vico is best known for his *verum factum* principle, first formulated in 1710 as part of his *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia, ex linguae latinae originibus eruenda* (1710) ("On the most ancient wisdom of the Italians, unearthed from the origins of the Latin language"). The principle states that truth is verified through creation or invention and not, as per Descartes, through observation: "The criterion and rule of the true is to have made it. Accordingly, our clear and distinct idea of the mind cannot be a criterion of the mind itself, still less of other truths. For while the mind perceives itself, it does not make itself." This criterion for truth would later shape the history of civilization in Vico's opus, the *Scienza Nuova* (*The New Science*, 1725), because he would argue that civil life—like mathematics—is wholly constructed.

Vichian rhetoric and humanism

Vico's version of rhetoric is often seen as the result of both his humanist and pedagogic concerns. In *De Nostri Temporis Studiorum Ratione* ("On the Order of the Scholarly Disciplines of Our Times"), presented at the commencement ceremonies of 1708, Vico argued that whoever "intends a career in public life, whether in the courts, the senate, or the pulpit" should be taught to "master the art of topics and defend both sides of a controversy, be it on nature, man, or politics, in a freer and brighter style of expression, so he can learn to draw on those arguments which are most probable and have the greatest degree of verisimilitude" (however, in his "*Scienza Nuova*", Vico denounces as "false eloquence" one defending both sides in controversies). As Royal Professor of Latin Eloquence, it was Vico's task to prepare students for higher studies in law and jurisprudence. His lessons thus dealt with the formal

aspects of the rhetorical canon, including arrangement and delivery. Yet as the above oration also makes clear, Vico chose to emphasize the Aristotelian connection of rhetoric with dialectic or logic, thereby reconnecting rhetoric to ends (or topics) as their center. Vico's objection to modern rhetoric is that it cuts itself off from common sense (*sensus communis*), as the sense common to all men. In his lectures and throughout the body of his work, Vico's rhetoric begins from a central argument or "middle term" (*medius terminus*) which it then sets out to clarify by following the order of things as they arise in our experience. Probability and circumstance retain their proportionate importance, and discovery-reliant upon topics or loci- supersedes axioms derived through reflective abstraction. In the tradition of classical Roman rhetoric, Vico sets out to educate the orator as the deliverer of the "oratio", a speech having "ratio" or reason/order at its heart. What is essential to the oratory art (as the Greek *rhetorike*) is the orderly link between common sense and an end commensurate to it-an end that is not imposed upon the imagination from above (in the manner of the moderns and a certain dogmatic form of Christianity), but that is drawn out of common sense itself. In the tradition of Socrates and Cicero, Vico's real orator or rhetorician will serve as midwife in the birth of "the true" (as a form or idea) out of "the certain" (as the confusion or ignorance of the student's particularized mind).

Vico's rediscovery of "the most ancient wisdom" of the senses (a wisdom that is "human foolishness" or *humana stultitia*), his emphasis on the importance of civic life, and his professional obligations remind us of the humanist tradition. He would call for a maieutic or jurisprudential oratory art against the grain of the modern privileging of a dogmatic form of reason in what he called the "geometrical method" of Descartes and the Port-Royal logicians.

Response to the Cartesian method

As he relates in his autobiography, Vico returned to Naples from Vatolla to find "the physics of Descartes at the height of its renown among the established men of letters." Developments in both metaphysics and the natural sciences abounded as the result of Cartesianism. Widely disseminated by the Port Royal Logic of Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole, Descartes' method was rooted in verification: the only path to truth, and thus knowledge, was through axioms derived from observation. Descartes' insistence that the "sure and indubitable" (or, "clear and distinct") should form the basis of reasoning had an obvious impact on the prevailing views of logic and discourse. Studies in rhetoric-indeed all studies concerned with civic discourse and the realm of probable truths-met with increasing disdain.

Vico's humanism and professional concerns prompted an obvious response that he would develop throughout the course of his writings: the realms of verifiable truth and human concern share only a slight overlap, yet reasoning is required in equal measure in both spheres. One of the clearest and earliest forms of this argument is available in the *De Italarum Sapientia*, where Vico argues that to introduce geometrical method into practical life is "like trying to go mad with the rules of reason," attempting to proceed by a straight line among the tortuosities of life, as though human affairs were not ruled by capriciousness, temerity, opportunity, and chance. Similarly, to arrange a political speech according to the precepts of geometrical method is equivalent to stripping it of any acute remarks and to uttering nothing but pedestrian lines of argument.

Vico's position here and in later works is not that the Cartesian method is irrelevant, but that its application cannot be extended to the civic sphere. Instead of confining reason to a string of verifiable axioms, Vico suggests (along with the ancients) that appeals to *phronêsis* or practical wisdom must also be made, as do appeals to the various components of persuasion that comprise rhetoric. Vico would reproduce this argument consistently throughout his works, and would use it as a central tenet of the *Scienza Nuova*.

Historiographical Implications

With the establishment of the "principles of humanity," Vico could claim that he had discovered the generative origins and evolution of all societies in history, and thereby fulfilled, as it were, the implicit

ambition in the title of the book—to build up a “New Science of the Common Nature of the Nations.” Our Science therefore comes to describe at the same time an ideal eternal history traversed in time by the history of every nation in its rise, development, maturity, decline, and fall. Indeed, we make bold to affirm that he who meditates this Science narrates to himself this ideal eternal history so far as he himself makes it for himself . . . For the first indubitable principle posited above is that this world of nations has certainly been made by men, and its guise must therefore be found within the modifications of our own human mind. And history cannot be more certain than when he who creates the things also narrates them

Idealist philosophers of history like Croce or Collingwood use these enigmatic formulations as confirmation, or at least inspiration for their own basic assumption, that historiographic knowledge is primarily recognitions or reenactments of actions performed by historical agents, whose motivations or intentions could be regained by modern historians and whoever “meditates” and “narrates” the actions to himself, thus re-“making” history in his own mind. However, for more critical and sociological theorists of history such as Marx and other “Materialists,” Vico’s assertion of the primacy of “modifications” and the “world of nations,” or the deconstruction of persons like Homer and Solon to communal representations, makes him a discoverer of collective mentalities and identities in history. “Historicists” from Dilthey and Meinecke to Berlin, and fellow “hermeneuticists” like Gadamer, commonly find in Vico’s accentuation of the “creative” and “narrative” aspects in historiography a certain intimation of the modern sensibility to the different epistemic perceptions and poetic configurations by which each nation or civilization accounts to itself for its past. What all these, and many other, appropriations of Vico’s text and wider legacy imply is that even if Vico himself did not produce a coherent philosophy of history, let alone a competent historiography, his New Science remains an insightful source for reflections and innovations in modern historiography and social sciences with an interest in history.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel(1770-1831)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (August 27, 1770-November 14, 1831) was a German philosopher, and a major figure in German Idealism. His historicist and idealist account of reality revolutionized European philosophy and was an important precursor to Continental and Marxism. This section discuss some main features of Hegel’s complex view of history.

It is well said that in Hegel history and philosophy meet, since he is a historian of philosophy and a philosopher of history, who also changed history. Hegel developed a comprehensive philosophical framework, or "system", of absolute idealism to account in an integrated and developmental way for the relation of mind and nature, the subject and object of knowledge, psychology, the state, history, art, religion, and philosophy. In particular, he developed the concept that mind or spirit manifested itself in a set of contradictions and oppositions that it ultimately integrated and united, without eliminating either pole or reducing one to the other. Examples of such contradictions include those between nature and freedom, and between immanence and transcendence.

Hegel influenced writers of widely varying positions, including both his admirers and his detractors. Karl Barth compared Hegel to a "Protestant Aquinas". Maurice MerleauPonty wrote, "All the great philosophical ideas of the past century—the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, phenomenology, German existentialism, and psychoanalysis—had their beginnings in Hegel...". Michel Foucault has contended that contemporary philosophers may be "doomed to find Hegel waiting patiently at the end of whatever road we travel". Hegel's influential conceptions are those of speculative logic or "dialectic", "absolute idealism". They include "Geist" (spirit), negativity, sublation, the "Master/Slave" dialectic, "ethical life" and the importance of history.

Hegel’s Interest in History and the French Revolution

Hegel’s interest in history is well known and undisputed. His interest in history is influenced by such factors as his classical training in German secondary school and later in the Protestant seminary, his

concern with current events, the French Revolution, and the development of the problem of knowledge in German idealism. The impact of the French Revolution can scarcely be overestimated. The French Revolution destroyed the ancient régime, leading eventually to the republican form of government that still persists in France. It gave increased prominence to the idea of the modern citizen as endowed with inalienable rights, the so-called rights of man. It further enfranchised sections of the population that had been disenfranchised up until that point, including Jews. It finally led to a separation between church and state in a predominantly Catholic country.

The French Revolution produced deep and lasting changes in philosophy. Hegel, who remained interested in politics throughout his career, developed a very subtle analysis of the French Revolution in the *Phenomenology*. He was in favor of its ideals but deeply opposed to revolutionary excesses. In the introduction to his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel remarks that the Revolution is rooted in thought, more precisely in the desire without precedent to create a society based on a rational concept of human being. This explains the fact that in the *Phenomenology*, he situates the passage concerning the Revolution in the midst of other passages on the Enlightenment, a historical moment when the faith in reason was manifest, and another, more detailed passage regarding the ultra-rationalist Kantian view of morality.

According to Hegel, the doctrine of the Enlightenment is opposed to faith. There is an opposition between faith, which naturally concerns the beyond, the infinite, the other world, and the universal, on the one hand, and the intellect, which busies itself with the here and now, the finite, this world, and self-certainty, on the other. Religion arises from a level that is pre-conceptual, and that has not yet attained the level of philosophy. Hegel rejects neither religion nor faith. He detects a permanent tension in the Enlightenment between faith and intellection, which is resolved in utility. This concept constitutes the link between faith, which is lacking all efficacy, but which possesses truth, and pure intellection, which possesses self-consciousness, but is lacking in truth.

Utility forms the criterion through which Hegel analyzes the French Revolution. His discussion contains three parts, or moments, concerning absolute freedom, the terror, and the awakening of free subjectivity. Absolute freedom represents self-awareness or self-consciousness without any real opposition, or again a pure intellection without resistance. Pure intellection destroys and, hence, surpasses the bounds following from the structure of society to accomplish what Hegel calls its law, its aim. Yet just when there is no longer any opposition within its world to intellect, a new opposition arises in the distinction between individual consciousness and universal consciousness. For the individual, who takes himself for universal consciousness, imposes his law under the form of terror, for which the terror of the French Revolution is the best example. Hegel, who is perhaps thinking of Napoleon, offers an analysis valid for dictators of every stripe. Universal freedom, without any limit, is only negative, producing, as he remarks, no more than “the fury of destruction”. The French Revolution expresses pure intellection that knows no limits, and that consists in self-expression in actions wholly insensible to anyone other than oneself, the revolutionary actor on the historical stage. It lacks the necessary connection, or true mediation, between the universal principle motivating the action, its maxim and the action following from it. Hegel contends that the result of intellection without any restrictions can only be death. Even on the political plane, reason cannot be realized in this way. For a government that acts in this manner represents only the faction that has won, not the general will, and, hence, not the will of the people in general.

Hegel is not hostile to the concept of revolution; and he is not hostile to the political vent of the French Revolution that, according to him, transmits the idea of freedom. For Hegel, all modernity consists in coming closer to freedom on the concrete, practical, level. Yet he believes that when we evaluate the Revolution according to its own aims, it is clear that it was unable to realize them, for the revolutionary desires were transformed into their opposites.

The Hegelian analysis of “Absolute Freedom and Terror” is triply important. To begin with, it

transmits the nuanced opinion of Hegel who accepts the fact of the French Revolution as an instance of relative progress but unequivocally condemns the excesses to which it gave rise. Although he criticizes the immoderate dimension of the French Revolution, Hegel explicitly recognizes the new possibilities it creates in a world that is henceforth in transition toward another epoch, the post revolutionary period. He underlines these possibilities when, in a famous passage, he says that our time is a period of gestation and of transition to a new period.

This opinion clearly exemplifies the sustained interest that Hegel accords to concrete facts and to history. Hegel, though reputed to be very abstract, shut up in the proverbial academic ivory tower, constantly breaks with this image through the practical, concrete dimension of his thought, which follows from its historical character. The Hegelian, unlike the Kantian, philosophy of history is specific, yet central to his philosophic system. Kant is concerned with the idea of history; but he fails to integrate it into his theory. Kant's view of theory finally remains on the margins of his theory of knowledge, eccentric to his epistemological theory that is resolutely a historical. Hegel is arguably the first major thinker to integrate the historical and systematic aspects within a single philosophical vision. With the exceptions of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and perhaps Max Weber (1864-1920), Hegel remains perhaps the first and the last to integrate history into his system.

Hegel and the Philosophy of History

Philosophers who write about history often do not know even the main historians or have more than a minimal acquaintance with historical writings. Hegel, who was an exception, had a working grasp of all the main historians up to his time and a deep knowledge of historical events. In holding that history is rational, hence cognizable, Hegel disagrees with his predecessors, who believed that history is important or unimportant, but not cognizable. Aristotle thought that history was unimportant, whereas Augustine, who invented the familiar eschatological conception of history, thought it is important but cannot be known. For Aristotle, poetry, which is concerned with universals, is more important than history, in which things happen only once. If that were the case, knowledge of history would be impossible. According to Augustine, we indeed know the final aim of history, which is to return to God, but, since we cannot know God's mind, we cannot know history itself.

Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of World History is very controversial. Here as elsewhere in his writings, different interpretations, which find support in his texts, are possible. A further problem is that we do not possess a final version of his view published by him, but only different versions of his lecture notes, hence different versions of his view of history to work with.

Hegel begins by distinguishing three main ways of writing history or historiography: original historiography, reflective historiography, and philosophical historiography. By original historiography, Hegel has in mind the writings of historians who were contemporaries of the events they described and which they undertook to describe in the form of representative thought. It follows, if the writer must be a contemporary of what he describes, that the scope cannot be large and that he shares in and does not reflect upon the content.

Reflective historiography, which goes beyond the present in spirit, deals with the past. It divides naturally into four subtypes. Universal historiography puts the accent on synthesis in surveying the entire history of a people, a country, or the world. This kind of historiography reflects the author, and the spirit of the historical moment he or she belongs to, which may differ from that of the materials, while achieving a certain generality. In the pragmatic form of reflective historiography, the author unifies the materials through a general idea in making the events present. In this context, Hegel makes the famous remark that history teaches us that, as he says, "nations and governments have never learned anything from history", hence they cannot act upon such lessons. The deeper reason is not ignorance about the past, but the difference between each historical

configuration, which has its own difficulties and solutions. Critical or scientific historiography, which was introduced and then widely employed during Hegel's lifetime by German historians, was a

historiography of historiography, which evaluated the authenticity and credibility of historiographic narratives. Specialized historiography, the fourth kind, is fragmentary, particular, and abstract. It consists of selecting a single general perspective or point of view as the focus, such as the history of art, law, or religion. It differs only in its particular focus from the third kind of historiography, or philosophical historiography of the world, which also adopts a general perspective.

Philosophical historiography, Hegel writes, is “nothing more than the application of thought to history”. The aim of historiography is to comprehend the past. He specifies his view, adding, “The only thought which philosophy brings with it is the simple idea of reason—the idea that reason governs the world, and that world history is therefore a rational process”.

The interpretation of this claim is not easy. The main religious and secular alternatives, which are incompatible, have support in the texts. It is unclear what Hegel is claiming, whether it is better to regard him as favoring a religious, a secular, or a providential-faith based approach to history? Or can the alternative approaches be compatible? Evidence for the religious reading, which is often adopted, derives from the many things Hegel says in this passage about providence and knowing God. Evidence for the secular reading, which is more rarely adopted, follows from Hegel’s approach to reason here. Hegel notes that Anaxagoras’ idea that reason rules the world is illustrated in nature, and that, with the exception of Epicurus, after it was taken over by Socrates, it was accepted throughout philosophy.

The religious and the secular approaches to history are anticipated in earlier thinkers. Voltaire, who coined the term “philosophy of history,” is often credited with being the first to work out a non-religious approach to history. He was writing against Bossuet, who provides an updated version of Augustine’s eschatological conception of history. Instead of treating history as the familiar march of God through the world, Voltaire treats it as a collection of facts to be interpreted in a secular manner from the perspective of human reason. In place of the revolutionary return of man to God located outside (human) history, he believes in a moderate form of progress within the historical space, hence the perfectibility of human beings within as opposed to beyond history.

It is usual to read Hegel from a right-wing, or religious perspective. After Hegel’s death in 1831, the Hegelian school quickly fragmented into right and left, or young Hegelian wings. The right-wing Hegelians insisted on a theological reading of Hegel, which the left wing accepted as correct but criticized. A religious reading of Hegel’s position, including his view of history, is common. According to Löwith, Hegel is the last philosopher whose view of history depends on Christianity. At least since Kojève, who pioneered an anthropological reading of Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, many observers deny Hegel’s view of history is theological in stressing an anthropological approach. Hegel’s approach to history depends on his reading of Aristotle. According to Aristotle, human action is teleological, or goal-directed, directed toward the human good, hence rational. In contending that human history is composed of the actions of men and women in the social context, Hegel extends an Aristotelian approach to action to history.

If human action is rational, then history, as the record of human actions is also rational, hence can also be known. Hegel adds nuances to this view of history as rational through related discussions of great men in history, or world-historical individuals, and the cunning of reason. His aim is to make the point that, though history is indeed rational, it is far from transparent. His explanation starts from two extremes, which are brought together in the course of human action: reason and passion. According to Hegel, the general ends of reason are manifested in and through the concrete actions of individuals. Such aims are realized through “passion,” according to Hegel “not quite the right word” to refer to “any human activity which is governed by particular interests,

special aims, or, if you will, by selfish intentions”. Hegel distinguishes between the intentions of ordinary individuals, concerned with their own ends, and the so-called world-historical individuals, such as Alexander, Caesar, or Napoleon. The latter are concerned with realizing deeper ends, whose moment is at hand so to speak, and for which they sacrifice themselves. Such individuals follow their

own passions, but the import of their actions is universal. According to Hegel, it is the cunning of reason that a particular person realizes a goal different from his intention

Hegel and the History of Philosophy

Hegel, who lectured on the history of philosophy nine times in his career- he was giving the tenth set of lectures in 1831 when he fell ill and suddenly died- is not the first to be interested in the history of philosophy. Aristotle, for instance, typically studies the views of his predecessors before formulating his own. Numerous modern historians of philosophy treat the philosophical past as a series of opinions of different thinkers. Yet Hegel is the first modern thinker, perhaps even the first important thinker, to link philosophy to the history of philosophy. In that specific sense, he can be said to invent the academic sub-field of philosophy, the history of philosophy, as we now know it.

Hegel stresses the importance of the history of philosophy for philosophy. He typically does not distinguish between philosophy and its history. He approaches the history of philosophy as in effect a giant Socratic dialogue, in which different perspectives vie with each other in an ongoing search for the truth. There is no single royal road to the truth, that is, a preferred philosophical tendency, and different theories recommend themselves as relatively better with respect to alternatives. Later philosophers have before them the previous discussion. Philosophy builds on all that is positive in the preceding history of philosophy in attempting to make progress toward the “solution” of outstanding problems.

Philosophical theories, like individuals, belong to their own historical moment. Hegel’s position grows out of his effort to come to grips with philosophy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In his initial philosophical text, entitled the *Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*, he criticizes the main philosophical theories of his time, which are identified with the names of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling. He already saw Kant, Fichte and Schelling as embarked on a single project, demonstrating the speculative identity of subject and object, knower and known. In relation to this approach, he created the idea of the German idealist tradition, with four main members, culminating in his own position. He later deepens and develops this approach but never alters it substantially.

Hegel later extended his claim concerning a single central philosophical task to the entire history of philosophy. The entire philosophical tradition is concerned with the problem of knowledge, which hence links together the many disparate theories as so many attempts to arrive at a solution. Since beginning in ancient Greece, philosophy has always asserted but never demonstrated the idealist claim for the unity of thought and being. This claim already arises in Parmenides’ claim for the identity of thought and being. It is later reasserted by Anselm in the ontological proof of the existence of God, and restated in different forms by a great many important thinkers, including Kant.

Hegel possessed a truly encyclopedic grasp of the history of philosophy. His detailed study, entitled *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, is replete with interesting readings of the main philosophical positions, as well as many lesser thinkers, which also illuminate his own theories. Hegel’s detailed criticisms cast light on the genuine accomplishments of prior thinkers as well as his own position. Plato, a world-historical individual, who had enormous influence on later thought, is already concerned, through study of the intellectual world lying beyond sensation, with the unity of reality and thought as depicted in the movement of science. Hegel is particularly interested in Plato’s Parmenides, as an outstanding example of dialectical thought. Plato focuses on generality or universality. Aristotle is an unusual genius, whose like has never again occurred. Hegel’s remarks on activity (*energeia*) are particularly interesting. He already focuses on the concept, which overcomes all dualisms. Hegel accords particular attention to modern philosophy, the period to which he belongs. Modern philosophy begins with Descartes. This period is marked by the principle of thought, also called the Protestant principle, which arises in Christianity. Philosophy asserts that thought is the principle of the world.

Hegel closes with three comments. To begin with, the history of philosophy is not a mere collection of

different thoughts. On the contrary, in all times there is only a single philosophy, whose differences express different, but necessary aspects of a single principle. Further, the development of philosophy is not contingent, but rather the necessary development of the phases of this science. Finally, most recent philosophy in any given historical period is the development and truth of its spirit.

Hegel's Historical Approach to Knowledge

Hegel's least known contribution is arguably his view of the historicity of knowledge claims. Reasons for the neglect of Hegel's view of knowledge include the suspicion that, as Kant thinks, epistemology begins and ends with his position as well as widespread hostility toward philosophical idealism. A general hostility to idealism belongs to the self-understanding of both Marxism and Anglo-American analytic philosophy. Marxism typically rejects idealism for materialism.

Hegel consistently maintains that philosophy is itself intrinsically historical. Like the other post-Kantian German idealists, Hegel participates in the ongoing effort to develop critical philosophy beyond Kant. His argument for the historical character of knowledge claims derives from a rethinking of critical philosophy. Kant's interest in knowledge is a central theme in his position. There are two different, incompatible approaches to knowledge in critical philosophy, which we can call representationalism and constructivism. Representationalism consists in some form of the view that a claim to knowledge must correctly represent a mind-independent external object as it is. In taking up a representationalist approach, Kant further develops, but later abandons, a main modern epistemological strategy. After a period of initial commitment, which is clearly indicated in the important letter to Marcus Herz, Kant came to reject this strategy on the grounds that, if the cognitive object were really independent, then it could not be known. One way to put this point is to note that, according to Kant, we cannot reliably claim to know things in themselves. His second epistemological approach, which is constructivist, consists in claiming that we can only reliably claim to know objects we in some sense construct.

This approach is the central insight in Kant's so-called Copernican revolution in philosophy. Kant never uses this term to refer to the critical philosophy, but in his own time it was already utilized to describe his position by several of his contemporaries such as Reinhold and Schelling.

Constructivism comes from mathematics, especially Euclidean geometry. Euclidean geometry constructs plane figures with a compass and ruler. Constructivism takes different forms, all of which are based on the insight that we can only know what we in some sense construct. It is independently introduced into modern philosophy by Hobbes, by Vico, who follows Hobbes, and by Kant. Kant argued for an a priori form of constructivism. There are various difficulties in Kant's conception of constructivism, including his inability to explain the activity through which the subject constructs its cognitive object. In attempting to improve critical philosophy according to its spirit, later German idealists reformulate it in a posteriori form Kant would have rejected. In a fuller account, it would be necessary to describe the phases in the transformation of the critical philosophy leading up to Hegel's position. In simplest terms, one can point to Fichte's interest in practice, and both Fichte's and Schelling's concern with history. These and other insights come together in Hegel's conception of the knowing process, hence knowledge, as intrinsically historical. The conviction that knowledge is historical arises out of a further development of the constructivist insight that the subject must construct what it knows. The historical form of this insight includes at least the following subclaims: first, since knowledge is human knowledge, the knowing subject is one or more finite human beings; second, the activity through which human beings construct what they know takes the form of different human practices; third, human constructive practices always occur within a social context; and, fourth, since social contexts change over time, human practices leading to the construction of cognitive objects occur in a social, hence historical space.

Hegel illustrates his version of the general constructivist approach to knowledge in a variety of ways. One of the most helpful examples is his general account of the process of knowledge in the

introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit. Hegel, who argues against immediate claims for empirical knowledge, is often wrongly accused of ignoring experience. On the contrary, through his deep concern with concrete phenomena of all kinds, he takes experience very seriously. Hegel is not concerned with the relation of phenomena to the mind-independent external world outside experience, which is unknowable. He is, rather, concerned with knowing what occurs in conscious experience. He depicts knowledge as a process of trial and error consisting in the comparison, within consciousness, of concepts, or views about experience, and objects of experience, or the contents of consciousness. Concepts are theories, which arise out of experience, which they are intended to comprehend. Knowledge consists in the grasping whatever is given in conscious experience through concepts, that is theories.

In any comparison between concepts and cognitive objects, there are only two possibilities. Either the concept and the object correspond, that is, are identical, or there is a difference between what one expects and what one finds. In the former case, the theory correctly grasps the object, and the process of knowledge, whose *terminus ad quem* is truth, comes to an end. In the latter case, when the theory turns out to be different from what one finds in practice, one needs to reformulate the theory. Hegel innovates in his view of the relation of theories to their cognitive objects. Since early Greek philosophy, a frequent theme is the conviction that to know requires us to grasp the mind-independent world as it is, in a word to know reality. Hegel abandons the pretense of grasping the world as it is as for the world as we experience it. According to Hegel, what we experience depends on the conceptual framework we utilize, hence changes as the framework changes. Thus someone who knows some chemistry might “perceive” H₂O instead of water. Accordingly, it is incorrect to hold that we formulate different theories to grasp the mind-independent world as it is; rather, we formulate successive theories in view of grasping the world as given in experience, which changes as the theories about it change. Knowledge is not the result of a direct grasp of what is. It is, rather, the result of a historical process in which successive theories are formulated to grasp the phenomenal contents of consciousness.

Leopold Ranke(1795-1886)

Leopold Ranke is the historian universally recognized as the founder of modern scientific historiography. Ranke was, indeed, the professional historian who applied the scientific method to historiography, giving thus a decisive new direction to his own discipline and, what is more, plotting a new role for historiography in modern culture. Ranke propounds a scientific approach to historiography, based upon the critical study of sources. He developed a method for such a critical study that allows the use of evidence provided by the sources to discredit distortions and to isolate their origins and infer true descriptions of the past. He exemplifies himself his methodical scientific historiography in a series of works dedicated to the history of the chief European nations between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries and culminating in a climactic and long anticipated attempt at a universal history. Ranke’s oeuvre comprises fifty-four volumes of a yet incomplete edition of his collected works. Ranke devised the educational institution appropriate for the transmission of his new science: the “historical seminar,” in which students could practice the new critical historiography under the supervision of their teacher.

According to Ranke, the scientific study of history could only thrive if philosophical speculations about history came to an end. Speculative philosophers of history like Hegel had dedicated themselves to eliciting the rationality of what had occurred. They firmly believed that reason is sovereign of the historical world, and that history, therefore, presents us with a rational process only to be grasped philosophically or speculatively. Against this speculative intellectual background, Ranke wanted to find out “what really had happened,” what actually had been the case. Nevertheless, his own historiographic work was carried out on the basis of certain substantive assumptions that came close to the main assertions of the philosophy of history he criticized. For the mature Ranke, historiography

was ultimately a harmonizing medium that allowed the reconciliation of man's inner life and the external world, the particular and the universal, necessity and freedom, subjectivity and objectivity, spirit and nature.

Scientific Historiography

Leopold Ranke was born in 1795 in the small rural Thuringian valley town of Wiehe. His family was deeply religious and Protestant, descended from a long line of Lutheran pastors. His father turned from the ministry for which he was destined to the profession of law and civil service. After having attended the secondary school at Pforta, where he became acquainted with the ancient classical authors and where he acquired a passion for the literary arts, he studied classical philology and theology at the universities of Leipzig and Halle from 1814 to 1818. He then became a teacher in Frankfurt/Oder and accepted a professorship in 1825 at the University of Berlin where he settled. He was appointed official Prussian state historian in 1841.

As a professional historian, Ranke combined three pre-existing methods: a critical attitude toward historical sources; the insistence upon original documents; and the application of the philological method to the writing and teaching of historiography. The critical attitude toward historical sources dates back to the first Greek historians. Ranke's doctoral dissertation at the University of Leipzig, now lost, was a study of Thucydides. The insistence upon original documents was in the tradition of humanist scholarship since the fifteenth century. Barthold Georg Niebuhr had spectacularly exemplified the application of the philological method to historiography in his studies of Roman history. Ranke explicitly acknowledged Niebuhr as his mentor. Ranke created a paradigm that could be handed down to an entire profession as its distinctive collective identity. Ranke's own achievement consisted of having written a large series of books showing how the paradigm worked in practice. He explained in short marginal notes, comments and reflections how he practiced the method, how he criticized the sources and inferred reliable historiography from the evidence.

The scientific historiography Ranke himself practiced in his works and reflected upon in his methodological observations is characterized by four main principles: the objectivity of historiographic truth; the priority of facts over concepts; the uniqueness of all historical events; and the centrality of politics. Each of these principles was immortalized by Ranke in a memorable formulation traditionally transmitted from generation to generation in the historiographic community.

The historian's objectivity means that the historian should not judge the past. Neither has he or she to instruct the present for the benefit of the future. This is a grand rejection of moralizing. Such high offices are not to be assumed by historians. History has simply to show "what actually happened", the famous formulation in the introductions to Ranke's main works, in his *History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations, 1494-1514*, in his *French History*, in his *English History*, and in the *History of Prussia during the 17th and 18th Centuries*. To achieve objectivity the historian must immerse in the historical object and grasp its inner necessity and the law it carries within itself. In his *English History* Ranke declared that he had tried to extinguish his own self to let the things speak and the mighty forces appear without any subjective deformation. The first Rankean principle implies the autonomy of historiography against possible pragmatic subordinations to moral, political or social interests: an ideal Ranke himself was not always able to live by.

The primacy of facts ("die strenge Darstellung der Tatsache") is the most effective prescription for the historian's work. It means a return to the sources, to the evidence provided by them, and the decision not to make abstract theory. The historian has to get to know and to present the facts as they are. He has to abstain from philosophical speculations. Strict presentation of the particular events and facts, even if that is unattractive and dull, should unquestionably be the supreme law in historiography, which cannot imitate philosophical procedures of abstraction and generalization. Historiographic knowledge is documentary, not speculative. Historiography's medium is the document, not the conceptual construction. Historiography is concerned with the particular, individual, not the general

and universal.

The uniqueness of all historical events as a principle and normative prescription for the historical profession is the logical consequence of Ranke's methodological insights. All historical units and forms like events, processes, revolutions, and evolutions, are unique and individual. They have their value in themselves, and not, as philosophers of history tend to assume, from the totality of the historical process. Each epoch must be seen as something valid for its own sake, and not from what may result from it (presentism). As an individual, autonomous epoch, each epoch is worth of consideration. Every epoch is immediate to God became the maxim under which historians united against philosophers of history who, believing in the idea of progress, tended to subordinate some epochs under other pretendedly more prominent epochs. Ranke protested against such a philosophical subordination making the case for a specific profession of historians who intellectually participate in the particular, individual, and enjoy it in and for itself. The mature Ranke betrayed this tenet in his commitment to the ideal of universal historiography.

Ranke's scientific historiography was focused on past politics and states considered to be "ideas of God." Such a historiography was, fundamentally, "political" historiography. Ranke did not neglect social and economic factors, but, in his works, they were seen and located in the framework of a political history. This focus on the political dimension of history and the corresponding conception of states as the primary units of history came about as a consequence of his own philosophical view of the historical process and on the basis of the documents Ranke as a historian mainly consulted: political and diplomatic documents centered on state's actions found in state archives. These four Rankean principles make up the theoretical structure of his specific version of "Historism." Ranke found appropriate, easily transmissible formulations for each one of them in a series of what Leonard Krieger has called "theoretical pronouncements" mostly dispersed in the introductions to his major books. In his own historiographic practice, Ranke combined them flexibly. But he did not always remain faithful to them. As theoretical principles they are useful as definition of the normative poles around which Ranke himself and many other nineteenth-century German historians revolved. The principles implied the critical method and the devotion to factual accuracy which had been developed by earlier generations of historians, philologists, classicists, and Bible scholars. In their combination with a series of basic convictions in regard to the nature of historical individualities and the state's central role in history, they became the disciplinary matrix or paradigm of German nineteenth century scientific historiography.

Substantive Assumptions

Karl R. Popper described critically in his book "The Poverty of Historicism" a philosophical view of history according to which historical prediction is possible due to the fact that there are discoverable "rhythms," "patterns," "trends," and "laws" underlying the evolution of history. Hegel was for Popper one of the main representatives of such a wrong approach to human practical reality. Hegel, like all other classical philosophers of history, affirmed the rationality of the historical process, which he conceived as teleologically directed, having a main goal, namely progress in the consciousness of freedom. He conceived of different historical phases and periods as well as the whole of history as the manifestation of what he called the development of the self-positing and self-realizing Spirit. In his lectures on world history entitled "Die Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters" ("The Main Traits of the Present Age"), Fichte, like Hegel, had also presented the ultimate goal and the main epochs of universal history. The ultimate goal of world history was determined by Fichte as the collective establishment of a rational culture ("Vernunftkultur"), a culture in which Reason (and not Understanding "Verstand") will reign supreme.

Ranke conceived the historians' task and profession in direct opposition to such speculative, philosophical constructions of world history, that affirmed the existence of historical laws and the teleological orientation of the whole historical process. Yet, Fichte's romantic ideal of the "blessed

life” and the special “Nature of the Scholar” inspired the young Ranke. Like Fichte, Ranke thought the academic calling was a sanctified task. The scholar has a mission to accomplish, comprehending and representing the divine idea and its vitalizing function in the world of appearances. But Ranke, unlike Fichte, would never affirm that fulfilling this mission is the philosophical explanation of the “concept” of history from which Fichte could deduce in his lectures history’s ultimate goal and its concrete, evolutionary realization.

The difference between the philosophical and the historiographic approach to history had also institutional consequences, specifically at the University of Berlin, which was divided into two hostile camps. One camp centered around Hegel. The other camp included a broad group of jurists, historians, philologists, and theologians. The jurists Friedrich Carl von Savigny and Karl Friedrich Eichhorn, the historian Barthold Georg Niebuhr, the philologists August Böckh, Franz Bopp, Karl Lachmann, and the theologian Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher belonged to this second camp. The main cause of their division was their different concepts of truth and reality. For the philosophical camp, historical diversity was merely a manifestation of an underlying rational principle. Truth could, consequently, be attained by reducing this diversity to rational concepts, or by interpreting it as an expression of Reason’s development and selfrealization. For the camp of historians, the philosophical reduction to conceptual schemes was a violation of the fullness and individuality of historical life. Both camps shared nevertheless the firm conviction that behind the phenomena and events of history, there was another reality, and that the aim of all academic study was the apprehension of that reality. Niebuhr, Savigny, and Ranke could agree with Hegel that in the long run philosophy and historiography coincided. However, they differed from Hegel in their deep conviction that such a transcendent reality could only be approached through historiographic research, which is much more suitable than philosophy to its complex, vitalistic, spontaneous, unique, and elusive character. Historiography was for them the only true way to knowledge of humankind’s spiritual condition, because it alone could recognize the value and autonomy of each epoch and each historical phenomenon without improperly subsuming them under a general linear process of fulfillment. A bitter controversy between Leopold Ranke and Heinrich Leo, a young disciple of Hegel, on the interpretation of Machiavelli’s work illustrates the difference between the philosophical and the historiographic standpoints (Iggers 1968: 66ff). Leo had reviewed Ranke’s “Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker” (“Histories of the Latin and Teutonic Nations”) and its methodological appendix “Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtsschreiber” (“On the Critique of Modern Historians”) accusing Ranke of a poor style, and of having introduced sentimentality into his narration. Ranke replied in the “Hallische Literaturzeitung” criticizing Leo’s treatment of Machiavelli’s work, whom Leo had judged by moral standards and as a “world- historical” person. Ranke thought that it is not the historian’s task to judge the past. Rather, the historians should focus on the more humble challenge of showing “what really happened.” Ranke recognized that there was something quite shocking in Machiavelli’s teachings. But he interpreted them as means used for a specific situation, and urged that they should be understood as such. The

conditions of corrupted Italy seemed so desperate to Machiavelli that he was bold enough to prescribe poison to save it. Ranke disagreed with Leo’s philosophical application of ethical standards to the assessment of historical characters, and to studying historical personalities in terms of their role in world history. Ranke wanted to study historical personalities for their own sake, not passing moral judgments upon them, and trying to understand them in their uniqueness and individual particularity. The “Histories of the Latin and Teutonic Nations” (the title significantly in the plural!) appeared to the philosopher Leo to resemble a heap of unsorted details, his author having done little to seek the general within the particular, and to grasp the “world historical significance” of his own subject matter. The dispute between the historiographic and the philosophical camp at the University of Berlin would be misunderstood if one concluded that Ranke was nontheoretical, non-philosophical, politically neutral, soulless positivist historian, who conceived scientific historiography as a technique that

applied critical methods to the evaluation of sources. Ranke was not exclusively concerned with historical facts, rejecting all theoretical or philosophical foundation of historiographic practice. Ranke rather approached the theoretical problems underlying his historiographic practice mainly during the four years of editorship of the "Historisch-Politische Zeitschrift," between 1832 und 1836, and in a series of random remarks and observations scattered through his historiographies and correspondence. In the brief introduction to the private lectures "About the Epochs of Modern History" ("Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte"), which he read to King Maximilian of Bavaria in 1854, and in his inaugural lecture as a professor in Berlin in 1836 "On the Affinities and Differences between Historiography and Politics" ("Über die Verwandtschaft und den Unterschied der Historie und der Politik"), Ranke developed a series of general, philosophical ideas on historiography very similar to those defended by the philosophical side. Ranke's substantive "philosophy of history" is, therefore, not systematic and consistent. Some of his propositions are occasional statements, tailored to the requirements of the particular situation or to the individual character of his interlocutor, for instance, on the great powers ("Die grossen Mächte," 1832), on politics ("Politisches Gespräch," 1836), or when modifying his own exposition under the questioning of the Bavarian king.

Like the philosophers of history, Ranke believed in a divine purpose which he associated with world history. He was committed to world historiography (especially in his old age), and postulated the idea of a developmental totality, axiologically superior to the individual entities, with "eternal ideas" and "laws," unknown to us, but nevertheless governing the appearances of the infinite variety of developments inherent in human affairs and, in general, humankind's destiny. The late Ranke could even see a universal and developing pattern in the actual history of man, a continuous general process. Continuity between past and present was consequently for him fundamental. Such continuity allowed the application of certain insights extracted from the verifiable past to the present, and demanded politically a sense of moderation.

The Meaning of History

Philosophically speaking, Ranke's position was much closer to Hegel than he would have admitted. Like Hegel, he saw a deeper reality behind historical phenomena. He interpreted these historical phenomena as concrete expression of a general spirit and objective order hidden in the individual events. The historian's task was for him to become an outlet of that general spirit, and to present the concrete phenomena in such a way that the general order could be intuitively perceived. What distinguished Ranke was his insistence that knowledge of the objective order can be attained only through careful study of individual facts, which must never be approached in abstract concepts, and his firm conviction that the plan of the universe is beyond man's grasp, so that man can only divine its outlines. The intuitive perception or divination of history's spiritual meaning required for Ranke, more than philosophical or conceptual work, it necessitated artistic means.

The philosopher attempts to subsume all life under a unifying concept to reach a deeper spiritual reality, but misses that spiritual reality at the very moment of his intervention. The historian can elevate himself to this spiritual plane by proceeding from the condition of existence and fully respecting the individual. The task of historiographic understanding begins for Ranke always with thorough immersion in the individual subject matter, with exact research, step-by-step apprehension, and the humble study of the documents, approaching like this the spiritual essence through acts of intuition, and never through conceptual devices. Historiography then resembles art. It elaborates perceptive, vivid, and imaginative portraits and descriptions of individual characters and particular historical constellations. It does not deliver the concept of the totality, of divine providence, but stimulates a feeling of the whole, an intuitive knowledge of it ("Mitgefühl, Mitwissenschaft des Alls"). Historiography therefore cannot concentrate exclusively on the merely empirical and actual, getting lost in the details, as was the case in Niebuhr's historiography. As a hermeneutic effort and discipline, it has, for Ranke, to try to understand the whole, in an act of "geistige Apperception" ("spiritual

apperception”). Only then, the material process of history can appear as a “Hieroglyphe Gottes” (“God’s secret writing”), and the historian can describe the dominating trends and governing ideas (“herrschende Tendenzen” and “leitende Ideen”) that make up its real texture and continuity.

Historical continuity is, for Ranke, not only the basis and subject matter of the historian’s grasping effort, but a precious political good, never to be neglected. The “Historisch-Politische Zeitschrift” had been founded to defend the policies of the enlightened Prussian bureaucracy against its numerous liberal critics on the left and to distinguish the position of the Prussian government from that of the reactionary right, which had the Berliner Politisches Wochenblatt (Berlin Political Weekly) to propagate Karl Ludwig von Haller’s feudal doctrines. Ranke took on the editorship of the Historisch-Politische Zeitschrift between 1832 and 1836. He conceived his task as one of keeping equal distance between the extremes of the conservative Berliner Politisches Wochenblatt and of liberalism. But his criticisms were directed almost entirely at the liberals who, in his opinion, willing to push forward several political reforms did not appreciate enough historical continuity. Ranke adhered to the conservative status quo, which rests on past experiences and traditions. He wanted, at the same time, to open up a future in which one would be able to do justice to new ideas, and the new social trends, but without breaking with the past. The liberal reformers were in his eyes fascinated by abstract principles, which they wanted to blindly apply to politics. Their approach to social and political institutions was, according to Ranke, based on abstract theory, and not on concrete realities and continuities. Against such abstractness, Ranke intended to use historiographic knowledge, and scientific historiography, which actually could show that all institutions and ideas have valuable historical roots.

Historiography alone could help to understand existing and dominant trends, preparing appropriate political decisions. Historiography alone could present specific diversities and differences, demonstrating that what was effective and good in a specific context must not necessarily be good in different and new contexts. The elimination of differences and diversity would kill the living reality of concrete human existence. For Ranke the study of history was the best way to understand human nature. Historiography grew for Ranke to become a perspective on all of reality. Further, historiography became the only perspective from which the opposing principles of life could be perceived in their constructive interactions. Through historiography, the professional historian obtained access to the contradictory nature of man and practical (social and political) reality. Constructive interactions of different principles that sometimes contradict, at other times complement, each other, are in Ranke’s opinion the subject matter of historiography. Historiography is for Ranke about interactive connectedness, the connection between past and present, the individual or particular and the universal, necessity and freedom, man’s inner life and the external world, national and world politics. Historiography helps to render comprehensible manifestations of humanity that would otherwise remain incomprehensible. It helps to understand how diverse and heterogeneous motives, ideas and actions can coexist with each other. Historiography’s logic is the “logic of the actual . . . when such heterogeneous relationships cannot be understood by the logics of either propositional thinking or the analytical sciences, they may still be manageable by a kind of thinking that makes sense of arranging things, however incongruous in themselves, along the time line”. For Leopold Ranke, historiography became a harmonizing medium, the field where polar opposites get reconciled. God and the world, spirit and nature, religion and culture, the ideal and the real, feeling and understanding, the general and the individual, the universal and the local, the present and the past, all came together in historiography, the master science.

Still under the influence of Fichte’s idea of the intellectual vocation, the young Ranke had tried to show in his Luther fragment how the divine idea manifested itself on earth, i.e., in history, as an invisible life force graspable through the tangible opposites it vitalized. Ranke’s original concern with Luther had been triggered by his interest in language and literature. In the course of writing the reformer’s biography, Luther became the character who could illustrate how inner spiritual life could

express itself in the external world. Luther was the spiritual individual who could vitalize the external world, activate the eternal in the world. Luther's conflicts and contradictions were conceived by Ranke as natural manifestations of the world's structure that placed restrictions on the desirable relations between the spirit and the empirical reality.

In the *Histories of the Latin and Teutonic Nations from 1494 to 1514*, the multiplicity of the contents and the copiousness of what really happened contrasted sharply with the intended unity of the project, which Ranke never had ceased to proclaim. Ranke himself conceded defeat when he confessed in the preface his failure to combine the two dimensions of his approach, the unity of what happened and the multiplicity of facts and events. The "Histories" illustrate tensions and contradictions in the historical field, in which unity and diversity interact with each other in forms not easily apprehended.

Ranke had always advocated the reconciliation of the national and the universal in historiography. In the *History of the Popes*, *German History of the Age of the Reformation*, *French History, Especially in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, *English History, Especially in the Seventeenth Century*, and in the series of private lectures he delivered in 1854 "On the World-historical Epochs of Modern Times," Ranke was able to combine the particular with the universal perspective, intelligently showing how both perspectives need and presuppose each other. The national appears in all these works intelligible only in connection to the "world-historical," and this "world-historical" is embedded in the local intricacies of national history. In the preface and introduction to the first volume of the *English History* Ranke left no doubt that he was writing from the perspective of universal history, and that this "world-historical" perspective was what made the relation between the present and the past historiographically significant. World historiography was to be Ranke's last project and perspective, not theoretically demonstrated or deductively inferred by conceptual means, but narratively presented and historiographically elucidated. Thematic universal realities were present in actual history. This was Ranke's firm conviction. The historian's task, accordingly, could only be to apprehend them in the particular constellations of actual history, and to show their indispensability for the comprehension of what really happened.

In his private lectures "On the World-historical Epochs of Modern Times," Ranke summarized his views on world history and the historian's task. Historians cannot "subsume" the complex historical process under "concepts" as philosophers usually do. They have to respect the diversity of history, and to accept that the laws behind everything that happens are unknown to them. They can describe the so-called "leitende Ideen" ("leading ideas"), which Ranke prefers to call "dominant trends" ("herrschende Tendenzen"). However, they cannot conceive history as a "logical process," as philosophers tend to do, affirming an independent life of the "Idea" or "Spirit," in which individuals have no other role than the role of mere instruments for the realization of the Spirit's plan. In Ranke's view, that would lead to "pantheism." Historical progress, which Ranke would not deny, is always to be specified. There is, indeed, material, scientific, and technical progress. However, in relation to cultural, moral, and spiritual history Ranke avoids applying the concept of progress, and prefers to affirm the individuality and uniqueness of each epoch, its intrinsic value, and its "immediate relation to God."

Benedetto Croce(1866-1952) and R.G.Collingwood (1889-1943)

The Italian thinker and leading liberal politician Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) and the British philosopher and archaeologist Robin George Collingwood (1889-1943) placed thought about history and historiography at the center of philosophy. Their work has influenced much thinking about history and historiography since the middle of the twentieth century. It continues to stimulate work in areas such as moral, social and political philosophy, metaphysics, the nature of philosophy, and the relationship between historical thinking and action.

This section will discuss at first the distinctive characteristics of the works of Croce and Collingwood. The second section sketches the place of historiography in relation to other elements of their

philosophies. The third section considers their approach to historiographic knowledge, while the fourth draws out the content of history as they conceived it. The conclusion returns briefly to the character of their contributions and its potential for philosophy in the future.

Croce and Collingwood developed a tradition of thought about history that goes back to Vico, Kant, and Hegel. This tradition sees history as a product of reason and produced grand visions of the dynamic and sweep of history. The philosophy of history, an account of how reason unfolds in time, came, therefore, to be seen as fundamental to philosophy, the study of reason in general. Earlier thinkers in this tradition held, for example, that reason produces history through the workings of concepts or peoples. Such thinkers tended to distinguish between history and the philosophy of history. They attributed a higher level of wisdom to the philosophy of history. The distinctive contribution of Croce and Collingwood was to fully locate reason in history in the individual actions of finite historical actors. For them, history is concerned with human action, and is created by liberty and freedom. A theory of action therefore underpins their accounts of history as an object of study (the metaphysics of history) and their accounts of historiographic thought (the epistemology of history). In discussing their accounts of history, we are therefore drawn into the core of an overarching philosophical approach.

For both thinkers, historiography involves understanding the present, and the importance of historiography lies in terms of the present possibilities it creates. The philosophy of historiography therefore has a practical dimension, and is not simply theoretical. For Croce, historiography enables us to prepare for action. For Collingwood, historiography shapes our choices and actions. Although there were personal and philosophical connections between the two thinkers, their work needs to be discussed in parallel rather than as a unified whole.

Philosophical Context

For Croce, the context for his philosophy of history and historiography is his philosophy of mind or, as he termed it, his “philosophy of spirit.” The “philosophy of spirit” is an attempt to provide a connected and general account of the cognitive activities which characterize mind, such as art and philosophy. For Collingwood, the context is his philosophy of mind and moral choice. Collingwood’s philosophy of mind extended to underlying mental activities as well as to cognitive activities such as art, science, religion, and philosophy. For both Croce and Collingwood, historiographic thinking arises from present problems and plays a key role in dealing with those problems.

Croce developed his philosophical system early in his career but continually revised it. He followed Vico in holding that the cognitive activities of mind form a recurring cycle. Croce reshaped this idea into the view that the aesthetic, logical, practical, and ethical activities of mind form a single cycle; first one activity dominates the conscious life of individuals, or even of historical epochs, then another. Croce was influenced by idealism because he held that the activities of mind or spirit represent a single, unified, reality. That is, all aspects of reality, and all knowledge and action, can be resolved into activities of mind. In this respect, Croce was a humanist. In his philosophy, there is nothing but “the eternal alternation of the eternal values or categories or activities of spirit”. He applied his thought as a powerful tool of aesthetic, historiographic and political criticism and became a leading opponent of irrationalism in all its forms, particularly fascism.

For Croce, the activities of mind can be theoretical or practical. On the theoretical side are art (or aesthetic) activity, and logical (or philosophical) activity. On the practical side are economic (or useful) activity and ethical (or moral) activity. Historiography plays a special role in the cycle of these activities, because historiography combines the elements that define art and philosophy respectively. That is, historiography combines the intuition of art with the logic of philosophy. This idea merits elaboration.

Croce distinguished art from the logical activities of the intellect. Art involves intuitive knowledge of the individual, and concrete knowledge, through the imagination. The activities of art are universal,

rather than the specialized or unusual activity of a few. That is, art is an activity of mind which occurs whenever there is expression or language, and which has its origin in our emotions. The intellect, on the other hand, involves knowledge of universals and relations, and it produces concepts. For Croce, concepts are always concrete and inside history, not beyond it, as for Hegel. This idea ultimately led Croce to identify philosophy with history. Croce consequently preferred to describe his philosophy as “absolute historicism,” rather than as idealism, emphasizing that historicism “is the affirmation that life and reality are history and history alone” . There is no need to search for meaning, concepts or causes outside of history: “There is nothing more to seek”.

For Croce, historiography brings together art and philosophy, intuition and concept, because historiography illuminates concepts through individual facts. By illuminating concepts in this way, narratives about history may clarify and help to resolve philosophical problems. Philosophy, in turn, enables us to interpret and narrate history. Croce’s commentaries on Marx, for example, placed great emphasis on the value of Marx’s economic thought for interpreting contemporary societies. Nevertheless, Croce rejected Marx’s determinism as well as all other accounts which understood history as being the product of concepts or ideas which operate separately from the activities of reasoning individuals, including Vico’s idea of providence and Hegel’s account of reason. It is important for Croce that the activities of mind are not simply theoretical, but also practical. It is not enough to develop knowledge. When we have done that, we may want to take action. But action does not follow automatically from knowledge. For Croce, practical and ethical activity should be distinguished from the theoretical activities of art and philosophy. That is, practical or ethical action does not simply flow from either intuitions or concepts, but is a distinct activity of the mind.

In Croce’s philosophy, historiography has both a theoretical and a practical importance. Historiography is a theoretical activity that plays a cathartic role in preparing for action. That is, we understand problems as a prelude to dealing with them: Historical philosophy or philosophical history is modest because it continually brings man face to face with reality; having made him achieve the catharsis of truth it leaves him free to seek and find out what his duty is and to create his activity. When we subsequently act, there is also feeling and passion, and therefore the material of new artistic activity; in this way, the cycle continues. Collingwood’s work was implicitly systematic, but focused on key problems. He sought to show how activities such as historiography, art, metaphysics, religion, and natural science were possible. He thought that providing an account of the activities of the mind could help address a crisis in European civilization that had found stark form in the rise of fascism and nazism. Collingwood’s argument was that the attempt to state what is most fundamental about the life of the mind in a particular civilization is a key to sustaining that civilization. He described such attempts as metaphysics and understood metaphysics to be a historiographic inquiry.

For Collingwood, history is concerned with human action. When we talk about history as an object we are talking about the realm created by human acts of reason and choice-or, as he put it, “mind.” For Collingwood mind is a set of activities, not a substance. He held that mind is activity, and develops through activity, so that it is not always the same. The capacity of people to make rational choices therefore develops over time, and this means that morality, society, and politics also develop. Historiography enables us to know the realm of human action. By reflecting on the common practices of modern historiography we can develop a philosophy of historiography. At the same time, we are developing a general account of how actions are known. For Collingwood, we know actions by reasoning to the historical situation and choices that agents made.

In Collingwood’s view, historiography exists for the sake of rational action. Historiography is involved in all aspects of thought, practical as well as theoretical. Such thinking shapes how situations come to be understood, how choices arise and how decisions are made. This view is unusual and merits explanation. We can choose only when we are first conscious that we have alternatives. For Collingwood, as for Croce, knowing our emotions and desires is a key to our consciousness of

alternatives, because we always desire something that is distinct from another thing. It is expression, and therefore artistic activity, which enables us to know our emotions. For Collingwood, there are three grounds upon which we can make reasoned choices between alternatives. Collingwood's account of moral action and his characterization of history result from his articulating these three grounds. Firstly, a choice can be for the sake of utility. Secondly, a choice can involve following a law or a rule. Finally, a choice can be an act performed out of duty. Each of these grounds is present in any given act, but only the concept of duty enables us to fully understand an act. We need to understand each of Collingwood's terms in order to grasp his view of history.

We can choose an act because of its utility, such as when it is economic to pursue a certain action. If we want to understand the act fully, however, an explanation in these terms will always be deficient—meaning that there must be other dimensions to the choice. The deficiency can be seen when we realize that a person's desires may focus on a particular kind of action, but their choices are always particular and specific. We may satisfy hunger in many different ways. Understanding why someone chooses to do so in one way rather than another requires more than an understanding of the utility of the means to the end.

We can choose to follow a rule or a law. We can try to understand the act in similar terms, such as when we explain it as demonstrating regularity or a sociological law. But this kind of explanation is deficient also. A rule or a law is not sufficient to determine our actions. In each and every particular case we may view a situation conscientiously, and thereby render rule-following either “unnecessary” or even “vicious.” Explanation in terms of rules or laws also fails to account for the specificity of our actions. Collingwood therefore criticized Kant's “categorical imperative” as being a theory of the rules that govern action, which fails to account adequately for actions.

For Collingwood, our acts are always concrete and particular—we always perform this act, and not just one act of a certain kind. Collingwood's idea of duty is an idea of concrete action. It is Collingwood's alternative to Kant's “categorical imperative.” On Collingwood's view, it is our duty to perform a particular act in a particular situation. Collingwood reinterpreted a term—duty—that others have applied to action in obedience to rules. In *An Autobiography*, Collingwood observed that we act without rules in two kinds of circumstances, each of which is common and requires that we have a strong sense of our situation. In the first group of cases we have no choice but to act, but have no rule on which to base our acts. This is particularly so in new situations, or when we are inexperienced. A second kind of situation occurs when we believe that acting according to rules would be inappropriate. This second group of actions involves situations we take very carefully, rejecting desire, self-interest and rules in order to act appropriately. In such circumstances, rule following would fail to deal adequately with situations in which we find ourselves. We can act appropriately only if we see our situation clearly. Historiography gives us the necessary trained eye for the situations in which we need to act. To act appropriately, we need the insight of historiography, rather than rules. From this observation, Collingwood concluded that historiography is a key to the diagnosis of moral or political problems.

There is another sense in which historiography is necessary to allow us to act appropriately. For in order to act we need to know what options we have available to us. To know our options we need to know what we are capable of. Collingwood argued that the only way we can truly know what we can do is to understand what we have become. In turn, knowing what we have become involves historiography. Similarly, we can understand others through historiographic accounts about what choices they have to make and what they have become. To summarize Collingwood's view, we need historiography in order to know ourselves and others. We understand the situations in which we find ourselves by thinking historiographically. Practical reasoning involves seeing ourselves as characters in particular historical narratives. In practical reasoning, the question we ask ourselves is which amongst our competing desires we will pursue. We eliminate various options because they suit our interests less, or go against principles we follow. Beyond such considerations, one act is necessitated

by our conception of our situation and ourselves-this is what we choose. In Collingwood's terms, duty is reason, obligating action. The principle of choice from duty enables us to understand not just ourselves in the past and present, but also the acts of others, and so to understand history, the realm of human action.

Knowing History

Croce and Collingwood both believed that historiography could lead to knowledge; they were not relativists in any normal sense of the term. Their theories of historiographic knowledge were, however, significantly different. Croce practiced a form of historiography heavily dependent on textual interpretation, and wrote particularly about the "moral-political" sphere of action. In a famous, and easily misunderstood, phrase, Croce said that "all true history is contemporary history." This does not mean that all historiography is of the recent past, but that historiography to be more than mere chronicle, "must vibrate in the mind of the historian, or to put the matter in the professional language of historians, there must be intelligible documents".

In his *Aesthetic*, Croce argued that the evidence to be criticized in historiographic judgement was the evidence "of the best observers, that is, of those who best remember." In his *Logic*, he aligned historiography and perception. Collingwood was rightly critical of Croce's analogies of memory and perception to account for the knowledge of history, because the knowledge of history involves reason. Unlike Croce, Collingwood was an archaeologist and historian of Roman Britain, who drew upon a wide range of approaches in his historiography. Modern, scientific, historiography is, for Collingwood, historiography that takes as its only authority the argument and reason of the historian. There is no possible appeal to an external reference point of fact which could guarantee particular conclusions about the past.

Collingwood's theory is that historiographic knowledge involves inference, based on the interpretation of what the historian accepts as evidence. Historiographic interpretation and inference are governed by principles that ensure that knowledge becomes possible. The historiographic imagination interpolates and connects actions so that narratives are coherent, but it is governed by the demands of evidence, criticism and the conception of what history is. The regulative "idea of history" is an understanding that history is concerned with action which has developed from ancient Greece to modern times.

For Collingwood, historiographic narratives are historical conclusions expressed as narratives of human action. They make the human past intelligible because they account for acts through the reason of historical agents. The narratives gain their merit by being fully open to and subject to criticism in light of other evidence and inferences. In reconstructing the practical or theoretical arguments of historical agents, historians re-enact those thoughts. Collingwood's famous theory of re-enactment is a theory of reason and the conditions of knowledge. It is not, as has often been claimed, a theory of empathy or intuition or simply a methodology of historiography.

The Content of History and Historiography

The accounts of historiography given by Croce and Collingwood imply that history and historiography have a specific kind of content with a contemporary significance. This is a fundamental feature of their views and sets them apart from subsequent thinkers who have sought to make the philosophy of historiography a purely formal analysis. In Croce's own assessment, "historiographic thought, for Collingwood and for me . . . was based . . . on contemporary politics to which it gave sharpness of concept, light of hope and firmness of decision." For Croce and Collingwood, the First World War, in particular, showed that the hold of historiographic thought in European civilization was weak, relative to scientific naturalism. Their philosophical works sought to redress that weakness. For Croce and for Collingwood, history is the realm of moral acts or acts of choice.

This makes all historiographies specific to an action in a time and a place. This also led both Croce and Collingwood to reject speculative philosophies of history that draw grand narratives from the shadow play of concepts. Because historiography involves concepts from the start, it is already, in Croce's

terms, philosophical. Therefore, there can be no philosophy that takes historiography as a raw material on which it superimposes other concepts and categories.

Nevertheless, since historiography is concerned with the realm of action, and arises from contemporary concerns, an account of history also underpins political and social philosophy. In this respect, Croce advanced a theory of liberty and liberalism which became a beacon for intellectual resistance to fascism. Collingwood developed a theory of civilization and barbarism as the work of mind. Whereas Croce, however, maintained that theory and practice were distinct, such that historiography prepares for action, but does not determine it, Collingwood sought a rapprochement between them.

For Croce, history is created by “liberty,” the moral dimension of human activity. Because liberty creates history, it explains history, and it is the subject of historiographic thought. But liberty is also an ideal which is actively pursued in some times, by some people, more than in others. Liberty or moral activity has given rise to the political orientation of liberalism. For Croce, the history of Europe in the nineteenth century was fundamentally concerned with the pursuit of liberty, and opposition to it. The liberalism of the nineteenth century needed to be seen in relation to democracy, economic liberalization, nationalism, communism and socialism, reaction and authoritarianism-but it was distinct from each of these. For Croce, in contrast with the majority of nineteenth- and twentieth-century political thinkers, liberty is just liberty-it is not the same as the concepts of justice or of economic liberty, and he made it his task to restate and develop a philosophical theory of liberty on this basis.

European history was not, however, shaped by the clearest and purest forms of liberalism alone. Rather, liberalism was distorted in a number of ways, including by an assimilation of the concept of liberty to the practical economic and industrial dimensions of nineteenth-century life. In particular, Croce attributed the origins of the First World War to a distorted “ideal of activism” whose “original impulse was nothing other than the principle of liberty” but which was liberty “deprived of its moral soul . . . detached from the past . . .” and lacking “the purity of the end.” Activism had become a “mournful parody . . . of an ethical ideal . . . the celebration of a black mass, but still a mass”.

Collingwood rejected the distinction between theory and practice. The distinction between theory and practice depends on the assumption that all knowledge is like knowledge in natural science. In natural science, a distinction is drawn between the object and the study of that object. Natural science presupposes the existence of an external natural world, which it “contemplates.” In the case of historiographic knowledge, however, the distinction does not apply. History, the object of historiography, is known from the inside – it is understood by agents who are within it and who create it, including by the way in which historiography shapes future actions.

The practical implications of Collingwood’s philosophy of historiography are visible in his account of society and civilization. These terms became very closely intertwined in Collingwood’s thought. For Collingwood, society is brought into being not by a “consensual social contract,” but by the decision or will of free agents to initiate the contract. The members of a society share the “social consciousness” of those “who are free and know themselves to be free.” Social consciousness can be characterized as “an act of deciding to become a member and to go on being a member” through common undertakings and actions.

There is a continual process by which people who simply have something in common become self-conscious and so will to become a society. In doing this, they civilize themselves. The process can, however, work in two directions. In the constructive vein, civilization is created by will. To be civilized is to live in such a way as to “endeavour to convert every occasion of non- agreement into an occasion of agreement.” Contrasting with civilization, there is a “will to barbarism,” that is, “a will to do nothing, a will to acquiesce in the chaotic rule of emotion which it began by destroying”.

To civilize is to undertake a process through which agents come to possess and exercise free will. Civilization is at its most fundamental when parents develop relations with their children that incorporate them into a society. Collingwood, therefore, considered that education was far too

important to be left to professionals, and saw their rise as representing a decline in the ability of modern Europeans to civilize themselves. As he put it, a world of “office-drudges” and “factory-drudges” is “a world consuming its own capital of civilization through having wantonly thrown away the power of educating its young.” Parents can, however, recover their roles in civilizing children, through play. A civilization can recover its vigor through expression, or art, because this brings the civilization back in touch with the emotions which are the foundations of reasoned choice.

A civilization can see itself as pursuing a useful end or as bound by rules, but such a civilization will fail to fully understand itself. Just as choice moves from utility and rule to duty, so a civilization can transform itself by deepening its understanding of history and strengthening the role of historiographic thought in its culture. This idea brings together all of the key elements of Collingwood’s thought. Since historiography is fundamental to practical action, a society that consistently understands itself as historical would develop a corresponding civilization. That is, the members of such a society would see themselves and others as making choices from duty. They would not claim to explain their own actions, or those of others, solely in terms of their usefulness or their adherence to a rule, but in terms of their individuality. A civilization that truly understands itself is one that can more fully address its moral and political problems.

Conclusion

Croce and Collingwood represent a tradition of thought about the philosophies of history and historiography that makes historiography central to philosophy, by seeing history in terms of the activity of reason. Croce developed a unified account of mind with history at its center. Collingwood developed a more critical approach which made the understanding of history as subject and as object central to the task of philosophy.

Both thinkers departed from much earlier thought about historiography and history. Because, for them, the philosophies of history and historiography reflect on the concept of history and the methodology of historiography, it does not offer a superior level of wisdom. Each rejected speculative philosophies of history that posit a grand schema or design superior to the events of history. Each also rejected a moralising approach to history, or the idea that the study of history is a guide to ethics. Croce’s and Collingwood’s approach to historiography differs also from later analytical philosophies of historiography. Their work has a metaphysical or substantive dimension that is quite alien to much analytical philosophy. Similarly, their view of the philosophies of history and historiography as being at the center of philosophy stands in sharp contrast with later thinkers who have viewed the philosophy of historiography as a branch or corner of philosophy, concerned with a discrete field of study, conducted in a theoretical manner, and neutral as to its significance. Taken together, Croce and Collingwood show not only how a key tradition of thought about history could take new forms, but also how thought about historiography could provide a powerful alternative to scientism in philosophy and culture more generally.

Much of the debate about the philosophies of history and historiography in the past twenty years has been concerned with the writing of historiography, the historiographic narrative. Writing is, though, only a finished product of a process of thinking. The process of historiographic thinking is not one for the academics but, on Croce and Collingwood’s accounts, is integral to the activities of the mind. Instead, then, of debating what it is for historians to write historiography, a more rewarding debate would be about who thinks historiographically, when and in what circumstances they do so, and what this way of thinking implies for their actions.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Isidore Auguste Marie François Xavier Comte (19 January 1798-5 September 1857), better known as Auguste Comte, was a French philosopher. He was a founder of the discipline of sociology and of the doctrine of positivism. He is sometimes regarded as the first philosopher in the modern sense of the term. Influenced by the utopian socialist Henri Saint-Simon, Comte developed the positive philosophy

in an attempt to remedy the social malaise of the French Revolution, calling for a new social doctrine based on the sciences.

He followed the Enlightenment tradition which believed in universalism. The Enlightenment thinkers believed that what was applicable to one society was valid for all the others. They, therefore, thought that it was possible to formulate universal laws which would be valid for the whole world. Comte also favoured this universal principle and was opposed to individualism which the Romanticists were preaching. Comte was a disciple of Henri Saint-Simon (1760-1825), a utopian socialist, from 1814 to 1824. Apart from Saint-Simon, the other influences on him were those of John Locke (1632-1704), David Hume (1711-1776) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). All these influences went into the making of his own system of philosophy. The main books he published were titled : The Course of Positive Philosophy and The Course of Positive Politics. It is in the first book, published in six volumes from 1830 to 1842, that he elaborated his theoretical model about history.

According to Comte, there was a successive progression of all conceptions and knowledge through three stages. These stages are in chronological sequence : 'the Theological or fictitious; the Metaphysical or abstract; and the scientific or Positive'. Of these three stages the first one is the

primary stage through which the human mind must necessarily pass. The second stage is transitional, and the third stage is the final and the 'fixed and definite state' of human understanding.

Comte also sees a parallel between this evolution of thought in history and the development of an individual from childhood to adulthood. According to him, the first two stages were now past while the third stage, that is, the Positive stage, was emergent. Comte considered that the Positive stage was dominated by science and industry. In this age the scientists have replaced the theologians and the priests, and the industrialists, including traders, managers and financiers, have replaced the warriors. Comte believed in the absolute primacy of science. In the Positive stage, there is a search for the laws of various phenomena. 'Reasoning and observation', Comte said, 'are the means of this knowledge.' Ultimately, all isolated phenomena and events are to be related to certain general laws. For Comte, the Positivist system would attain perfection if it could 'represent all phenomena as particular aspects of a single general fact; such as gravitation, for instance'.

Positivism, therefore, upheld that knowledge could be generated through observation. In this respect, Positivism had very close resemblance to the Empiricist tradition which emphasised the role of sense experience. Thus observation and experience were considered as the most important and essential function. Facts were the outcome of this process. However, at its most fundamental level, the Positivist philosophy was not concerned with individual facts. They, instead, believed in general laws. These laws were to be derived through the method of induction, that is, by first determining the facts through observation and experience and then derive laws through commonness among them. For Positivists, therefore, general laws are only colligation of facts derived from sense experience. Thus, facts are determined by sense experience and then tested by experiments which ultimately leads to the formation of general laws. These general laws, like those in the sciences, would be related to the basic laws of human development. Once discovered (and formulated), these laws could be used to predict and modify the patterns of development in society. In such a scheme, individual facts, or humans for that matter, were of no consequence. Comte, therefore, looked down upon the historians as mere collectors of facts which were of no relevance to him once general laws were known. There were three major presuppositions in Comte's system of philosophy :

- 1) He envisaged that the industrial society, which Western Europe had pioneered, was the model of the future society all over the world.

- 2) He believed that scientific thinking, which he called the positivist philosophy, was applicable both for the sciences and for the society. Moreover, he thought that this thinking, and by implication the positivist philosophy, would soon become prevalent in the whole world, in all societies.

3) Comte believed that the human nature was the same everywhere. It was, therefore, possible to apply the general laws of development, discovered by him, to all societies.

Some of these ideas were common in Comte's age. The belief that the age of religion was over and the age of science and industry had arrived was shared by many. Comte's main ideas derived from two sources-principle of determinism found in thoughts of Montesquieu (1689-1755), a French political philosopher, and the idea of inevitable progress through certain stages propounded by Condorcet (1743-1794), another French philosopher. Thus Comte's central thesis can be stated in Raymond Aron's words as follows;

'Social phenomena are subject to strict determinism which operates in the form of an inevitable evolution of human societies-an evolution which is itself governed by the progress of the human mind.'

Armed with this principle, Comte strove to find in the human world a basic pattern which would explain everything. Thus, for him, 'a final result of all our historical analysis' would be 'the rational co-ordination of the fundamental sequence of the various events of human history according to a single design'.

The Positivist method, as envisaged by Comte, would consist in the observation of facts and data, their verification through experimentation which would finally lead to the establishment of general laws. This method was to be applied in the sciences as well as in humanities such as sociology, history, etc. And, as in the sciences, the individual had not much role in determining the process of development. Thus, for the historians, Comte's method could have following implications :

- 1) History, like sciences, is subject to certain general laws which could explain the process of human development.
- 2) Human mind progresses through certain stages which are inevitable for all societies and cultures.
- 3) Individuals cannot change the course of history.
- 4) The inductive method, which Comte believed was applicable in sciences, consisting of observation of facts, experimentation and then formulation of general laws, should be applied in the writing of history as well.

Carl Marx and Materialistic Interpretation of History

Karl Marx (1818–1883) is best known not as a philosopher but as a revolutionary communist, whose works inspired the foundation of many communist regimes in the twentieth century. It is hard to think of many who have had as much influence in the creation of the modern world. Trained as a philosopher, Marx turned away from philosophy in his mid-twenties, towards economics and politics. However, in addition to his overtly philosophical early work, his later writings have many points of contact with contemporary philosophical debates, especially in the philosophy of history and the social sciences, and in moral and political philosophy. Historical materialism-Marx's theory of history-is centered around the idea that forms of society rise and fall as they further and then impede the development of human productive power. Marx sees the historical process as proceeding through a necessary series of modes of production, characterized by class struggle, culminating in communism. Marx's economic analysis of capitalism is based on his version of the labour theory of value, and includes the analysis of capitalist profit as the extraction of surplus value from the exploited proletariat. The analysis of history and economics come together in Marx's prediction of the inevitable economic breakdown of capitalism, to be replaced by communism. However Marx refused to speculate in detail about the nature of communism, arguing that it would arise through historical processes, and was not the realisation of a pre-determined moral ideal.

Marx's Life and Works

Marx was born on 5 May, 1818, in Trier, a small, originally Roman, city on the river Moselle. Many of Marx's ancestors were rabbis, but his father, Heinrich, a lawyer of liberal political views, converted

from Judaism to Christianity and Marx was baptized with the rest of his family in 1824.

At school, the young Marx excelled in literary subjects (a prescient schoolteacher comments, however, that his essays were 'marred by an exaggerated striving after unusual, picturesque expression'). In 1835, he entered the University of Bonn to study Law. At the end of 1836, he transferred to Berlin and became a member of the Young Hegelian *Doktorclub*, a bohemian group whose leading figure was the theologian, Bruno Bauer. The views of the *Doktorclub* turned increasingly radical (to some extent, it would seem, under Marx's influence) in the late 1830s.

Marx's father died in 1838 and in the next year—perhaps not coincidentally—Marx abandoned the law in favour of a doctorate in philosophy. His thesis, *Differenz der demokritischen und epikureischen Naturphilosophie* (Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature) was accepted by the University of Jena in 1841. Marx had hoped to use it to gain an academic position, but, after Bruno Bauer's suspension from his post at the University of Bonn, it became apparent that such hopes would have to be abandoned in the current political climate.

Marx turned instead to journalism, involving himself with the newly-founded *Rheinische Zeitung* and taking over the editorship in October 1842. However, the paper came increasingly into conflict with the Prussian government and was banned in March 1843. At this point, Marx decided to move abroad. In the summer he married Jenny von Westphalen (after an engagement of six years) and during a long honeymoon in Kreuznach worked on *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie* (Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right) and the essay 'Zur Judenfrage' ('On the Jewish Question') in which he started to formulate his disagreements with his fellow Young Hegelians. He and Jenny moved to Paris in October of that year. It was in 1844 that Marx met up again with Friedrich Engels and the alliance that was to last for the rest of Marx's life was formed. Together Marx and Engels wrote *Die Heilige Familie* (The Holy Family), a polemic against Bruno Bauer. More important, however, was the body of writing on economics and philosophy that Marx produced at this time which are generally known as The Paris Manuscripts.

Marx was expelled from France in 1845 and moved to Brussels. In the spring of 1845, he wrote for his own clarification a series of 'Theses' on Feuerbach that are one of the few mature statements that we have from him of his views on questions of epistemology and ontology. In 1845–46 Marx and Engels wrote *Die deutsche Ideologie* (The German Ideology) which, although it too remained unpublished, contains an authoritative account of their theory of history and, in particular, of the place of ideas in society. Marx's developing economic views were given expression in a polemic against Proudhon, *La Misere de la Philosophie* (The Poverty of Philosophy), published in 1847. *Das Kommunistische Manifest* (The Communist Manifesto), written by Marx and Engels as the manifesto of the Communist League in early 1848, is the classic presentation of the revolutionary implications of Marx's views on history, politics and economics. During the revolutionary upsurge of 1848 Marx returned to Germany, but, with the defeat of the revolutionary movement, he was forced to leave, first for Paris, and then, in August 1849, for London, where he would live in exile for the rest of his life.

The years of exile in Britain were difficult ones for Marx (and even more so for his loyal and devoted family). He was in constant financial difficulty and he had to rely heavily on Engels and other friends and relations for support. His theoretical activities were chiefly directed to the study of political economy and the analysis of the capitalist system in particular. They culminated in the publication of Volume One of *Das Kapital* (Capital) in 1867. However, *Das Kapital* is the tip of a substantial iceberg of less important publications and unpublished writings. Amongst the former, the *Preface to Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy) published in 1859, contains the classic statement of Marx's materialist theory of history. Volumes Two and Three of *Das Kapital*, left unfinished at Marx's death, were edited and published posthumously by Engels. In addition, three volumes of *Theorien über den Mehrwert* (Theories of Surplus-Value), a series of critical discussions of other political economists, written in 1862–63, were published in the early

twentieth century. An extensive and more or less complete work, the *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (known both in English and in German as the *Grundrisse*) was written in 1857–58 but only published in 1939. The Introduction to the *Grundrisse* is the mature Marx's most extended discussion of the method of political economy. In addition, there exist numerous notebooks and preliminary drafts, many (if not, at the time of writing, all) of which have been published.

Political economy apart, Marx wrote three works on political events in France (*Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich* (Class Struggles in France) (1850), *Das achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte* (The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte) (1852) and *The Civil War in France* (1871)). Among his many polemical writings, the *Kritik des Gothaer Programms* (Critique of the Gotha Programme) (1875) is particularly important for the light it throws on Marx's conception of socialism and its relation to ideas of justice.

Marx was in very poor health for the last ten years of his life and this seems to have sapped his energies for large-scale theoretical work. However, his engagement with the practical details of revolutionary politics was unceasing. He died on 14 March 1883 and is buried in Highgate Cemetery, London.

Marx as a Young Hegelian

Marx is relevant to philosophy in three ways: (1) as a philosopher himself, (2) as a critic of philosophy, of its aspirations and self-understanding, and (3) by the philosophical implications of work that is, in Marx's own understanding of it, not philosophical at all. These three aspects correspond, broadly speaking, to the stages in Marx's own intellectual development. This and the following section are concerned with the first stage.

The Young Hegelians, with whom Marx was associated at the beginning of his career, did not set out to be critics of Hegel. That they rapidly became so has to do with the consequences they drew from certain tensions within Hegel's thought. Hegel's central claim is that both nature and society embody the rational order of *Geist* (Spirit). Nevertheless, it did not follow, the Young Hegelians believed, that all societies express rationality to the fullest degree possible. This was the case in contemporary Germany. There was, in their view, a conflict between the essential rationality of *Geist* and the empirical institutions within which *Geist* had realized itself: Germany was 'behind the times'.

A second source of tension lay in Hegel's attitude towards religion. Hegel had been prepared to concede a role to religion as expressing the content of philosophy in immediate form. The Young Hegelians argued, however, that the relationship between the truths of philosophy and religious 'representation' was, in fact, antagonistic. In presenting reality not as the embodiment of reason but as the expression of the will of a personal god the Christian religion establishes a metaphysical dualism that is quite contrary to the secular 'this-worldliness' which (although Hegel himself might have been too cautious to spell it out fully) is the true significance of Hegel's philosophy.

This was the position endorsed by Marx at the time of his doctoral dissertation. Its subject was taken from a period of Greek thought with parallels to Germany in Marx's own time. Just as the Young Hegelians faced the problem of how to continue philosophy after Hegel, so Democritus and Epicurus wrote in the shadow of another great system, that of Aristotle. Marx's sympathies are with Epicurus. He is more successful than Democritus, Marx believes, in combining materialism with an account of human agency. Furthermore, Marx admires Epicurus for his explicit critique of religion, the chief task of philosophy, he asserts, in all ages. In destroying the illusions of religion, the Young Hegelians believed, philosophy would provide both the necessary and the sufficient conditions for human emancipation and the achievement of a rational state. In the works that he wrote in Kreuznach in 1843 (the unpublished draft of the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right and the essay 'On the Jewish Question') and shortly thereafter (the 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction') Marx called this position into question. In the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right Marx has two main criticisms to make of Hegel. The first is that Hegel's real concern is to retrace in the political realm the

outlines of his own metaphysics rather than developing an analysis of political institutions and structures in their own right. This gives his political philosophy an apologetic function, for it leads him to present the contradictions that he finds in reality as essentially reconciled in the supposedly higher unity of the 'Idea'. But they are not, says Marx. On the contrary, they are 'essential contradictions'. Chief amongst such contradictions is that between the 'system of particular interest' (the family and civil society-that is, economic life) and the 'system of general interest', namely, the state. And this leads to Marx's second criticism. Hegel, Marx alleges, assumes that the state, because it is 'higher' from the point of view of Hegelian logic, can reconcile effectively the contradictions of economic life. In fact, in Marx's view, it is civil society that is prior to the state. The state arises from the condition of civil society and is always subordinate to the form of the latter.

Marx's Theory of Historical Materialism

Marx did not set out his theory of history in great detail. Accordingly, it has to be constructed from a variety of texts, both those where he attempts to apply a theoretical analysis to past and future historical events, and those of a more purely theoretical nature. Of the latter, the 1859 Preface to *A Critique of Political Economy* has achieved canonical status. However, *The German Ideology*, co-written with Engels in 1845, is a vital early source in which Marx first sets out the basics of the outlook of historical materialism. We shall briefly outline both texts, and then look at the reconstruction of Marx's theory of history in the hands of his philosophically most influential recent exponent, G.A. Cohen, who builds on the interpretation of the early Russian Marxist Plekhanov.

We should, however, be aware that Cohen's interpretation is not universally accepted. Cohen provided his reconstruction of Marx partly because he was frustrated with the existing Hegelian- inspired 'dialectical' interpretations of Marx associated especially with Louis Althusser, which he felt did not provide a rigorous account of Marx's views. However, some scholars believe that the interpretation that we shall focus on is faulty precisely for its lack of attention to the dialectic. One aspect of this criticism is that Cohen's understanding has a surprisingly small role for the concept of class struggle, which is often felt to be central to Marx's theory of history. Cohen's explanation for this is that the 1859 Preface, on which his interpretation is based, does not give a prominent role to class struggle, and indeed it is not explicitly mentioned. Yet this reasoning is problematic for it is possible that Marx did not want to write in a manner that would engage the concerns of the police censor, and, indeed, a reader aware of the context may be able to detect an implicit reference to class struggle through the inclusion of such phrases as "then begins an era of social revolution," and "the ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out". Hence it does not follow that Marx himself thought that the concept of class struggle was relatively unimportant. Furthermore, when *A Critique of Political Economy* was replaced by *Capital*, Marx made no attempt to keep the 1859 Preface in print, and its content is reproduced just as a very much abridged footnote in *Capital*. Nevertheless we shall concentrate here on Cohen's interpretation as no other account has been set out with comparable rigour, precision and detail.

The German Ideology: In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels contrast their new materialist method with the idealism which had characterised previous German thought. Accordingly, they take pains to set out the 'premises of the materialist method'. They start, they say, from 'real human beings', emphasising that human beings are essentially productive, in that they must produce their means of subsistence in order to satisfy their material needs. The satisfaction of needs engenders new needs of both a material and social kind, and forms of society arise corresponding to the state of development of human productive forces. Material life determines, or at least 'conditions' social life, and so the primary direction of social explanation is from material production to social forms, and thence to forms of consciousness. As the material means of production develop, 'modes of co-operation' or economic structures rise and fall, and

eventually communism will become a real possibility once the plight of the workers and their awareness of an alternative motivates them sufficiently to become revolutionaries.

Preface: In the sketch of *The German Ideology*, all the key elements of historical materialism are present, even if the terminology is not yet that of Marx's more mature writings. Marx's statement in 1859 Preface renders much the same view in sharper form. Cohen's reconstruction of Marx's view in the Preface begins from what Cohen calls the Development Thesis, which is pre-supposed, rather than explicitly stated in the Preface. This is the thesis that the productive forces tend to develop, in the sense of becoming more powerful, over time. This states not that they always do develop, but that there is a tendency for them to do so. The productive forces are the means of production, together with productively applicable knowledge: technology, in other words. The next thesis is the primacy thesis, which has two aspects. The first states that the nature of the economic structure is explained by the level of development of the productive forces, and the second that the nature of the superstructure—the political and legal institutions of society—is explained by the nature of the economic structure. The nature of a society's ideology, which is to say the religious, artistic, moral and philosophical beliefs contained within society, is also explained in terms of its economic structure, although this receives less emphasis in Cohen's interpretation. Indeed many activities may well combine aspects of both the superstructure and ideology: a religion is constituted by both institutions and a set of beliefs.

Revolution and epoch change is understood as the consequence of an economic structure no longer being able to continue to develop the forces of production. At this point the development of the productive forces is said to be fettered, and, according to the theory once an economic structure fetters development it will be revolutionized—'burst asunder'—and eventually replaced with an economic structure better suited to preside over the continued development of the forces of production.

In outline, then, the theory has a pleasing simplicity and power. It seems plausible that human productive power develops over time, and plausible too that economic structures exist for as long as they develop the productive forces, but will be replaced when they are no longer capable of doing this. Yet severe problems emerge when we attempt to put more flesh on these bones.

Functional Explanation: Prior to Cohen's work, historical materialism had not been regarded as a coherent view within English-language political philosophy. The antipathy is well summed up with the closing words of H.B. Acton's *The Illusion of the Epoch*: "Marxism is a philosophical farrago". One difficulty taken particularly seriously by Cohen is an alleged inconsistency between the explanatory primacy of the forces of production, and certain claims made elsewhere by Marx which appear to give the economic structure primacy in explaining the development of the productive forces. For example, in *The Communist Manifesto* Marx states that: 'The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production.' This appears to give causal and explanatory primacy to the economic structure—capitalism—which brings about the development of the forces of production. Cohen accepts that, on the surface at least, this generates a contradiction. Both the economic structure and the development of the productive forces seem to have explanatory priority over each other.

Unsatisfied by such vague resolutions as 'determination in the last instance', or the idea of 'dialectical' connections, Cohen self-consciously attempts to apply the standards of clarity and rigour of analytic philosophy to provide a reconstructed version of historical materialism.

The key theoretical innovation is to appeal to the notion of functional explanation (also sometimes called 'consequence explanation'). The essential move is cheerfully to admit that the economic structure does indeed develop the productive forces, but to add that this, according to the theory, is precisely why we have capitalism (when we do). That is, if capitalism failed to develop the productive forces it would disappear. And, indeed, this fits beautifully with historical

materialism. For Marx asserts that when an economic structure fails to develop the productive forces-when it ‘feters’ the productive forces-it will be revolutionised and the epoch will change. So the idea of ‘fettering’ becomes the counterpart to the theory of functional explanation. Essentially fettering is what happens when the economic structure becomes dysfunctional.

Now it is apparent that this renders historical materialism consistent. Yet there is a question as to whether it is at too high a price. For we must ask whether functional explanation is a coherent methodological device. The problem is that we can ask what it is that makes it the case that an economic structure will only persist for as long as it develops the productive forces. Jon Elster has pressed this criticism against Cohen very hard. If we were to argue that there is an agent guiding history who has the purpose that the productive forces should be developed as much as possible then it would make sense that such an agent would intervene in history to carry out this purpose by selecting the economic structures which do the best job. However, it is clear that Marx makes no such metaphysical assumptions. Elster is very critical-sometimes of Marx, sometimes of Cohen-of the idea of appealing to ‘purposes’ in history without those being the purposes of anyone.

Cohen is well aware of this difficulty, but defends the use of functional explanation by comparing its use in historical materialism with its use in evolutionary biology. In contemporary biology it is commonplace to explain the existence of the stripes of a tiger, or the hollow bones of a bird, by pointing to the function of these features. Here we have apparent purposes which are not the purposes of anyone. The obvious counter, however, is that in evolutionary biology we can provide a causal story to underpin these functional explanations; a story involving chance variation and survival of the fittest. Therefore these functional explanations are sustained by a complex causal feedback loop in which dysfunctional elements tend to be filtered out in competition with better functioning elements. Cohen calls such background accounts ‘elaborations’ and he concedes that functional explanations are in need of elaborations. But he points out that standard causal explanations are equally in need of elaborations. We might, for example, be satisfied with the explanation that the vase broke because it was dropped on the floor, but a great deal of further information is needed to explain why this explanation works. Consequently, Cohen claims that we can be justified in offering a functional explanation even when we are in ignorance of its elaboration. Indeed, even in biology detailed causal elaborations of functional explanations have been available only relatively recently. Prior to Darwin, or arguably Lamarck, the only candidate causal elaboration was to appeal to God's purposes. Darwin outlined a very plausible mechanism, but having no genetic theory was not able to elaborate it into a detailed account. Our knowledge remains incomplete to this day. Nevertheless, it seems perfectly reasonable to say that birds have hollow bones in order to facilitate flight. Cohen's point is that the weight of evidence that organisms are adapted to their environment would permit even a pre-Darwinian atheist to assert this functional explanation with justification. Hence one can be justified in offering a functional explanation even in absence of a candidate elaboration: if there is sufficient weight of inductive evidence.

At this point the issue, then, divides into a theoretical question and an empirical one. The empirical question is whether or not there is evidence that forms of society exist only for as long as they advance productive power, and are replaced by revolution when they fail. Here, one must admit, the empirical record is patchy at best, and there appear to have been long periods of stagnation, even regression, when dysfunctional economic structures were not revolutionised.

The theoretical issue is whether a plausible elaborating explanation is available to underpin Marxist functional explanations. Here there is something of a dilemma. In the first instance it is tempting to try to mimic the elaboration given in the Darwinian story, and appeal to chance variations and survival of the fittest. In this case ‘fittest’ would mean ‘most able to preside over the development of the productive forces’. Chance variation would be a matter of people trying out new types of economic relations. On this account new economic structures begin through experiment,

but thrive and persist through their success in developing the productive forces. However the problem is that such an account would seem to introduce a larger element of contingency than Marx seeks, for it is essential to Marx's thought that one should be able to predict the eventual arrival of communism. Within Darwinian theory there is no warrant for long-term predictions, for everything depends on the contingencies of particular situations. A similar heavy element of contingency would be inherited by a form of historical materialism developed by analogy with evolutionary biology. The dilemma, then, is that the best model for developing the theory makes predictions based on the theory unsound, yet the whole point of the theory is predictive. Hence one must either look for an alternative means of producing elaborating explanation, or give up the predictive ambitions of the theory.

Rationality: The driving force of history, in Cohen's reconstruction of Marx, is the development of the productive forces, the most important of which is technology. But what is it that drives such development? Ultimately, in Cohen's account, it is human rationality. Human beings have the ingenuity to apply themselves to develop means to address the scarcity they find. This on the face of it seems very reasonable. Yet there are difficulties. As Cohen himself acknowledges, societies do not always do what would be rational for an individual to do. Co-ordination problems may stand in our way, and there may be structural barriers. Furthermore, it is relatively rare for those who introduce new technologies to be motivated by the need to address scarcity. Rather, under capitalism, the profit motive is the key. Of course it might be argued that this is the social form that the material need to address scarcity takes under capitalism. But still one may raise the question whether the need to address scarcity always has the influence that it appears to have taken on in modern times. For example, a ruling class's absolute determination to hold on to power may have led to economically stagnant societies. Alternatively, it might be thought that a society may put religion or the protection of traditional ways of life ahead of economic needs. This goes to the heart of Marx's theory that man is an essentially productive being and that the locus of interaction with the world is industry. As Cohen himself later argued in essays such as 'Reconsidering Historical Materialism', this may appear one-sided, and ignore other powerful elements in human nature. Such a criticism chimes with a criticism from the previous section; that the historical record may not, in fact, display the tendency to growth in the productive forces assumed by the theory.

Alternative Interpretations: Many defenders of Marx will argue that the problems stated are problems for Cohen's interpretation of Marx, rather than for Marx himself. It is possible to argue, for example, that Marx did not have a general theory of history, but rather was a social scientist observing and encouraging the transformation of capitalism into communism as a singular event. And it is certainly true that when Marx analyses a particular historical episode, as he does in the 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon, any idea of fitting events into a fixed pattern of history seems very far from Marx's mind. On other views Marx did have a general theory of history but it is far more flexible and less determinate than Cohen insists (Miller). And finally, as noted, there are critics who believe that Cohen's interpretation is entirely wrong-headed (Sayers).

The Annales School

The Annales School of historiography, widely considered as one of the most important developments in the twentieth-century history-writing, formally emerged with the foundation of the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* (Annales of Economic and Social History) in 1929 by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. In terms of thematic range and methodological innovations, this School remained foremost in France and influenced history-writing in many other countries for decades and had followers all over the world. In this Unit you will learn about the context of its emergence, its contributions to history-writing, and the various new historiographical trends it gave rise to.

Social and Intellectual Context

The decade of the 1920s witnessed two paradoxical developments in France: The First World War had ended and its formal conclusion had occurred at Versailles, near Paris, under the Presidentship of the French Prime Minister, Clemenceau. Symbolically thus it was the victory of France over its traditional rival Germany, much more than the collective victory of the rest of Europe. The great French Impressionist painter, Claude Monet, had done the most renowned of his works, *Les Nymphéas*, the Water Lilies, 'as a bouquet of flowers presented to France after the victory', and a special museum structure, *L'Orangerie*, was built in the heart of Paris to display them. There was therefore an aura of celebration in the French air.

The air, however, was also beginning to show traces of gloom in the latter part of the decade with the spectre of the Great Depression gradually extending its shadows over it; the Depression was soon to overwhelm societies and economies around the world, the more so the ones that had most to lose. France was among them. There was thus a palpable restiveness around, a puzzle that perplexed everyone: How could it be possible that a nation, which had vanquished an old and powerful enemy so recently, could stare helplessly before a debilitating circumstance? This was an entirely new situation, which posed an encompassing question and waited for a new and encompassing answer. Old answers would by their nature be inadequate. New answers demanded new perspectives and new methodologies. If history was to contribute to

this quest, it must first renew itself by self-questioning. This was the social context of the discipline's self-renewal, marked by the founding of the journal *Annales d'histoire Economique et Sociale*.

There was besides an intellectual context. The Nineteenth Century had witnessed the birth of several new disciplines, notably social and cultural anthropology, human geography and psychology. Young and energetic as these were, their practitioners looked at the old discipline of history sceptically. Durkeheimian sociology in particular was expansive and ambitious, claiming the capability of a totalising explanation, explaining, in other words, the entire spectrum of societal dynamics. Human geography too was not far from extending similar claims, focusing on social, cultural and institutional forms of organisation.

History came in for a degree of derision for its exclusive concern with 'the event' – the unique, short term, the immediate and transient. This was how history was studied then: focusing on change of a reign or a dynasty, wars, battles, administrative measures. As John Seeley had put it pithily: 'History is past politics and politics is present history.'

No long term dynamics interested historians. What then was the point of studying history if all it explained was how one ruler replaced another and how one battle added or deleted a little bit of land from the territory ruled by him? The 'event' was like the surf in the ocean, ephemeral and therefore insignificant; the real 'movement' in the ocean was invisible to the naked eye, below the surface. This, the anthropologists and the geographers felt, was ignored by the historians.

A second question was the use of historical sources. Archives had acquired a sanctity for the historians that became almost a moral precept. All statements made by them must be traced back to some or the other empirical evidence stored in dusty archival files. Anything short of it failed to constitute 'facts', so sacred for the historian. Even as late as the 1970s, historian Jacques Leonard questioned the legitimacy of philosopher Michel Foucault's intervention in the problems of history by threateningly demanding if he had ever soiled his hands in the dust of archival files ('The Historian and the Philosopher') and Foucault responded by making fun of the sanctity of archival dust ('The Dust and the Cloud'). The historian accepted as true whatever was on the surface of the documentary evidence; that the document itself was a cultural construct, a highly subjective construct never bothered the historian. The objective reality lay hidden in the very long drawn formation of human behaviour, their habits, value systems, and their responses to situations in life.

All these were formed at the subconscious level within the family, the community, the neighbourhood. None of these was either the result of, or recorded in written documents, nor was any of it obvious. These subtleties were missed out in the discipline of history in its preoccupation with the 'event', the immediate and the obvious. A sort of vision of 'Social Science' was emerging from which history was excluded.

Foundation of the Annales

The lambasting of history left two friends, young historians in a far away corner of the French academia, Strasbourg, very restless. Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre were unhappy with the kind of history they had learnt and were forced to teach; they were sensitive to the insights the younger disciplines could provide. They were dissatisfied that disciplines that were such close kin should be at war with each other and each had erected impermeable boundaries around itself. In January of 1929 they launched a new journal, *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. Initially, the journal focused on issues of contemporary concerns to seek to understand the genesis of the emerging crisis; as time passed, it turned increasingly to medieval and early modern history, the ones practiced by Bloch and Febvre.

In the all too brief Editorial in the journal's inaugural issue, the editors movingly emphasised the necessity and the benefits of what later came to be called interdisciplinary research, even as one remained firmly grounded in one's own discipline. 'Of course, nothing would be better than if each one, absorbed in his own legitimate specialisation, assiduously tilling his own patch of land, made at the same time the effort to understand the work of his neighbour. But the separating walls are often so high that they block our view. And yet, what a host of valuable ideas on method and interpretation of facts, what insights into culture and advances in intuition would germinate through more frequent intellectual interaction amongst all these different groups! On this depends the future of economic history, as also the right knowledge of facts which shall tomorrow constitute 'all history.'

'All history' was what *Annales* was keen to constitute, in place of partial history; this will also be the 'true history.' True history was not being counterposed here to false history but to any form of partial history. 'All history' and 'true history' would comprise an ever expansive domain for the discipline; no part of the past and no aspect of it was beyond its purview. Space was thus being created for meeting the challenge of other disciplines as well as incorporating their insights.

Consequently, newer themes opened up for the historian's exploration. Marc Bloch himself created a comprehensive and grand structure in his study of feudalism by looking at all its aspects in one book of two volumes, *The Feudal Society*, 1936. He spent a considerable time living in the French countryside in order to sensitize himself to the remains of that society, whether as abandoned agricultural fields or as cultural attitudes and values. Lucien Febvre on the other hand was more keen to explore the area of emotions and beliefs. His book, *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: the Religion of Rabelais* (1942) dwelt upon one central character, François Rabelais, critical of Christianity to the point of unbelief. The character was however a point of entry for Febvre's study of religion in all its myriad aspects in the context of society in the sixteenth century. His celebrated essay, 'Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past' was a watershed in extending history's concerns into

new domains. Indeed it starts with the assertion: 'Sensibility and history – a new subject: I know of no book that deals with it. I do not even know whether the many problems which it involves have anywhere been set forth. And yet, please forgive a poor historian for uttering the artist's cry, and yet what a fine subject it is!' In some ways the essay was to set the tone for what was later to be explored on a very large scale by *Annales* historians, i.e. the history of mentalités, mentalities.

History was thus beginning to become part of the Social Sciences. In 1903 François Simiand had visualised Social Science in the singular and history outside it, though he had also shown the way for it to enter the arena of social science in his essay, 'methode historique et science sociale': 'If

the study of human facts wishes to establish itself as a positivist science, it must turn away from the singular facts and address itself to recurring facts, that is set aside the accidental for the regular, eliminate the individual for the social.' It was an invitation to historians to learn from Economics, Sociology, Anthropology and Geography to focus on what was then conceived of as the 'laws' of social movement and change which are inherent in the general rather than the particular. The essay was reproduced in the *Annales* in 1960 by Fernand Braudel 'for the benefit of young historians to enable them to gauge the distance travelled in half a century and to comprehend better the dialogue between History and the Social Sciences which remains the objective and the *raison d'être* of our journal.'

The first responses to the invitation to study the long-term regularities were a merger The *Annales* School between Economics and History and the emergence of economic history as an autonomous discipline. Ernest Labrousse's work, *La crise de l'économie française à la fin de l'Ancien Régime et au début de la Révolution* (The Crisis of the French Economy at the end of the Ancient Regime and the beginning of the Revolution, 1944) and Fernand Braudel's *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, 1949), both sought out the long term trends in history that would help us understand, and to an extent predict, social and economic change. Unlike in the sphere of industrial economy, where overproduction leads to economic crisis, in agriculture underproduction of food grains lies at the base of a crisis situation which then spreads to other sectors of economy and society, was Labrousse's conclusion. Braudel on the other hand had studied the extremely slow change in the ecology around the Mediterranean and the long term and long distance impact of intercontinental trade. Braudel's interest in these themes remained abiding, though through his later works he constantly kept extending their frontiers. The three volume study under the general title, *Civilization and Capitalism* and the titles of individual volumes, *The Structures of Everyday Life*, *The Wheels of Commerce* and *The Perspectives of the World* both continues with his earlier concerns and incorporates new ones, such as the history of the diet, into them.

One branching out from the long-term history was the history of the climate, which spans several centuries. Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie was among the early historians of the 60s who introduced this new theme into European historiography. A new territory was being explored here, the territory of long-term history of the economy and its ramifications in society. The new problematics also demanded new visions of history, new sources and new methods of investigation. Economic changes were not left to general impressions: they had to be based upon quantitative data, a new concept, further buttressed by the coming of computers in the 1960s. Of sources too, Lucien Febvre had reacted to the assertion of Fustel de Coulanges in another context, 'History is written through the use of texts', by declaring: 'texts, certainly, but all kinds of texts... and not texts alone...' Marc Bloch, as we have noted above, lived in the French countryside in the mode of an anthropologist to get insights into the working of the feudal system.

Fernand Braudel had taken seriously the criticism of the historians' preoccupation with the 'event', the immediate and therefore with the single, unidimensional conception of Time. His own studies took him a long distance away from the immediate. He was therefore able to conceptualise different rhythms of historical time in different problematic contexts. In an influential essay, 'History and the Social Sciences: the *Longue Durée*', 1958, Braudel earmarked three temporal rhythms: the long term, or the structure, which moves ever so slowly as in writing the history of ecology and social and economic systems, such as capitalism; the conjunctures, which provide the method for mapping the history of medium term change such as inter-decennial change in patterns of long distance trade; and the event, the immediate.

New trends in Historiography

Three offshoots of these new ventures were the history of mentalities, the history of groups at society's margins and comparative history. Lucien Febvre had already embarked upon the territory of mentalities in his essay on 'Sensibility and History'. Marc Bloch himself had explored the theme of royal thaumaturgy in *Le rois thaumaturges* in 1924, the healing powers of kings, translated into English as *The Royal Touch*, 1973. The early explorations had ignited enough interest and the study of mentalities began to grow substantially. Michel Vovelle extended the quantitative method to the examination of testamentary wills preserved in church records to map the changing attitudes towards death in medieval and early modern France. Jacques Le Goff looked at how attitudes towards Time were changing in the Middle Ages in his highly celebrated essay, 'Merchant's Time and Church's Time in the Middle Ages.' Church's time was cosmic, immeasurable, extending from the Creation of the Universe to the Day of Judgment; merchant's transactions on the other hand required Time that was precise, measured to the day and was a commodity open to sale through commercial transactions. The conflict between the two was a major social conflict in the Middle Ages in Europe. Le Goff is a towering figure in the Annaliste historiographical tradition, extending its boundaries far into the field of the history of mentalities.

So too was Georges Duby until his death in 1996. Beginning with the history of land and labour in the medieval European context, (*Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*) Duby went into the study of marriage, family and women, the Cathedrals and the study of medieval imagination, especially the values that guided the working of the medieval society.

Philippe Ariès loved to call himself 'an amateur' historian, for even as he was a practicing historian, he was yet outside the profession. He was the initiator of some major new themes in history. He constituted the notion of death and the attitude towards children as veritable subjects of historical investigation. He brought the history of the family centrestage, with the issues of sexuality, the household and interpersonal relationships at the core. His works, *Centuries of Childhood*, 1962, traced the history of the recognition of childhood and its separate needs, for the child had hitherto been treated merely as a young adult; and *The Hour of Our Death*, 1981, dwelt upon the perceptions of death. These were major interventions in redefining social history. The renowned Cambridge group on the history of the family led by Peter Laslett and Jack Goody in the 1970s and 80s followed up these breakthroughs and published some astoundingly innovative research works: Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, eds., *Household and Family in Past Time*, 1972; Peter Laslett, *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations*, 1977; Richard Wall, J. Robin and P. Laslett, eds., *Family Forms in Historic Europe*, 1982; Jack Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*, 1983.

Three sets of recent collaborative endeavours have taken the history of mentalities further: Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, general eds., *A History of Private Life*, 5 vols., Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., *The History of Women*, 4 vols., and Giovanni Levi and Jean-Claude Schmitt, general eds., *A History of Young People*, 2 vols. A large portion of each of these works dwells upon mentalities. G. Vigarello followed up the theme of mentalities in his delightful book, *The Concepts of Cleanliness*, Cambridge, 1988, while Jean-Claude Schmitt had edited a special issue of the journal *History and Anthropology* on the theme of gestures in 1984.

The groups at society's margins had been a point of attraction for the historian for long; what was lacking until the 1960s and 70s was a conception of marginality and its relationship with mainstream society. The marginals were not merely those who were poor, without means; they were the ones living not only at the mainstream society's territorial margins – at the borders of the village, in hermitages or hideouts in the forests or the hills etc. – but whose norms of life were at variance with the mainstream norms whether perforce or by choice: The beggars, the lunatics, hermits, thieves and robbers. It was Michel Foucault, the philosopher, who set the parameters of this

problematic especially in his *Discipline and Punish and Madness and Civilization*. The study of marginality, he argued, was important because it was the 'other' of the mainstream; the *The Annales School* study is an entry point into mapping the contours of the mainstream itself. Foucault introduced the central concept of the relation of power in the study of social phenomena. The creation of marginality was an emphatic expression of the relation of power in that the elite values at the mainstream determined the notion of marginality. Whoever does not conform to those values gets excluded into the margins as prisoners or lunatics or whatever. The birth of Psychiatry for him was the chief expression of the creation of marginality as a relation of social power. In setting up this perspective, Foucault was questioning a fundamental assumption of the discipline of history, i.e. that the 'facts' recovered from the archives possessed an unassailable objectivity. For Foucault 'facts' were culturally constructed: they expressed a relation of power. The objectivity of history was then at one go relativised. This was a serious challenge to *Annales* as much as to positivist history. Some of the *Annalistes* incorporated Foucauldian insights into their study of marginality. The Polish historian Bronisław Geremek's major work, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris*, originally published in Polish in 1971, in French in 1976, and in English in 1987 was written under Foucault's influence.

The comparative history framework was implicit in the *Annales* vision from the inception. Comparative history was not quite an invention of *Annales* historiography as Marc Bloch had emphasised in his famous essay, 'A Contribution Towards a Comparative History of European Societies' (1928). For him the comparative method rested on dissimilarities underneath apparent similarities between two phenomena or situations. A comparison between these two would highlight the salient features of each and therefore become a very useful tool for developing each one's profile. However, the study of phenomena such as feudalism or capitalism as a large, comprehensive theme itself makes it comparative inasmuch as their conceptualisation could only result from a comparative study of their vast and varied structures.

Contribution of the Annales School

Any assumption that *Annales* historiography has since its inception over seven decades ago has proceeded along a straight line and a single strand, without much variation and without much inner conflict and contradiction, would clearly be quite mistaken. Indeed, the several alterations in the subtitling of the journal during its life are pointers to both its innate tensions and its dynamism. Even as the term *Annales* gave the journal a permanent identity, its original subtitle, *histoire économique et sociale* gave way to *économies, sociétés, civilisations* and lately to *Histoire et sciences sociales*. Some of the major tensions arose from the *Annales*' own project. In some important ways *Annales* historiography was on one hand opposed to the legacy of Positivism as well as Marxism and on the other inherited this legacy. Positivism as well as Marxism envisioned a dichotomy between an objective truth in history and a subjective perception of it by the historians. Positivism predicated the unveiling of the objective truth upon scientific rationality: the objective truth is embedded in historical records; through the employment of reason the historians will be able to uncover it bit by bit and this will bridge the gap between the observer, the historian, and the observed, the objective reality. Marxism reached the same end through the prism of class struggle. All history can be explained thus. *Annales* historiography too dreamt of some day capturing 'total history', which will be 'true history'. But the telling difference between them was that if Positivism rested all historical explanation on scientific reason and Marxism on class struggle, in *Annales* historiography there was no such permanent structuring of historical explanation. That is, not all historical phenomena or episodes or movements were 'in the last instance' brought down to either economic base or politics or psychology or whatever. It rather preferred to study moving conjunctures, each phenomenon, episode or movement with its own causal hierarchy. Yet, however muted, the very vision of the ability to compose a total and a true history some day was not without the underpinnings of Positivist and Marxist assumption of

objective reality. Indeed, the Annalistes, with their professed antipathy towards teleology, have nevertheless shown an astonishing, if implicit, long term hierarchisation of historical explanation. The early works in this genre mostly pertain to what might be located broadly in the area of socio-economic history, barring of course Lucien Febvre's precocious explorations in the history of sensibilities and unbelief etc. Once the 'foundation' had been laid, the 'superstructure' of the history of mentalities followed in its wake. Nothing evokes this implicit structuring more forcefully than the assertion of one of the most celebrated practitioners of Annales historiography, Georges Duby, that he had turned to the study of marriage, women, the family etc. of medieval Europe, since he had already established his grasp over its economy, production process, distribution and so forth.

Annales historiography has remained somewhat ambivalent too with regard to a problem it had itself raised, that of history's ties with chronology. If it intended to transcend the temporal bounds in its search of a true history, it implied rethinking on the conception of time and chronology: History dealt with time, for sure, but was not, and should not be, led on the leash by chronology. Indeed, if chronology was artificial, time itself was fluid. Fernand Braudel's conceptualisation of differing rhythms of historical time and Jacques Le Goff's demonstration of time as culturally constructed and therefore relative as well dynamic, rather than absolute and fixed, constituted major landmarks in redefining the dual relationship of the discipline of history to time and chronology. Inherent in the conception of 'total history' or 'history in its entirety' was a suspicion of the sanctity of strict chronological divides between antiquity, medieval and modern, for many of the themes are hard to tie down to these divides. The rhythm of change in mentalities, social values or family structures transgresses virtually any temporal boundaries set around it.

Implied in the investigation of these themes was the assumption that the historian needs to rise above the terror of evidence, especially archival evidence and depend upon imagination and anthropological insights, much as Marc Bloch had done. Yet, most practitioners of this genre of historiography have adhered rather tightly to the chronological boundaries set by their evidence. Nothing expresses this tension more evocatively than the title of Fernand Braudel's major book *Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. On one hand, Braudel seeks to cover a vast canvas of history in the two volumes; on the other, the temporal boundaries are tightly set 'in the Age of Philip II'. The diktat of evidence exercises as much terror for them as it did for their predecessors in the nineteenth century and keeps them forcefully on chronology's leash, their ambition under considerable restraint.

Nevertheless, the explorations that could be encapsulated within what has virtually become an umbrella term, the Annales historiography, have opened to the historian's craft vistas that allow the discipline an all-encompassing domain. At the heart of its concerns are human beings with all their life's tensions, struggles, their ambiguities, indecisions, conflicting and competing emotions, thoughts, experiences and mentalities; the study of the structures of life is subordinated here to the study of human beings rather than as self-contained, impersonal phenomena, as the subject of study themselves to which human beings relate merely as programmed actors. The expanse of the domain itself, and the complexities of explorations of its ever-growing dimensions, should ensure the relegation of any teleological project deep into the background, whether or not the Annalistes have confronted it with deliberation.

Postmodernist Intervention

Postmodernism is a reaction against modernity. In essence, it may also be called anti-modernity. However, it is not anti-modern in a simple, binary opposition. It has developed through a long process of critical engagement with modernity and its consequences. It has gained prominence since the 1970s. The three decades since then have seen the spread of postmodern ideas throughout the world. However, they are particularly dominant in the advanced Western world. The ideologues of postmodernism have criticised and attacked the philosophy, culture and politics which modernity had

generated.

The Modernist Tradition

The process of modernity began in the European countries around the time of Renaissance. Its centre lay in the origins and growth of modern sciences which established a quest for certainty, truth, exactitude, general principles and universal laws. Its ultimate philosophical justification was achieved in the works of philosophers like Descartes, Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire, Montesquieu and Diderot, the German philosophers such as Kant and Hegel and many other philosophers and thinkers. Modernity was said to herald the end of the Middle Ages or Feudalism in Europe, and usher in an era where Reason reigned supreme. The philosophers of modernity from Descartes to the post-Enlightenment thinkers to Marx and Weber denounced the medieval values, faiths and beliefs. Although some of them, like Marx, were critical of modernity, they upheld most of its values and norms.

Great thinkers like Hobbes, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Hume, Adam Smith, Bacon were both products and producers of this modernity. Apart from new philosophical principles, modernity also generated powerful material forces which gave rise to modern industries, capitalism, and an entirely new set of social relations in Europe by the nineteenth century. This new industrial society was marked by urbanisation, bureaucratisation, individualism, commodification, rationalisation and secularisation. By the mid-nineteenth century, the process of modernity had almost completely eliminated the economy, society and polity of the Middle Ages in Western Europe and North America. Instead, it had given rise to a completely new economic, social and political order.

As the modernity generated unprecedented progress, it also created enormous sufferings. The peasantry, workers and artisans were all forced to go through terrible misery in the process of being modernised. Even more sufferings were due for the colonial territories in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Australia where the colonising Europeans eliminated the local people, occupied their lands and drained the economy for their own benefits. This imperialist drive led to the death of millions in colonial territories, enormous distortion in their cultures and traditions, and terrible burden on their resources.

What is Postmodernism?

Postmodernism denotes the philosophy which has now arisen after and in opposition to the philosophy of modernity. It has been a belief among some, particularly the postmodernists that we have passed beyond modernity and the age we are now living in is a postmodern one. Keith Jenkins, one of the postmodern theorists of history, declares that 'Today we live within the general condition of postmodernity. We do not have a choice about this. For postmodernity is not an "ideology" or a position we can choose to subscribe to or not; postmodernity is precisely our condition : it is our fate.' Frederic Jameson, a benevolent critic of postmodernism, also thinks that postmodernism is a cultural process initiated by a radical change in the nature of capitalism. In a famous book, he has characterised postmodernism as the 'cultural logic of late capitalism'.

Basing in this belief about the emergence of a new society, several thinkers have argued that this has led to a change in our knowledge-system. Thus Jean-Francois Lyotard, a French thinker who popularised the term 'postmodernism', states that 'the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as postmodern age'.

In using the term postmodernity, the emphasis is basically on the social and the economic. It implies the exhaustion of modernity and stresses the rise of new information and communication technologies leading to globalisation and the enormous growth of consumerism. The theorists of this transformation have claimed that just as in the past the agrarian societies based on land were replaced by industrial societies based on manufacturing, in the same way, the industrial societies are now being replaced by a postindustrial world in which the service sector is now the most prominent.

It was Daniel Bell who, in his book *The Coming of Postindustrial Society*, seriously wrote about the

arrival of a new kind of society representing a break from the earlier industrial society. In his view, the old-style 'factory worker' is now replaced by the new service-sector professional. Simultaneously, the old-style machines are now replaced by new information and communication technologies. The Fordist assembly line is now a thing of the past and there is a decentralisation of production and manufacturing. Moreover, now there is a greater flexibility in management and employment.

Main Concepts

Very much like the theories of modernity, there is no unified theory of postmodernism. If anything, the situation is even more diffuse and chaotic. The range is vast and it covers the whole spectrum from mild critique of modernity to total nihilism. But, although postmodernism derives its definitions from many sources, the one common thread running through them is the critique of modernity. The major ideologues whose works constitute the corpus from which postmodernism is formulated are Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Deleuze, Guattari, White, and Rorty. Their works posed a major challenge to the narratives of modernity and their theories attacked the basic foundations of knowledge created by modernity with Reason at its centre. The targets of their criticism have been capitalism, historicism, humanism, scientism, and rationalism which constituted the modern world.

Postmodernism questioned the claims of the Enlightenment philosophers for universal knowledge. It also criticised the search for foundations of knowledge. Modernity gave rise to grand narratives, that is, overarching theories purporting to explain each and everything within its compass. Postmodernism rejects the very idea of such grand narratives and attacks the all-encompassing, overarching ideologies. Secondly, postmodernism debunks the claims of the science to achieve truth. Postmodernism takes nothing as absolute and leans towards relativism, sometimes total relativism. It, moreover, rejects the claims of human and social sciences for representing the facts and the world. In the opinion of the postmodern theorists, there is no truth which is beyond or prior to linguistic intervention; it is language which constructs the reality and the world for the humans. It is, therefore, futile to search for truth beyond language which, in turn, is conditioned by the individual and local cultures.

Thirdly, postmodernism also attacks the modernist organisation of world and knowledge in binaries. According to the postmodernists, the modernist tradition tried to arrange knowledge around certain major binaries in which science was the core common element—science vs. rhetoric, science vs. literature, science vs. narrative. Here science represented the true knowledge while the other side of the binary belonged to imagination and false consciousness. It also generated other sets of binaries. Fact vs. fiction, truth vs. imagination, science vs. magic, masculine vs. feminine, etc. are the binary oppositions conventionalised by the theorists of modernity. In these binaries, the second term almost always occupies an inferior position. Postmodernism challenges this knowledge based on binaries and instead emphasises on multiplicities, varieties and differences.

Ideologues of Postmodernism

There are many thinkers associated with postmodernism. However, in this section, we will take up the ideas of only some of the most important thinkers for discussion. Michel Foucault (1926-1984) : Foucault, a French philosopher, was a complex thinker whose thoughts encompass various themes and multiple ideas. Nevertheless, he is considered a postmodern thinker because of his trenchant criticism of the Enlightenment ideas and modernity. His writings had and have still continued to exert tremendous influence in humanities and social sciences. His work is frequently referred to in disciplines such as history, cultural studies, philosophy, sociology, literary theory and education. He is famous for his critiques of various social institutions which he considered the products of European modernity. Institutions and disciplines such as psychiatry, medicine and prisons invited his trenchant criticism. Apart from his works on these, he is also renowned for his general theories concerning power and the relation between power and knowledge, as well as his ideas concerning 'discourse' in relation to the history of Western thought. In later life he also worked on the history of sexuality.

Foucault expressed his ideas through a series of important books

– *Madness and Civilization* (1961), *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963), *The Order of Things* (1966), *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), *Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison* (1975), and *The History of Sexuality* (1976-1986).

Foucault's writings are mostly set in historical contexts, but he discourages the notion of totality and continuity in history. Instead, he promotes the idea of discontinuity. Thus, for him, history is not continuous and unifocal, nor can there be any universalisation of history. Foucault's ideas about history and society progresses from the concept of archaeology to that of genealogy. But throughout his works, he stresses the idea of difference. Moreover, he rejects the Enlightenment idea that the rule of Reason can be equated with emancipation and progress. He says that instead of serving as an emancipatory force, the knowledge centres on power and helps in creating new forms of domination in modern times. He thus criticises the attempts to separate knowledge and power and emphasises that the pursuit of knowledge, particularly in modern times, is indissolubly associated with pursuit of power and quest for domination.

Jacques Derrida (1930-2004): Derrida, another French philosopher, has proved crucial to the development of the postmodern theory, particularly the 'linguistic turn'. The basic contribution of Derrida to the development of the poststructuralist and postmodernist theories is his theory of deconstruction. It views all written texts as product of complex cultural processes. Moreover, these texts can only be defined in relation to other texts and conventions of writing. According to Derrida, the human knowledge is limited to texts; there is nothing outside the texts. Reality is constituted by language. It does not, however, mean that there is no world outside of language. But it does mean that the world we know is accessible to us only through language. It is language which constitutes our world and, therefore, language precedes reality. The knowledge of reality is not beyond language and its rules of existence. Another point related to deconstruction is the idea of difference which states that the meaning of anything is ascertained only through difference from other things. Any text is conceivable only in relation of difference to other texts. In this sense, difference precedes the existence of things. Another point is about the unity of opposites, because without unity, there are no opposites. Unity and opposition alternate with each other. Deconstruction emphasises on the instability and multiplicity of meanings. There is no fixed meaning of anything and no single reading of a text.

Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924-1998): Lyotard is the main thinker who made the word postmodern famous. His book, *The Postmodern Condition*, published in French in 1979 and in English in 1984, made the term popular. He defined the term in the following way : 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives'. These metanarratives are grand narratives such as 'the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth'. Lyotard expresses doubt towards all these. In his opinion, theories and discourses of all kinds are 'concealed narratives', that is, near- fictional accounts, despite their claims for universal validity. He criticises the modernist theories which tend to totalise and universalise ideas which are basically modern European products. He also rejects the foundationalism which bases all knowledge on secure theoretical foundations. He attacks the metatheories, articulated through what he calls the masculinist metalanguage, which support the domination of various sorts-of one class over another, of men over women, of majority over minority. Instead, he advocates the ideas of difference and plurality, of radical uncertainty, and possibility of alternatives.

Hayden White (b.1928) : White, an American historian, is considered an important postmodern thinker, particularly, in the field of history. His book, *Metahistory : The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, published in 1973, has been hailed by many as signifying a break in the philosophy of history. It was supposed to herald a 'linguistic turn' in the writing of history. Now, it was said, instead of asking 'how does history resemble science?' one might ask 'how does history resemble fiction?' White argues that the past is presented to us merely in the form of various disjointed

chronicles. It is the historian who creates out of it a meaningful story. It is not possible to find in the historical events a coherent narrative. At the most, they offer elements of a story. It is now the historian who prepares a coherent narrative out of the available set of records by suppressing certain events, while highlighting some others. This process becomes manifest by the fact that the same set of events may be construed as tragic, ironic or comic depending upon the political or other predilections of the historians. It, therefore, becomes clear, according to White, that history is not a scientific exercise, but a literary one and the historical narratives are not scientific treatise but 'verbal fictions'.

White says that in writing of history all the techniques of novel-writing are employed. Selection of events, characterisation, change of tone and point of view are the techniques common to both the writing of novels and history. In history-writing, as in the creation of novels, imagination plays a great role. It is only through imagination that the historian makes sense of the past events and weaves some of them into a credible story.

Postmodernism and History-Writing

Postmodernism offers a fundamental critique of the conventional mode of history-writing. Sometimes the critique becomes so radical that it almost becomes anti-history. The main ingredient of history-writing, such as facts, sources, documents, archival records, etc., all come under severe scrutiny under the microscope of postmodernist vision. The certainty and continuity attached to historical writing are thoroughly debunked, the inner working of historiography is put under scanner and its proclaimed nearness to 'truth' is attacked. The history-writing itself is historicised, and its rootedness in the western culture is highlighted by the postmodern thinkers. Postmodernism rejects the 'objectivist' tradition of history writing starting with Ranke which strove to recover the past 'as it actually was'. It has attacked history both in its grander versions as well as in its relatively modest versions. It challenges the proclaimed objectivity and neutrality of the historians and claims that the process of interpretation transforms the past in radically different ways.

Postmodernism questions the very basis of conventional historiography by locating its origins in the modern Europe's encounter with the other. It began with the European Renaissance which prompted the Europeans to 'discover' other lands and people. In this quest the 'history' served as a tool for posing the modern western self in opposition to the other whose history was supposed to be just beginning as a result of its encounter with Europe. Thus the practice of history was employed not just to study the past but to fashion it in terms of the criteria set by modern Europe. History, therefore, evolved a western quest for power over the colonised territories and its desire to appropriate their pasts.

There are basically two types of history in conventional sense. One is the grand narrative of history which visualises that the human society is moving in a certain direction, towards an ultimate goal – global capitalist society or a global communist one. There is another, more modest version of history which claims to rely only on facts and to eschew any ideological orientation. It claims neutrality and objectivity for itself and is the most accepted version of history writing. This is also known as the 'lower case history' which is 'realist, objectivist, documentarist and liberal-pluralist'. At the centre of professional history writing is the notion of objectivity, of facts, of being able to represent reality, to recover the past. Historical facts are seen to exist independent of and prior to interpretation. Historian's job is thus said to be able to discover the truth, to be neutral and dispassionate.

Postmodernism rejects all these notions. It not only attacks the attribution of any essence to the past, but also criticises the attempts to study the past for 'its own sake'. Both versions of history writing are considered as ideological and situated in particular cultural formation. Both kinds of history is said to be 'just theories about the past', without any claim to represent the truth. Both are the products of western modernity and represent the ways in which it 'conceptualized the past'. According to postmodernism, there is no historical truth but what the historians make it out to be, no facts except what the historians interpret, no representable past except what the historians construct. In

postmodernist view, the history can be accepted as genuine knowledge only if it sheds its claims to truth and hence to power, and accepts its fragmentary character. The only history possible is microhistory. The ambiguities and gaps in historical narration are inherent and essential to it and should be retained. All quests for continuity, coherence and consistency should be dropped. It should be accepted that all documents and facts are nothing but texts and are ideologically constructed.

There are even more extreme views within postmodernism with regard to historiography. Keith Jenkins, therefore, declares that 'we are now at a postmodern moment when we can forget history completely.' Here he differs somewhat from his earlier position where he felt the need for anti-modernist 'reflexive histories'. Recently, however, he has taken the position that 'thanks to the "non-historical imaginaries" that can be gleaned from postmodernism we can now wave goodbye to history'. He justifies his position on the ground that the history we know is entirely a modern western product which never earlier existed anywhere in the world: 'we have obviously never seen anything like nineteenth- and twentieth-century western upper- and lower-case genres... at any other time or place. That there have never existed, on any other part of the earth, at any other time, ways of historicizing time like that.' This extreme position questions the very existence of any kind of professional historywriting.

Critique of Postmodernism

As postmodernist critique of modernity ranges from total rejection to partial acceptance, so does the criticism of postmodernism vary from virulent attack and complete rejection to some level of its acceptance. The critiques have pointed out that in some extreme form of postmodern relativism, the implication may be that 'anything goes'. However, such a stance may justify the status quo where 'everything stays'. Total relativism and nihilism denies the transformative praxis and does nothing to change the repressive socio-economic and political order. By segmenting the knowledge and by demarcating the socio-cultural boundaries to extreme micro levels, it makes it impossible to create a broad solidarity of the oppressed. Moreover, the postmodern analysis of society and culture is lopsided because it emphasises the tendencies towards fragmentation while completely ignoring the equally important movements towards synthesis and broader organisation. At another level, by conceptualising power as distributed into countless small and big systems, practices and organisations at various levels of society, postmodernism obscures the selective concentration of power, the basic relations of domination and subordination, of repression and resistance. It also tends to ignore the roles of state and capital as much more potent tools of domination and repression.

Some critics also charge postmodernism with being historicist as it accepts the inevitability of the present and its supposedly postmodernist character. If the world is now postmodern, it is our fate to be living in it. But such postmodernity which the western world has created now is no more positive than the earlier social formation it is supposed to have superseded. Moreover, it is not very sure that whether the modernity has actually come to an end. In fact, large parts of the world in the erstwhile colonial and semi-colonial societies and East European countries are now busy modernising themselves. Even in the west, the chief characteristics of modernity are still there – industrial economy, political parties and factions, markets, unions, state regulations, discipline-based knowledge, etc. The concept of postmodernity, therefore, remains mostly at an academic and intellectual level.

Critics also argue that many postmodernists, deriving from poststructuralism, deny the possibility of knowing facts and reality. As a result, no event can be given any weightage over another. All happenings in the past are of the same value. Thus, theoretically, the Holocaust or any brutality of a similar nature can be equated with any other event, whether tragic or comic, because, in postmodernist view, it is the language which creates events and histories for us.

Conclusion

In all ages and all human societies the history that has been written has been inseparable from the

history through which the writers have lived. Few would wish to deny that what historians produce, like other forms of human thought and expression, is subject to change over time. Since the content of their thought and writing is itself concerned, in greater or lesser part, with changes over time, it would be strange-indeed paradoxical-if this were not so. There is, however, little agreement as to how and why history, in the sense of what historians think and say, changes as and when it does. It is easy to postulate two extreme views on this, though few people today would be content with either as a sufficient explanation. At one end of the scale, history can be thought of as an autonomous intellectual discipline, with its own methodology and conventions, which has changed because its practitioners have become dissatisfied with its descriptive and explanatory capacity, and have seen-or thought that they have seen-a better way of doing it. At the other end of the scale, we may think of history as having been wholly conditioned by changes in the society in which historians are living; such external influences may be scientific, technological, military, economic, demographic, social, political, religious, cultural, etc., but these are what bring about different ways of thinking about the past and different ways in which it is portrayed in the writings of historians; naturally these include different explanations of historical change and continuity. For just as the pace and impact of other changes in human life have not been uniform in all times and places, so likewise changes in the practice of historical study and expression have come about unevenly. Thus, in the above discussion we come across several changes that history had witnessed since arrival of the modernity. Even in recent times also Historiography has undergone great paradigmatic change due to the recent developments in historical understanding. Historians are trying to provide new interpretations for the already used source materials and also use hitherto unused sources.

Unit-III: History as Interdisciplinary Practice

1. History and Archaeology, History and Anthropology.
2. History and Psychology, History and Literature.

Introduction

To reconstructing the past, historians employed several techniques. To produce his written product in form of history a historian basically exercise three function first is of gathering the data, criticizing or evaluating the data, and presenting the material in readable form. Each of these processes entails its own special technique and training, but in the hands of experienced practitioners they are interrelated activities. Finding, sifting, and presenting the evidence in combination involve the skills of a detective, a scientist, a judge, and an artist. History, it has been said, could not have been born without two basic elements—a body of more or less reliable materials and a critical method to deal with them. While the historian relies primarily on documents, his sources also include a variety of other materials: physical remains—roads, fortifications, buildings, pottery, weapons, chiseled stones, coins, tapestries, pictures, sculptures, and other museum pieces; orally transmitted folklore in legends, ballads, and sagas; handwritten papyri and parchment manuscripts; printed books and papers; motion picture films; sound recordings: television and radio broadcasts; and computer tapes. The accumulation of data on man's past is a fascinating story in its own right: it long was a slow process, and only in late modern times did the materials become voluminous and the sources more complex, a process associated with the growth of large repositories in national archives and libraries, and with collections of private papers. To find the data on a given subject, the historian uses a variety of bibliographical compilations and archival finding aids and draws on the skills of archivists, librarians, and museum specialists. Hence, this chapter will discuss in brief about the types of data or facts or evidence or otherwise called sources of information a historian collect to reconstruct the past.

Primary and Secondary Sources: Basic Concept

In historical research, sources are divided into two general categories: primary and secondary. Primary sources offer firsthand testimony of a happening, the view of an eyewitness. Secondary sources are descriptions or narrations of the event derived from the primary sources. Thus a letter of Pandit Nehru from Spain to Indira Gandhi and describing an incident in it, for example his first-hand report on Spanish Civil War, is a primary source; a later scholar's reconstruction or account of the event, for instance in, represents a secondary source. Sometimes the line between the two categories may be blurred and the same document may be a primary source from one standpoint and a secondary source from another.

While in many ways modern technology has made printed sources more readily and widely available to the historian, the telephone has proved to be the historian's enemy. Historians of recent events have often commented on how an important trail they could once trace in documents may now disappear in an unrecorded telephone Call at high levels of officialdom. But to supplement the written record in contemporary history and to fill gaps in it, the historian may draw on oral history interviewing his subjects, recording the interview on tape, and using the transcription as a source. This technique is a modern refinement of the process of drawing on the testimony of witnesses utilized by probably the greatest historian writing of his own times, Thucydides, in his study of the Peloponnesian Wars between the Athenians and the Spartans. In this way the contemporary historian generates his own primary sources. Once he has accumulated his raw data from whatever source, the historian must subject it to the second process, critical examination and evaluation, before he can use it.

Obviously, one cannot travel to the past by ship or plane, or even through e-mail or the internet. This is a very serious point: the only way we can have knowledge of the past is through studying the relics and traces left by past societies.

Primary sources, as it were, form the basic 'raw material' of history; they are sources which came into existence within the period being investigated. The articles and books written up later by historians,

drawing upon these primary sources, converting the raw material into history, are secondary sources. The distinction between primary and secondary sources is a critical one, though no historian has ever pretended that it offers a magic key to the nature of historical study, or that primary sources have a necromantic potency denied to secondary ones. There is always some excitement about being in contact with a genuine primary source, but one will not learn very much from a single source. Reading through an edited selection of excerpts from primary sources will have the salutary effect of bringing one in contact with the thinking and language of past generations, but it will not amount to research. If the ordinary reader, or history student, wants to learn quickly about the role and status of women during the Renaissance, or about the causes of the First World War, they will be well advised to go to the secondary authorities, a knowledge of the principles of history being useful in separating out the more reliable from the less. But if you are planning to make an original contribution to historical knowledge, you are unlikely to make much of a stir if you stick strictly to other people's work, that is, the secondary sources- to which, it should be stressed, the research historian will frequently return throughout all stages of research and writing. The difference is critical in that strategy which all historians, in one way or another, devise in embarking on a new research project. It is through the secondary sources that one becomes aware of the gaps in knowledge, problems unsolved, suspect explanations. It is with the aid of these secondary sources, and all the other resources of the profession, that one begins to identify the archives in which one will commence one's researches.

Primary sources, numbingly copious in some areas, are scarce and fragmentary in others. Much has to be garnered indirectly and by inference. Historians do not rely on single sources, but are always seeking corroboration, qualification, correction; the production of history is very much a matter of accumulating details, refining nuances. The technical skills of the historian lie in sorting these matters out, in understanding how and why a particular source came into existence, how relevant it is to the topic under investigation, and, obviously, the particular codes or language in accordance with which the particular source came into being as a concrete artefact.

With regard to the secondary source, there is a further broad distinction to be made between, on the one hand, research-based specialist work, which will usually appear in the form of articles in learned historical journals or specialist monographs, and, on the other, general works or textbooks, which have the function of summarising and synthesising the specialist work. In other words, we need to understand not just the distinction between primary and secondary sources, but also that there are different types and levels of secondary source. These range from the most highly specialised research based work, through high-quality textbooks which incorporate some personal research as well as summarise the work of others, to the simpler textbooks, and then on to the many types of popular and non-academic history.

Because a source comes in the form of a printed book, that does not necessarily mean it is secondary. A book which originates within the period being studied is a primary source - it might be a legal textbook describing the law as it existed at the time of publication, a work of political philosophy, an analysis of popular music or a 'conduct book', a guide to etiquette. Rule number one: look at the date! Primary sources in their original form are usually only to be found in specialist libraries or record offices.

While students and general readers will always need the textbooks, and other secondary works, they will also find that actually reading the words of, or looking at the artefacts created by, the people of the past society being studied can give a more direct and vivid understanding of that society than any secondary account. To sum up: primary sources are indispensable for research and the production of historical knowledge, but selected and edited and, if necessary, translated they are also vital in the teaching and learning of history. Let us discuss the primary and secondary sources of historical research in details.

Primary Sources

Scholars defines a primary data source as “the testimony of any eyewitness, or of a witness by any other of the senses, or of a mechanical device like the Dictaphone-that is, of one who ... was present at the events of which he tells. A primary source must thus have been produced by a contemporary of the events it narrates.” In other words, primary sources are tangible materials that provide a description of an historical event and were produced shortly after the event happened. They have a direct physical relationship to the event being studied. Examples of primary sources include newspaper report, letters, public documents, court decisions, personal diaries, autobiographies, artifacts and eyewitness’s verbal accounts. These primary sources of data can be divided into two broad categories as follows:

The remains or relics of a given historical period: These could include photographs, coins, skeletons, fossils, tools, weapons, utensils, furniture, buildings and pieces of art and culture (object d’ art). Though these were not originally meant for transmitting information to future generations they could prove very useful sources in providing reliable and sound evidence about the past. Most of these relics provide non-verbal information.

Those objects that have a direct physical relationship with the events being reconstructed: This includes documents such as laws, files, letters, manuscripts, government resolutions, charters, memoranda, wills, news-papers, magazines, journals, films, government or other official publications, maps, charts, log-books, catalogues, research reports, record of minutes of meetings, recording, inscriptions, transcriptions and so on.

The Immense Variety of Primary Sources

Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Types of Primary Sources: Primary sources did not come into existence to satisfy the curiosity of historians. They derive 'naturally', 'organically', as it were, or, more straight forwardly, 'in the ordinary course of events', from human beings and groups of human beings living their lives, worshipping, making decisions, adjudicating, fornicating, going about their business or fulfilling their vocations, recording, noting, communicating as they go, very occasionally, perhaps, with an eye on the future, but generally in accordance with immediate needs and purposes. The technical skills of the historian lie in sorting these matters out, in understanding how and why a particular source came into existence, how relevant it is to the topic under investigation, and, obviously, the particular codes or language in accordance with which the particular source comes into being as a concrete artefact. Following are few general points about the different types of sources, and the different strengths and weaknesses they have, depending upon what particular topic is being studied.

The contrast between public and private sources: The simple contrast here is between sources which were intended to be seen or read by substantial numbers of people and sources generated purely for the use of one person or certain specified persons. We cannot say that one sort is automatically more reliable than the other. We could make the initial presumption that someone writing in their own diary or to a close friend would be unlikely to tell deliberate lies. Conversely, some types of public document may be deliberately designed to mislead. On the other hand, the fact that a document is public and 'open' may create pressures for it to be accurate.

The contrast between 'documents of record' and discursive sources: A 'document of record' is one which by its very existence records that some event took place- it is not someone else's account, but, as it were, it embodies the event itself. Prime examples are acts of parliament, peace treaties, charters, and minutes of meetings. An act of parliament itself embodies the event of a law being passed, as a peace treaty embodies the event of a peace treaty being concluded: both may be full of waffle and hypocrisy, and they may indeed never be implemented, but they still record something that definitely happened. The actual existence of Magna Carta, a charter does tell us that the issuing of Magna Carta really did

take place. Minutes can be uninformative or even misleading, but provided they are not fakes they are records that the meetings did take place. Important documents of record that have recently been much used by historians are wills. Wills record a definite transaction. They may well be the best way of establishing how rich a person was. They can also be used to infer how much, or how little, affection existed between married couples and between parents and children.

Much work with primary sources is done by indirect inference. Discursive sources - somebody else's report that a meeting took place or description of the signing of a treaty - will have their own uses, but are not the best and most direct sources for the events themselves. Other discursive sources which have come into great use in recent times are books advising on social behaviour and etiquette, sometimes known as 'conduct books', studies of customs and folklore, and guides, handbooks, directories and other works of reference. The last category can be given a high rating for potential accuracy, since customers wouldn't buy them if they weren't reliable. The second one should be accurate, though there is always the danger of the enthusiast being tempted to romanticise.

Classification of Primary Sources

Documents of record: As we have seen from the examples of the edict and treaties already mentioned, these, taken in conjunction with other sources, offer an enormous variety of insights and perceptions, but they do also record something that actually happened; they record a 'fact' or 'event', the very edict or treaty itself, and in that specific and limited sense they cannot be 'ideology' (they are 'fact', not 'opinion')-though of course, as historians know better than anyone, minutes, reports of meetings, and so on, recording what a body as a whole agreed its decisions to be, can be incomplete and slanted. They may, as with, say, parish registers or rent-rolls, record hard, factual information- the 'facts' will be subject to human error in the original entries, though scarcely to ideology, and will require specialist skills to extract. Documents of record have a range and variety that the mockers of 'a fetishism of documents' have never dreamed of. E. P. Thompson, and other historians of the working class, have made great use of police records; in reconstructing the life of Montaigne, Le Roy Ladurie used the records of the Inquisition; one of the most illuminating sets of sources for sexual behaviour in ancient regime France are the declarations de grossesse, statements required by law from unwed mothers. These, it need scarcely be said, are records, subject to the accuracy and honesty of the scribes, of what the women said, not necessarily of what actually happened. No one but the historian can comprehend the fascinating variousness of sources, and what can be done with them; no one better than the historian knows their dreadful fallibility.

Surveys and reports: These will always have a point of view, as with Carr's Blue Books, but then it is one of the historian's first tasks to be sure that he or she has fully grasped what that point of view is; the task is not to pin down an ideology (rather easy when there seem to be so few on offer, of which, of course, much the most popular is 'bourgeois') or identify a type of discourse, but to penetrate far more deeply in order to isolate such bits of hard evidence as the source does contain.

Chronicles and histories: Historians who, for a couple of hundred years or more, have been used to the mishmash of superstition and myth, mixed with the occasional recording of fact or attempt at assessment, to be found in monastic and chivalric chronicles and town histories, are entitled to feel some weary resentment at latter-day preachers on the problems of 'deconstructing' texts; medieval historians try as far as they can to avoid undue dependence on such sources (yet how glad we are to have them for such places as Tajikistan or Vilnius); a few authentic chronicles, difficult though they will be to interpret, are worth any amount of specious theory.

Family and personal sources: Diaries and memoirs intended for publication will obviously be assessed differently from letters written solely with the purpose of, say, begging for a job, or informing a husband of how the household is faring in his absence; all diaries will have to be treated as the products of rather untypical human beings: but when purpose, social background, personal peculiarities, immediate context, literary conventions - as relevant - are taken into account, how much

information there often is for those skilled enough to perceive it!

Polemical, hortatory and prescriptive documents: Pamphlets, treatises, sermons, political manifestos are among the most used of historical sources: the naïve may think that these are simply conflicting discourses, Catholic against Protestant, Tory against socialist. In fact, apparently competing discourses often reveal shared assumptions about the nature of social structure. Conduct books, advising or prescribing on etiquette and behaviour - often for women! - are much used by historians these days, fully aware that they have to pin down who wrote them, who read them, and how far, if at all, they corresponded to actual behaviour.

Studies of customs and folklore and other academic works: Some important recent books have made considerable use of contemporary studies of folklore and customs - folklorists have their prejudices and blind spots like everyone else, but, on the whole, their driving force tends to be a dedication to their subject, so that again the historian, employing the appropriate wariness and crosschecks, can learn much. The writings of neither Max Weber, nor of Talcott Parsons, tell us how class actually is or was; but they give insights into perceptions of class in, respectively, the late-nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century. Works of contemporary cultural theorists don't tell us much about either culture or history, but they will tell future historians much about the strange ideas put forward at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Guides, handbooks, directories, and other works of reference: The historian will have to work out whether the intention is to prescribe a desired behaviour, or whether it is simply to report on actual behaviour, but codifications of the law, guides on parliamentary procedure, directories, handbooks, and educational manuals will have to be accurate, or they will be of no value to their potential customers. Guides to 'Ladies of the Town' are an interesting sub-category; of course they inscribe prevailing values, a slightly more complex matter than those whose unvarying response to the practices of the past is outrage would have us believe.

Media of communication and artefacts of popular culture: With newspapers, cartoons, etchings, and other illustrative material, posters and advertisements, films, radio tapes, television tapes, we move into fields where the cultural theorists also like to trample: no harm done, and perhaps something for historians to learn, provided always the fundamental purposes and achievements of history are kept firmly in mind - not to illustrate predetermined generalisations about competing discourses, or dominant ideologies, but to illuminate the past. These sources are very rich for attitudes, assumptions, mentalities, and values.

Archaeological and Material Artifacts: It has to be recognised that these are sources not directly used by the majority of working historians; yet most would consider it at least an ancillary part of their job to be knowledgeable about the built environment of whatever period or society they are studying and to be familiar with surviving physical relics. The area most affected by archaeological discoveries, obviously, is that traditionally termed 'ancient' or 'classical' history. A major point is confirmed: discovery or application of new sources alters interpretations - in other words, history depends on sources. We can learn a lot about the more modern period too, particularly about lifestyles and living conditions, from, for example, household utensils, furniture, and surviving buildings.

Large and elaborate inn signs dating from the early seventeenth century indicate that in that period literacy was still not widespread: an ideographic and easily recognised sign was of more use to the majority than a written one. Such sources may often be of use for rather specialised history, such as, for instance, the history of costume and fashion. But they can play their part too in the study of the wider questions of attitudes and mentalities. Coins have all sorts of subtle uses. Sometimes the actual illustrations and inscriptions on them tell us something about what matters seemed significant to the particular society which used the coins. The Roman emperors used coins for disseminating propaganda. More often coins serve as a basic source of precise information which can help to illuminate the significance of a whole host of other archaeological finds by, for example, giving an

exact dating.

Literary and artistic sources: Many of those who are in the van of condemning what they perceive as the fetishism of documents would maintain that 'art' and 'literature' are meaningless terms; but then they would also maintain that all of the other sources studied by the historian - like novels, plays, paintings, and so on are merely 'texts' or forms of discourse. The historian who wishes to produce results does best to stick to categories based partly on the physical nature of the source, but mainly on its fundamental contemporary purpose. Paintings are not painted to serve the same purpose as acts of parliament, nor novels drafted to bring wars to a dose. There are important bodies of literary and artistic theory which the historian would be extremely foolish to ignore. Every historian, for instance, should be aware of the conventions within which an artist of any particular period or style operates in representing reality. But historians will also adhere to their own proven methods: not reading the text in isolation, but studying all the other sources which indicate the origins of the work of literature or art, the intentions of the artist or writer, the conditions under which it was produced, the way it was marketed, and how it was received. If information is to be taken from the text it will, in the usual way, be checked against other relevant sources.

Processed sources: This inelegant title, redolent of down-market foodstuffs, points to some of the most up-market activities indulged in by historians today: paleontology, serology, aerial photography, the study of place names, and, of course, the application of advanced computer technology to statistical material. To take the last first, the actual raw data will have to be collected from the various other categories of sources listed here: in origin, it is indisputably primary source material, but it only becomes usable through being processed through a computer. Aerial photographs are not in themselves sources left by the past; rather, the taking of an aerial photograph is a process through which the contours of a medieval village, say, or of old field plans, not apparent to someone standing on the ground, become clear. To be absolutely accurate, one should probably say that the actual configurations of the landscape, invisible though they may be to the unaided human eye, form the true primary source.

Likewise, the true primary sources for the study of place names are surviving towns, villages, and geographical features and their names, together with all the other categories of sources from which place names may be extracted. The study of place names is a process or technique for making use of the data assembled from many sources. But place-name evidence is no more free-standing or infallible than any other. The date we first hear of a place name may not be the same as the date at which it first came into existence. Paleontology is the study of pollen cores from peat bog and lake sediments, giving knowledge of vegetational change. Serology uses the distribution of different blood groups in societies of today to indicate settlement patterns of, say, different tribal groups or of different nationalities. In both of these cases, process and basic source are inextricably intertwined.

Oral traditions: What is usually meant is 'oral testimony', the recording, whether on tape, or in shorthand, or by any other means, of personal recollections. For some areas of historical study, including much recent Third World history, such source material is absolutely invaluable. Naturally, it takes great skill, and a mastery of whatever other knowledge is available, to make effective use of what is inherently a highly problematic source. Oral traditions are especially valuable for societies where the written word is little used. Folk songs and folk sayings can give insights into the attitudes and mentalities of ordinary people in the past. It is in this category of source that we really do encounter the 'stories' which the linguistic materialists tell us are the only sources out of which we construct our lives. It is, on the contrary, fundamental to systematic historical study that realistic distinctions are made between 'stories' properly so-called and the many very different kinds of evidence mentioned here.

Observed behaviour, surviving customs, technical processes, etc: For economic and military historians alike the study of a contemporary craftsman at work in the old manner provides a peculiar,

but unique, kind of source. When Marc Bloch was alive, it was still perfectly reasonable for him to believe that, in studying the French peasants of his day, he would learn about their past. In our day, the focus of such approaches has had to switch to the Third World, where medieval historians can still reasonably hope that the study of practices current there now will throw light on behaviour in the Europe of earlier times. Thus, historian's concern with sources should be careful first to be clear that they really do understand what these sources comprise, and should certainly not remain under the illusion.

Evaluation and Use of Primary Sources

Anyone interested in studying history needs to think, step by step, about the problems involved in making use of primary sources, about, in particular, their strengths and their weaknesses. Professional historians, in their own researches, explicitly and systematically go through these questions; in very many cases they will be able to take the answers for granted. But here, when we get to the bottom of it, is a numbered list of the points which have to be established, or the questions which have to be answered, before a historian can use, interpret, derive information or meanings from, a particular primary source.

Authenticity of the Source: Now, in any exercise one might set in a teaching situation, one would be sure that the preselected source used was authentic, so in ordinary teaching situations we could ignore this question. However, it is important to be aware of the issue. Take, for example, a medieval charter apparently dated early in the eleventh century and purporting to make a grant of land from the king to a monastery. It is always possible that the charter was actually forged by the monks late in the twelfth century in order to establish a right to the land. The document will still be of value to historians as a genuine twelfth-century forgery which may tell them a good deal about that century, but they will have to be very circumspect in its use if their subject of study lies early in the eleventh century. To establish authenticity the historian will have to deploy the techniques of palaeography and diplomatics. Authenticity is often established through the provenance of the source. This is particularly important in regard to physical artefacts or archaeological sources. The fact is that the vast majority of written sources used by working historians do not have serious problems of authenticity. Often it is known that a particular document has been safely housed in a particular collection from the very moment it was created, and sometimes there were actual witnesses to its creation; there are many obvious checks on the authenticity of published documents. Still, the issue can crop up, as it did rather spectacularly in 1985 when a British Sunday newspaper published as authentic the quite cleverly faked 'Hitler Diaries'.

Production Date of the Source: How close is its date to the date of the events to which it relates, or to dates relevant to the topic being investigated? How does this particular source relate chronologically to other relevant sources? How does it relate to other significant dates? For example, there is a famous charter (in the Museum of London) from King John to the citizens of London whose date, May 1215, is shortly before that of Magna Carta itself, so that the grant of this charter can be related to King John's need to find supporters in the City of London against the barons; the date of the Horace Mann commentary already studied might be related to those of other significant events and developments: for instance, while its tone is extremely pessimistic, 1851 is often seen as a time of gathering optimism among the middle and upper classes, represented by the Great Exhibition of that year. What, in short, is the significance of the date of the particular source being studied? In some cases precisely dating a documenter, more particularly, a building or physical artefact is an extremely difficult task in itself. But if the historian cannot date the source, it is very difficult indeed for him/her to make much use of it. The more he/she knows about its date, and other related dates, the more use he/she will be able to make of it.

Category and Nature of Source: Usually the answers will be obvious, but it is important to be clear about the type. An official letter sent by a foreign secretary will contain different kinds of information, and will need different types of analysis, from a private letter sent by the same foreign secretary to his

wife, which may, in some circumstances, actually contain more frank, and more usable, information. Historians come to recognise the conventions, the codes, if you like, of particular types of sources, and these will have to be taken into account.

Purpose behind Existence of the Source: What person, or group of persons, created the source? What basic attitudes, prejudices, vested interests would he, she or they be likely to have? Who was it written for or addressed to? An ambassador's report on conditions in the country in which he is stationed may be biased in various directions: if he is a Catholic in a Protestant country he may tend to exaggerate the evidence of a Catholic upsurge; he may send home the kind of information he knows the home government wants to hear; he may, as for instance Neville Henderson, British ambassador to Hitler's Germany, was, be over-anxious to maintain peaceful relations between the two countries; on reporting on a potential enemy he may give a hopelessly optimistic account, say, of the likelihood of unrest among the general populace. If we are dealing with a private letter, was it written with the genuine intention of conveying reliable information, or maybe to curry favour with the recipient? Here knowledge of the respective social positions of writer and recipient will be useful. If we are dealing with some kind of report or investigation, what were the sympathies of the writers of the report? And so on.

Intention of Authors of the Source: Is the writer dependent, perhaps, on hearsay? How far is Horace Walpole, a Whig aristocrat, reliable in describing the mainsprings of the eighteenth-century 'Wilkes and Liberty' movement? Can middle-class writers really understand the feelings of the poor? John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* (1919) is an exciting on-the-spot account of the Bolshevik Revolution: but, in using it as a primary source, can we be absolutely certain that in fact he ever left his hotel bedroom? ⁶ How exactly was the document understood by contemporaries? What, precisely, does it say? Certain branches of historical investigation require the skills of palaeography, diplomatics and philology. There may be problems of deciphering inscriptions, hieroglyphics and certain types of handwriting. There can be problems arising from archaic or obscure languages. Some of the controversies in medieval history centre on the shade of meaning to be allotted to a specific passage in dog-Latin or medieval French. Any technical phrases, esoteric allusions, or references to individuals or institutions will have to be fully elucidated in order that the full meaning of the document can come through. Events referred to in the source may have to be elucidated. Allusions to the Bible can be frequent, and a Renaissance letter will usually be loaded with references to classical mythology. All allusions and references and quantities have to be sorted out so that we can be sure that we have got the full meaning of the source as contemporaries would have understood it, before we can go on to make use of the document.

Then, finally, we have the question of how the source relates to knowledge obtained from other sources, both primary and secondary. In elementary teaching exercises students may well be very short on contextual knowledge. But it cannot be stressed too strongly that in the real practice of history, one can do very little with primary sources unless one already has a very considerable contextual knowledge.

Secondary Sources

A secondary source is one in which the eyewitness or the participant i.e. the person describing the event was not actually present but who obtained his/her descriptions or narrations from another person or source. This another person may or may not be a primary source. Secondary sources, thus, do not have a direct physical relationship with the event being studied. They include data which are not original. Examples of secondary sources include textbooks, biographies, encyclopedias, reference books, replicas of art objects and paintings and so on. It is possible that secondary sources contain errors due to passing of information from one source to another. These errors could get multiplied when the information passes through many sources thereby resulting in an error of great magnitude in the final data. Thus, wherever possible, the researcher should try to use primary sources of data.

However, that does not reduce the value of secondary sources.

Nature, Significance and usage of Secondary Sources

Secondary Sources of historical research offer commentary, analysis, or interpretation of primary sources. These are written many years after an event, or by people not directly involved in the event. This kind of sources are often written by people who have an expertise in the field. Can be biased, depending on the view-point of the author. Secondary Sources can be useable when a historian need to provide historical context or critical perspectives. When someone need an analysis of a primary source, or a critique that compares several primary sources. This type of sources are useful in order to ground your own research in an academic setting (i.e., show that others have done similar research to yours and share or contradict your opinions). Besides, if a scholar want a list of primary sources that could potentially be useful in your research-the works cited page of a secondary source can be a great resource for this.

Secondary sources are best for uncovering background or historical information about a topic and broadening your understanding of a topic by exposing you to others' perspectives, interpretations, and conclusions. However, it is better to critique an original information source (primary source) if you plan to reference it in your work.

Secondary sources are information sources that interpret, include, describe, or draw conclusions based on works written by others. Secondary sources are used by authors to present evidence, back up arguments and statements, or help represent an opinion by using and citing multiple sources. Secondary sources are often referred to as being "one step removed" from the actual occurrence or fact.

A secondary source is an account of the past created by someone who wasn't present at the event. The most obvious example of a secondary source is a textbook. A textbook writer researches hundreds of sources and summarizes them into one short narrative that is quick and easy to read. A secondary source often uses primary sources or even other secondary sources to construct their story. Sometimes, usable primary sources might be found within a secondary source. For instance, the Idaho Historical Society's online mining exhibit is a secondary source, but the exhibit has links to original primary sources such as photographs, artifacts, and documents. Some examples of secondary sources are: encyclopedias, biographies, textbooks, current magazines or newspapers that feature stories about the distant past, and most web sites.

Secondary sources are those written about the past from the point of view of a future date. Typically they are produced by authors who have examined a variety of primary sources dating to a previous era or eras while conducting an investigation into an historical topic. Secondary sources generally take the form of monographs, composite works or compendiums written by a series of authors about a subject or subjects, and articles in academic journals. After sifting through a good deal of evidence such as autobiographies, speeches, government records, etc, the authors of secondary sources are then able to draw a series of broader conclusions about particular historical subjects. For example, the individuals involved in a large event, such as a World War, were typically participants in only a small part of the action- but the author of a secondary source can combine the writings or recollections of several dozen participants to form a larger picture of the nature of the conflict. Through such a composite analysis, conclusions might be drawn about the impact of the war on anything from world oil prices to the role of women in wartime production, depending upon the sources consulted and the author's angle of inquiry.

It should be noted, however, that not all the authors of secondary works on historical subjects are professional historians. Many such works are also produced by journalists, biographers, investigative reporters, and even authors of fiction who have opted to write nonfiction works. The sources produced by these kinds of authors can range in character from broad, general accounts to highly specified or technical investigations. Often they are reflective of a popular approach to the past that readers from

many walks of life, young or old, find enjoyable to read. Sometimes these authors have digested the works of professional historians and have proceeded to write an account of the same subject that is more approachable for people with a casual or passing interest. Be aware of the types of secondary sources that you consult. Biographical details about their authors are often available, and they will help you to determine how popular or how scholarly a particular source may be. Virtually anything published by a university press will have gone through a peer-review process

– an examination by a series of scholars in similar fields-and will likely be a good academic source. Online book reviews can also be of value.

It is also important to distinguish between an author who is summarizing other people's views, and an author's who is expressing his or her own views. For example, if a passage in a secondary work read "Eighteenth century anatomical writing was profoundly misogynistic. Women were not only physically but also mentally inferior to men," then it would be inaccurate to paraphrase this by stating "The author thinks that women are inferior to men." In fact, the author is merely assessing the beliefs held by eighteenth century anatomical writers, and is not sharing his or her own opinion on the subject. Read your sources with care, and be sure to identify correctly the agent or speaker who is making claims or expressing opinions. Your choice of secondary source material will have an impact on the nature of your investigation and the angle of your argument. Consult your instructor if you have any questions about your sources.

A secondary source is a document or recording that relates or discusses information originally presented elsewhere. Secondary sources involve generalization, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, or evaluation of the original information. Secondary sources are invaluable to historians, but they have to be used with caution. Their reliability and validity are open to question, and often they do not provide exact information required by a sociologist. Secondary sources are one kind of research reports that use primary data to solve research problems, written for scholarly and professional audiences. Researchers read them to keep up with their field and use what they read to frame problems of their own by disputing other researchers' conclusions or questioning their methods. Researchers often use secondary sources for practical reasons. They can save time and money and they may provide access to historical data that cannot be produced using primary research because the events concerned took place before current members of society were born.

Scholars should adhere to certain useful guidelines for evaluating secondary sources or documents. The criteria can be applied to all secondary sources, including existing historical research. They offer systematic ways of trying to ensure that researchers use secondary sources with as much care as they employ in producing primary data.

Authenticity: There are two aspects of authenticity soundness and authorship. A sound document is one which is complete and reliable ensuring all the pages are there, no misprints and if it is a copy of an original it should be a reliable copy without errors. Authorship concerns who wrote the document. Many documents are not actually produced by those to whom they are attributed. For example letters signed by Prime Minister may have been written by civil servants and might reveal little about the prime ministers own views.

Credibility: This issue relates to the amount of distortion in a document. Any distortion may be related to sincerity or accuracy. In a sincere document the author genuinely believes what they write. This is not always the case as the author may hope to gain advantage from deceiving readers.

Representativeness: A researcher must be aware of how typical or untypical the documents being used are in order to assign limits to any conclusions drawn. Two factors that may limit the possibility of using representative documents are survival and availability. Many documents do not survive because they are not stored, and others deteriorate with age and become unusable. Other documents are deliberately withheld from researchers and the public gaze, and therefore do not become available.

Meaning: This concerns the ability of the researcher to understand the document for example the

document may be written in a foreign language or written in old fashioned language or handwriting or vocabulary which is difficult to comprehend.

There are certain advantages of secondary sources for the researcher such as, ease of access; low cost to acquire; clarification of research question; may answer research question and may show difficulties in conducting primary research. On the other hand there are also disadvantages of secondary sources such as quality of research may be poor; not specific to researcher's needs; possible incomplete information and not timely.

Distinction between Primary and Secondary Sources

The distinction between primary sources and secondary sources is very much important. Since history's critics feel a constant compulsion to scratch at this distinction, manifestly finding it the equivalent of a particularly irritating itchy spot, both misrepresenting and mocking the distinction, it is necessary to say more about it here. The critics attack the distinction partly because they are secretly embarrassed that they themselves actually have no experience of what it is like to work among primary sources in the archives, and partly because many of them subscribe to the view that everything, primary or secondary, belongs to the single category 'text' and shares in the quality of 'textuality'. The usual tactic is to dig out some highly untypical example of a 'text' which could, depending upon the topic being investigated, serve as either a primary or a secondary source; then a highly eccentric research topic has to be invented - thus the published books, obviously secondary sources, could be primary sources for a study of Twentieth-Century Attitudes to the Study of History.

The distinction between primary and secondary sources is absolutely explicit, and is not the least bit treacherous or misleading. No magical necromancy attaches to primary sources, but the ultimate truth is that it is only through the primary sources, the relics and traces left by past societies, that we can have any knowledge of them. The discovery and analysis of primary sources alone does not make history; but without the study of primary sources there is no history. Primary sources are sources which were generated within the period being studied. Self-evidently, a book which was a secondary source in the nineteenth century will normally not remain a useful secondary source for students in the twenty-first century, but may, if they are studying certain rather narrow aspects of the nineteenth century, become a primary source for them. There is nothing very difficult about that. The distinction is one of nature - primary sources were created within the period studied, secondary sources are produced later, by historians studying that earlier period and making use of the primary sources created within it.

There are also differences of function. A general reader or student wanting quickly to acquire knowledge about, say, the French Revolution, would go immediately to one or more reliable secondary sources on the French Revolution. The young researcher, or the old historian, setting out to do research leading to new contributions to historical knowledge would first of all have to read all of the relevant secondary materials, to be fully abreast of current knowledge and to be aware of the areas particularly needing investigation. But, that done, there would need to be substantial research in the primary sources. It is a fundamental requirement that a PhD dissertation be very largely based on primary sources. Behind all the confusion lies the misapprehension that historians are claiming that primary sources contain a higher quality of 'truth' than secondary sources. This is manifestly not so. Primary sources are intractable, opaque, and fragmentary. At best, they shed light from one particular direction; usually one need quite a lot of them before any light is shed at all. Obviously, for a comprehensive view of any particular historical topic, a good secondary source relating to that topic is far more useful than any single primary source.

All primary sources have to be treated with great care, and require the skills of the historian in their analysis and interpretation. Many primary sources contain secondary information, as when a diarist includes references to, or quotations from, that morning's newspaper. This does not stop the diary from being a primary source, but it does mean that the historian would be best to go back and check the

original newspaper. This kind of checking and cross referencing, this general scepticism, is a normal part of the historian's activities in using primary sources.

The problems are most acute when it comes to dealing with autobiographies or memoirs and 'contemporary histories'. If the author of the autobiography or memoir belongs to the period being studied, then, the human lifespan being what it is, the autobiography dearly must belong to that period too, and therefore is a primary source. It will be subject to the fallibility of memory but then that is often true of other primary sources as well, and it may well contain much secondary material; the historian who, after all, is professionally very preoccupied by this distinction between primary and secondary will be thoroughly on guard and ready to discount, or cross-check, the secondary material. Some contemporary histories can have the character of elaborated memoirs and so serve as potentially useful primary sources: striking examples are Clarendon's volumes on the Civil Wars and Churchill's on the twentieth-century ones. Dated and unreliable as a general account of the war, this book has primary value for students of Churchill himself.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that to produce a standard research work which may be called a scholarly writing is not very easy. It not only requires the intelligence of the scholar but also the authenticity of the data collected by him. Again the data or sources collected by him are divided into two types: primary and secondary. A primary source is a direct record of some time or event in the past. Most often, primary sources are a firsthand account, like a diary or newspaper story, from someone living in the historical period being studied. But a primary source can also be an object that was created in the past that now provides some insight into the lives of people who lived at the time. Primary resources aren't necessarily created in the time frame being researched. For example, a witness to an important historical event might write about their experience later in their life in an autobiography or talk about the experience in an interview 30 years later. Depending on when they originated, all of these could be used as primary sources: diaries, autobiographies, letters or other correspondences, photographs, newspapers, magazines, government documents, maps, movie footage, oral history interviews, museum artifacts, artwork, literature, even music. A secondary source is an account of the past created by someone who wasn't present at the event. The most obvious example of a secondary source is a textbook. A textbook writer researches hundreds of sources and summarizes them into one short narrative that is quick and easy to read. A secondary source often uses primary sources or even other secondary sources to construct their story. Sometimes, usable primary sources might be found within a secondary source. Again the researcher while using these sources has to be careful when he or she is retrieving historical information from those dead objects.

Unit-3
Chapter-II

HISTORICAL CRITICISM

External and Internal Criticism; Examination of Sources

Introduction

History is studied from documents, and that documents are the traces of past events. This is the place to indicate the consequences involved in this statement and this definition. Events can be empirically known in two ways only: by direct observation while they are in progress; and indirectly, by the study of the traces which they leave behind them. Now, the peculiarity of "historical facts" is this, that they are only known indirectly by the help of their traces. Historical knowledge is essentially indirect knowledge. The methods of historical science ought, therefore, to be radically different from those of the direct sciences; that is to say, of all the other sciences, except geology, which are founded on direct observation. Historical science, whatever may be said, is not a science of observation at all. The facts of the past are only known to us by the traces of them which have been preserved. These traces, it is true, are directly observed by the historian, but, after that, he has nothing more to observe; what remains is the work of reasoning, in which he endeavours to infer, with the greatest possible exactness, the facts from the traces. The document is his starting-point, the fact his goal. Between this starting-point and this goal he has to pass through a complicated series of inferences, closely interwoven with each other, in which there are innumerable chances of error; while the least error, whether committed at the beginning, middle, or end of the work, may vitiate all his conclusions. The historical method is thus obviously inferior to the method of direct observation; but historians have no choice: it is the only method of arriving at past facts. The detailed analysis of the reasoning which lead from the inspection of documents to the knowledge of facts is one of the chief parts of Historical Methodology. It is the domain of criticism. This chapter will be devoted to it. We shall endeavour, first of all, to give a very summary sketch of the general lines and the will discuss in details about the main divisions of the subject.

External and Internal Criticism- Meaning and Concept

External Criticism: External Criticism is that part of the historical method which determines the authenticity of the source. The document is somewhat like a prisoner at the bar. Its genuineness must be tested, where possible, by paleographical and diplomatic criticism. It must be localized in time and place. It must be ascertained, whether in its present state it exists exactly as its author left it. In order to test its genuineness, the student must ask himself if it is what it appears to be or if it is a forgery. One is too apt to imagine that historical forgeries passed out of style with the Middle Ages. The document must be viewed from every possible angle. Its agreement or disagreement with facts known from other genuine sources of the same place and period, or on the same subject, will often be a deciding factor in its authenticity. The writer's ignorance of facts which he should have known and which should have been mentioned in the document, or the record of events which he clearly could not have known at the time of writing, are other signs of genuineness or of its absence. A document proven probably genuine by these tests can often be heightened in value by an analysis which may restore it to its original state, or which may accentuate the historicity of the facts it contains. The False Decretals, or the Pseudo-Isidorean Decretals, are a good example of the value of External Criticism. Of the one hundred documents contained in the collection, which was written about 852, about five are authentic. It is by analyzing the Decretals and by localizing them in place and time, that the student is enabled to see the constant use of material which the Popes to whom they are attributed could never have known. Letters from the Popes of the first three centuries, for instance, contain parts of documents dating from the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. The importance of a strict test for historical material is easily

recognizable when one reflects that these False Decretals, although a huge forgery, passed for genuine all through the Middle Ages; and when especially one touches the delicate question of how far these forgeries contributed to papal authority in that period. The sum total of all these operations will give the student a fair idea of how far his source or sources may be trusted as authentic. A further question arises-whether the material facts found in the source can be used as evidence for the work in hand. External Criticism is applied for the testing the Genuineness of the Source, localizing it (time, place, author) and analyzing it (Recession and Restoration of text).

Internal criticism: Internal criticism is that part of the historical method which determines the historicity of the facts contained in the document. It is not of absolute necessity that the document be proven genuine; even forgeries or documents with truncated truths may contain available material. But before any conclusion is admissible, the facts contained in the document must be tested. In order to determine the value of these facts, the character of the sources, the knowledge of the author, and the influences prevalent at the time of writing must be carefully investigated. We must first be certain that we know exactly what the author said and that we understand what he wrote as he understood it. It would be misleading, for example, to see in the words *lex, homo, or scutagium* of the Magna Charta (1215) the same meaning as is found in classical Latin dictionaries. Moreover, the facts given by the author or writer must be firmly established as having taken place exactly as reported. The student or research-worker must be permeated with an earnest desire to reach the truth and must be, as far as it lies within his power, indifferent to the results of his inquiry or criticism. What is of the utmost importance in dealing with any source, whether it be a volume already in print or a document hitherto used or unused by historians, is that the student jealously guard himself against the danger of seeing if it agrees with preconceived conclusions of his own. Internal Criticism is applied by the scholars for determining the value of the Source, interpretation of the source and establishment of the facts.

Historical Criticism- Necessity

There are two species of historical documents. Sometimes the past event has left a material trace. Sometimes, and more commonly, the trace is of the psychological order-a written description or narrative. The first case is much simpler than the second. For there is a fixed relation between certain physical appearances and the causes which produced them; and this relation, governed by physical laws, is known to us. But a psychological trace, on the other hand, is purely symbolic: it is not the fact itself; it is not even the immediate impression made by the fact upon the witness's mind, but only a conventional symbol of that impression. Written documents are not as valuable as material documents; they are only valuable as signs of psychological operations, which are often complicated and hard to unravel. The immense majority of the documents which furnish the historian with starting-points for his reasonings are nothing else than traces of psychological operations.

In order to ascertain the relation which connects the document with the fact-it is necessary to reproduce the whole series of intermediate causes which have given rise to the document. It is necessary to revive in imagination the whole of that series of acts performed by the author of the document which begins with the fact observed by him and ends with the manuscript, in order to arrive at the original event. Such is the aim and such the process of critical analysis.

First of all we observe the document. Is it now in the same state as when it was produced? Has it deteriorated since? We endeavour to find out how it was made in order to restore it, if need be, to its original form, and to ascertain its origin. The first group of preliminary investigations, bearing upon the writing, the language, the form, the source, constitutes the special domain of External Criticism, or critical scholarship. Next comes Internal Criticism: it endeavours, by the help of analogies mostly borrowed from general psychology, to reproduce the mental states through which the author of the document passed. Knowing what the author of the document has said, we ask; what did he mean? ; did he believe what he said? ; was he justified in believing whatever he did believe? This last step brings the document to a point where it resembles the data of the objective sciences: it becomes an

observation; it only remains to treat it by the methods of the objective sciences. Every document is valuable precisely to the extent to which, by the study of its origin, it has been reduced to a well-made observation.

Compared with other students the historian is in a very disagreeable situation. It is not merely that he cannot observe his facts directly. It very rarely happens that the documents which he is going to use represent precise observations. He has at his disposal none of those systematic records of observations which, in the established sciences, can and do replace direct observation. The historian is compelled to turn to account rough and ready reports, such as no man of science would be content with. All the more necessary are the precautions to be taken in utilising these documents, the only materials of historical science. It is evidently most important to eliminate those which are worthless, and to ascertain the amount of correct observation represented by those which are left.

The historian has to be more careful on this subject, because the natural inclination of the human mind is to take no precautions at all, and to treat these matters, which really demand the utmost obtainable precision, with careless laxity. It is true that every one admits the utility of criticism in theory; but this is just one of those principles which are more easily admitted than put into practice. Many centuries and whole eras of brilliant civilisation had to pass away before the first dawn of criticism was visible among the most intellectual peoples in the world. Neither the orientals nor the middle ages ever formed a definite conception of it. Even now there have been enlightened men who, in employing documents for the purpose of writing history, have neglected the most elementary precautions, and unconsciously assumed false generalisations. For criticism is antagonistic to the normal bent of the mind. The natural tendency of man is to yield assent to affirmations, and to reproduce them, without even clearly distinguishing them from the results of his own observation. Even, in our daily life we accept indiscriminately, without any kind of verification, hearsay reports, anonymous and unguaranteed statements, "documents" of indifferent or inferior authority. It takes a special reason to induce us to take the trouble to examine into the origin and value of a document on the history of yesterday; otherwise, if there is no outrageous improbability in it, and as long as it is not contradicted, we swallow it whole, we pin our faith to it, we hawk it about, and, if need be, embellish it in the process.

Criticism is not a natural habit; it must be inculcated, and only becomes organic by dint of continued practice. Historical work is, then, pre-eminently critical; whoever enters upon it without having first been put on his guard against his instinct is sure to be drowned in it. In order to appreciate the danger it is well to examine one's conscience and analyse the causes of that *ignavia* which must be fought against till it is replaced by a critical attitude of mind. History, like every other study, is chiefly subject to errors of fact arising from inattention, but it is more exposed than any other study to errors due to that mental confusion which produces incomplete analyses and fallacious reasoning.

External Criticism or Problem of Authenticity

3.2.4.1. Textual Criticism:

Suppose that an author of our own day has written a book: he sends his manuscript to the printer; with his own hand he corrects the proofs, and marks them "Press." A book which is printed under these conditions comes into our hands in what is, for a document, a very good condition. Whoever the author may be, and whatever his sentiments and intentions, we can be certain that we have before us a fairly accurate reproduction of the text which he wrote. We are obliged to say "fairly accurate," for if the author has corrected his proofs badly, or if the printers have not paid proper attention to his corrections, the reproduction of the original text is imperfect, even in this specially favourable case.

Turning now to ancient documents, let us ask in what state they have been preserved. In nearly every case the originals have been lost, and we have nothing but copies. Have these copies been made directly from the originals? No; they are copies of copies. The scribes who executed them were not by any means all of them capable and conscientious men; they often transcribed texts which they did not understand at all, or which they understood incorrectly, and it was not always the fashion, to compare

the copies with the originals.

If our printed books, after the successive revisions of author and printer's reader, are still but imperfect reproductions, it is only to be expected that ancient documents, copied and recopied as they have been for centuries with very little care, and exposed at every fresh transcription to new risk of alteration, should have reached us full of inaccuracies.

There is thus an obvious precaution to be taken. Before using a document we must find out whether its text is "sound" that is, in as close agreement as possible with the original manuscript of the author; and when the text is "corrupt" we must emend it. In using a text which has been corrupted in transmission, we run the risk of attributing to the author what really comes from the copyists. There are actual cases of theories which were based on passages falsified in transmission, and which collapsed as soon as the true readings were discovered or restored. Printers' errors and mistakes in copying are not always innocuous or merely diverting; they are sometimes insidious and capable of misleading the reader.

For a long time historians simply used the texts which they had within easy reach, without verifying their accuracy. And, what is more, the very scholars whose business it is to edit texts did not discover the art of restoring them all at once; not so very long ago, documents were commonly edited from the first copies, good or bad, that came to hand, combined and corrected at random. Not all historical documents have as yet been published in a form calculated to give historians the security they need, and some historians still act as if they had not realised that an unsettled text, as such, requires cautious handling. Still, considerable progress has been made. From the experience accumulated by several generations of scholars there has been evolved a recognised method of purifying and restoring texts. No part of historical method has a more solid foundation, or is more generally known. Following paragraphs will discuss the essential principles of textual criticism.

Methods of Establishing Authenticity: In order to establish the authenticity of text of an un-edited document following procedure can be adopted.

First, the most simple case is that in which we possess the original, the author's autograph itself. There is then nothing to do but to reproduce the text of it with absolute fidelity. Theoretically nothing can be easier; in practice this elementary operation demands a sustained attention of which not everyone is capable.

Second, if the original has been lost; only a single copy of it is known, then it is necessary to be cautious, for the probability is that this copy contains errors. Texts degenerate in accordance with certain laws. To discover and classify the causes and the ordinary forms of the differences which are observed between originals and copies following point has to be observed; such as alterations of an original occurring in a copy are due either to fraud or to error. Then, modifications arising from fraud or errors of judgment are often very difficult to rectify, or even to discover. Some accidental errors are irreparable in the case we are considering, that of a unique copy. But most accidental errors can be detected by anyone who knows the ordinary forms: confusions of sense, letters, and words, transpositions of words, letters, and syllables, false divisions between words, badly punctuated sentences, and other mistakes of the same kind. Errors of these various types have been made by the scribes of every country and every age,

There are also cases of conjectural emendation. The most satisfactory are those whose correctness is obvious palæographically. In such cases scholarly corrections are possible even in the text of quite modern documents, reproduced typographically under the most favourable conditions. There can be no doubt that numerous texts which have been preserved, in corrupt form, in unique copies, have resisted, and will continue to resist, the efforts of criticism. Very often criticism ascertains the fact of the text having been altered, states what the sense requires, and then prudently stops, every trace of the original reading having been obscured by a confused tangle of successive corrections and errors which it is hopeless to attempt to unravel. The scholars who devote themselves to the fascinating pursuit of

conjectural criticism are liable, in their ardour, to suspect perfectly innocent readings, and, in desperate passages, to propose adventurous hypotheses. They are well aware of this, and therefore make it a rule to draw a very clear distinction, in their editions, between readings found in manuscripts and their own restorations of the text.

Finally, if we possess several copies, which differ from each other, of a document whose original is lost. Here modern scholars have a marked advantage over their predecessors: besides being better informed, they set about the comparison of copies more methodically. The object is, as in the preceding case, to reconstruct the archetype as exactly as possible.

The scholars have to struggle in this kind of case, to use the first copy that comes to hand, whatever its character may happen to be and to use the oldest copy out of several of different date. In theory, and very often in practice, the relative age of the copies is of no importance; a sixteenth-century manuscript which reproduces a good lost copy of the eleventh century is much more valuable than a faulty and retouched copy made in the twelfth or thirteenth century. The third impulse is still far from being good; it is to count the attested readings and decide by the majority. Suppose there are twenty copies of a text; the reading A is attested eighteen times, the reading B twice. To make this a reason for choosing A is to make the gratuitous assumption that all the manuscripts have the same authority. This is an error of judgment; for if seventeen of the eighteen manuscripts which give the reading A have been copied from the eighteenth, the reading A is in reality attested only once; and the only question is whether it is intrinsically better or worse than the reading B.

It has been recognised that the only rational procedure is to begin by determining in what relation the copies stand to each other. For this purpose one has to find out the fact that all the copies which contain the same mistakes in the same passages must have been either copied from each other or all derived from a copy containing those mistakes. It is inconceivable that several copyists, independently reproducing an original free from errors, should all introduce exactly the same errors; identity of errors attests community of origin. Evidently they can have no value beyond what is possessed by their common source; if they differ from it, it can only be in virtue of new errors; it would be waste of time to study their variations. Having eliminated these, we have before us none but independent copies, which have been made directly from the archetype, or secondary copies whose source has been lost. In order to group the secondary copies into families, each of which shall represent the same tradition, we again have recourse to the comparison of errors. By this method we can generally draw up without too much trouble a complete genealogical table of the preserved copies, which will bring out very clearly their relative importance.

When the genealogical tree of the manuscripts has been drawn up, we have to restore the text of the archetype by comparing the different traditions. If these agree and give a satisfactory text, there is no difficulty. If they differ, we decide between them. If they accidentally agree in giving a defective text, we have recourse to conjectural emendation, as if there were only one copy. An abundance of manuscripts is an embarrassment rather than a help when the work of grouping them has been left undone or done badly; nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the arbitrary and hybrid restorations which are founded on copies whose relations to each other and to the archetype have not been ascertained beforehand. On the other hand, the application of rational methods requires, in some cases, a formidable expenditure of time and labour. Some works are preserved in hundreds of copies all differing from each other; sometimes the variants of a text of quite moderate extent are to be counted by thousands; several years of assiduous labour are necessary for the preparation of a critical edition of some medieval romances. And after all this labour, all these collations and comparisons, can we be sure that the text of the romance is sensibly better than it would have been if there had been only two or three manuscripts to work upon? No. Some critical editions, owing to the apparent wealth of material applicable to the work, demand a mechanical effort which is altogether out of proportion to the positive results which are its reward.

"Critical editions" founded on several copies of a lost original ought to supply the public with the means of verifying the "stemma codicum" which the editor has drawn up, and should give the rejected variants in the notes. By this means competent readers are, at the worst, put in possession, if not of the best possible text, at least of the materials for constructing it.

The results of textual criticism: A kind of cleaning and mending are purely negative. By the aid of conjecture and comparison we are enabled to construct, the best text possible, of documents whose original is lost. The text of a document which has been restored is not worth more than that of a document whose original has been preserved.

There will be abundant scope for textual criticism as long as we do not possess the exact text of every historical document. In the present state of science few labours are more useful than those which bring new texts to light or improve texts already known. It is a real service to the study of history to publish unedited or badly edited texts in a manner conformable to the rules of criticism.

Critical investigation of authorship

It would be absurd to look for information about a fact in the papers of someone who knew nothing about it. The first questions, then, which we ask when we are confronted with a document is: Where does it come from? who is the author of it? what is its date? A document in respect of which we necessarily are in total ignorance of the author, the place, and the date is good for nothing. **Necessity of Verification:** Most modern documents contain indication of their authorship.

Many ancient documents, on the other hand, are anonymous, without date, and have no sufficient indication of their place of origin. The natural tendency of the human mind is to place confidence in the indications of authorship, when there are any. For example, in a picture gallery we see an unsigned picture whose frame has been furnished by the management with a tablet bearing the name of Leonardo da Vinci; therefore Leonardo da Vinci painted this picture. This is one of the most universal, and at the same time indestructible, forms of public credulity.

Experience and reflection have shown the necessity of methodically checking these instinctive impulses of confiding trust. Paintings in which there is not the least gleam of talent have, in the most celebrated galleries of Italy, been tricked out, without proof, with the glorious name of Leonardo. The conclusion is, that the most precise indications of authorship are never sufficient by themselves. They only afford a presumption, strong or weak - very strong, in general, where modern documents are concerned, often very weak in the case of ancient documents. False indications of authorship exist, some imposed upon insignificant works in order to enhance their value, some appended to works of merit in order to serve the reputation of a particular person, or to mystify posterity; and there are a hundred other motives which may easily be imagined, and of which a list has been drawn up. There are, in addition, documents which are forged from beginning to end; the forgers have naturally furnished them with very precise indications of their alleged authorship.

Verification is therefore necessary. But how is it to be had? By adopting following methods we can verify about the author of the documents.

Internal Analysis: The chief instrument used in the investigation of authorship is the internal analysis of the document under consideration, performed with a view to bring out any indications it may contain of a nature to supply information about the author, and the time and place in which he lived.

First of all we examine the handwriting of the document. Kalhana was alive in 1148 A.D; if a text attributed to him are contained in manuscripts executed in the eleventh century, we have in this circumstance an excellent proof that the attribution is ill-founded: no document of which there exists a copy in eleventh-century handwriting can be posterior in date to the eleventh century. Then we examine the language. It is known that certain forms have only been used in certain places and at certain dates. Most forgers have betrayed themselves by ignorance of facts of this kind; they let slip modern words or phrases. Lastly, we note all the positive data which occur in the document-the facts which are mentioned or alluded to. When these facts are otherwise known, from sources which a

forger could not have had at his disposal, the bonafides of the document is established, and the date fixed approximately between the most recent event of which the author shows knowledge, and the next following event which he does not mention but would have done if he had known of it. Arguments may also be founded on the circumstance that particular facts are mentioned with approval, or particular opinions expressed, and help us to make a conjectural estimate of the status, the environment, and the character of the author.

When the internal analysis of a document is carefully performed, it generally gives us a tolerably accurate notion of its authorship. By means of a methodical comparison, instituted between the various elements of the documents analysed and the corresponding elements of similar documents whose authorship was known with certainty, the detection of many a forgery has been rendered possible, and additional information acquired about the circumstances under which most genuine documents have been produced. The results obtained by internal analysis are supplemented and verified by collecting all the external evidence relative to the document under criticism which can be found scattered over the documents of the same or later epochs. Sometimes there is a significant absence of any such information, which established the document as forgery.

Interpolations and continuations-Evidence of style: Many documents have, at different times, received additions which it is important to distinguish from the original text. There are two kinds of additions—interpolations and continuations. To interpolate is to insert into the text words or sentences which were not in the author's manuscript. Usually interpolations are accidental, due to the negligence of the copyist, and explicable as the introduction into the text of interlinear glosses or marginal notes; but there are cases where someone has deliberately added to the author's text words or sentences out of his own head, for the sake of completeness, or emphasis. If we had before us the manuscript in which the deliberate interpolation was made, the appearance of the added matter and the traces of erasure would make the case clear at once. But the first interpolated copy has nearly always been lost, and in the copies derived from it every trace of addition or substitution has disappeared. There is no need to define "continuations." It is well known that many chronicles of the middle ages have been "continued" by various writers, none of whom took the trouble to indicate where his own work began or ended.

Sometimes interpolations and continuations can be very readily distinguished in the course of the operations for restoring a text of which there are several copies, when it so happens that some of these copies reproduce the primitive text as it was before any addition was made to it. But if all the copies are founded on previous copies which already contained the interpolations or continuations, recourse must be had to internal analysis. Is the style uniform throughout the document? Does the book breathe one and the same spirit from cover to cover? Are there no contradictions, no gaps in the sequence of ideas? In practice, when the continuators or interpolators have been men of well-marked personality and decided views, analysis will separate the original from the additions as cleanly as a pair of scissors. When the whole is written in a level, colourless style, the lines of division are not so easy to see; it is then better to confess the fact than to multiply hypotheses.

Plagiarism and borrowings: The critical investigation of authorship is not finished as soon as a document has been accurately or approximately localised in space and time, and as much information as possible obtained about the author or authors. Plagiarism, is now forbidden by the law and considered dishonourable; formerly it was common, tolerated, and unpunished. Many historical documents, with every appearance of originality, are nothing but repetitions of earlier documents, and historians occasionally experience, in this connection, remarkable disillusiones. An event is attested three times, by three chroniclers; but these three attestations, which agree so admirably, are really only one if it is ascertained that two of the three chroniclers copied the third, or that the three parallel accounts have been drawn from one and the same source. Imperial charters of the middle ages contain eloquent passages which must not be taken seriously; they are part of the official style, and were

copied word for word from chancery formularies.

It belongs to the investigation of authorship to discover, as far as possible, the sources utilised by the authors of documents. In both cases we proceed on the assumption that identical readings have a common source: a number of different scribes, in transcribing a text, will not make exactly the same mistakes in exactly the same places; a number of different writers, relating the same facts, will not have viewed them from exactly the same standpoint, nor will they say the same things in exactly the same language. The great complexity of historical events makes it extremely improbable that two independent observers should narrate them in the same manner. When two ancient documents are in question: when the author of one has copied directly from the other, the filiations is generally easy to establish; the plagiarist, whether he abridges or expands, nearly always betrays himself sooner or later. When there are three documents in a family their mutual relationships are sometimes harder to specify. It is more complicated still when there are four, five, or more documents in a family, for the number of possible combinations increases with great rapidity. However, if too many intermediate links have not been lost, criticism succeeds in disentangling the relationships by persistent and ingenious applications of the method of repeated comparisons. The results of the critical investigation of authorship, as applied to the filiation of documents, are of two kinds. Firstly, lost documents are reconstructed. On the other hand, criticism destroys the authority of a host of "authentic" documents.

Importance of investigations of authorship: The results of critical investigation of authorship are striking. By eliminating spurious documents, by detecting false ascriptions, by determining the conditions of production of documents which had been defaced by time, and by connecting them with their sources, it has rendered services of such magnitude that to-day it is regarded as having a special right to the name of "criticism." It is usual to say of an historian that he "fails in criticism" when he neglects to distinguish between documents, when he never mistrusts traditional ascriptions, and when he accepts, as if afraid to lose a single one, all the pieces of information, ancient or modern, good or bad, which come to him, from whatever quarter.

The critical investigation of authorship, like textual criticism, is preparatory, and its results negative. Its final aim and crowning achievement is to get rid of documents which are not documents, and which would have misled us; that is all. "It teaches us not to use bad documents; it does not teach us how to turn good ones to account." It is not the whole of "historical criticism;" it is only one stone in the edifice.

Critical classification of sources

By the help of the preceding operations the documents of a given class, or relating to a given subject, have been found. We know where they are; the text of each has been restored, if necessary, and each has been critically examined in respect of authorship. We know where they have come from. It remains to combine and classify the materials thus verified. This is the last of the operations which may be called preparatory to the work of higher (or internal) criticism and construction. Whoever studies a point of history is obliged, to classify his sources. To arrange, in a rational and convenient manner, before making use of them, is really very important, part of the historian's profession.

The system of slips: in this method, the notes from each document are entered upon a loose leaf furnished with the precisest possible indications of origin. The advantages of this artifice are obvious: the detachability of the slips enables us to group them at will in a host of different combinations; if necessary, to change their places: it is easy to bring texts of the same kind together, and to incorporate additions, as they are acquired, in the interior of the groups to which they belong. As for documents which are interesting from several points of view, and which ought to appear in several groups, it is sufficient to enter them several times over on different slips; or they may be represented, as often as may be required, on reference-slips. Moreover, the method of slips is the only one mechanically possible for the purpose of forming, classifying, and utilising a collection of documents of any great extent. Statisticians, financiers, and men of letters who observe, have now discovered this as well as

scholars.

The method of slips is not without its drawbacks. Each slip ought to be furnished with precise references to the source from which its contents have been derived; consequently, if a document has been analysed upon fifty different slips, the same references must be repeated fifty times. Again, in virtue of their very detachability, the slips, or loose leaves, are liable to go astray; and when a slip is lost how is it to be replaced? But the truth is, experience has suggested a variety of very simple precautions, which we need not here explain in detail, by which the drawbacks of the system are reduced to a minimum. If we use slips of uniform size and tough material, and to arrange them at the earliest opportunity in covers or drawers or otherwise.

Classification by time, place, species, and form: Documents may be grouped according to their date, according to their place of origin, according to their contents, according to their form. Here we have the four categories of time, place, species, and form; by superposing, then, we obtain divisions of smaller extent. We may undertake, for example, to make a group of all the documents having a given form, of a given country, and lying between two given dates; or of all the documents of a given form; or of a given species; of a given epoch. Whatever the division chosen, there are two alternatives: either the documents to be placed in this division are dated or they are not.

If they are dated, as is the case, for example, with the charters issued from the chancery of a prince, care will have been taken to place at the head of each slip the date of the document entered upon it. Nothing is then easier than to group in chronological order all the slips, that is, all the documents, which have been collected. The rule is to use chronological classification whenever possible. There is only one difficulty, and that is of a practical order. Even in the most favourable circumstances some of the documents will have accidentally lost their dates; these dates the compiler is bound to restore, or at least to attempt to restore; long and patient research is necessary for the purpose.

If the documents are not dated, a choice must be made between the alphabetical, the geographical, and the systematic order. If the arrangement according to date was impossible, seeing that most of the inscriptions are not dated. It is advisable to divide them into classes, that is, a distinction was made, resting solely on the contents of the inscription, and having no regard to their place of origin, between religious, sepulchral, military, and poetical inscriptions, those which have a public character, and those which only concern private persons, and so on.

The alphabetical arrangement is very convenient when the chronological and geographical arrangements are unsuitable. There are documents, such as the sermons, the hymns, and the secular songs of the middle ages, which are not precisely dated or localised. They are arranged in the alphabetical order of their incipit- that is, the words with which they begin.

Besides, given collections arranged in chronological, geographical, or alphabetical order, nothing more than the addition of a good table of contents is needed to make them available for all the purposes which would be served by a systematic arrangement.

Ordinary workers, only collect and classify materials useful for their individual studies. Hence certain differences arise. For example, the arrangement by subjects, on a predetermined system, which is so little to be recommended for great collections, often provides those who are composing monographs on their own account with a scheme of classification preferable to any other. But it will always be well to cultivate the mechanical habits of which professional compilers have learnt the value by experience: to write at the head of every slip its date, if there is occasion for it, and a heading in any case; to multiply cross-references and indices; to keep a record, on a separate set of slips, of all the sources utilised, in order to avoid the danger of having to work a second time through materials already dealt with. The regular observance of these maxims goes a great way towards making scientific historical work easier and more solid.

Critical scholarship and scholars

The operations described in the preceding paragraphs such as restoration of texts, investigation of

authorship, collection and classification of verified documents constitutes the vast domain of external criticism, or critical scholarship.

Importance and dignity of external criticism: It has been said that the sure methods of external criticism have raised history to the dignity of a science, "of an exact science;" that critical investigations of authorship "enable us, better than any other study, to gain a profound insight into past ages;" that the habit of criticising texts refines or even confers the "historical sense." It has been tacitly assumed that external criticism is the whole of historical criticism, and that beyond the emendation and classification of documents there is nothing left to do. This illusion, common enough among specialists, is too crude to need express refutation; the fact is, that it is the psychological criticism which deals with interpretation and examines into the good faith and accuracy of authors that has, better than any other study, enabled us to gain a profound insight into past ages, not external criticism. An historian who should be fortunate enough to find all the documents bearing on his studies already edited correctly, classified, and critically examined as to authorship, would be in just as good a position to use them for writing history as if he had performed all the preliminary operations himself. It is quite possible, whatever may be said, to have the historical sense in full measure without having ever, both literally and figuratively, wiped away the dust from original documents—that is, without having discovered and restored them for oneself. This is to be understood as simply referring to the habit of going direct to the sources, and treating definite problems. Without doubt a day will come when all the documents relating to the history of classical antiquity shall have been edited and treated critically. There will then be no more room, in this department of study, for textual criticism or the investigation of sources; but, for all that, the conditions for the treatment of general ancient history, or special parts of it, will be then eminently favourable.

External criticism, as we cannot too often repeat, is entirely preparatory; it is a means, not an end; the ideal state of things would be that it should have been already sufficiently practised that we might dispense with it for the future; it is only a temporary necessity. Theoretically, not only is it unnecessary for those who wish to make historical syntheses to do for themselves the preparatory work on the materials which they use, but we have a right to ask, as has been often asked, whether there is any advantage in their doing it. History cannot be written from manuscripts. It is impossible for a man to write history from documents which he is obliged to put for himself into a condition in which they can be used.

Distinction between "historians" and "critical scholars: The professions of "critical scholar" and "historian" were, in fact, clearly distinguished. The "historians" cultivated the empty and pompous species of literature which then was known as "history," without considering themselves bound to keep in touch with the work of the scholars. The latter, for their part, determined by their critical researches the conditions under which history must be written, but were at no pains to write it themselves. Content to collect, emend, and classify historical documents, they took no interest in history, and understood the past no better than did the mass of their contemporaries. The scholars acted as though erudition were an end in itself, and the historians as if they had been able to reconstruct vanished realities by the mere force of reflection and ingenuity applied to the inferior documents, which were common property. So complete a divorce between erudition and history seems to-day almost inexplicable, and it was in truth mischievous enough. We need not say that the present advocates of the division of labour in history have nothing of the kind in view. It is admittedly necessary that close relations should obtain between the world of historians and that of critical scholars, for the work of the latter has no reason for existence beyond its utility to the former. All that is meant is, that certain analytical and all synthetic operations are not necessarily better performed when they are performed by the same person; that though the characters of historian and scholar may be combined, there is nothing illegitimate in their separation; and that perhaps this separation is desirable in theory, as, in practice, it is often a necessity.

Internal Criticism or Problem of Credibility

3.2.5.1. Positive Interpretative criticism (hermeneutic)

Internal criticism deals with the mental operations which begin with the observation of a fact and end with the writing of words in a document-It is divided into two stages: the first concerned with what the author meant, the second with the value of his statements.

Internal criticism is not, like external criticism, an instrument used for the mere pleasure of using it; it yields no immediate satisfaction, because it does not definitively solve any problem. It is only applied because it is necessary, and its use is restricted to a bare minimum. The most exacting historian is satisfied with an abridged method which concentrates all the operations into two groups:

- (1) the analysis of the contents of the document, and the positive interpretative criticism which is necessary for ascertaining what the author meant; (2) the analysis of the conditions under which the document was produced, and its negative criticism, necessary for the verification of the author's statements.

This twofold division of the labour of criticism is, moreover, only employed by a select few. The natural tendency, even of historians who work methodically, is to read the text with the object of extracting information directly from it, without any thought of first ascertaining what exactly was in the author's mind. This procedure is excusable at most in the case of nineteenth-century documents, written by men whose language and mode of thought are familiar to us, and then only when there is not more than one possible interpretation. It becomes dangerous as soon as the author's habits of language or thought begin to differ from those of the historian who reads him, or when the meaning of the text is not obvious and indisputable. Whoever, in reading a text, is not exclusively occupied with the effort to understand it, is sure to read impressions of his own into it; he is struck by phrases or words in the document which correspond to his own ideas, or agree with his own a priori notion of the facts; unconsciously he detaches these phrases or words, and forms out of them an imaginary text which he puts in the place of the real text of the author. Interpretation passes through two stages: the first is concerned with the literal, the second with the real meaning.

Interpretation of Literal Meaning: The determination of the literal meaning of a document is a linguistic operation. To understand a text it is first necessary to know the language. But a general knowledge of the language is not enough. The natural tendency is to attribute the same meaning to the same word wherever it occurs. We instinctively treat a language as if it were a fixed system of signs. Here every expression has a single precise meaning, which is absolute and invariable; it expresses an accurately analysed and defined idea, only one such idea, and that always the same in whatever context the expression may occur, and by whatever author it may be used. But ordinary language, in which documents are written, fluctuates: each word expresses a complex and ill-defined idea; its meanings are manifold, relative, and variable; the same word may stand for several different things, and is used in different senses by the same author according to the context; lastly, the meaning of a word varies from author to author, and is modified in the course of time. *Vel*, which in classical Latin only has the meanings or and even, means and in certain epochs of the middle ages; *suffragium*, which is classical Latin for suffrage, takes in medieval Latin the sense of help. We have, then, to learn to resist the instinct which leads us to explain all the expressions of a text by their classical or ordinary meanings. The grammatical interpretation, based on the general rules of the language, must be supplemented by an historical interpretation founded on an examination of the particular case. The method consists in determining the special meaning of the words in the document; it rests on a few very simple principles.

Different degrees of difficulty in interpretation: When we have analysed the document and determined the literal meaning of its phrases, we cannot even yet be sure that we have reached the real thoughts of the author. It is possible that he may have used some expressions in an oblique sense; there are several kinds of cases where this occurs: allegory and symbolism, jests and hoaxes, allusion and implication, even the ordinary figures of speech, metaphor, hyperbole, litotes. In all these cases it is

necessary to pierce through the literal meaning to the real meaning, which the author has purposely disguised under an inexact form.

There is no fixed external criterion by which we can make sure of detecting an oblique sense; in the case of the hoax, which in the present century has become a branch of literature, it is an essential part of the author's plan to leave no indication which would betray the jest. In practice we may be morally certain that an author is not using an oblique sense wherever his prime object is to be understood; we are therefore not likely to meet with difficulties of this kind in official documents, in charters, and in historical narratives. In all these cases the general form of the document permits us to assume that it is written in the literal sense of the words.

On the other hand, we must be prepared for oblique senses when the author had other interests than that of being understood, or when he wrote for a public which could understand his allusions and read between the lines, or when his readers, in virtue of a religious or literary initiation, might be expected to understand his symbolisms and figures of speech. This is the case with religious texts, private letters, and all those literary works which form so large a part of the documents on antiquity. Thus the art of recognising and determining hidden meanings in texts has always occupied a large space in the theory of hermeneutic, and in the exegesis of the sacred texts and of classical authors.

The different modes of introducing an oblique sense behind the literal sense are too varied, and depend too much on special circumstances, for it to be possible to reduce the art of detecting them to definite rules. Only one general principle can be laid down, and that is, that when the literal sense is absurd, incoherent, or obscure, or in contradiction with the ideas of the author or the facts known to him, then we ought to presume an oblique sense.

In order to determine this sense, the procedure is the same as for studying the language of an author. We compare the passages in which the expressions occur in which we suspect an oblique sense, and look to see whether there is not one where the meaning may be guessed from the context. A celebrated instance of this procedure is the discovery of the allegorical meaning of the Beast in the Apocalypse. But as there is no certain method of solving these problems, we never have a right to say we have discovered all the hidden meanings or seized all the allusions contained in a text; and even when we think we have found the sense, we shall do well to draw no inferences from a necessarily conjectural interpretation.

On the other hand, it is necessary to guard against the temptation to look for allegorical meanings everywhere, as the neo-Platonists did in Plato's works and the Swedenborgians in the Bible. This attack of hyper-hermeneutic is now over, but we are not yet safe from the analogous tendency to look for allusions everywhere. Investigations of this kind are always conjectural, and are better calculated to flatter the vanity of the interpreter than to furnish results of which history can make use.

Results of interpretation: When we have at length reached the real sense of the text, the operation of positive analysis is concluded. Its result is to make us acquainted with the author's

conceptions, the images he had in his mind, the general notions in terms of which he represented the world to himself. This information belongs to a very important branch of knowledge, out of which is constituted a whole group of historical sciences: the history arts and of literature, the history of science, the history of philosophical and moral doctrine, mythology and the history of dogmas, the history of law, the history of official institutions, the assemblage of popular legends, traditions, opinions, conceptions which are comprised under the name of folk-lore.

All these studies need only the external criticism which investigates authorship and origin and interpretative criticism; they require one degree less elaboration than the history of objective facts, and accordingly they have been earlier established on a methodical basis.

3.2.5.2. Negative internal criticism

Analysis and positive interpretative criticism only penetrate as far as the inward workings of the mind of the author of a document, and only help us to know his ideas. They give no direct information about

external facts. Even when the author was able to observe them, his text only indicates how he wished to represent them, not how he really saw them, still less how they really happened. What an author expresses is not always what he believed, for he may have lied; what he believed is not necessarily what happened, for he may have been mistaken. These propositions are obvious. And yet a first and natural impulse leads us to accept as true every statement contained in a document, which is equivalent to assuming that no author ever lied or was deceived; and this spontaneous credulity seems to possess a high degree of vitality, for it persists in spite of the innumerable instances of error and mendacity which daily experience brings before us.

Reflection has been forced on historians in the course of their work by the circumstance of their finding documents which contradicted each other; in such cases they have been obliged to doubt, and, after examination, to admit the existence of error or mendacity; thus negative criticism has appeared as a practical necessity for the purpose of eliminating statements which are obviously false or erroneous. Historians, in their works, and even theoretical writers on historical method, have been satisfied with common notions and vague formula in striking contrast with the precise terminology of the critical investigation of sources. They are content to examine whether the author was roughly contemporary with the events, whether he was an ocular witness, whether he was sincere and well-informed, whether he knew the truth and desired to tell it, or even whether he was trustworthy.

The historian ought to distrust a priori every statement of an author, for he cannot be sure that it is not mendacious or mistaken. At the best it affords a presumption. For the historian to adopt it and affirm it afresh on his own account implies that he regards it as a scientific truth. To take this decisive step is what he has no right to do without good reasons. But the human mind is so constituted that this step is often taken unconsciously. Against this dangerous tendency criticism has only one means of defence. We must not postpone doubt till it is forced upon us by conflicting statements in documents; we must begin by doubting. We must never forget the interval which separates a statement made by any author whatsoever from a scientifically established truth, so that we may continually keep in mind the responsibility which we assume when we reproduce a statement.

The natural impulse is to perform the criticism of the whole of an author, or at least of the whole of a document, in the lump; to divide authorities into two categories, on the one side trustworthy authors and good documents, on the other suspected authors and bad documents. Having thus exhausted our powers of distrust, we proceed to reproduce without discussion all the statements contained in the good document. We apply to authors that judicial procedure which divides witnesses into admissible and inadmissible: having once accepted a witness, we feel ourselves bound to admit all his testimony; we dare not doubt any of his statements without a special reason. Instinctively we take sides with the author on whom we have bestowed our approval, and we go so far as to say, as in the law courts, that the burden of proof rests with those who reject valid testimony.

The confusion is still further increased by the use of the word *authentic*, borrowed from judicial language. It has reference to the origin only, not to the contents; to say that a document is *authentic* is merely to say that its origin is certain, not that its contents are free from error. But *authenticity* inspires a degree of respect which disposes us to accept the contents without discussion. To doubt the statements of an *authentic* document would seem presumptuous, or at least we think ourselves bound to wait for overwhelming proof before we impeach the testimony of the author.

These natural instincts must be methodically resisted. A document is not all of a piece; it is composed of a great number of independent statements, any one of which may be intentionally or unintentionally false, while the others are accurate, since each statement is the outcome of a mental operation which may have been incorrectly performed, while others were performed correctly. It is not, therefore, enough to examine a document as a whole; each of the statements in it must be examined separately; criticism is impossible without analysis. Thus internal criticism conducts us to two general rules.

A scientific truth is not established by testimony: In order to affirm a proposition we must have

special reasons for believing it true. It may happen in certain cases that an author's statement is a sufficient reason for belief; but we cannot know that beforehand. The rule, then, will be to examine each separate statement in order to make sure whether it is of a nature to constitute a sufficient reason for belief.

The criticism of a document is not to be performed en bloc: The rule will be to analyse the document into its elements, in order to isolate the different statements of which it is composed and to examine each of them separately. Sometimes a single sentence contains several statements; they must be separated and criticised one by one. In a sale, for example, we distinguish the date, the place, the vendor, the purchaser, the object, the price, and each one of the conditions.

In practice, criticism and analysis are performed simultaneously. As soon as we understand a phrase we analyse it and criticise each of its elements. It thus appears that logically criticism comprises an enormous number of operations. Like every practical art, criticism consists in the habit of performing certain acts. In the period of apprenticeship, before the habit is acquired, we are obliged to think of each act separately before performing it, and to analyse the movements; accordingly we perform them all slowly and with difficulty; but the habit once acquired, the acts, which have now become instinctive and unconscious, are performed with ease and rapidity. The reader must therefore not be uneasy about the slowness of the critical processes; he will see later on how they are abridged in practice. The problem of criticism may be stated as follows

Given a statement made by a man of whose mental operations we have no experience, and the value of the statement depending exclusively on the manner in which these operations were performed; to ascertain whether these operations were performed correctly. The mere statement of the problem shows that we cannot hope for any direct or definitive solution of it; we lack the essential datum, namely, the manner in which the author performed the mental operations concerned. Criticism therefore does not advance beyond indirect and provisional solutions, and does no more than furnish data which require a final elaboration.

A natural instinct leads us to judge of the value of statements by their form. We think we can tell at a glance whether an author is sincere or a narrative accurate. We seek for what is called "the accent of sincerity," or "an impression of truth." This impression is almost irresistible, but it is none the less an illusion. There is no external criterion either of good faith or of accuracy. "The accent of sincerity" is the appearance of conviction; an orator, an actor, an habitual liar will put more of it into his lies than an undecided man into his statement of what he believes to be the truth. Energy of affirmation does not always mean strength of conviction, but sometimes only cleverness or effrontery. Similarly, abundance and precision of detail, though they produce a vivid impression on un-experienced readers, do not guarantee the accuracy of the facts; they give us no information about anything but the imagination of the author when he is sincere, or his impudence when he is the reverse. We are apt to say of a circumstantial narrative: "Things of this kind are not invented." They are not invented, but they are very easy to transfer from one person, country, or time to another. There is thus no external characteristic of a document which can relieve us of the obligation to criticise it.

The value of an author's statement depends solely on the conditions under which he performed certain mental operations. Criticism has no other resource than the examination of these conditions. But it is not a case of reconstructing all of them; it is enough to answer a single question: did the author perform these operations correctly or not? The question may be approached on two sides.

The critical investigation of authorship has often taught us the general conditions under which the author operated. It is probable that some of these influenced each one of the operations. We ought therefore to begin by studying the information we possess about the author and the composition of the document, taking particular pains to look in the habits, sentiments, and personal situation of the author, or in the circumstances in which he composed, for all the reasons which could have existed for incorrectness on the one hand, or exceptional accuracy on the other. In order to perceive these reasons

it is necessary to be on the lookout for them beforehand. The only method, therefore, is to draw up a general set of questions having reference to the possible causes of inaccuracy. We shall then apply it to the general conditions under which the document was composed, in order to discover those causes which may have rendered the author's mental operations incorrect and vitiated the results. But all that we shall thus obtain will be general indications, which will be insufficient for the purposes of criticism, for criticism must always deal with each separate statement.

The criticism of particular statements is confined to the use of a single method, which, by a curious paradox, is the study of the universal conditions under which documents are composed. The information which is not furnished by the general study of the author may be sought for by a consideration of the necessary processes of the human mind; for, since these are universal, they must appear in each particular case. We know what are the cases in which men in general are inclined to alter or distort facts. What we have to do in the case of each statement is to examine whether it was made under such circumstances as to lead us to suspect, from our knowledge of the habits of normal humanity, that the operations implied in the making of it were incorrectly performed. The practical procedure will be to draw up a set of questions relating to the habitual causes of inaccuracy.

The whole of criticism thus reduces to the drawing up and answering of two sets of questions: one for the purpose of bringing before our minds those general conditions affecting the composition of the document, from which we may deduce general motives for distrust or confidence; the other for the purpose of realising the special conditions of each statement, from which special motives may be drawn for distrust or confidence. These two sets of questions ought to be drawn up beforehand in such a form as may enable us to examine methodically both the document in general and each statement in particular; and as they are the same for all documents, it is useful to formulate them once for all.

The critical process comprises two series of questions, which correspond to the two series of operations by which the document was produced. All that interpretative criticism tells us is what the author meant; it remains to determine (1) what he really believed, for he may not have been sincere;

(2) what he really knew, for he may have been mistaken. We may therefore distinguish a critical examination of the author's good faith, by which we seek to determine whether the author of the document lied or not, and a critical examination of his accuracy, by which we seek to determine whether he was or was not mistaken.

In practice we rarely need to know what an author believed, unless we are making a special study of his character. We have no direct interest in the author; he is merely the medium through which we reach the external facts he reports. The aim of criticism is to determine whether the author has reported the facts correctly. If he has given inexact information, it is indifferent whether he did so intentionally or not; to draw a distinction would complicate matters unnecessarily. There is thus little occasion to make a separate examination of an author's good faith, and we may shorten our labours by including in a single set of questions all the causes which lead to misstatement. But for the sake of clearness it will be well to discuss the questions to be asked in two separate series.

The questions in the first series will help us to inquire whether we have any reason to distrust the sincerity of a statement. We ask whether the author was in any of those situations which normally incline a man to be insincere. We must ask what these situations are, both as affecting the general composition of a document, and as affecting each particular statement. Experience supplies the answer. Every violation of truth, small or great, is due to a wish on the part of the author to produce a particular impression upon the reader. Our set of questions thus reduces to a list of the motives which may, in the general case, lead an author to violate truth. The following are the most important cases:-

The author seeks to gain a practical advantage for himself: The author wishes to deceive the reader of the document, to persuade him to an action, or to dissuade him from it; he knowingly gives false information: we then say the author has an interest in deceiving. This is the case with most official documents. Even in documents which have not been composed for a practical purpose, every

interested statement has a chance of being mendacious. In order to determine which statements are to be suspected, we are to ask what can have been the general aim of the author in writing the document as a whole; and again, what can have been his particular purpose in making each of the separate statements which compose the document. But there are two natural tendencies to be resisted. The first is, to ask what interest the author could have had in lying, meaning what interest should we have had in his place; we must ask instead what interest can he have thought he had in lying, and we must look for the answer in his tastes and ideals. The other tendency is to take sole account of the individual interest of the author; we ought, however, to remember that the author may have given false information in order to serve a collective interest. This is one of the difficulties of criticism. An author is a member at one and the same time of several different groups, a family, a province, a country, a religious denomination, a political party, a class in society, whose interests often conflict; we have to discover the group in which he took most interest, and for which he worked.

The author was placed in a situation which compelled him to violate truth: This happens whenever he has to draw up a document in conformity with rule or custom, while the actual circumstances are in some point or other in conflict with rule or custom; he is then obliged to state that the conditions were normal, and thus make a false declaration in respect of all the irregularities. In nearly every report of proceedings there is some slight deviation from truth as to the day, the hour, the place, the number or the names of those present. Most of us have observed, if not taken part in, some of these petty fictions. But we are too apt to forget them when we come to criticise documents relating to the past. The authentic character of the documents contributes to the illusion; we instinctively make authentic a synonym of sincere. The rigid rules which govern the composition of every authentic document seem to guarantee sincerity; they are, on the contrary, an incentive to falsify, not the main facts, but the accessory circumstances. From the fact of a person having signed a report we may infer that he agreed to it, but not that he was actually present at the time when the report mentions him as having been present.¹⁶⁸

Sympathy and antipathy: The author viewed with sympathy or antipathy a group of men (nation, party, denomination, province, city, family), or an assemblage of doctrines or institutions (religion, school of philosophy, political theory), and was led to distort facts in such a manner as to represent his friends in a favourable and his opponents in an unfavourable light. These are instances of a general bias which affects all the statements of an author, and they are so obvious that the ancients perceived them and gave them names (studium and odium); from ancient times it has been a literary commonplace for historians to protest that they have steered clear of both.

Vanity: The author was induced by private or collective vanity to violate truth for the purpose of exalting himself or his group. He made such statements as he thought likely to give the reader the impression that he and his possessed qualities deserving of esteem. We have therefore to inquire whether a given statement may not be influenced by vanity. But we must take care not to represent the author's vanity to ourselves as being exactly like our own vanity or that of our contemporaries. Different people are vain for different reasons; we must inquire what was our author's particular vanity; he may have lied in order to attribute to himself or his friends actions which we should consider dishonourable. There is, however, a kind of vanity which is universal, and that is, the desire to appear to be a person of exalted rank playing an important part in affairs. We must, therefore, always distrust a statement which attributes to the author or his group a high place in the world.

Deference to public opinion: The author desired to please the public, or at least to avoid shocking it. He has expressed sentiments and ideas in harmony with the morality or the fashion of his public; he has distorted facts in order to adapt them to the passions and prejudices of his time, even those which he did not share. The purest types of this kind of falsehood are found in ceremonial forms, official formula, declarations prescribed by etiquette, set speeches, polite phrases. The statements which come under this head are so open to suspicion that we are unable to derive from them any information about

the facts stated. We are all aware of this so far as relates to the contemporary formula of which we see instances every day, but we often forget it in the criticism of documents, especially those belonging to an age from which few documents have come down to us. No one would think of looking for the real sentiments of a man in the assurances of respect with which he ends his letters. But people believed for a long time in the humility of certain ecclesiastical dignitaries of the middle ages, because, on the day of their election, they began by refusing an office of which they declared themselves unworthy, till at last comparison showed that this refusal was a mere conventional form. In order to recognise these conventional declarations there are two lines of general study to be pursued: the one is directed to the author, and seeks to discover what was the public he addressed, for in one and the same country there are usually several different publics, each of which has its own code of morals or propriety; the other is directed towards the public, and seeks to determine its morals or its manners.

Literary distortion: The author endeavoured to please the public by literary artifices. He distorted facts in order to embellish them according to his own aesthetic notions. We have therefore to look for the ideal of the author or of his time, in order to be on our guard against passages distorted to suit that ideal. But without special study we may calculate on the common kinds of literary distortion. There are different type of distortion such as rhetorical distortion, epic distortion, dramatic distortion etc. Literary distortion does not much affect archives; but it profoundly modifies all literary texts, including the narratives of historians. Now, the natural tendency is to trust writers more readily when they have talent, and to admit statements with less difficulty when they are presented in good literary form. Criticism must counteract this tendency by the application of the paradoxical rule, that the more interesting a statement is from the artistic point of view, the more it ought to be suspected. We must distrust every narrative which is very picturesque or very dramatic, in which the personages assume noble attitudes or manifest great intensity of feeling. This first series of questions will yield the provisional result of enabling us to note the statements which have a chance of being mendacious.

Reasons for doubting accuracy: The second series of questions will be of use in determining whether there is any reason to distrust the accuracy of a statement. Was the author in one of those situations which cause a man to make mistakes? As in dealing with good faith, we must look for these conditions both as affecting the document as a whole, and as affecting each of the particular statements in it. The set of questions by the aid of which we investigate the probabilities of error may be drawn up in the light of experience, which brings before us the most common cases of error.

The author a bad observer, hallucinations, illusions, prejudices: The author was in a situation to observe the fact, and supposed he really had observed it; he was, however, prevented from doing so by some interior force of which he was unconscious, an hallucination, an illusion, or a mere prejudice. It would be useless, as well as impossible, to determine which of these agencies was at work; it is enough to ascertain whether the author had a tendency to observe badly. It is scarcely possible in the case of a particular statement to recognise that it was the result of an hallucination or an illusion. At the most we may learn, either from information derived from other sources or by comparison, that an author had a general propensity to this kind of error. There is a better chance of recognising whether a statement was due to prejudice. In the life or the works of an author we may find the traces of his dominant prejudices. With reference to each of his particular statements, we ought to ask whether it is not the result of a preconceived idea of the author on a class of men or a kind of facts. This inquiry partly coincides with the search for motives of falsehood: interest, vanity, sympathy, and antipathy give rise to prejudices which alter the truth in the same manner as willful falsehood. We therefore employ the questions already formulated for the purpose of testing good faith. But there is one to be added. In putting forward a statement has the author been led to distort it unconsciously by the circumstance that he was answering a question? This is the case of all statements obtained by interrogating witnesses. Even apart from the cases where the person interrogated seeks to please the proposer of the question by giving an answer which he thinks will be agreeable to him, every question suggests its own answer, or

at least its form, and this form is dictated beforehand by someone unacquainted with the facts. It is therefore necessary to apply a special criticism to every statement obtained by interrogation; we must ask what was the question put, and what were the preconceptions to which it may have given rise in the mind of the person interrogated.

The author was badly situated for observing: The practice of the sciences teaches us what are the conditions for correct observation. The observer ought to be placed where he can see correctly, and should have no practical interest, no desire to obtain a particular result, no preconceived idea about the result. He ought to record the observation immediately, in a precise system of notation; he ought to give a precise indication of his method. These conditions, which are insisted on in the sciences of observation, are never completely fulfilled by the authors of documents. It would be useless, therefore, to ask whether there have been chances of inaccuracy; there always have been, and it is just this that distinguishes a document from an observation. It only remains to look for the obvious causes of error in the conditions of observation: to inquire whether the observer was in a place where he could not see or hear well, as would be the case, Above all, we must ask when he wrote down what he saw or heard. This is the most important point: the only exact observation is the one which is recorded immediately it is made; such is the constant procedure in the established sciences; an impression committed to writing later on is only a recollection, liable to be confused in the memory with other recollections. Memoirs written several years after the facts, often at the very end of the author's career, have introduced innumerable errors into history. It must be made a rule to treat memoirs with special distrust as second-hand documents, in spite of their appearance of being contemporary testimony.

Negligence and indifference: The author states facts which he could have observed, but to which he did not take the trouble to attend. From idleness or negligence he reported details which he has merely inferred, or even imagined at random, and which turn out to be false. This is a common source of error, though it does not readily occur to one, and is to be suspected wherever the author was obliged to procure information in which he took little interest, in order to fill up a blank form. Of this kind are answers to questions put by an authority, and detailed accounts of ceremonies or public functions. There is too strong a temptation to write the account from the programme, or in agreement with the usual order of the proceedings. How many accounts of meetings of all kinds have been published by reporters who were not present at them! Similar efforts of imagination are suspected in the writings of medieval chroniclers.

Fact not of nature to be directly observed: The fact stated is of such a nature that it could not have been learnt by observation alone. It may be a hidden fact or a private secret. It may be a fact relating to a collectivity, and applying to an extensive area or a long period of time; for example, the common act of a whole army, a custom common to a whole people or a whole age, a statistical total obtained by the addition of numerous items. It may be a comprehensive judgment on the character of a man, a group, a custom, an event. Here we have to do with propositions derived from observations by synthesis or inference: the author can only have arrived at them indirectly; he began with data furnished by observation, and elaborated them by the logical processes of abstraction, generalisation, reasoning, calculation.

On the probable inaccuracies of an author, general indications may be obtained from an examination of his writings. This examination will show us how he worked: whether he was capable of abstraction, reasoning, generalisation, and what were the mistakes he was in the habit of making. In order to determine the value of the data, we must criticise each statement separately; we must imagine the conditions under which the author observed, and ask ourselves whether he was able to procure the necessary data for his statement.

If the author is not the original observer of the fact: In history there is so great a dearth of direct observation. Take any narrative at random, even if it be the work of a contemporary, it will be found that the facts observed by the author are never more than a part of the whole number. In nearly every

document the majority of the statements do not come from the author at first hand, but are reproductions of the statements of others. In order to criticise a second-hand statement it is no longer enough to examine the conditions under which the author of the document worked: this author is, in such a case, a mere agent of transmission; the true author is the person who supplied him the information. The critic, therefore, must change his ground, and ask whether the informant observed and reported correctly; and if he too had the information from someone else, the chase must be pursued from one intermediary to another, till the person is found who first launched the statement on its career, and with regard to him the question must be asked: Was he an accurate observer?

Lack of documents nearly always prevents us from getting as far as the observer of a fact; the observation remains anonymous. A general question then presents itself: How are we to criticise an anonymous statement? It is not only "anonymous documents" with which we are concerned, where the composition as a whole is the work of an unknown author; even when the author is known, this question arises with respect to each statement of his drawn from an unknown source.

Criticism works by reproducing the conditions under which an author wrote, and has hardly anything to take hold of where a statement is anonymous. The only method left is to examine the general conditions of the document. We may inquire whether there is any feature common to all the statements of a document indicating that they all proceed from persons having the same prejudices or passions. In respect of each fact derived from such a tradition we must ask whether it has not been distorted by the interest, the vanity, or the prejudices of the group concerned. We may even ignore the author, and ask whether there was anything likely to make for or against correct observation, common to all the men of the time and country in which the observation must have been made.

The most useful of all these general inquiries has reference to that mode of transmitting anonymous statements which is called tradition. No second-hand statement has any value except in so far as it reproduces its source; every addition is an alteration, and ought to be eliminated. Similarly, all the intermediary sources are valueless except as copies of the original statement founded directly on observation. The critic needs to know whether this transmission from hand to hand has preserved or distorted the original statement; above all, whether the tradition embodied in the document was written or oral. Writing fixes a statement, and ensures its being transmitted faithfully; when a statement is communicated orally, the impression in the mind of the hearer is apt to be modified by confusion with other impressions; in passing from one intermediary to another the statement is modified at every step, and as these modifications arise from different causes, there is no possibility of measuring or correcting them.

Oral tradition is by its nature a process of continual alteration; hence in the established sciences only written transmission is accepted. Historians have no avowable motive for proceeding differently, at any rate when it is a case of establishing a particular fact. We must therefore search documents for statements derived from oral tradition in order that we may suspect them. There is thus only an indirect method, and that is to ascertain that written transmission was impossible; we may then be sure that the fact reached the author only by oral tradition. We have therefore to ask the question: In this period and in this group of men was it customary to commit to writing facts of this kind? If the answer is negative, the fact considered rests on oral tradition alone.

The most striking form of oral tradition is legend. It arises among groups of men with whom the spoken word is the only means of transmission, in barbarous societies, or in classes of little culture, such as peasants or soldiers. In this case it is the whole group of facts which is transmitted orally and assumes the legendary form.

When a people has emerged from the legendary period and begun to commit its history to writing, oral tradition does not come to an end, but only applies to a narrower sphere; it is now restricted to facts which are not registered, whether because they are by their nature secret, or because no one takes the trouble to record them, such as private actions, words, the details of events. Thus arise anecdotes,

which have been named "the legends of civilised society." Like legends they have their origin in confused recollections, allusions, mistaken interpretations, imaginings of all kinds which fasten upon particular persons and events.

Legends and anecdotes are at bottom mere popular beliefs, arbitrarily attached to historical personages; they belong to folk-lore, not to history. We must therefore guard against the temptation to treat legend as an alloy of accurate facts and errors out of which it is possible by analysis to extract grains of historical truth. A legend is a conglomerate in which there may be some grains of truth, and which may even be capable of being analysed into its elements; but there is no means of distinguishing the elements taken from reality from those which are the work of imagination. To use Niebuhr's expression, a legend is "a mirage produced by an invisible object according to an unknown law of refraction."

The crudest analytical procedure consists in rejecting those details in the legendary narrative which appear impossible, miraculous, contradictory, or absurd, and retaining the rational residue as historical. We must make up our minds to treat legend as a product of imagination; we may look in it for a people's conceptions, not for the external facts in that people's history. In the case of written transmission it remains to inquire whether the author reproduced his source without altering it. This inquiry forms part of the critical investigation of the sources, so far as it can be pursued by a comparison of texts. But when the source has disappeared we are reduced to internal criticism. We ask, first of all, whether the author can have had exact information, otherwise his statement is valueless. We next put to ourselves the general question: Was the author in the habit of altering his sources, and in what manner? And in regard to each separate second-hand statement we ask whether it has the appearance of being an exact reproduction or an arrangement. We judge by the form: when we meet with a passage whose style is out of harmony with the main body of the composition, we have before us a fragment of an earlier document; the more servile the reproduction the more valuable is the passage, for it can contain no exact information beyond what was already in the source.

Critical operations are shortened in practice:

If the text be one whose interpretation is debatable, the examination is divided into two stages: the first comprises the reading of the text with a view to the determination of the meaning, without attempting to draw any information from it; the second comprises the critical study of the facts contained in the document. In the case of documents whose meaning is clear, we may begin the critical examination on the first reading, reserving for separate study any individual passages of doubtful meaning.

We begin by collecting the general information we possess about the document and the author, with the special purpose of discovering the conditions which may have influenced the production of the document—the epoch, the place, the purpose, the circumstances of its composition; the author's social status, country, party, sect, family, interests, passions, prejudices, linguistic habits, methods of work, means of information, culture, abilities, and mental defects; the nature of the facts and the mode of their transmission. Information on all these points is supplied by the preparatory critical investigation of authorship and sources. We now combine the different heads, mentally applying the set of general critical questions; this should be done at the outset, and the results impressed on the memory, for they will need to be present to the mind during the remainder of the operations.

Thus prepared, we attack the document. As we read we mentally analyse it, destroying all the author's combinations, discarding all his literary devices, in order to arrive at the facts, which we formulate in simple and precise language. We thus free ourselves from the deference imposed by artistic form, and from all submission to the author's ideas—an emancipation without which criticism is impossible.

The document thus analysed resolves into a long series of the author's conceptions and statements as to facts. With regard to each statement, we ask ourselves whether there is a probability of their being false or erroneous, or whether, on the other hand, there are exceptional chances in favour of good faith and accuracy, working through the list of critical questions prepared for particular cases. This list of

questions must be always present to the mind. At first it may seem cumbersome, perhaps pedantic; but as it will be applied more than a hundred times in each page of the document, it will in the end be used unconsciously. As we read a text, all the reasons for distrust or confidence will occur to the mind simultaneously, combined into a single impression.

Analysis and critical questioning will then have become a matter of instinct, and we shall have acquired for ever that methodically analytical, distrustful, not too respectful turn of mind which is often mystically called "the critical sense," but which is nothing else than an unconscious habit of criticism.

Conclusion

By "historical criticism" is meant the study of any narrative which purports to convey historical information in order to determine what actually happened and is described in the passage in question. Criticism has not always borne a good name. To test is to criticize; and while criticism is not the chief end of historical research, still, no conclusions may be made by the research-worker until all his material has passed through the sieve of historical criticism. The processes of Criticism fall naturally into two parts. The first important step is to determine whether the given source is at all admissible as evidence, or, in other words, whether the material is genuine or not. Conclusions are worth less and labor is wasted if the document is fraudulent or misjudged. It is necessary to know at the outset whether the chronicle, charter, or relic is in reality what it claims to be, or what it has been esteemed to be. It is important to determine where and when it originated, who was its author, and where he derived his information. The rules of procedure by which these facts are determined in historical research constitute external criticism. The second part of the critical process weighs the relation of the testimony to the truth. One must decide whether the statements made are trustworthy and, if not absolutely certain, whether they are probable. The degree of probability or possibility must be determined, or, if necessary, the whole cast out as worthless. This is internal criticism, and is often called Higher Criticism, since it deals with more important matter than external form. Hence, to understand the veracity of historical sources particularly literary one criticism is necessary. This chapter will discuss the process of criticism employed by historian for critical evaluation of source material before using them in writing history.

Structure

Unit-3 Chapter-III

COLLECTION AND SELECTION OF FACTS AND EVIDENCES AND CAUSATION IN HISTORY

Introduction

The historian works with documents. Documents are the traces which have been left by the thoughts and actions of men of former times. For want of documents the history of immense periods in the past of humanity is destined to remain forever unknown. In order to draw legitimate inferences from a document to the fact of which it is the trace, numerous precautions are requisite. These facts retrieved out of raw documents are the materials of Historical Construction. The facts are isolated, of very different kinds, of very different degrees of generality, each belonging to a definite time and place, of different degrees of certainty. Historical facts are derived from the critical analysis of the documents. Historical facts have the common characteristic of having been taken from documents; but they differ greatly among themselves. For proper research in history proper collection and selection of facts are necessary operation. Another important historical theory is that no historical event happens without a cause or causes. Every cause in turn has some effect too. Thus, this chapter will discuss the aspects of role of facts in historical research and concept of causation in historical happening.

Facts in Historical Research

What exactly are 'the facts'? the answer is in history facts are the materials of Historical Construction. Historical facts are isolated, of very different kinds, of very different degrees of generality, each belonging to a definite time and place and of different degrees of certainty. Facts are the matters which historians deal with, and about which they have a duty not to get it wrong, vary considerably in nature and complexity. Where do 'the facts' come from? they come from the traces that have been left by past societies, that is, the primary sources. But, of course, historians do not go back to the primary sources to reassure themselves. The prime necessity for the historian, when confronted with the historical facts, is to limit the field of his researches. In the ocean of universal history what facts is he to choose for collection? Secondly, in the mass of facts so chosen he will have to distinguish between different groups and make subdivisions. Lastly, within each of these subdivisions he will have to arrange the facts one by one. Thus all historical construction should begin with the search for a principle to guide in the selection, the grouping, and the arrangement of facts. This principle may be sought either in the external conditions of the facts or in their intrinsic nature.

Nature of Historical Facts

The materials of Historical Construction are isolated facts, of very different kinds, of very different degrees of generality, each belonging to a definite time and place, of different degrees of certainty. Historical facts are derived from the critical analysis of the documents. They issue from this process in the form to which analysis has reduced them, chopped small into individual statements; for a single sentence contains several statements: we have often accepted some and rejected others; each of these statements represents a fact. Historical facts have the common characteristic of having been taken from documents; but they differ greatly among themselves.

Historical facts represent phenomena of very different nature. From the same document we derive facts bearing on handwriting, language, style, doctrines, customs, events. Thus the facts reach us pell-mell, without distinction of nature. This mixture of heterogeneous facts is one of the characteristics which differentiate history from the other sciences. For the purpose of remedying this disorder it is necessary to sort the facts and group them by species. But, for the purpose of sorting them, it is necessary to know precisely what it is that constitutes a species of historical facts; in order to group them we need a principle of classification applicable to them.

Historical facts present themselves in very different degrees of generality, from the highly general facts

which apply to a whole people and which lasted for centuries, down to the most transient actions of a single man. Here again history differs from the sciences of direct observation, which regularly start from particular facts and labour methodically to condense them into general facts. In order to form groups the facts must be reduced to a common degree of generality, which makes it necessary to inquire to what degree of generality we can and ought to reduce the different species of facts. And this is what historians do not agree about among themselves.

Historical facts are localised; each belongs to a given time and a given country. If we suppress the time and place to which they belong, they lose their historical character; they now contribute only to the knowledge of universal humanity, as is the case with facts of folk-lore whose origin is unknown. This necessity of localisation is also foreign to the general sciences; it is confined to the descriptive sciences, which deal with the geographical distribution and with the evolution of phenomena. It obliges the historian to study separately the facts belonging to different countries and different epochs. The facts which have been extracted from documents by critical analysis present themselves accompanied by a critical estimate of their probability. In every case where we have not reached complete certainty, whenever the fact is merely probable—still more when it is open to suspicion—criticism supplies the fact to the historian accompanied by a label which he has no right to remove, and which prevents the fact from being definitively admitted into the science. Even those facts which, after comparison with others, end by being established, are subject to temporary exclusion, like the clinical cases which accumulate in the medical reviews before they are considered sufficiently proved to be received as scientific facts.

Historical construction has thus to be performed with an incoherent mass of minute facts, with detail-knowledge reduced as it were to a powder. It must utilise a heterogeneous medley of materials, relating to different subjects and places, differing in their degree of generality and certainty. No method of classifying them is provided by the practice of historians; history, which began by being a form of literature, has remained the least methodical of the sciences.

Searching for Historical Data

The procedure of searching for historical data should be systematic and pre-planned. The researcher should know what information he needs so as to identify important sources of data and provide a direction to his search for relevant data. Using his knowledge, imagination and resourcefulness, he needs to explore the kinds of data required, persons involved, institutions involved. This will help him to identify the kinds of records he require and whom he should interview. Since a historical research is mainly qualitative in nature all the primary and secondary sources cannot be identified in advance. It is possible that as one collects some data, analyzes and interprets it, the need for further pertinent data may arise depending on the interpretive framework. This will enable him to identify other primary or secondary sources of data.

The search for sources of data begins with wide reading of preliminary sources including published bibliographies, biographies, atlas, specialized chronologies, dictionaries of quotations and terms. Good university and college libraries tend to have a great deal of such preliminary materials. This will enable a researcher to identify valuable secondary sources on the topic being studied such books on history relating to one's topic. For extensive materials on a subject, the researcher may need to go to a large research library or a library with extensive holdings on a specific subject. Such secondary materials could include other historian's conclusions and interpretations, historical information, references to other secondary and primary sources. The historical researcher needs to evaluate the secondary sources for their validity and authenticity. Now the researcher should turn his attention to the primary sources. These are usually available in the institution or the archives especially if the source concerns data pertaining to distant past or data pertaining to events in which the chief witnesses are either dead or inaccessible. In case of data concerning the recent past, the researcher can contact witnesses or participants themselves in order to interview them and/or study the documents possessed by them.

However, it is not possible for a historical researcher to examine all the material available. Selecting the best sources of data is important in a historical study. In a historical study the complete “population” of available data can never be obtained or known. Hence the sample of materials examined must always be a purposive one. What it represents and what it fails to represent should be considered. The researcher needs to identify and use a sample that should be representative enough for wider generalization.

The Grouping of Facts

Historical construction should begin with the search for a principle to guide in the selection, the grouping, and the arrangement of facts. This principle may be sought either in the external conditions of the facts or in their intrinsic nature.

The simplest and easiest mode of classification is that which is founded on external conditions. Every historical fact belongs to a definite time and a definite place, and relates to a definite man or group of men: a convenient basis is thus afforded for the division and arrangement of facts. We have the history of a period, of a country, of a nation, of a man; the ancient historians and those of the Renaissance used no other type. Within this general scheme the subdivisions are formed on the same principle, and facts are arranged in chronological and geographical order, or according to the groups to which they relate. As to the selection of facts to be arranged in this scheme, for a long time it was made on no fixed principle; historians followed their individual fancy, and chose from among the facts relating to a given period, country, or nation all that they deemed interesting or curious. Livy and Tacitus mingle accounts of floods, epidemics, and the birth of monsters with their narratives of wars and revolutions.

Classification of facts by their intrinsic nature resulted in the selection and grouping together those facts which relate to the same species of actions; each of these groups becomes the subject-matter of a special branch of history. Grouping of facts according to their nature is combined with the system of grouping by time and place; we thus obtain chronological, geographical, or, national sections in each branch. The history of a species of activity subdivides into the history of periods, countries, and nations.

The same principles aid in determining the order in which the facts are to be arranged. The necessity of presenting facts one after another obliges us to adopt some methodical rule of succession. We may describe successively either all the facts which relate to a given place, or those which relate to a given country, or all the facts of a given species. All historical matter can be distributed in three different kinds of order: chronological order, geographical order, that kind of order which is governed by the nature of actions and is generally called logical order. It is impossible to use any of these orders exclusively: in every chronological exposition there necessarily occur geographical or logical cross-divisions, transitions from one country to another, or from one species of facts to a different species, and conversely. But it is always necessary to decide which shall be the main order into which the others enter as subdivisions.

It is a delicate matter to choose between these three orders; our choice will be decided by different reasons according to the subject, and according to the public for whom we are working. That is to say, it will depend on the method of exposition; it would take up too much space to give the theory of it.

Selection of Facts

When we come to the selection of historical facts for classification and arrangement, a question is raised which has been disputed with considerable warmth. Every human action is by its nature an individual transient phenomenon which is confined to a definite time and a definite place. Strictly speaking, every fact is unique. But every action of a man resembles other actions of the same man, or of other members of the same group, and often to so great a degree that the whole group of actions receives a common name, in which their individuality is lost. These groups of similar actions, which the human mind is irresistibly impelled to form, are called habits, usages, institutions. These are merely constructions of the mind, but they are imposed so forcibly on our intellect that many of them

must be recognised and constantly employed; habits are collective facts, possessing extension in time and space. Historical facts may therefore be considered under two different aspects: we may regard either the individual, particular, and transient elements in them, or we may look for what is collective, general, and durable. According to the first conception, history is a continuous narrative of the incidents which have happened among men in the past; according to the second, it is the picture of the successive habits of humanity.

On this subject there has been a contest, especially in Germany, between the partisans of the history of civilisation and the historians who remain faithful to ancient tradition; in France we have had the struggle between the history of institutions, manners, and ideas, and political history, contemptuously nicknamed "battle-history" by its opponents.

This opposition is explained by the difference between the documents which the workers on either side were accustomed to deal with. The historians, principally occupied with political history, read of individual and transient acts of rulers in which it was difficult to detect any common feature. In the special histories, on the contrary, the documents exhibit none but general facts, a linguistic form, a religious rite, a rule of law; an effort of imagination is required to picture the man who pronounced the word, who performed the rite, or who applied the rule in practice.

There is no need to take sides in this controversy. Historical construction in its completeness implies the study of facts under both aspects. The representation of men's habits of thought, life, and action is obviously an important part of history. And yet, supposing we had brought together all the acts of all individuals for the purpose of extracting what is common to them, there would still remain a residue which we should have no right to reject, for it is the distinctively historical element—the circumstance that a particular action was the action of a given man, or group of men, at a given moment. In a scheme of classification which should only recognise the general facts of political life there would be no place for the victory of Pharsalia or the taking of the Bastille—accidental and transient facts, but without which the history of Roman and French institutions would be unintelligible.

History is thus obliged to combine with the study of general facts the study of certain particular facts. It has a mixed character, fluctuating between a science of generalities and a narrative of adventures.

Causation in History

All scientific inquiry begins with the question 'why?' Why does lightning occur in sky? Why do we have tsunami? Why do draught occur? In one form or another all disciplines ask the question 'why?' History is no exception. Like other natural and social sciences it too addresses the 'why' interrogative. Even as historians study the past they try to explain why a particular event or phenomenon did or did not occur. They ask, for example, why did the Gupta Empire decline? Why did Kalinga War occur? Why did the India got partitioned? The writing of history thus begins with why questions. However, unlike many other social sciences history does not focus upon generalities. It does not explain a category of events but analyzes a specific occurrence. Instead of offering an explanation for why de-colonisation occurs, or why civilisations decline, or why revolutions occur, it examines why the British left India in 1947, why the socialist revolution occurred first in Russia. Historians, in other words, explain the occurrence of specific events. In place of treating the event as an instance of a general category it perceives it as, it concentrates on those dimensions that are specific to the given event and offers an account that explains fully why the event happened when it did.

E.J. Tapp's bold claim that without a 'concept of causation there can be no history' has serious implications for practical and philosophical aspects of history. Indeed, few historians would argue that causation plays no role in the study of the past. It is a key component of historical methodology and a crucial device in attempting to explain why events happened as they did. Whilst the concept of causation has always been present in the study and construction of history, it was not until 1734 with the Baron de Montesquieu's *Considerations on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans* that an emphasis was placed on trying to explaining why an event—in this case, the rise and

decline of Rome-had occurred. Since then, historians have grappled with the concept and employed it in varying ways and to varying degrees in their work. The application of causal explanations has, however, raised several important issues which the historian must consider. As Paul Conklin asserts, the debates about causation in history rarely focus on its importance in adequate historical explanation, but rather on the implications of its use. This invariably leads to the consideration of several important issues. One of the most obvious is the definition and identification of a 'cause' and the factors which make an event or condition one. This in turn highlights the difficulties of selecting from what is often a plurality of causes which may affect any single event in the past. Causation also evokes considerations of which causes, if any, may be deemed more important than others. The subjective selection by the historian from these myriad events and conditions represents a significant aspect of the debate regarding the role of causation in history. Finally, there are debates surrounding the role that determinism, free will and chance play in causal explanations of historical events-whether there are grand theories guiding the course of history or whether human free agency ultimately decides the outcome of past events. Whilst these aspects of causation remain fiercely debated, less contentious is the notion that causation plays an important role in providing a coherent, intelligible explanation of the past.

Concept of Causality

Even though the event is taken to be a unique particular, historians nevertheless endeavor to explain its occurrence. The analysis of an event as a particular does not undermine either the effectiveness of the offered explanation or its claim to represent the truth. Like other social scientists, historians offer a complete explanation of the phenomenon under consideration, and they do this by determining what caused that event to occur. Search for causes is thus central to historical analysis. Up until the eighteenth century philosophers and historians commonly believed that the cause must be an antecedent event - one that occurred prior to the event that is being explained; and that the antecedent event must be regularly associated with the effect. However, following upon the work of John S. Mill, the cause is no longer identified as an event that occurs before.

No historical event happens without a cause or causes. Every cause in turn has some effect too. In earlier times the scholars did not discuss the causes of the events because they thought it was an interference in the will of god. But now importance of cause is considered essential because it works as a useful guide for future action. A prominent historian says "Determinism means that the data being what they are, whatever happens definitely and could not be different. To hold that it could means only if the data were different."

The historians in the beginning did not think about the causes of the events. They only described the course of events, as when and where the work took place and how many people were killed, how the armies were planned. So they never thought over the causes of happenings. At present the historians are providing more importance to the causes of the events. Their views are based on value judgment so causes usually differ but their approach has importance.

Historians and Causation

Causal relationships are essential to establishing historical explanations and aiding in the understanding of the past-without it, historians are left with a collection of unrelated facts. In a similarly bold fashion Tapp asserts that causation should be the foremost concern of all historians; 'the great central pillar' of historical thinking. E.H. Carr is another to argue the importance of causation in history, stating that history is first and foremost a 'study of causes'. Carr believes that the true historian's role is, having assessed the causes of an event, to form them into a hierarchy of importance. In establishing a plurality of causes, and then forming them into a hierarchy of importance, the issue of subjectivity, selection and value judgments becomes pertinent as they reflect the historian's own unique interpretation of the past, as identified by Mendel Cohen in his analysis of selection in causation. To assess all that has been said about causation and history would overstep the bounds of

this essay, but it is clear from this brief survey of opinions that whilst causation is acknowledged as a fundamental aspect in the study of history, there is little consensus on the precise role it should play. The reason for such contention is that there no consensus on the identification of a 'cause', nor do all historians understand the philosophy of causation. Bearing the significant issues of the debate in mind, there is a common sense approach to historical causation; assessing causal relationships within history, balancing the major concerns of plurality, hierarchy, selection, determinism, free will and chance in history as expressed by historians.

Causation has, and should, continue to play an important role in the work of historians and historiographers. The historian's role is to give an account of what, how and why events in the past occurred as they did. Causation may therefore be seen as a branch of historical explanation used to answer these basic questions. The act of merely describing history has been criticised by Carr who claims that one may describe history but explain nothing, indicating a failure on the part of the historian in fulfilling their role. It is the predominant view now that historians should not be content to write 'mere annals', but must 'give something more than a record of events, must discover the connection between one event and the other'. This is the essence of causation, and key to a greater understanding of the past. When approaching the questions of 'how' and 'why', the application of causation becomes critical. History is, after all, an account of men and women attempting to 'do things', so it is common to investigate why and how these events came to be. The 'how' question begs a causal response, although this is generally achieved through a historical narrative.

The historical narrative has often been mistaken for a purely descriptive account of past events. However, upon closer analysis Froeyman identified that historical narratives share four traits which establish a coherent, causal chain of explanation. The stages of the narrative form a causal chain, linking them together and making them intelligible, with all stages relating back to a central concept or subject and a 'plot' which gives the narrative its distinct structure. 'Why' questions also ask for a causal answer, most easily summed up as 'because'-although few historians would argue that it was so simply explained. From a myriad of factors historians seek the relevant information to explain why the past occurred as it did. Employing a causal approach is essential in helping to better explain and understand the past. It helps to make events in the past coherent and intelligible. Causation, the relationships between events and the forces exerted on individuals, groups and ideas is therefore a 'central pillar' of historical explanation.

Whilst causes are necessary to historical explanation, their apparent simplicity gives way to a complex and 'almost impossible' path for the historian. This then presents the historian with an unenviable but crucial task. The concept of causation has always been prevalent, if not always the focus, in the construction and interpretation of the past. The historian's goal of explaining the past has meant that even in merely describing events, causation is implicitly part of their work. In providing a sequence of events, causal relationships are implied as one event or force acts upon and leads to another. Whilst ancient historians predominantly produced narrative explanations, they often incorporated causal relationships to explain past events. Herodotus, Thucydides and Polybius all sought to explain the past through narrative; yet causal relationships were implicit in the selection and ordering of events, people and ideas. The narrative structure gave coherence and order to events, demonstrating their interconnectedness. However, ancient Greek and Roman historians also strongly believed in fate and the will of the Gods. The outcome of events was never truly determined by cause and effect relationships, but rather by 'divine will'. This limited their attempts to explain the past through specific, identifiable cause and effect relationships.

Historical explanations during the Middle Ages were also primarily reliant on the concept of 'divine will'. Christian scholars rejected the notions of astrological determinism which had gained prominence prior to the medieval period, instead believing that the actions of men and women were in some way representative of the meanings of the Christian faith or the plans of God. Many events, whether they

were contemporary or historical, were attributed to divine will. Augustine's City of God, considered to be one of the most important early historical works, differed slightly from this viewpoint. Augustine saw history as a struggle between the 'city of man' and the 'city of god'- those who pursued earthly pleasures and those who served God. He attributed the fall of Rome in 410 to the moral decay of Roman society, rather than the will of God which so many had believed beforehand. Nevertheless, the concept of 'divine will' remained the predominant means of explanation for a long period of history. It was not until the eighteenth century with the Baron de Montesquieu's Considerations on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans that a discernible emphasis was placed on causal factors in history. Montesquieu laid the foundations for modern causal history, highlighting the important relationships between conditions, events and their eventual outcomes which make for the study of history. Montesquieu believed that:

It is not fortune that rules the world . There are general causes, whether moral or physical which act upon every monarchy; which advance, maintain or ruin it. All accidents are subject to these causes. If the chance loss of a battle-that is, a particular cause-ruins a state, there is a general cause which created the situation whereby this state could perish with the loss of a single battle.

Montesquieu not only sought to explain the reasons for the expansion and decline of the Roman Empire, but also potential 'general causes' which may have been attributable to other instances in history. Montesquieu's lead was followed in other great works of the era, like Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Later in the eighteenth century, ideas of total, progressive causal histories began to emerge. Hegel melded history and philosophy together, viewing all of history as stages and processes of human reason; the ultimate goal of which was the combination of the individual's intellectual freedom with the moral needs of society, embodied in the modern European nation-state. All of history, from an individual's decisions to ideas, movements and events were seen as part of this process. Marx also proposed a view of history based on 'historical materialism'. Human progress was best characterised by distinct stages of modes of production and domination of the ruling class over the means of production and exchange. The conflict between classes generated by these factors would trigger progress. All of history could be traced to the underlying structures of production and exchange. Engels claimed that Marx had discovered the 'laws of history'. The Historicist view of history has traditionally been opposed by empiricists because of its determinist nature and the minimised notion of 'free will'.

During the eighteenth century philosopher David Hume questioned the prevailing views of causal relationships, which would have a significant impact on the philosophy of causation in history. He argued that a cause and effect relationship could not be proven; merely the relationship between two objects or events observed. Even if event A was always followed by event B, it could only be said that it is likely to occur. Hume believed that human mind formed the causal link between the two events. Hume was skeptical of the ability to define a law which identified a causal link between two events, but even Hume was reluctant to fully reject the notion of causation. Following from this, scientific and law-legal approaches to historical causation have also been put forth. The aim of these approaches was much like Montesquieu's- to observe patterns and models which could lead to the development of historical laws and the prediction of events based on causal relationships and conditions. Popper argued that the physical nature of historical events meant that they were, by their very nature, repeatable. However, the human aspect of the past, the psychological and motivational aspects of decision making, means that the only way an historical event could be recreated is by re-imagining the past.

A more recent trend in causal history is the counterfactual, although this approach remains

controversial within the discipline. The counterfactual approach has been demonstrated notably in the works of Niall Ferguson and Robert Crowley. Ferguson strongly advocates counterfactual history as a means of disputing 'great forces' histories and emphasising the power of individual choices and chance events in history. Counterfactuals are usually proposed as 'what if' scenarios- effectively a thought experiment for historians. If a cause may be described as 'an event, action or omission but for which the whole subsequent course of events would have been significantly different', counterfactuals can substitute or change causes associated with significant points in history and hypothesise alternate outcomes. The actual course of past events can be better appreciated if alternative realities are considered. Counterfactuals can also be used to test the validity of causal attribution; if condition C is necessary for event E, counterfactuals can be used to ascertain whether E could happen without C. However, this approach is highly theoretical as historians have no way of knowing what never existed, and is therefore of limited use. Froeyman instead suggests the use of comparisons, as finding similar events and conditions is possible and can give weight to causal attribution.

Causation has also been faced with the post-modern challenge to historiography. Hayden White and Keith Jenkins have criticised the subjective nature of causal selection and interpretation. Both have argued that causal explanations are not concerned with the past, but rather are battles between historians for the primacy of position and interpretation. More radical post-modern scholars have rejected causation on the basis that sequential time is an intellectual construct, but this is an extreme form of argument that has found little support amongst historians. The concept of time is a fundamental part of historical studies as it defies the territory into which historians inquire-that is, the past. These events, having happened, must be located somewhere in the timeline. Whilst the nature of how these events are organised and ordered may be debated, it is unreasonable to expect history to be written without a functioning concept of sequential time. Despite the fact that some historians have rejected the role of causation in historical explanation, the majority have accepted that it has an important role to play. However, there is no all encompassing theoretical framework agreed upon by historians as to the precise role that it does or should fulfill when trying to understand the past.

Approaches to identifying causes

The sheer number and variety of issues that emerge from debates about the role of causation highlight its importance. One of the foremost concerns is the identification of a 'cause'. Causation extends beyond a case of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Simply because one event follows after another it does not mean that the former was the cause of the latter. There are usually multiple factors at work to bring about an event. Only by appreciating 'close antecedent factors which are relevant to the event' can a proper understanding of the past be achieved. To do this, he supported the practice of identifying necessary and sufficient conditions. Necessary conditions are conditions without which an event could not happen. These may be broken down further into absolute conditions, without which the event definitely could not happen, and relative conditions, without which the event probably would not happen. Sufficient conditions are conditions that, when present, may reasonably be assumed to be a factor in an event. However, these conditions may be relative to prevailing background conditions contemporaneous with the event in question. This approach to causation is not supported by all historians. The search for sufficient conditions has confused the debate about causation in history. Whilst necessary and sufficient conditions may prove to be the best indicators of causal links and may give way to discovering patterns in history, they are also very hard to identify. The accumulation of necessary antecedent causes can also give the impression of inevitability and determinism.

There are numerous other ways historians may identify causes. Historians may seek to identify long and short term causes for events. However, the identification of 'long' and 'short' term causes is dependent on the time period being analysed by the historian. One may be able to identify long term causes stretching back thousands of years. The ability to apply causal mechanisms and determining relevant conditions on such a scale, where factors like geography, weather patterns and demographic

change may all be accounted for as potential causal elements in a historical event. True causes must be sought in human action and decision, and the motivations for making them. To truly understand why an event happened historians must seek out the participants' intentions and examine the conditions under which they acted. This is similar to Collingwood's argument that a 'cause' refers to what brings about free human action, and that to understand the past we must see events from the inside. Some other historians have proposed that the true cause is the factor that is 'abnormal'. It is the factor that, if not present, would have allowed the regular course of events to unfold. However, the interpretation of the 'abnormal' cause will be dependent on the historian's point of view, values and the questions they are asking. The different approaches to identifying causes may be the most damning charge against causation in history, but it cannot be denied that events do not occur spontaneously. There are a series of conditions and triggers which precipitate them. The variety of methods which attempt to define or identify a cause suggests that it is extremely difficult to single out just one factor which may be attributed as the cause to any one historical event. This has led to the general acceptance that there is a plurality of causes to any one event.

Condition theory of causation

In their investigations historians are faced with a multitude of facts, conditions, events, actors and ideas that may contribute to the explanation of the questions they are seeking to answer. However, even in accepting a plurality of causes, historians may disagree over the selection and the significance of each cause. The selection of causes and the subjective judgments historians make in determining them is therefore a critical aspect of the causation debate. Carr's conception of the true historian was one who, just as they gather facts and discard the irrelevant, does the same with contributing causal factors. It is then up to the historian to marshal these causes in order of their importance. To Carr, the organisation of causes is the pinnacle of historical investigation: the 'essence of interpretation'. In fact, it seems a common-sense approach for the historian. The historian can only account for so much and must select only what they deem is relevant. Some historians may use a rational approach to this selection, whilst others may allow emotion or value judgments to influence their decisions and interpretations. More often than not, a historian's selection will be influenced by both factors, leading to unique and independent interpretations of causal relationships. However, this notion of subjective selection has been challenged by some post-modernist scholars like Jenkins. He argues that even if causes could be identified, all events must be accounted for as being related in an ever expanding causal chain, but this runs contrary to a common sense approach.

The interpretation of historical facts and causes is a process of selection in terms of historical significance, influenced by the perspectives of the historian. White believes that the importance placed on a cause is not intrinsic, but rather determined by a historian's point of view. This may affect the historian's selection of 'abnormal' causes. However, some scholars also warn against making subjective selections based on 'value properties' of causes; that is, a cause perceived to be good, bad, right or wrong. Hart and Honore also reject the notion of seeking a hierarchy of causes because it is subjective, arbitrary and based on value judgements. Conversely, Mendel Cohen believes that causal interpretation needs some form of value judgment, and to avoid such a practice would drastically alter the discipline. Different perspectives lead to the growth of knowledge and varying interpretations of the past. In acknowledging a multiplicity of causes at work, and then making a selection based on perceived importance, the historian highlights their aims and contributes to an ever-expanding base of knowledge and research as to 'why' events happened as they did. Far from damaging the discipline, the openness, reassessment and possibilities of causal interpretation must be seen as positive contributions to the study of history.

The Great Cause Explanation

Causation's prominent role in history has also given rise to debates over the nature of free will, determinism and chance events in history. The application of causation to history has been resisted by

some on the grounds that it negates the idea of free will and instead posits a determinist perception of the past. One of the most criticised approaches is the 'great cause', which aims to provide an all-encompassing explanation to past events. These 'great cause' explanations form part of the historicist school of thought and include theories such as 'divine will', Hegelian idealism and Marxian economic theory. These movements may imprecisely give the impression of inevitability, with all events and individuals guided by certain external forces throughout history and into the future. The application of laws to history has also been seen as advancing a determinist view of the past. These approaches were popular during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but have since been passed over by most contemporary historians. However, there is no reason to assume that causation implies determinism, or that notions of free will and determinism are mutually exclusive. It is possible to break the determinist view into two parts, opening a new avenue for consideration. Firstly, there is absolute determinism, whereby events have only one way in which they could have occurred, with relationships and causes fixed. Alternatively, there is limited determinism, in which there is an end result, but the way in which it is reached may come about in different ways. This may be demonstrated in the idea that World War II could still have occurred even without Adolf Hitler in power in Germany. Richard Evans suggests that the political, social and economic conditions within Germany such as the humiliation imposed by the Versailles Treaty and the attitudes of leading members of the German military may have been sufficient causes to spark a war. However, the actual events and conditions which may have led to the outbreak of war, and the course of the war itself, may have been greatly different.

The rationalist approach to historical causation is one dictated by the necessity of conditions, where people are still free to choose a course of action, but from choices imposed on them by the conditions they find themselves in. This recalls Marx's comment that; 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past'. It is therefore impossible to believe that 'free will' is indeterminate or impervious to external forces. Decisions and actions are informed by experience and knowledge of causal consequences, as well as external pressures. Francis Bradley, like Tapp, believes that free will is not completely unrestricted. He writes that 'if the freedom of the will is to mean that the actions of the men are subject to no law, and in this sense are irrational, then the possibility of history, I think, must be allowed to disappear', as the past becomes a matter of uncertainty. The application of causal explanation does not reject the notion of individual moral responsibility or decision making, although the recognition of external factors working on human agency is a fundamental part of causal explanation. People are constantly under pressures outside of their control, be they political, social, cultural, economic or psychological. As Stanford suggests the human aspect of causation is of the utmost importance, and the analysis of these pressures is vital in offering a comprehensive causal explanation.

Chance or accident in history

In addition to causes, one must also consider the role of chance or accident events in history. Chance in history is often referred to as the 'Cleopatra's Nose' theory, where it is said that small chance events have the power to drastically alter outcomes. Whilst Carr acknowledges that chance events have real outcomes, he dismisses their study or inclusion in a causal hierarchy as they can add no knowledge or meaning. In insisting that historians should seek generalisations, accidents serve little purpose in analysis. Whilst Carr claims that offering accidents as part of causal explanations challenges any attempt at explaining history in a coherent, logical sequence, it is unreasonable to assume that accidental events have no place in a complete and adequate understanding of the past. Whilst they may not indicate patterns, 'accidents' have often played a very important role in determining the course of past events. If present, they must be considered when attempting to provide an adequate and complete explanation as they help to explicate just why events unfolded as they did. Instead of offering them as an explanation in themselves, accidents may lead the way to further causal investigations. Some may

seek to explain accidents in terms of a causal chain, and then describe the intersection of two causal chains. There may also be underlying reasons why an accident may have far reaching consequences in history. Montesquieu proposed that the loss of a battle is not sufficient to bring about the collapse of the state unless there are other causes at work. Therefore, rather than being offered as a simple 'because', accidents in history open up other avenues for causal explanation. In doing so, the event can be placed in a logical and coherent context relative to the events to which it is associated.

Importance of Causation in History

It is therefore apparent from the many and varied attitudes towards causation that it plays an integral role in historical explanation, though it raises many complex issues for the historian to consider when interpreting the past. In fact, there are few who would reject the notion that some form of causal explanation plays an important role in understanding the past- and those who do reject this idea reject the concept of causation almost completely. Despite this general consensus that causation does have a significant role to play in historical explanations, there is no single agreed upon approach to its use or implementation, making it one of the most contentious aspects of historical methodology. Causation is a crucial component in providing a more complete and coherent explanation of the past. Without causation, the historian is left with a collection of facts, ordered sequentially but unrelated. To truly understand a past event it is important to understand the factors and forces which link events and issues to one another, and from this it is possible to understand more clearly why events occurred as they did. Whilst the selection and identification of causes is one of the most controversial aspects of the causation debate, the variety of approaches indicates how great an emphasis has been placed on this facet of historical explanation. The selection of causes is also greatly influenced by the historian's interpretation of the available evidence, their values, beliefs and perspectives. This therefore links causation to interpretation- another key feature of historical methodology. Furthermore, causation raises questions of determinism, free will and chance in history and their respective impacts on shaping the outcomes of past events. Whilst determinist theories have fallen out of favour, causation's greatest contribution is in highlighting the influence external factors can have on human agency, helping the historian to understand why people acted as they did.. These should be of the greatest benefit to historians in their work. Causation should be fundamental to all well informed explanations of the past. It helps to offer answers to the question many historians ask-why did events happen as they did? The explanation of the past is inadequate without it. Causation links events and issues to one another, giving coherence and meaning to the past. Whilst there are many other important factors to bear in mind when considering history, Tapp's claim that 'without a concept of causation there can be no history' should certainly be in the forefront of the historian's mind. Without an adequate grasp of causation, history merely becomes a collection of facts and events. It is key to historical methodology and to all historical explanations. A theory of causation is not, in the end, something historians can dispense with.

Conclusion

Thus, from the above discussion we arrive at a conclusion that for historical research historian needs sources or documents left for us by the past societies. From those documents after long procedures of operations historians derived facts on which historical works are composed. While writing history from historical facts derived out of sources, often historian encounter various problems to link the facts. This linking of facts in order to arrange them in cause and effect order the theory of causation helps the scholars to reach an hypotheses. It is therefore apparent from the many and varied attitudes towards causation that it plays an integral role in historical explanation, though it raises many complex issues for the historian to consider when interpreting the past.

Unit-IV: Historical Methods

5. Sources of History: Written, Oral, Visual & Archaeological.
6. Historical facts.
7. Historical Causation.

Introduction

The pattern and approaches to history is changing day by day. New branches are introduced in the arena of historical research. On the basis of area universal history is such a new branch of study in history. Universal history or history without a border deals in international events and adopts a world view point. No longer historian confined their research to modern geo-political demarcation of world. Large area irrespective of their political demarcation are taken under a single research to understand history of that geographical region from political, cultural and ethnic aspects. Contrast to this new borderless history, there is another branch of history that confined itself to boundary. Even within a fixed boundary there are small areas where historical research are carryout. This branch of history is called local history. Local history is the study of history in a geographically local context and it often concentrates on the local community. It incorporates cultural and social aspects of history. Historic plaques are one form of documentation of significant occurrences in the past and oral histories are another. Local history is often documented by local historical societies or groups that form to preserve a local historic building or other historic site. This chapter will discuss the area of research in history within a boundary and a without a border.

History Without Border

The conflicts of the modern world are deeply rooted in centuries of history. Historians and social scientists could do more to develop research across disciplinary, regional and national boundaries. Everyone knows that we live in a globalized world, but the history profession stands out among academic disciplines for defining its topics of research and 'slots' for new positions almost exclusively according to national boundaries. To contribute to a more peaceful world, historians must insist on the persistence of links beyond the nation-state.

Historians and social scientists, however, have not done enough to develop research across disciplinary, regional and national boundaries. As a result, political leaders and the global public have trouble connecting historical processes with their daily lives. The discipline of history, finds itself today in a puzzling quandary. Everyone knows that we live in a globalized world, but the history profession stands out among academic disciplines for defining its topics of research and "slots" for new positions almost exclusively according to national boundaries. Social scientists have long favored comparative and theoretical definitions over national ones, and even literature and foreign language departments no longer confine their canon to a single nation. But historians cling tenaciously to national boundaries, even as they recognize the need to reach farther.

Historians still need, however, research based on mastery of primary sources in local languages, which is the hallmark of historical study. No universal theory will eliminate the crucial value of grounded ethnographic and archival research. How can scholars devoted to the local and national reach beyond the current limits of the discipline while maintaining the foundation of their craft. Historians cling to national boundaries, even as they recognize need to reach farther.

In the concept of history without border a historian consider a particular expanse suppose Asia, not as a region with clearly defined regional and national boundaries, but as "spaces of flows," arenas in which multiple processes, peoples, commodities and cultural formations interacted dynamically over long periods of time. States, empires and nations shaped the direction of these flows, but did not contain them. The globe has been a connected unit since the linking of the north and south American continents to Asia and Europe in the 16th century. Now researchers need new historical and social scientific methods to grasp this totality.

In this kind of historical research historian can do research first in the region basis, then they can focus on transnational processes and the movement of peoples. For example in when we discuss the history of ancient India between B.C 200 to A.D 300, we noticed that India during this period did not confine to its traditional boundary, rather extended beyond the Hindukush and reach upto central Asia. Again during this period Indian history was influence by the intrusion of various foreign tribes from different part of Asia. Hence while discussing history of India during this period historian discuss the contemporary historical-geography of entire Asia for better understanding. Another concept in this regard is that in ancient times the geo-political context was different then what it is today. There was no restriction on the movement of people across border, so also idea unlike today. Modern geo-politics prevent such phenomena because of which historical research is also confined itself to within a fixed border. But the latest development of history without border will create a new lens for creative study of the fluid interactions that have shaped the contemporary world.

In a latest such attempt to reconstruct history of a vast region without caring the border and geo-political boundary, the editors and authors of the Asia Inside Out project, a three-volume series, Harvard University Press, present original research following inter-Asian connections over long stretches of time. The volumes bring together scholars from anthropology, history, geography, and literary studies covering the region from Japan to Yemen over the past 500 years. and Empires and nations shaped the direction of flows for peoples, trade and cultural interactions, but did not contain them. In the first volume, Heidi Walcher argues that the year 1501, which at first seems to be the conventional date for the establishment of the Safavid dynasty in Iran, looks different when viewed as part of wider Asian histories, including those of Central Asian and Chinese empires and European states. Victor Lieberman singles out the mid-16th century as a time of critical state transformation in Burma, Russia, Japan and India. Peter C. Perdue likewise argues that 1557, the year the Ming granted the Portuguese a leasehold in Macau, also coincided with the expansion of trading relationships on the northwest frontier with the Mongols and the penetration of the Chinese diaspora into Southeast Asia. Silver flows from Latin America powered all these trade routes. Nancy Um, Charles Wheeler and Kerry Ward examine three maritime polities from the 17th through 18th centuries: Yemen's role in global coffee trade, Vietnam's religious and economic linkages to Qing China, and Indian Ocean trade viewed from Pondicherry.

The volumes follow the story up through the 19th and early 20th centuries, as Robert Hellyer analyzes the promotion of tea exports from Meiji Japan, Anand Yang examines the views of an Indian soldier sent to repress the Boxer Rebellion in Beijing in 1900, and Eric Tagliacozzo surveys the apparently secure but actually fragile structure of Dutch colonialism in 1910. Finally, contemporary ethnographic studies of Bangalore in 1956 by Andrew Willford and of Filipino workers in Dubai in 2008 by Naomi Hosoda show that current flows of people and the friction of ethnic conflict follow upon lengthy historical developments.

Still the modern world is shaped by the influence of age-old legacies of political and economic domination and community formation. Empires and nations shaped the direction of flows for peoples, trade and cultural interactions, but did not contain them. Based on this the second volume includes topics such as personal connections and comparisons between Korea, China and Japan, the settlement of the Canton delta, trade in the Gulf of Tongking, intelligence agents in Kashmir and the Himalayas, commerce in Burma, the transformations of Chittagong, British surveillance of Iraq's deserts, family relations in Southern Arabia, and Chinese speakers in Soviet Central Asia. Each of these places lies on a boundary between multiple flows of people, goods and culture. The convergence of state power, capital investment and religious and kinship networks in these places defines specific nodes in global systems. As in the first volume, the studies cover a long period and wide geographical area, but what unifies them is a common interest in tracing wide-ranging networks, based on intensive local ethnographic research and primary sources, over large scales of space and time.

Modern states have not dissolved in the beneficent bath of neoliberal consumerism, nor have ethnic divisions withered away into homogeneous individualism. Age-old legacies of political and economic domination and community formation still shape our modern world. Large theories and parochial histories fail to grasp the individual and local characteristics which weave the threads of this world. For example, despite Modi and Xi Jinping's optimistic declarations of inter-Asia cooperation, China and India are fighting for control of the border region of Arunachal Pradesh. China's claims to islands in the South China Sea have generated conflict with Vietnam, the Philippines and others. China, Japan and Korea each make irreconcilable claims to small uninhabited islands with no usable resources. What causes these violent conflicts? Ultimately, it is misguided history. Truncated, self-serving nationalist histories, sponsored by xenophobic states seeking popular legitimacy, have erased all the long-lasting interconnections of the past. To contribute to a more peaceful world, historians must insist on the persistence of links beyond the nation-state.

Although we know that the world is connected, but how it is connected we do not know. Whether this connection is through a nested hierarchy, a flat plain, a tangled ball of string or a beautiful brocade is still a matter of puzzle. Only specific historical and ethnographic studies, juxtaposed under coherent conceptual definitions, will reveal the true contours of the historical and contemporary world. National history no longer suffices, but transnational, global, and world histories need to extend their explorations. Thus for a peaceful, safe and prosperous humanity historical research should broaden its area of research from within a fixed boundary to a borderless region encompassing great array of nations, languages and ethnicity.

History Within A Boundary

In contrast to the above discussion, most of the historical research are confined to a particular geo-political regions. Research on history are confined to a particular country, state or province, a particular linguistic group and a single ethnic population. History has been divided into nationalistic pattern such as history USA, History of India, History of Germany, History of England. History is also separated among ethnic race such as the history of the British People, History of the Aryan, History of the Dravidian, History of the Slav, History of the Saxon etc. Although there is no harm in this kind of history but in some cases it failed to give justice to the subject of research. Suppose, for example a historian is working on Indus Valley civilization in India, he or she should not left out mentioning Harappa and Mahenjodara in his work because those sites are located within Pakistan. The historian has to discuss about them because without their mention, the research work will not complete. In present days approach of history is changing widely. Following paragraphs will at a length discuss different approach of history such as local history, regional history and the their significance in historical research.

Local History

Local history is generally described as 'a range of historical writings focusing on specific, geographically small areas, frequently produced by non-professional historians for a nonacademic audience'. In the western countries, particularly in Britain, France and the United States, local histories were written in the 18th and early 19th centuries by the local elites. In the late 19th century, this process acquired momentum and several societies were formed to undertake local studies. Under the impact of industrialisation, urbanisation and migration, the local communities were destabilised and a crisis of identity emerged. This resulted in a desire among the local educated people to record their history at local and regional levels. From the 1860s onwards, several history groups emerged which were interested in promoting the studies of their regions. Their works covered many aspects of their past-'from the history of local churches and parishes to reports on the discovery of flint axe-heads in previously unknown sites of archaeological importance'. Studies on genealogy and family history were some other areas of interest in local history. Local history started as amateur attempts to promote the locality and community as a matter of pride and even now such trends prevail and the term 'local

history' continues to be linked with antiquarianism and amateur historiography. However, since the 1930s, there was a certain professionalisation in this sector.

A.H. Dodd's *Industrial Revolution in North Wales* (1933), W.H. Chaloner's *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923* (1950), W.G. Hoskins's classic *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955) and J.D. Marshall's *Furness and the Industrial Revolution* (1958) were some of the books which revolutionised the writing of local history in Britain. History of local dynasty, regional states and linguistic region also started in India in the early part of 20th century by Indian historian.

Gradually, for promotion of local history and research in regional topic in several university department of local history were opened during the early part of 20th century. The first university department of local history was established in 1947 at Leicester in Britain.

The local history in Asia belongs mostly to oral tradition. Royal lineages and achievements in battles form the basic staple of this tradition. Parts of these histories were in written form also, but the oral form was the predominant mode of presentation. In India, *Bakhar* in Maharashtra, *Raso* in Rajasthan and *Vamshavalis* in south India were some of the ways in which the traditional local histories were presented. They are genealogies and chronicles narrating the family history of the ruling dynasties and commemorating the achievements of warriors in the battles. With the colonial domination and the introduction of the western education system, new elites began to emerge in Asian countries. The establishment of the university system in the late 19th century in India brought the historical knowledge within more formal academic purview. However, quite a lot of history- writing was still done by the people outside the university system. Local history was a particularly attractive field for the amateur and non-academic historians who felt interested in the past of their locality and community.

Most of these historians were and are born and brought up in the localities and communities they write about and most of them are non-professional historians outside the formal academia. It is true that some of local histories are written within the universities. However, most of it is written by people outside the universities.

In comparison with the traditional local histories which were mostly oral, the new kind of local histories are written and published. They are 'attempts to reconstruct local identities within larger contexts by means of reference to the past-and as forms which appropriate and adapt "modern" historiography to local needs and purposes'. They are aimed at providing knowledge about the locality and at increasing local self-awareness. They also seek to accord prestige to the locality before the wider world and make its name known.

The new local histories are not completely cut off from the tradition. They use local oral and other primary sources and interact with the local communities to maintain the continuity of tradition. It is true that they hold the power of the written word as against the oral tradition. However, they are not antagonistic to the old histories and the communities concerned consider them as objects of local pride. The new local historians, on their part, 'frequently view their own undertakings not as a threat to "old" history, but rather as a mission to rescue it in view of vanishing historical knowledge caused by urbanization, the spread of formal education, or by war and displacement'.

History has served as a tool all over the world to 'imagine' and 'construct' a sense of community. The new local histories in Asia endeavour to recreate a sense of identity for the localities and communities by referring to a common past. Within the boundaries of a nation-state, the local communities have become 'modern localities' which are, parts of 'a complex phenomenological quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts'. The changing atmosphere, inter- regional migration and long-distance communication have created a situation where the members of the local communities are no longer confined to a particular locality either physically or emotionally. The new local histories try to take account of this changed environment. They may also stress historicity and change, and the

importance of being part of larger contexts, as a matter of local pride and indicator of modernity. Many of them oscillate between these extremes and combine both perspectives.

The new local histories in Asia 'construct' the locality in several ways: by referring to common ancestry, common culture, ancient kingship, kinship relationships and religious, cultural and political achievements. This way they try to portray the locality as 'a moral community that shares, or should share, a common value-system'. This is done by an acceptable mixture of local traditions and modern academic historiography. The writing of the new local histories in Asia is largely influenced by the western methods of research and presentation of material. These histories are chronological and there are large-scale references to the sources. Moreover, they are generally conceived within an evolutionist perspective. The conceptualisation is not in religious or mythological terms, but in modern, secular terms. However, in terms of content, they derive largely from the traditional oral and written sources and their use of sources are generally uncritical. Although they sometimes adopt a linear sense of time as per the western model, they often include in their narrative tales of origins and mythical and legendary heroes whose lives and actions cannot fit into any chronology and cannot be verified. Thus while the form of these histories may resemble the western concepts and methods, their content and narrative technique are based on local traditions.

The audience of these histories are both local and national or even wider. Since they are written and published and use the modern academic methods of presentation, their reach is beyond the locality. Still, they deal with the locality and its traditions. Moreover, these local histories are not simple academic texts. They also act as agents in establishing local pride and providing a sense of community and local identity. The new local histories, therefore, operate at two levels-local and trans-local. Their writers are generally products of the modern education system and adopt the modern historical concepts and methodology which may be alien to the local society. At the same time, their works derive from local traditions and directly participate in local discourse. Even as these histories challenge the traditional ways of representing the past, they thrive on and do not necessarily replace the local traditions.

Micro History

Micro history has a curious relationship with local history. It resembles local history as its subject matter is often confined to a locality. Moreover, its sources are local in origins and nature. The oral sources, folk tales and legends and local records, which are staple of local history, are also used extensively by the micro historians. Carlo Ginzburg, one of the best-known historians identified with micro history, traces the first use of this term to an American scholar, George R. Stewart. In his book, *Pickett's Charge: A Micro history of the Final Charge at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863*, published in 1959, Stewart uses the term. The book is centred on an event which lasted for only about twenty minutes. In 1968, Luis Gonzalez used the term 'micro history' in the subtitle of his book which deals with the changes experienced over four centuries by a tiny, 'forgotten' village in Mexico. In fact, as Gonzalez himself pointed out, the term was also used in 1960 by Fernand Braudel. But, for Braudel, it had a negative connotation and was synonymous with the 'history of events'.

Thus microhistory, as a conceivable historical practice, emerged during the 1970s and the 1980s in Italy. Although it had its variants in Germany in *Alltagsgeschichte* or the 'history of everyday life', and in France and the United States in the new cultural history, it is the Italian micro historians who set most of the agenda for writing this version of history. Micro history is a late modern, sometimes, postmodern, response to the problems of modern historiography. The micro historians are critical of not only the Rankean paradigm, but also the macro historical paradigms developed by Marxism, the *Annales* School and even the old social history. The micro historians do not have an optimistic view about the various benefits brought about by the modern technology. Thus the objection to the macro historical discourse is not only methodological, but also ethical and political.

The macro historical conception, they argue, praise the achievements of modernisation, modern science and technology while ignoring the human cost; they also neglect the experiences of the 'little people' who has to bear the brunt of 'progress'. The micro historians define their historiographical practice against approach of the analytical social science, metahistory of Marxism and the non-human grand history of the Annales School, particularly Braudel.

The micro historians trace the origins of this trend to the crisis of macro history in the 1970s. There was an increasing disenchantment with grand narratives and the social scientific studies based on quantitative data not because these approaches were inherently wrong but because they did not capture the reality at the micro level. According to the micro historians, the attempt should be 'to open history to peoples who would be left out by other methods' and 'to elucidate historical causation on the level of small groups where most of life takes place'. Giovanni Levi, one of the founders of this trend, points out that it is now generally accepted that 'the 1970s and 1980s were almost universally years of crisis for the prevailing optimistic belief that the world would be rapidly and radically transformed along revolutionary lines'. Moreover, 'many of the hopes and mythologies which had previously guided a major part of the cultural debate, including the realm of historiography, were proving to be not so much invalid as inadequate in the face of the unpredictable consequences of political events and social realities-events and realities which were very far from conforming to the optimistic models proposed by the great Marxist or functionalist systems'. This crisis also entailed conceptual and methodological failure to comprehend the reality at the ground day-to-day level. Levi states that the 'conceptual apparatus with which social scientists of all persuasions interpreted current or past change was weighed down by a burden of inherited positivism.

Forecasts of social behaviour were proving to be demonstrably erroneous and this failure of existing systems and paradigms required not so much the construction of a new general social theory as a complete revision of existing tools of research'. Micro history was one response to this comprehensive crisis. It was a groundbreaking and radical response and it took the historiography away from its focus on the 'big structures, large processes and huge comparisons'. Instead, it concentrated on the small units in society. It was severely critical of the large quantitative studies and macrolevel discourses because it distorted the reality at small level. It focused on the small units and on the lives of the individuals living within those units. It was felt that this would lead to better understanding of reality at small level. As Giovanni Levi put it : 'The unifying principle of all micro historical research is the belief that microscopic observation will reveal factors previously unobserved.' However, according to Levi, it was not at the theoretical level that its significance should be seen. Micro history is 'essentially a historiographical practice whereas its theoretical references are varied and, in a sense, eclectic'. It was a historiographical experiment which has 'no body of established orthodoxy to draw on'.

There were various other reactions to this crisis. One of them was, in the words of Levi, the resort to 'a desperate relativism, neo-idealism or even the return to a philosophy riddled with irrationality'. However, Levi believed that the 'historical research is not a purely rhetorical and aesthetic activity'. He firmly takes the side of historians and social scientists who believe that there is a reality outside the texts and it is possible to comprehend it. Thus the micro historian is 'not simply concerned with the interpretation of meanings but rather with defining the ambiguities of the symbolic world, the plurality of possible interpretations of it and the struggle which takes place over symbolic as much as over material resources'. Thus, for Levi, micro history is poised delicately between the approach of the analytical social sciences and the postmodernist relativism 'Micro history thus had a very specific location within the so-called new history. It was not simply a question of correcting those aspects of academic historiography which no longer appeared to function. It was more important to refute relativism, irrationalism and the reduction of the historian's work to a purely rhetorical activity which interprets texts and not events themselves.' one warmly espoused by Ankersmit, that reduce historiography to a textual dimension, depriving it of any cognitive value'.

Significance of Local History

Local histories of a country contribute millions of chapters to her national story. Past events, activities, people, and places on the ground continue to inform us as to who we are, by reminding us of who we were. Local history isn't all sentimentalism and nostalgia, by any means. History as a whole is the benchmark by which we measure our progress as a people and make a course correction if necessary. It's a crystal ball in which we can see the future by studying the past. Local history contains the mental geography of a town. It shows us the values and concerns that shaped our social and political environment.

The question of boundaries has its own complexities since man-made boundaries change frequently and rapidly with each political change. The only stable boundaries are geographical and even these are liable to be substantially modified by ecological changes. The definition of a region requires the correlation of many facets in the study of historical evolution. Again coinciding of geographical definition with a political and cultural entity has occurred only for a brief period of its history. Prior to that the area contained more than one geographical and social identity. What seems significant, therefore, is not just the brief period when the larger frontiers coincided but the investigation of the interaction and relationship between the sub-regions.

Even though the sub-regions can be approximately demarcated, their historical interaction has been complex. The pattern of relationships has not been consistent and similar through time. There are many reason for these changes.

The contribution which regional history can make is in seeking to connect these elements at a more precise level. If the focus on the pattern of historical change in the region can be sharpened it contributes to the quality of generalizations at the broader level as well as makes for more valuable comparative studies with other regions. Comparative studies would suggest the similarities within the two regions, thereby enabling a wider generalization. Dissimilarities would indicate the particular regional factors and would lead to the modification of the broader generalization. Without local history-that is, well-researched local history-the larger pattern could never be completed. Now local history may be utilised in several ways. Local history can be used to trace the development of the particular village, city, town of a locality or region, outlining its progress as a unit of local government. Secondly we can find out what incidents of more national importance have taken place in the neighbourhood and devote some time to the description of them. Thirdly we can illustrate our larger national history by references to what actually or putatively happened in one particular district.

In the context of India, local history is being taught as an important segment of the history syllabus now a days. As such, it merits the attention not only of the specialist in the region but also of historians working on other aspects of Indian history. The initial interest in India in regional history grew out of nationalist historical writing. It was motivated to some extent by a search for new source materials, a search which has resulted in an abundance of sources-archaeological, epigraphic, historical literature, religious literature, archival records and family papers-all of which have added to the body of information available on the history of many regions of the sub-continent. It is however at the interpretational level that the interest in regional history assumes greater historiographic potential, a potential with which we are perhaps as yet not altogether fully familiar.

The historical interest in regions such as south India, Bengal, Odisha and Maharashtra, coincided with the new sources providing information particularly on what came to be regarded as the inter-empire periods of Indian history, or, alternatively, complementing the information available from records outside the region. It began to be seen that the supposed 'dark ages' stressed by the historiography of the nineteenth century were far from dark and that the lacunae could be eliminated by using local source material. Further, that it was in these inter-imperial periods that the nature of historical change at the regional level could be seen more clearly. Local history thus became a corrective to the earlier tendency to generalize about the subcontinent from the perspective of the Ganges Valley.

The spread of nationalism into the various states increased the interest in local or regional history. This brought its own perspective with the emergent professional groups who participated in the national movement and at the same time sought for an identity from the past; a process which has continued into the post independence period. It might be argued that historical writing often takes the form of a desire to establish an identity on the part of the social group to which the historian belongs. Groups in power, therefore, sometimes tend to see the history of their community as the history of the region or even of the nation. This is further emphasized in contemporary historical writing by the equating of the present day state boundary as the boundary of the region; and this is held to be viable for all periods of history.

Enfolded in the writing of regional history is also the positive side. The earlier nationalist school, despite its weaknesses, succeeded in generating a debate on the historical assumptions of the historians of the nineteenth century concerning the nature of the Indian past: a debate which has opened up many new dimensions. Regional history in the context of Indian history could play a similar, catalytic role. This however does not mean the substituting of the concerns of Indian ideology by those of regional ideology. On the contrary it would require the analysis of the historical patterns of the region and the relating of these patterns to the generalizations of Indian history. One might begin with the historical point at which the awareness of being a region, and having a history, is first expressed. The historian's interest lies in analyzing the roots of this consciousness-whether they result from an administrative or political coherence, or from linguistic or religious urges or a combination of many factors. In analyzing this consciousness it is equally imperative to consider that which preceded it and that which came subsequently. Historical events are not isolated phenomena, suspended in space and time, and the historical matrix in which they are embodied is as important as the events.

Conclusion

Thus, in the changing world the area of historical research is also changing. No longer are historians confined to nationalist history, rather devoted themselves to local or regional level and micro level. Again some historians are also doing research on the wider region where historians are no longer confined to a nation or a fixed political boundary. This branch of history is known as universal history or history without border.

Chapter-II

Introduction

After collection of documents and retrieval of facts from those dead sources, next operation of the historian is to interpretation of the facts. Then the final work of a historian begin that is explanation of the topic and their skillful presentation. In this operation two aspects are noticed one is the problem of objectivity, which means the use of historical facts without bias and partiality. The other one is the bias in historical writings. The principle of objectivity is the foundation on which the edifice of historical profession stands. Most, if not all, historians wrote in the belief that their writings presented an objective picture of the world. Even when they disagreed among themselves, they believed that their accounts were more objective than those of others whom they criticised. Thus the historical battles were fought on the grounds of objectivity. There is also debates among historians show that they expect descriptions of past people and events, interpretations of historical subjects, and genetic explanations of historical changes to be fair and not misleading. Sometimes unfair accounts of the past are the result of historians' bias, of their preferring one account over others because it accords with their interests. It is useful to distinguish history that is misleading by accident from that which is the result of personal bias; and to distinguish personal bias from cultural bias and general cultural relativity. Hence, to understand the concept of historical objectivity and bias, this chapter will discuss them separately in two section in the subsequent paragraphs.

Objectivity in History

Objectivity has been the founding principle of the historiographical tradition in the West. Right since the days of Herodotus, the historians have believed in the separation of the subject and the object, in the distinction between the knower and known and in the possibility to recover the past. The principle of objectivity, has clearly defined as; 'The principal elements of the ideal of objectivity are well known and can be briefly recapitulated. The assumptions on which it rests include a commitment to the reality of the past, and to the truth as correspondence to that reality; a sharp separation between knower and known, between fact and value, and above all, between history and fiction. Historical facts are seen as prior to and independent of interpretation: the value of an interpretation is judged by how well it accounts for the facts; if contradicted by the facts, it must be abandoned. Truth is one, not perspectival. Whatever patterns exist in history are "found", not "made". Though successive generations of historians might, as their perspectives shifted, attribute different significance to the events in the past, the meaning of those events was unchanging.' For this purpose, however, the historian has to be impartial and should not take sides. They should be able to suspend their personal beliefs and rely only on the truth of the evidences. The role of an objective historian's is that of a neutral, or disinterested, judge; it must never degenerate into that of an advocate or, even worse, propagandist. The historian's conclusions are expected to display the standard judicial qualities of balance and evenhandedness. As with the judiciary, these qualities are guarded by the insulation of the historical profession from social pressures or political influence, and by the individual historian avoiding partisanship or bias- not having any investment in arriving at one conclusion rather than another. Objectivity is held to be at grave risk when history is written for utilitarian purposes. One corollary of all this is that historians, as historians, must purge themselves of external loyalties: the historian's primary allegiance is to "the objective historical truth, and to professional colleagues who share a commitment to cooperative, cumulative efforts to advance toward that goal.

Thus, objectivity is the founding principle of the historical profession, it must maintain distance from propaganda and from wishful thinking, and must also reliance on evidence and logic.

Development of the principle of objectivity

The belief that there is a reality of the past and it is possible to historically capture it has been engrained in the dominant tradition of the Western historiography. Since the time of Herodotus the western world of historiography maintained the historical records referred to a real past and real human beings. The objectivist tradition believed in both the reality of the past as well as in the possibility of its mirror representation. It uphold that there was a correspondence between the intentions and actions of the people and the historians

should exert themselves to comprehend the mental world of the people in the past.

The development of modern science added a new dimension to this belief. It was now asserted that the methods used in the sciences could be applicable to various branches of human knowledge. August Comte, the founder of Positivism, believed that the inductive method used in the natural sciences needed to be applied to the history as well as the humanities in general. He also claimed scientific status for the humanities. He thought that all societies operated through certain general laws which needed to be discovered. According to him, all societies historically passed through three stages of development. These stages were : first, the 'theological' or fictitious stage, during which the human mind was in its infancy and the natural phenomena were explained as the results of divine or supernatural powers. Secondly, the 'metaphysical' or abstract stage is transitional in the course of which the human mind passes through its adolescence. In this stage, the processes of nature were explained as arising from occult powers. Finally, the 'Positive' stage which witnessed the maturity of human mind and the perfection of human knowledge. Now there was no longer a search for the causes of the natural phenomena but a quest for the discovery of their laws. Observation, reasoning and experimentation were the means to achieve this knowledge. This was the scientific age which is the final stage in the development of human societies as well as human minds.

Ranke, was the first historian who truly and elaborately laid the foundation of a genuinely 'objective' historiography. He clearly distinguished history from literature and philosophy. By doing so, he attempted to rid it of an overdose of imagination and metaphysical speculation. For him, the historians' job was to investigate the past on its own terms and to show to the readers 'how it essentially was'. It did not mean, however, that Ranke had a blind faith in the records. He, in fact, wanted the historians to subject the sources to strict examination and look for their internal consistency so as to determine whether they were genuine or later additions. He wanted the historians to critically examine and verify all the sources before reposing their trust in them. But, once it was proved that the records were genuine and belonged to the age which the historian was studying, the historian may put complete faith in them. He called these records as 'primary sources' and maintained that these sources would provide the foundations for a true representation of the contemporary period. Thus the historians should trust the archival records more than the printed ones which might be biased. He, however, believed that it was possible to reconstruct the past and that objectivity was attainable.

This trend emphasised that the facts were in the records which the historians needed to discover. If the historians were impartial, followed a proper scientific method and removed his / her personality from the process of investigation, it was possible to reconstruct the past from these facts. There was an enormous belief in the facts in the nineteenth and the early decades of the twentieth centuries. It was thought that once all the facts were known, it was possible to write 'ultimate history' which could not be superseded.

The scientific status of history was forcefully asserted by J.B.Bury, at Cambridge. He believed that although history 'may supply material for literary art or philosophical speculation, she is herself simply a science, no less and no more'. The writing of history was simply related to the documents. It did not matter who the historian was as long as verified documents for the period were available. In this view, as E.H.Carr put it : 'History consists of a corpus of ascertained facts. The facts are available to historians in documents, inscriptions and so on, like fish in the fishmonger's slab. The historian collects them, takes them home, and cooks and serves them in whatever style appeals to him.'

But even before the nineteenth century ended, such beliefs started to look implausible. Application of some new techniques in archaeology and other areas uncovered ever increasing information even about most ancient societies. Moreover, in the beginning of the twentieth century, historiography moved to other directions away from political history which the nineteenth-century historians specialised in. Social, economic and cultural histories began to be written. The historians started to look at already available documents from new perspectives and for different purposes. It was also pointed out that the works of even those historians, including Ranke, who believed in complete objectivity and professed the use of 'primary sources' were full of rhetorical elements and were many times based on printed 'secondary sources'.

The Rankean tradition was criticised in the twentieth century for being too naive and being concerned with individual facts instead of the general patterns. Moreover, it was also criticised for being narrowly political and being concerned with elite individuals. The new trends in the historiography in the twentieth century focused on economy and society as opposed to the political and on common people as opposed to the elite. The most influential among these trends were the Marxist and the Annales schools of historiography. However, they shared with the Rankean tradition two fundamental themes. They believed that history could be written scientifically and objectively and that there was a direction in which the history was moving continuously.

However, the scientific and objectivist claims of historiography suffered somewhat between the wars. The records and facts were blatantly manipulated by various national political establishments. The continued tension led to partisan assertions both by various governments and respective intelligentsia. History-writing was also affected by this. After the Second World War, the Cold War also influenced the academia and prompted the intellectuals to take sides or, conversely, to hide their opinions to avoid repression. But most of functioning historians retained their faith in the possibility of achieving objectivity in history. The proponents of objectivity from Ranke in the 1820s to Robert Fogel in the 1970s believed in the scientific status of history. They thought that if proper scientific methods of inquiry were used, it could be possible to get close to what really happened in the past.

Problem of Historical Objectivity

Problems of historical objectivity are very intricate and only after the solution of these problems by the supporters of scientific theory, there is possibility of establishment of the principle of historical objectivity.

Lack of Impartiality: Nothing itself can be objective. On the other hand objectivity is established in it. Modern scholar intend to make history, objective by external methods, on account of which the question of objectivity has become a debatable issue among scholars. Modern historian in order to establish his view describes past with a specific attitude, concept, personal jealousy, bias or misunderstanding which can never be impartial. Thus partial description of events is a great hurdle in the way of establishing objectivity.

Influence of Social Environment: Karl Marx has considered man to be a social being involved in traditions. As history is also born and developed in the context of society and religion, it is equally influenced by it. Even a historian is not free from this impact, therefore, according to Karl Marx, there is a lot of disharmony in the writings of Arab, Jew, Hindu, Muslim, Russian and American historian. Hence the supporters of the scientific concept of history would endeavour to find out objectivity outside society.

Changeability of History: undoubtedly history is the study of past events which have presented by the historians of different ages according to their own angles. Historian of each society write history according to the need of his society. If slave system was considered a boon in some epoch, it is described as a curse in the modern context. Hence because of changeability in history, thought of scientific objectivity is a nightmare.

Change in Belief: many beliefs of past now do not hold water and have lost their significance completely. In the same way the historic authenticity of the present would also become meaningless in future but there appears to be no change in the objectivity with the passage of time. Two and two make four is certain according to mathematics. Hence objectivity is always sovereign in all ages. In fact scientific objectivity is not sovereign in all times.

Need of Ages: The historian presents the collected data and facts according to the need of his age and circumstances. In the history writing contemporary social needs are given preference. Prominent scholars Croce has also pointed out that history is written in accordance with the age and he feels that the soul of man should be conscious to his epoch, only then he can draw a real picture of the society. The utility of one historical fact changes from time to time in different ages as the selfish nature of man also went on changing according to time, age and circumstances. As the history of one epoch differs from the other, it is not possible to prove historical objectivity at all.

Influence of Personal Feelings: In the selection of historical fact the attitude of man is generally influenced by his personal emotion, social environment and economic circumstances. In such condition it is natural that

he is led astray from the principle of historicity. Hence it is not proper to expect objectivity from him in these conditions. Mostly the works of historians are inspired by his personal feelings, on account of which the historical facts, are often neglected and the effort of objectivity is marred at all.

Feeling of Bias: There is no reason denying the fact that historians generally become victim of bias. Generally in history we study the past. The English historians have described the war of independence of 1857 as a military revolt but according to Indian scholars it was certainly a war of independence. So the presence of bias and sympathy is certain in history. The description based on the interest of writer can be subjective but not objective.

Selective Nature of History: The nature of history is selective. As it is not possible for the history to depict the complete picture of past, so he draws his attention to the one aspect of history. Being involved in the bias and partiality historian described the events in their own fashion. It is therefore, evident that a historian selects facts in support of his views. Such tendency is a great stumbling block in the way of historical objectivity.

Supremacy of Emotions: there is supremacy of emotion in history writing instead of logic. History writing is subject of consciousness. Hence the supremacy of emotion is natural in it. The personality of the historian is clearly visible in his work from which removal of the supremacy of emotion is not possible to make it objective. Historical objectivity is an intricate problem. In spite of his all possible impartiality historian cannot be objective because the writer himself describes the events connected with the man who is made of the same flesh of bone as the writer himself.

Problem of Religion and Caste: Another problem of objectivity is connected with religion and caste. It is almost impossible for a historian to get rid of these feelings because of the influence of religion, and caste the medieval historians endeavoured to present their accounts of historical facts in their own fashion. On the one hand sir J.N.Sarkar condemned the policies of Aurangzeb due to his fanaticism. On the other hand Farookhi, a Muslim scholar has praised him for the same reason. The same contrasting attitude also found in the description of Roman catholic scholars and Arab and Jewish historians.

Hence, it is almost impossible for a historian to be objective. The entire nature of history cannot be made objective except the economic aspect. Social changes go on changing. There is no possibility that the thing which is not important in the present contrast, might not have been significant in the past also. Man cannot get rid of himself from the influence of changing values. The man of civilized society has intimate relationship with different political parties and a historian being a social creature is also influenced by the ideologies of the political parties and presents interpretation of history according to his own view. Hence it is not proper to expect of an objectivity from a historian.

Need of Historical Objectivity

In the present age great attention is being paid to the need of historical objectivity so that a scientific outlook had developed towards the study of history. To think of the study of scientific nature of history, would be useless effort in the absence of objectivity. The following fundamental principles need a special attention in this connection:-

- What type of objectivity is expected from historian.
- It is necessary to think of an objectivity and subjectivity in history?
- Why do the scholar and historian see history as a problem of objectivity.
- Is it a fact that history can never be objectivity like that of science?

In order to get the proper answer of the question it is necessary to think of them according to the following points.

- Butterfield mention that before incorporation of objectivity in history, it is necessary that we must know the difference between general history and research in history. Being short general history can be objective but in the later case it is not possible to establish objectivity because of its bulk. In former case a historian cannot express his personal feelings but in the later after choosing a subject of research a scholar has ample of opportunity to give vent to his personal feelings and interest.

- Objectivity is the expression of history. Personality is given less importance in comparison to fact in history. In fact we can say objectivity by giving supremacy to fact. The meaning of intellectual objectivity is to separate personal element from history. The historical objectivity can be established more by practice than by principles. In fact the description of real fact is objectivity.
- Those historians are liable for criticism who present the fact in their own perspective and conceal the fact or give importance to personal feelings. There is possibility of objectivity in history without paying attention to place and person. Historians leaving aside objectivity should not describe anything according to personal interest.
- Historical events are concerned with the life of great men. And a prominent historian in his definition of history has also pointed out that history is the biography of great men. A scholar establishes objectivity in the history by giving a true account of the achievement of great men and is not influenced by bias or too much appreciation. According to Dilthey the basis of objectivity in history should be the objective study of the nature of man. Personality and priority should be put aside from the scope of history so that historical objectivity could be maintained in history.
- The impartial and independent attitude of a historian brings him close to the one fact from the other. Hence a historian does not have need of selecting the fact. Facts themselves move to their path. The historian is only required to respect the facts. Keeping himself away from the triangle of mysticism, should make proper description of the past, considering the already expressed ideas to be true.
- Man is motivated by religion but a historian must keep himself far from religious influence. A historian is required to produce a true account of the society without being involved with one or the other sect. He would be able to save objectivity by doing so.
- Different principles of historical independence are not the problem of objectivity. One historical fact can be seen by a single prospection with different angle and the aim of the same is to be present the real account. Walsh is also of the opinion that a historian must obey the principle and remain disciplined during the course of his writing. In case he neglected the basic principle he can be held responsible for spoiling the nature of history.
- The nature of history can be very simple if a historian follows the methods of an artist. He should describe the historical thinking like an artist.

This is the principle of nature that he also provides the solution of problems. A historian describes the past according to his own perspective and belief that the real objectivity must always be available in his description, so on the basis of above reoffered need of the historical objectivity could be maintained.

Critical View of Objectivity

In spite of intricate nature of historical objectivity, historians have presented some solution of these problems. It is true that historical descriptions are neither acceptable to all nor belong to all times but they are influenced by the facts. The impact of the personality of the scholar is clearly visible in his works. It is not impossible for a historian to put aside his personal bias from his composition as to come out of his own skin. Actually objectivity means mutual understanding and not the conflicting and contrasting attitude. There appears to be no difference of opinion in the knowledge of objectivity unless the thing changes itself. Objectivity knowledge is far from the influence of place and period. However, scientific objectivity and historical objectivity are poles apart. A prominent historian does not present the twisted facts. His personal interest or isolation, partial attitude and different principle also clearly point out as to how the attitude of a historian remains attached with objectivity. It is also necessary for an intellectual historian to follow the canon of history writing. In fact history loses its real nature in the absence of intellectual faith and becomes a novel or an imaginative composition. The principle of history always inspired a historian to be objective and historians like Gibbon who neglected it gradually lost their significance.

There are all sorts of reasons for rejecting the possibility of objective knowledge of the past. But one reason

has become particularly prominent in the latter half of the twentieth century. In general terms, the argument is that we cannot have objective historical knowledge because we do not have access to a given past against which to judge rival interpretations. Hermeneutic theorists sometimes make this point by stressing the historicity of our understanding. We cannot have access to a given past because any understanding we develop of the past necessarily will be infused by prejudices arising from our particular historical situation. We cannot have access to a given past because the past is constructed by discourses which are themselves the effects of power. Finally, deconstructionists make much the same point by arguing that nothing can be straightforwardly present as a given truth. We cannot have access to a given past because the objects of the past, like all other objects, do not have stable meanings or identities. All these are instances of rejecting historical objectivity on the grounds that we do not have access to a given past against which to judge rival interpretations. They reject the possibility of access to a given past for rather different reasons—the historicity of our being, the influence of power on discourse, the absence of any stable meanings—but they all agree that we cannot grasp the past as a presence, and that this threatens the very possibility of objective historical knowledge.

Bias in History

“Soul of Historians is like a bee for he collects all the good of our opulent time and never touches poison.” Bias is visible everywhere in history. The chief reason of it is too much interpretation of the subject. As a result of it, tendency of bias is developing among the western historians rapidly. Kitson Clark opines that impartiality is found in brief description. Generally bias creeps in the subject because of its bulk and too much details. When some historians concentrates his attention, more to interpretation and analyses of giving importance to the evidence, partiality is clearly visible in his writing. Hence some of the scholars have advocated for the middle path. Butterfield write that impartiality is impossible in history and the claim of its achievements is a great blunder. David Thomson also write that of bias can be uprooted from the historians. The suggestion that historical descriptions, interpretations, and explanations could be biased would strike them as either self-evident or nonsense. It is self-evident to them that historians' accounts of the past reflect their personal interests and vision of past events; and they would think it nonsense to suppose that there is some objective standard of interpretation against which some accounts could be judged biased and others not.

The concept of bias in historical description, interpretation and explanation

When historians describe something, such as a person, a society, or an event, they usually describe just certain aspects of those things, such as the character of the person, the politically active groups in the society, and the major changes that occurred in something during the event, such as the changes in an economy during a period of inflation. The aspects of a subject that they choose to examine and describe are those that interest them. To be fair, a description must describe all the predominant features of the chosen aspect of the subject, so that the description is not at all misleading. For example, it would be misleading to mention only the good features of a person's character and not the bad; only the dominant political group in a political structure and not the opposition groups; or only the beneficial changes that occurred during an event and not the suffering it produced.

One way to ensure that all predominant features of the chosen aspect of a subject are included is to provide an exhaustive description of it. But such a description would include trivial facts, which would be very boring. A quite brief summary description of things can be fair. Anything less than an exhaustive description, however, will be the result of selection. It is this fact that leads many people to doubt both the intelligibility and possibility of a fair description. Any description, they say, will reflect both the historian's preconceptions of the nature of the aspect of the subject being described, and the historian's particular interests in that subject. For instance, what dispositions are relevant to character? Plato would say a person's wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. Aristotle would say their virtues and vices. Christians would say their selfishness and benevolence. Kant would say their willingness to abide by rational moral principles. Conservatives would say their respect for tradition and convention. What could a "fair" or biased description possibly mean in this context? An unbiased concept of character seems inconceivable.

A similar argument can be mounted about other historical subjects as well. For instance, historians' concepts of political structure vary, for all sorts of groups and institutions in a community exert power. It seems that there is no objective basis for deciding which power groups to include. Political parties in parliament might make the laws of a democratic country, but those who finance the election campaigns of those parties influence their decisions, as do those who get a hearing in their constituencies, namely the newspapers, radio, and TV, and pressure groups who get publicity through them. This is all well known. But the families and personal friends of politicians can influence their decisions too. Unions and professional associations, with their capacity to organize industrial action, can influence government decision-making. The courts, with their powers of punishing those who break the law, must also be respected. In some countries, the armed forces take an interest in politics, and their capacity to influence events has to be accepted as well. Are they all part of a political structure? Some would exclude personal, judicial, and military groups from the realm of politics, but others would certainly include them. Historians who are impatient of providing a comprehensive account of a political structure will often content themselves with noting the influence of just one or two of these groups on the lawmakers. If they like a law, then they will look for some to praise for it, and if they do not like it, they will find people to blame. It is hard to imagine what a "fair" and "unbiased" account of a political process would be like.

Given such difficulties in defining historical subjects, should we abandon the concept of biased history altogether, as entirely meaningless? The examples are familiar, but no less important for that. Women's history is a response to the conviction that traditional history, written usually by white males, in which women were largely invisible, was unfair and biased. Similarly, colonial history written by the colonizers used to ignore the views of the colonized. In each case historians have identified with the powerful, seeing events through their eyes, and with those whose culture is closest to their own. For a long time the bias was unconscious and culture wide, but with the liberation and education of women, indigenous people, and the poor it became widely recognized and was largely corrected. If it persists today, it is in cases of personal, not cultural, bias.

These concerns about past bias in history seem quite intelligible. If a historian is describing a society, it seems in appropriate to use a concept of society that leaves out almost half its members.

Similarly, if one is trying to understand the interaction between colonizers and locals, one will get only half the picture if the local point of view is not explained. And in the political history of a society, the attempts of workingmen and women to achieve what they would regard as justice against those who would exploit them deserve respect, as well as the attempts of those in power to further their own interests. Another area of history that has been subject to unacceptable bias has been national history. Those who have examined national histories draw attention to national prejudices at work in stereotyping both other nations and their own. V. R. Berghahn and H. Schissler, who have researched the matter, almost despair of correcting them. "One of the problems of stereotyping is, of course, that, although they present warped images of reality, stereo types have proved extraordinarily resistant to enlightenment." They suggest that foreigners might be able to detect distortions in a country's history of itself: "They may be able to perceive biases and gaps which elude the indigenous historian educated in a particular national tradition of looking at the past." The problem they address is that of culture-wide bias. One of the most interesting examples of national bias is that of North American and Russian historians. North Americans are proud of their liberal traditions, which have given enterprising people a chance to prosper with little impediment, and are appalled at the severe restrictions on individual freedom that existed under the communist regime. Russians, on the other hand, used to be taught to see history in Marxist terms, and see how the capitalist class in America exploits the working class and the people of overseas countries who work for them. On the other hand Russians are proud of their more egalitarian system in which they believe wealth has been more evenly distributed among the working people. Each presents the society of the other as more oppressive than it really is. These forms of cultural bias have not been widely recognized and discussed. Can we find an account of bias in history which allows that these various kinds of cultural bias are real and worrying? To understand how historical descriptions,

interpretations, and explanations can be biased, one needs a clear idea of what such historical accounts are like.

Does bias matter?

The objections to biased history are pretty obvious, but given recent neglect of the subject, they are worth rehearsing. There are several reasons for objecting to bias in history, and indeed in any accounts of everyday life. Biased histories generally purport to provide a fair account of their subject but in fact do not, and so are misleading. This is intrinsically bad. Biased histories can also have bad consequences; biased accounts of what has happened usually result in injustice. Second, they cause misunderstanding of the structures and processes involving the things they describe, which can result in inappropriate strategies for altering them.

Biased descriptions are often unjust, presenting a one-sided impression of their subject that accords with the historian's interests. For instance, a biased biography will present either the admirable or deplorable aspects of a person's character, abilities, and contribution to society. A biased account of an institution will emphasize the role of those aspects the historian wants to praise or blame for its success or failure, ignoring the equally significant contribution of others.

Biased explanations of actions and events refer to some of the reasons for which they occurred but not all. This is another way in which historians flatter people or institutions they like, and denigrate those they dislike. It is obvious that such a practice results in histories that are quite unjust. Thus histories that attribute industrial strikes to the greed of the workers rather than to the injustice of the employers, or vice versa, when both are involved, are biased and unjust. Histories that attribute wars to the hostility of one party without mentioning the provocation of the other, when both were involved, are also biased and unjust. Such injustice is familiar, but it can be damaging in every case, for example by aggravating industrial unrest and international distrust in the cases just cited. Historians and commentators have a social responsibility to provide fair explanations of what happens, not biased ones.

Biased explanations produce misunderstanding that is not only unjust but can have serious consequences. Sometimes explanations of social facts are attributed to individuals when social structures have been largely to blame. For instance some blame the unemployed for their plight, citing laziness, lack of qualifications, and a dissolute life-style as the reasons for their not having a job. The fact that there is only one job available for, say, every ten unemployed is not mentioned, even though this increases tremendously the probability of someone being unemployed. Alternatively, occasionally historians blame structural facts about the market and competition for falling economic returns, ignoring the ineptitude of those in power. Biased accounts like these fuel a misunderstanding of the processes involved, in these cases, in unemployment and economic failure. They can result in quite inappropriate responses, such as exhorting the unemployed to try harder while doing nothing to increase the number of available jobs; or adopting a laissez faire policy towards economic growth.

Most of these points are well known, but the damage caused by biased accounts is not widely acknowledged. Social injustice and misunderstanding are very serious indeed, and scholars should do all they can to prevent them by avoiding bias as much as possible. Some of those who write partial, biased history would probably argue that, far from promoting injustice, it is written to correct massive injustices in the communities it addresses. So often women, blacks, the poor, the colonized, and the environment have been ignored both by Western communities and by their historians. Some would say that by focusing upon their history more or less exclusively, historians redress the imbalance; they make people notice them and value them, and, they hope, treat them justly in the future.

This is a powerful argument, but a worry remains. To focus upon oppressed people alone runs the risk of ignoring the reasons others had for their behavior towards them. Aborigines viewed those who took their children away to white, state institutions with horror; but the whites often acted for what they judged to be the good of those children. We now know them to have been dreadfully mistaken. But to portray them as heartless violators of Aboriginal families, from the Aboriginal perspective, and say nothing about the way they interpreted their own actions, would be to demonize them unjustly, and might create attitudes of

revulsion towards them among Aboriginal people which they do not entirely deserve.

In many cases the privileged have simply exploited those under them in the most heartless way, but their wickedness should be exposed by a careful consideration of their motives, and not merely by reporting the opinions of their victims. Clearly bias in history should be avoided. But can it be? Can a historian's social responsibility of providing fair descriptions, interpretations, and explanations of social events be fulfilled? There are three commonly held reasons for denying the possibility of avoiding bias in history. The first is that historians' interests will inevitably influence their judgment in deciding how to conceive of a historical subject, in deciding what information to select for inclusion in their history of it, and in choosing words with which to present it. The second is the belief that, just as a historian's account of the past is inevitably biased, so too are the reports of events by contemporaries upon which historians rely. Some think there is no objective information about historical events which historians can use to describe them. The third is that, even if historians' individual biases can be corrected, and even if facts about the past can be known, historians are still products of their culture, of its language, concepts, beliefs, and attitudes, so that the possibility of an impartial, fair description of past events still remains unattainable.

Reason for Bias in History

No doubt feeling bias is natural among the historians but it is not seen abruptly in the work of the scholar. Actually certain reason and circumstance are responsible for its rise which are given as under.

Impact of society: History is the mirror of society and historians is a social being, hence his writing is based on the social environment in which he lives. Therefore Gooch, a prominent historian mentions that the expression of the writer made of clay and bone is clearly visible in his works. The subject of writing of historian is society and being a member of it he cannot get rid of these influences in spite of his wishes. Ranier also affirmed that expression of contemporary society and time is clearly seen in the works of a scholar. Hence bias and partiality exist in his writings.

Religious attitude: Religious attitude of historian is also a stumbling block in the impartial attitude of historian. There is always a sharp contrast in the description of same event among the Hindu, Muslim and Arab-Jews historians. All historians belonging to the different religions consider one another responsible for untoward and illogical description of events because they have feelings of bias in them. Therefore bias and partiality is visible in their writings.

Process of choosing subjects: Auckshot writes that history writing is the result of bias thinking of a historian as the nature of collection of data is selective. Historians choose his subject and evidence according to his choice, however one event is described by different scholars according to their own angle. This is the reason that Sir J.N.Sircar and Farookhy have contrasting views about the religious policy of Aurangzeb. Similar contrast is seen in the writing of western and Indian scholars regarding the event of 1857. Besides it there appears no similarity in the writing of Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars because of their different religious concepts.

Lack of impartiality: Partiality and bias make a historian aware of his limitation. Description and criticism of Akbar and his policy by Badauni is event proof of his partiality and bias towards the Emperor.

G. M. Graveling also admits that existence of bias is visible in an historian and feels that whenever a historian writes about a great man in his work he has a liberal and polite view about him and his sympathy is quite natural towards the object of his writings. Ranier is of the opinion that all emotional impartiality is not a merit but a demerit of history. Hence it is testified that it is very difficult to separate bias from history. Pointing out towards the general history and research history Butterfield has also written that the former writing may have impartiality but the latter cannot, as the personal attitude of a research scholar is quite significant in his work.

Different political ideas: Man lives in a society where peoples of different ideas also live. Among them communist, democratic, autocratic, Marxist, capitalist are famous historians who interpret the event according to the ideology of different political parties and select the facts according to their own choice. A famous historian had given great emphasis on the moral causes in the downfall of Roman Empire where as Karl

Marx's feel that economics reason were responsible for the decline of the Roman Empire. Because of different attitude bias is sure to exist., impartiality is nightmare. Ranke, has also affirmed this attitude in his writings.

Personal attitude of historians: G.R. Elton mentions that history is not only an event but also facts described by the historian. But nly the collection of facts would make history an encyclopedia. History according to Scots is also on interpretation and not on facts. Madelbaum also mentions that history should be interpreted in the context of social environment. E.H.Carr too writes that facts do not speaks themselves but historians makes them speak. They also give significance to the ill of historians. The facts is this that historians give more importance to his personal attitude, bias is essential in his descriptions.

Role of historical Events: some historical events makes the attitude of a historian bias. Most of the French historians mentions that the Modern Age ushered with the event of French Revolution of 1789. We find a number of examples in history in which historians have given glimpse of their contrasting attitude. A prominent scholar relates that we fail to find unanimity among scholars of history because of their different attitude which proves to be helpful in the development of bias in the historians.

At last, we can say in this context that under these circumstances it appears to be difficulty to sow the seed of impartiality. Butterfield also rightly remarks that impartiality is impossible in history and the claim of its achievement is completely hallow and false. In case we lit the facts with the match of interpretation, they will glitter themselves. Walsh mentions that history should be written with different point of view so that bias could be removed from history.

Expectation of impartiality in History

Every historian has interpreted past with his own point of view on the basis of contemporary needs which the scholars have condemned calling "harmful elements of history". Charles Omen and Namier are the great critics of the theory of bias in history. They mention that the liberal historians of the 19th century have endeavored their base to produce twisted and distorted facts before the readers, which should have not been done. Elton is the great supporter of scholarship in history. He has studied history in this context and did not allow his wittings to be affected by his personality. He has also accepted that though personality and personal attitude have intimate relationship and it is impossible to separate them from history, but an intelligent historian can succeed in the mission by his ability and capability. Kitson Clark also write that personal attitude and bias can be mitigated by the developed technique of different concept.

It also expected from the historian that they should present a true account of the event of past. If there is found partiality and bias in their history writing, it should be criticized and condemned. The feeling of bias comes in history because of writer own position and it affect his writings. According to principle of political science power corrupts a man and absolute power corrupt the man absolutely. This saying is also applicable on the position of historian when he considering his position supreme begins to give decision according to his own will like Pope of Rome or an autocratic ruler. Butterfiled mention that a historian is not a judge but a servant of the servants of God. Action also write in this connection that bias should not be included in evaluation. A historian should collect the self explanatory data for his writings.

Neglecting the fact Scots has given emphases on the interpretation but scholars do not agree to the point of Scot and say that it intends to produce the evidence according to his own choice. Scholars also do not agree with the Elton who write about the use of match to enlighten the facts. But the truth is that facts speak themselves. They do not need any external life for their enlightenment.

Expression of personality should be avoided in history writing but Gooch mention about the presence of it in history. History is not imaginative. It is true depiction of past based on reality. So a historian should keep his personality away from his writings.

Gooch also opines that a historian should adopt an impartial view about life of the man of past and should write the past events on the basis of facts. No doubt man is born free but he cannot make himself aware from the influence of his traditions and forefathers. He should always express his feelings keeping in view the past. Unnecessary interpretation of the history in the context of present is always deceptive. A prominent scholars

opine, if a historians respect objectively, the fact unimpressed by caste, personal interest, value judgment etc. will also continued to lead without any hindrance.

In the present time it is not expected for a historian to express his thought without Partiality. Only he learned scholars should perform their duties without paying attention that history is a source of pleasure. Biased and partial historians should be condemned severely. Society should not tolerate those historians who criticize the principle by the name of liberty of writings. The welfare of human beings consist in the impartiality of the authors. Hence the historians who give importance to bias and partiality in their writings are not friend but enemies of the society.

A historian should give importance on the facts in his composition leaving aside imaginations and research. Imaginations has not been given any place in the writing of Ranke. He has endeavored his best to make them based on facts, hence it is not at all a source of amusement but a serious duties of the subjects. He wanted to reestablished the honor of history which had been taken away by the historical novels. In facts, all the historians have advocated for impartial historical writings thinking it to be the demand of the age.

In brief, we can say that it is the pious duty of a historian that without touching the poisonous elements of history, he should accept only good and sweet aspects of history. It also means that he should write history free from bias and partiality in order to produce an unbiased picture of society for the goods of posterity.

Conclusion

The above discussion inform us that the principle of objectivity is the foundation on which the edifice of historical profession stands. Most, if not all, historians wrote in the belief that their writings presented an objective picture of the world. Even when they disagreed among themselves, they believed that their accounts were more objective than those of others whom they criticised. Thus the historical battles were fought on the grounds of objectivity. There is also debates among historians show that they expect descriptions of past people and events, interpretations of historical subjects, and genetic explanations of historical changes to be fair and not misleading. Sometimes unfair accounts of the past are the result of historians' bias, of their preferring one account over others because it accords with their interests. Bias is visible everywhere in history. When some historians concentrates his attention, more to interpretation and analyses of giving importance to the evidence, partiality is clearly visible in his writing. Thus, to avoid bias historical objectivity is an easy solution although it is very difficult to adhere to the concept of objectivity in historical writing.

Distortion connotes contortion, deformity, malformation, mutilation, twisting, losing shape and so on. The very word distortion and its shades of meanings and connected expressions prove that such actions could have taken place directly and indirectly, with or without motive, internally and externally. As historiography is closely connected with the available archaeological evidences, defacement of such evidences occur on similar lines, which includes damage, vandalism, destruction, injury and impairment. The same process could occur to the historical documents also. Above all, as human beings are involved in such processes, their likes, dislikes, motives, urges, drives, ambitions, impulses, passion etc., are mixed coloring the historiography. This chapter will discuss how, why and what for such distortion has taken place in historical writings. Here we will also discuss how distortion pose a challenge in history.

Distortion of History

The process of historical writing, historiography and history itself are studied together. Every piece of evidence is a subject to question. This is a way to look for truths of the past. This is a process full of uncertainties and historians make a lot of effort to recover and report the truth as much as possible. Historical facts are subject to how others understand those facts, or revise them again, and the conclusions they reach might be differ from others greatly. This is called historical revisionism and is essentially academic and considered legitimate. But then, there are people who use the same facts, skew the details, and use their personal discretion while reporting and then, the manner with which

they conclude the story and their intentions behind that are fixed. The aim at shaping the whole study and pushing it towards the one objective they have in mind, and evidently enough, are not flexible with other possible conclusions. This entire idea of illegitimately distorting history is called negationism.

Looking at some examples, we have imperialist historians, who used ability to understand, formulate and disseminate ideas to downplay the significance of Indian history; nationalist historians, who tried to compensate for all that the study of Indian history suffered under imperial history writing, and then, in the process, forgot where exactly to stop; for both, history was an instrument of either degrading and disintegrating a group of people of a particular culture, or upgrading and integrating the same. But talking about present day, while the aforementioned ideologies are still very much academic in nature, what actually disconcerts anyone genuinely interested in this pursuit of truth is the way extremists use a grotesquely, deliberately disfigured history to propagate and promote their ideology. You can't call it a lie, because it actually is history but disfigured it is because of the way it is reported and presented. But there's a very thin line of difference between this, and lying under the tag of history. Rightist institutions, for instance, try to create this image of ancient Indian civilisation as some sort of strong cultural, political and economic motherland out of which the rest of the countries in the subcontinent or around the subcontinent were born. The emphasis on the superiority of a particular nationalism and backing it by random, ill-substantiated theories and assumptions are greatly misleading, and they can be accessed by people easily, youth especially, with their opinions still impressionable and growing. And thinking about it, no one takes the responsibility of all the whims they have about history and bringing their opinions and discourses for people to read and absorb it all in. Nobody can hold them responsible for voicing for a certain section of the society, which is absolutely dumb and blind and extremist.

Besides historical work and activities of private right wing pseudo-intellectual institutions, there are state governments which actually are lacing educational textbooks with the statements which are somewhat or even completely divorced from reality, which they so strongly believe in. These pieces of information are not only incorrect in varied degrees, but also a form of propaganda.

Tampering with the already available information and slipping in extra, unnecessary, and possibly false details is just one sort of distortion. The other would be overlooking facts, which is equally harmful, because here, history is a sequence of events, and leaving facts intentionally out of the sequence-facts which are important and significant-is, in a manner, misleading. Events like genocide and crimes against humanity and the related or the similar are generally not taken in as a part of the sequence that the authority wants the people to know. Distortion of history and suppression of past follies neither heal the sense of injustice and victimhood nor can it lead to final closure. Past crimes against humanity need to be confronted and acknowledged, to enable us to learn and move on.

The point in history is something every person in this society should be familiar with, because it helps us greatly to understand our society as it is today. We are a result of whatever happened in the past-and in that sense, history cannot be ignored. How can we expect ourselves to become individuals with a holistic understanding of our society if we don't even try to learn our history and if we do, we don't learn the sequence with everything in place, as a part of some propaganda? Verifying history and then, the process of construction of history is a very uncertain area to venture into, and most of it depends upon what the truth is or what we think it is, or the perceptions of truth prevalent at a certain point of time. But, the most that we can do, is to use to use our intelligence, and question things being fed to us, than taking in everything and not questioning anything at all.

Historical distortions are not new. Before history there was myth. Even when the so-called "dark age of Greece" came to an end and alphabetic writing appeared, this was still an age of myth- the days of the Homeric epics. Then came the age of history. Herodotus, whom Cicero called "the father of history" and who was moved to write by the conflict which had pitted the Persians against his own fellow citizens, marks the boundary line between the mythic time of the bards and the time of the

historian. However, readers of his “investigation” (the meaning of the word *istoria*), which he embellished with endless anecdotes, were still regaled with extraordinary feats. It was Thucydides who first asserted the claims of history writing as a genre, with a genuine methodology: in his view, the historian’s aim was not so much to tell a story as to understand and explain events by seeking out “their truest cause”. History writing as a specific activity came much later to Rome: indeed, it did not emerge for a further two centuries. However, the birth of history was no guarantee against distortion; it did not even spell a complete end to myth. Livy padded out his account of the early days of Rome with myth and Julius Caesar is well known for the artful distortions of historical fact in his War commentaries.

In the 20th century, misuse and distortion of history are still current and may even still involve resort to myth. Misuses of history for propaganda purposes have naturally been particularly blatant in the dictatorships which have plagued various nations of modern world, whether communist, fascist or merely authoritarian. Such abuses reached extraordinary heights in totalitarian regimes such as existed in Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union under Stalinism. Another important challenge before the historian is to highlight the persistent abuses of history in democratic nations of world at this century’s end, in order to reflect on ways of preventing them.

Is history subject by its very nature to misuse?

The problem of misuse may seem to some extent to be intrinsically linked to the nature of history itself. We surely have to be sensitive, when we use the word, to the ambiguities of the term “history”. Then there is the problem of whether academic history, which is admittedly a product of research, can truly be regarded as a science. And the teaching of history in schools requires a transposition of scholarly knowledge to another level, a transposition which may itself provide an opportunity for distortions to occur.

In French, the word *histoire* refers to the work of the historian and the object of that work; history as taught (with the problem of the discrepancy between the writings of academic historians and history as a subject on the curriculum, a problem which relates to the transposition of knowledge from research to teaching); and an untrue fiction (telling a story).

These multiple meanings are found in many other languages (the words *Geschichte* in German, *storia* in Italian, *historie* in Norwegian or Danish, for example). We should note, however, that in English the word “story”, not “history”, is used for a fictional narrative and, similarly, in Spanish one says *cuento*, not *historia*. The fact that the same term can be used to designate academic historical research, history as taught and an untrue story could be significant for us here. We should, however, beware of according too much importance to this point and believing that speakers of English or Spanish are less prone than others to distort history. The object of this chapter is to determine how the work of the historian and history as taught can be distorted or abused.

History is a construction by historians, who are men or women of their times, but we should not, for all that, deny it the possibility of aspiring to truth. In spite of the impact of nationalism and ideologies on the work of 20th-century historians, they can produce work that is “scientific” in so far as they strive towards objectivity. History can represent a path towards truth. On that path there is a place, between the true and the false, for verisimilitude or “truthlikeness”, in the sense, as Popper has it, of an “approximation to truth”. Though it does not achieve truth, history has truth as its norm. The historian cannot subscribe to an absolute subjectivism. The historical fact is, admittedly, a construct, but there is a reality of past human experience. Historical reconstruction is a form of mediation through which we can at least attain to something of the past. The historian’s object of study is not that of the natural sciences; it is not reproducible and hence not susceptible of experimental verification.

Though the historical fact is reconstructed, it does not emerge *ex nihilo* and cannot therefore be regarded as having no foundation in reality. “Intentionalist” and “functionalist” historians may debate the genesis of the Final Solution, but the Holocaust-deniers, who deny the materiality of the

extermination camps, have no right to call themselves historians. What they claim is clearly false, since it is contrary to a reality attested by material evidence, official documents and the testimony of witnesses. They are not merely “assassins of memory”, but assassins of history. There is an objectivity to the human past which one cannot misrepresent without forfeiting the title of historian. The basis of the historian’s work is the study of the traces of that past which we call sources.

All historical research derives, in fact, from sources. Without these it cannot be regarded as valid. However there are some problems to be taken into account in the handling of sources. There is the problem of the rules for opening up archives, which vary from place to place and can make research difficult.

Then there is the problem of possible forgeries, which is not a new one and which concerns not just written texts, but also images. With the new information and communication technologies the danger of falsification is growing. In addition, there is the problem of the overabundance of-not to say massive increase in- documentation, with the difficulties this presents for selecting the relevant material. Historians have to take these dangers into account when they do their research.

Academic history is not an exact but a human science. It is the implementation of rational procedures with the aim of establishing the truth. The historian’s construct is made the more valid by being submitted to the critical gaze of his or her colleagues. This is one of the guarantees of the seriousness of history, which Popper terms “inter-subjectivity”. Historians are not immune to subjectivity, but fortunately they are not alone in this.

Purpose and People Behind Distortion of f history

In attempting to revise the past, illegitimate historical revisionism may use techniques inadmissible in proper historical discourse, such as presenting known forged documents as genuine; inventing ingenious but implausible reasons for distrusting genuine documents; attributing conclusions to books and sources that report the opposite; manipulating statistical series to support the given point of view; and deliberately mis-translating texts. Historical revisionism is conducted to influence a target's ideology or politics for a particular purpose. Sometimes the purpose is as innocent as wanting to sell more books or attract attention with a startling headline. James M. McPherson, former president of the American Historical Association, wrote that some would want revisionist history understood as, "a consciously falsified or distorted interpretation of the past to serve partisan or ideological purposes in the present". Broadly understood, there are two motivations behind revisionist history: the ability to control ideological influence and to control political influence. The definition of history changes according to modern times. The ideological interpretation of historical processes have been another feature of historiography, which created bias and prejudice with pre-conceived notions, hypotheses and theories leading to distortions. Following few factors are responsible for the distortions in history.

It is difficult to dissociate these two closely interrelated questions. Finding the guilty party comes down to asking who profits by the crime: identifying the motives for misuse enables us to show who is responsible.

This is a complex investigation and it has to be conducted very openly. As anyone can misuse history. When history is used for propaganda purposes, responsibilities are quite clearly delineated, but generally much more diffuse and mitigated responsibilities exist, running through the whole of a society.

The propaganda function assigned to history

This function, which political regimes may assign to history, represents a major danger of abuse. It is in undemocratic countries that the most obvious danger of misuse has existed. It was also in those countries that the schoolbooks represented an official point of view and were strictly controlled. As the mobilisation of the masses by propaganda and by the indoctrination of the young were fundamental aspects of totalitarianism, historical “research” and the teaching of history were kept under systematic surveillance by the totalitarian regimes, which channeled them for their own ends.

In the communist countries, the single party was the “crucible of history”, keeping a permanent watch on the required conformity between historical development and its own analyses, any interpretation at variance with these being condemned as “un-Marxist and unscientific”. Schoolbooks and teachers had to align themselves totally with the official view. Before 1989, in German Democratic Republic’s history syllabus, was designed according to the test of communist rulers. In that same country, the Reformation in the 16th century was presented as the early bourgeois revolution in Germany, the American War of Independence as the first bourgeois revolution in America, the mutinies in the German navy in 1918 as the socialist November revolution, the communist seizure of central Europe after the second world war as the victory of the socialist revolution in Europe and the invasion of what was then Czechoslovakia in 1968 as the suppression of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia. Under the communist regime, Estonia, which had been violently annexed, was described in the history syllabus as having been kindly received into the happy family of the Soviet nations, founded on the union of workers, peasants and intellectuals, led by the working class.

Before the fall of communism in Hungary, official historiography, fashioned to serve the regime, presented the events of 1956 as a mere attempt to restore capitalism and spread the idea that the masses who had gone over to the workers’ councils consisted of misguided workers, capitalist petty-bourgeois elements who had infiltrated the working class, functionaries of the old state apparatus and common criminals.

History was also crudely distorted by the nazis and fascists for propaganda purposes. In nazi Germany, the view of history which was imposed was a racial one, dominated by the idea that the master race had to battle against inferior breeds, its most urgent task being to combat the “Jewish peril”. In Hitler’s view, racial struggle was the motor of history.

This basic theme of *Mein Kampf* became the official, obligatory version of history in Germany once the nazis took power. The content of school history books in nazi Germany was essentially racist. The idea of conquering living space in eastern Europe also drew on a version of history which glorified German eastward expansion particularly the battles of the Teutonic knights against the Slavs.

In fascist Italy, history was enrolled into the service of Italian greatness, with particular emphasis being put on the memory of the power of ancient Rome—a favourite theme of Mussolini’s propaganda. Just as Hitler had himself portrayed as a Teutonic knight, so Mussolini was depicted as Caesar.

It should not, however, be thought that democratic countries are immune from this use of history for their own purposes. It has been, and may still be, used to reinforce national cohesion. The role history played in “the invention of nations” and the way professional history became increasingly nationalistic in the late 19th century. An abuse of history occurred when it was taught from a nationalistic point of view, and that there was a danger of selecting and exaggerating an element on the grounds that it contributed to the formation of the nation-state. Many examples of such uses of history can be cited.

For example, in France in the early years of the 20th century, Ernest Lavissee virtually had the role of “the nation’s teacher”. His successive textbooks were in use in primary schools until the early 1950s. In the schools of the Third Republic a veritable pantheon of national heroes was assembled: Vercingetorix, Joan of Arc, Bayard, the young revolutionaries Bara and Viala, to name but a few. This may properly be described as a national mythology.

There are several instances of the issue of history in the service of national cohesion. The reference here is to the need for an enemy against whom one can assert one’s own identity. An example of pair of opposites is that of Greeks and Turks, with the Greeks rejecting the period of Ottoman domination as having been one of subjugation and decline. All the ills of modern Greece are ascribed to what are seen as centuries of enslavement.

In democracies, history can also be used to promote particular values. There is, of course, a very positive side to the resolve to defend democratic values. It is entirely laudable for history to be given a civic purpose, where the intention is to enable schoolchildren to become citizens capable of thinking

freely and taking an active part in the community. History must develop pupils' critical faculties, the idea being that the minds of our pupils should be comparable to filters rather than blotting paper.

In France, historians like Lavissee developed a kind of Republican catechism, which led at times to democracy being confused with Republicanism, and to the idea that the only true republic was the French, the others being vulgar imitations. It also produced the belief that the "land of human rights" could not possibly itself infringe those rights—a conception which underlay a tendency to neglect certain facts, such as the rapaciousness and repression of the colonial era and the period of decolonisation. In the democracies, abuses of history may in fact be produced by more diffuse social pressures.

The pressure of memory

One should not confuse history with memory. Far from being synonymous, they are different in every respect memory is life, always borne along by living groups, open to the dialectic of recollection and amnesia, vulnerable to use and manipulation. History is the problematical incomplete reconstruction of that which is no more. Memory accords reminiscence a sacred place, history hunts it out from that place. Memory is an absolute, history knows only the relative. To history, memory is always suspect. Though both are mental constructs, they do not operate in the same way. But the relations between them have been complex and remain so. There is interaction between the two, in two main respects.

Firstly, the collection of memories is of interest to historians on two counts: on the one hand, the memories of eye-witnesses to events are a precious source. Jacques Le Goff calls these "the finest historical material"; on the other hand, memory itself has in recent years become a new object of study for historians.

Secondly the construction of memory: historians and history teachers do not simply confine themselves to using the memory of societies as a source material. They contribute to constructing that memory. Thus, history and memory feed off each other in ways and with degrees of intensity which vary from one period to another and from country to country.

One of the examples of uneasy relationships between history and memory is to assess the figures on violence in the Spanish civil war. They are split between the interpretation of those who won that war, the "half-and-half" approach and the "Romantic" line, which sees violence as being less marked on the Republican than the nationalist side. The controversies this provokes are all the more intense for the fact that these painful events still loom large in the memories of the opposing parties, and can re-open wounds which have not yet fully healed.

In post-communist Hungary around the interpretation of the events of 1956. There have even been public quarrels between veterans of the 1956 uprising. Historians have divided into several camps, often more on political than professional grounds, and it is difficult for public opinion and teachers to decide where they stand on the various interpretations.

The history of these events has emerged only with difficulty, if it has emerged at all, since the emotions surrounding the conflicts have continued to run high over a long period. When debate begins on such issues, the crucial step has in a way been taken: at least the silence is broken; the period of repression is over. The problem for historians is to be able to work on the question with the requisite serenity: it is the problem of an ever-present past.

In the states which have just emerged from Soviet domination, the need for memory was felt all the more intensely because the Communist Government had attempted to eradicate it. However, these resurrections of memory may be very virulent and may give rise to exaggeratedly nationalistic history. This is particularly a problem in the Balkans, a part of the world. The revival of old memories has stirred up ancient quarrels in that region, with the tragic consequences we have seen in the former Yugoslavia.

Need for memory was a legitimate one, but argued that it had to be guided by an aim of understanding and harmony. Schoolchildren should be presented with the elements of a memory that is their heritage,

but they should also be equipped to adopt a critical stance on the perceptions reflected in the collective memory, so as to offset the dangers of nationalist abuses of history.

Memories lying outside the national mainstream should not be eclipsed and that tolerance should be promoted. Memory is plural: ethno-linguistic groups, socio-professional groups, religious groups and the like all have memories. This is easier to deal with in countries like the United States, where there is acceptance of the model of communities living side by side, than in a country like France, which vests its hopes for harmony in integration and secularism and where the French Republic genuinely regards itself as a melting pot.

Other pressures of many kinds which society applies to history

School is no longer the only place where children learn about history. With the media and the new technologies, they are confronted with a flood of information which history teaching cannot ignore if the aim is to maintain pupils' interest in history and contribute to the formation of their historical awareness. It is all the more important not to ignore it as the information in question may involve distortions of history of all kinds, which are beyond the scholarly control of university academics and the pedagogical control of schoolteachers.

There is a possible danger of distortion in the confusion of historical information pupils receive outside the classroom. One of these was manipulated images. This is not a new phenomenon. The editing of photographs was a regular practice in the totalitarian regimes, both Stalinist and Nazi. The new technologies now offer far more sophisticated possibilities for fakery. Examples of the manipulation of digital images include the doctoring of a photograph of the world leaders at Yalta to include Mao Tse-tung.

Publications aimed at young people may convey stereotypes of which pupils need to be forewarned. In *The adventures of Tintin in the Congo*, for example, which dates from the colonial period, blacks are presented at best as children whom the white colonialist must look after for their own good and at worst as dangerous, bloodthirsty savages. In the Asterix comic books, deliberate use is made of a host of stereotypes, ranging from caricatures of the ancient Britons to satirical depictions of the Greeks and the Romans, not to mention the Belgians. It must be said, however, that the Gauls are themselves caricatured as brawling, heavy drinkers, gluttons and nationalistic male-chauvinists.

So-called historical epics in the cinema often take liberties with historical fact and their presentation of events may be more of the order of romance than reality. For example, Patrice Chéreau's film *Queen Margot* draws on an outdated interpretation of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in which Catherine de Medici is presented as the villain of the piece, the interpretation which Dumas espoused in his novel. These films are often based on historical myths, as is illustrated by the very many screen versions of the life of Joan of Arc, the most recent of which was Luc Besson's hit.

There is, however, a much more serious danger than the one posed by these films, which do not seek in any sense to manipulate history, but simply have artistic and commercial goals: the danger posed by films which are actually instruments of covert propaganda, such as those made under the Nazis—particularly anti-Semitic productions like *Jew Süss*. These films, if broadcast without commentary or warning on television, could have catastrophic effects on impressionable young people.

Some radio and television programmes with historical pretensions continue to peddle received versions of events, such as the perennial reference to the division of the world at Yalta. This is so commonly heard in the broadcast media that many teachers repeat it in their classes. Given the requirements of the medium, it is, admittedly, not possible for broadcasters to give a full account of academic research, except on some specialised channels, and popularisation must not be rejected per se. It is even desirable, so long as it does not distort, since it can promote an interest in history. The problem is that, in their desire for effect, journalists may confuse a simple version of events with a simplistic one.

One also finds an opposite form of excess, associated with journalism as a genre. The pursuit of sensation and scandal can lead to the acceptance, without any serious checking of the

facts, of mere hypotheses presented as revelations. This applies not only to radio and television, but also to the press. Journalists love historical scoops and sometimes run a story without taking the precaution of verifying the scientific validity of their information. How many articles have we seen along the lines that Pearl Harbor was not a surprise attack because Roosevelt knew about it in advance or on the alleged conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy?

The new technologies also come under fire in this regard-particularly the Internet. This is, admittedly, a very valuable research tool, but it can prove dangerous. For example, a school pupil surfing the Web alone may come across a Holocaust-denial site without being forewarned of its content, falling victim as a result to the most scandalous form of the distortion of history. How are schoolchildren to be protected from such abuses? This question shows how important it is to rise to the challenges posed by these new technologies so that teachers can help their pupils to be filters rather than blotting paper.

There is another form of misuse of history with which schoolchildren are confronted outside the classroom: the use of historical material in advertising. This is as old as advertising itself. For example of the use of Vikings on matchboxes, but the historical image most widely exploited for commercial purposes is that of Napoleon, which is used in a great many countries. A danger may exist here in the sense that historical characters who were in fact tyrannical rulers and set little store by human life may be turned into familiar and, in a sense, likeable figures. The number of deaths these tyrants had on their hands and also the prison-camp systems (the Gulag and Lao Gai) on which they based their terror are well known. To use such figures as advertising images is offensive; it may also turn out to be dangerous.

Lastly, artists too may distort history. The totalitarian regimes, in which artists were able to express themselves only under state supervision, were masters of this.

Ideological influence

History is a tool that contributes to the shaping of national identity, cultures, and memories. Through the study of history, individuals are imbued with a particular identity. By revising history, therefore, one has the ability to specifically craft that ideological identity. Because historians are credited as people who single-mindedly pursue truth, revisionist historians capitalize on the profession's credibility and present their pseudohistory as true scholarship. By adding a measure of credibility to their work, their ideas are more readily accepted in the public mind. To an extent, historical revisionism is recognized as 'truth-seekers' finding different truths to fit the needed political, social, or ideological context

Political influence

History provides insight into past political trends and helps predict political implications of the present. Revisionism can be used to cultivate specific politically motivated myths- sometimes with official consent. Self-taught, amateur, or dissident academic historians manipulate or misrepresent historical accounts to achieve deliberate political ends. Herodotus, for example, wrote his version of history to gather political support for the Greek system of government over the aggressive Persian despot. Also, Soviet Communism and Soviet historiography treated reality and the party line as one and the same, employing historical revisionism to advance a specific political and ideological agenda.

Loss of records and archaeological evidences

This is quite possible considering the time involved in history as pointed out above. Besides the religious iconoclastic destruction and the vandalism during different time of history in different parts of the world, there had been systematic looting, smuggling and impairment of records and archaeological evidences. Various archaeological sites and monuments such as the sites of Indus Valley Civilization, monuments of Sanchi and Bahrut, art specimens of Udayagiri, and many more evidences prove how the time could have played a havoc in the slow destruction i.e, erosion of the

archaeological evidences. Illegal excavation, smuggling and stealing away of already excavated sites have been a constant loss of historical sources of information. The Hatighumpa-Kharavela inscription too has been a matter of controversial reading and interpretation, as it has been mutilated by nature itself, because of time. Thus loss and destruction of authentic historical sources materials create a situation in which some historian with vested interest are constructing history to achieve their goal but this is resulting in distortion of history.

As distortions in history have been due to different factors, only the factors related to human agencies appear to pose great threat to objective historiography in presenting the facts to the public instead of tainted with ideology and so on.

How is history misused?

Most of the techniques used in historical distortion are for deception or denial. The specific techniques of historical revisionism vary from using forged documents as genuine sources, to exploiting opinions by taking them out of their historical context. Other techniques include manipulating statistical series to support the given point of view, and deliberately mis-translating texts into other languages. Instead of submitting their work to peer review, revisionists rewrite history to support an agenda, and often use fallacies to obtain the desired results. Because historical revisionism can be used to deny, deceive, or influence explanations and perceptions, it can be regarded as a technique of propaganda. Finally, techniques of historical revisionism operate within the intellectual battle space in order to advance an interpretation or perception of history.

British historian Richard J. Evans describes the difference in technique between historians and revisionists thus: Reputable and professional historians do not suppress parts of quotations from documents that go against their own case, but take them into account, and, if necessary, amend their own case, accordingly. They do not present, as genuine, documents which they know to be forged just because these forgeries happen to back up what they are saying. They do not invent ingenious, but implausible, and utterly unsupported reasons for distrusting genuine documents, because these documents run counter to their arguments; again, they amend their arguments, if this is the case, or, indeed, abandon them altogether. They do not consciously attribute their own conclusions to books and other sources, which, in fact, on closer inspection, actually say the opposite. They do not eagerly seek out the highest possible figures in a series of statistics, independently of their reliability, or otherwise, simply because they want, for whatever reason, to maximize the figure in question, but rather, they assess all the available figures, as impartially as possible, in order to arrive at a number that will withstand the critical scrutiny of others. They do not knowingly mistranslate sources in foreign languages in order to make them more serviceable to themselves. They do not willfully invent words, phrases, quotations, incidents and events, for which there is no historical evidence, in order to make their arguments more plausible.

We may attempt to construct a typology of the methods of abusing or distorting history comprising denial, falsification, fixation on a particular event, omission and exploitation for extraneous purposes, while at the same time remaining aware that such a typology is relative and that it may be difficult to classify some forms of misuse in one precise category, since it belongs to several at once. This also raises the question of what areas of history can be distorted and abused, in terms of both period and subject matter.

Abuse of the historical record by denial of a clear historical fact

Denial is one of the most serious forms and one which springs to mind immediately. This kind of abuse is in some cases the work of states, and is backed up by official versions of history. Among the most famous are the denial by the Soviets of their part in the massacre of the Polish army officers at Katyn and the denial by the Turks of the massacres of Armenians. Denial occurs when a state is forced into that course of action in the face of a challenge from international opinion. Generally, states prefer not to make any reference to the events concerned. This is most often how they react to the pressure

of opinion within their own countries, an attitude usually reflected in a “blackout” of the events in history books and school textbooks. This is how the Katyn massacre was dealt with in the Soviet Union and it is the case even now where the massacres of Armenians in Turkey are concerned.

Organised groups may also engage in abuse of the historical record by denial. The most shocking example of this, is the denial of the Holocaust by the negationists, who refuse to accept that the nazis set about exterminating the Jews during the second world war, and have even gone so far as to claim that the gas chambers were merely facilities for disinfecting camp inmates’ clothing. They contest the clear facts of the case, which are supported by all the evidence which the nazis, in spite of their efforts, did not manage to destroy. In their version of events, the Jews were responsible for the second world war. The “alleged genocide” was merely a hoax perpetrated by politicians and financiers, mainly for the benefit of the state of Israel, with the Germans and Palestinians as its victims. These Holocaust deniers, who have a presence in many countries, use various means to spread their views: leaflets, books, supposedly scholarly studies, specialized journals, cartoons, cassettes and videos, Internet sites. They employ perverse methods: fantasising disguised as hyper-criticism; quibbling over figures, details and words; persistent innuendo; deliberate ignoring of context; attempts to pass off as conclusions what are in fact initial assumptions. These methods are diametrically opposed to the proper approach of the historian. That is why what these people do has to be described as “Holocaust denial”, not “revisionism”, the latter term being quite inappropriate since it would grant them the entirely unwarranted status of historian.

The denial of a clear historical fact involves concealing the traces of the past or, when those traces cannot be erased, distorting their true meaning or, where possible, falsifying them. Falsification may also take other forms.

Abuse by falsification

Falsification may consist in the creation of false evidence. This is not a new practice. We know, for example, of the Donation of Constantine, the alleged last will and testament of the Emperor Constantine in favour of the Pope, the effect of which was to legitimate papal aspirations to dominate the empire. In the 15th century, Lorenzo Valla demonstrated that the document was a forgery, probably made in the 8th century. There is also the False Decretals forgery, a collection of letters attributed to the popes of the first six centuries. Though long regarded as authentic, these were in fact the work of a 9th-century forger.

In the last century, the doctoring of the Ems Telegram by Bismarck achieved its goal, the German chancellor cutting down a 200-word telegram from the King of Prussia to twenty words so as to make it appear insulting. As Bismarck hoped, “the telegram had the effect of a red rag to the Gallic bull”. France fell into the trap set by a telegram falsified through deliberate and skilfully calculated abridgement.

One of the most scandalous cases in the 20th century is that of the use by anti-Semites, and particularly by the nazis, of the Protocols of the elders of Zion. This document, which appeared to provide evidence of a Jewish conspiracy for world domination, was in fact a forgery made by an agent of the Tsarist secret police in Paris at the beginning of the 20th century. The Hitler regime made systematic propaganda use of it to denounce “the Jewish peril”. Since the creation of the state of Israel, it has been used in the Arab Muslim world as ammunition for the anti-Zionist cause. That demonological anti-Zionism, based on the idea of Jewish world conspiracy, a notion still fuelled today by the protocols, has combined insidiously with a virulent anti-Semitism to form a movement which has not balked at taking the ultimate step of Holocaust denial.

Forgery is not confined to texts; all kinds of pseudo-proofs may be involved. For example, the nazis fabricated false evidence in order to accuse a former Dutch communist, Van der Lubbe, of the Reichstag fire.

The Stalinist regime did likewise in preparing its case against the defendants in the Moscow Show Trials. In 1937, we may even speak of collusion between Stalin and Hitler in the fabrication of false evidence to dispose of Tukhachevsky. The Soviet marshal represented a danger to Hitler in so far as he advocated preventive war against Nazi Germany, with the Soviet Union fighting alongside western armies if necessary. He also seemed dangerous to Stalin, for, though apparently respectful of his authority, this prestigious senior officer might at some stage prove a formidable rival. Berlin supplied the Kremlin with the evidence it lacked. The forged documents incriminating Tukhachevsky and those who seemed to Stalin to be his supporters. The Soviet regime was consequently able to present them as “paid agents and accomplices of the Hitlerians”. Tukhachevsky was arrested on 26 May 1937, confessed under torture and was executed on 11 June 1937. In the following months, two other marshals, 8 admirals, 430 generals and more than 30,000 officers were executed in their turn. The manoeuvre, based entirely on forgeries, had been a complete success.

Moreover, the Soviet Union systematically doctored its statistics to persuade the world of its success and power. It was not until the Soviet Union first faltered, then collapsed, that we learned how greatly western historians, geographers and economists had been deceived right up to the 1970s by this meticulous concealment of the parlous state of the Soviet economy.

The Japanese also faked evidence. In 1931, for example, in order to justify their intervention in Manchuria, the Japanese army mounted a fake attack, thus lending credence to the idea of a “Manchurian Incident”. They repeated the move in July 1937, with the so-called Marco Polo Bridge Incident, in order to shift responsibility for their assault on China on to the Chinese themselves. Similarly, the Germans set up attacks by fake Polish soldiers on Silesian border posts. And in 1964 the Americans falsely reported an attack on the USS Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin so as to be able to launch reprisal bombings on North Vietnam and openly enter the war.

The desire to falsify evidence may go as far as the material destruction of the physical vestiges of the past. The Nazis attempted to suppress the evidence of their extermination project. In many camps they attempted, as at Mattheusen, to destroy the gas chambers. They forced the Auschwitz prisoners to undertake a terrible “death march”, so that the Soviets would not discover them when the camp was liberated. For all their last minute efforts, they could not destroy all trace of their crimes, which had been so numerous. When the Allies reached the camps, horrific discoveries were made.

Other examples of the destruction of material evidence were mentioned. For instance, little is left of the buildings of the Soviet Gulag. Sites where the material remains are still visible, such as the Solovetsky Islands, are rare, but this seems to be more a result of the huts being destroyed by the snow and cold of the Siberian wastes than of systematic destruction. The sudden collapse of communism has also made archives available which fortunately have not been destroyed and which detail the sinister facts and figures of the Gulag and the realities of the terror in the Soviet Union.

Historical material should not be destroyed, so that historians could use it one day. Historians could not have worked on the problem of violence during the Spanish civil war, as they are currently doing in Spain, if the relevant documents had been destroyed.

Apart from the forging or destruction of documents, many examples of the falsification of historical events were given.

One such is the so-called the Dolchstoß legend in Germany, which was spread by senior officers of the Reichswehr after 1918. They contended that the Kiel mutiny and the proclamation of the republic in November represented a “stab in the back” for an undefeated army. In fact the General Staff, faced with an irretrievable military situation, had themselves advised the imperial government to sue for an armistice.

In 1940, Pétain denied responsibility for French defeat and blamed this on the Popular Front, when in fact the blame lay with a General Staff whose military doctrine he had inspired.

We have seen how in 1933 the Nazis accused the communists of burning the Reichstag when

they had done it themselves. They were not averse to the crudest of falsifications, accusing the Jews, for example, of being behind a war for which they were themselves entirely responsible.

The murder of Kirov in 1934 was ascribed to individuals whom Stalin wished to eliminate, but it is possible that Stalin organised the murder himself, though it is difficult to come to any certain conclusions on the question.

The massacre of Polish officers at Katyn in Byelorussia was attributed by the Soviets to German troops, whereas it had been committed by the Soviet army and the populations deported by Stalin at the end of the second world war were systematically accused of having collaborated with the Germans, a charge which was most often baseless.

Those involved in the uprisings in East Berlin in 1963 or Budapest in 1956 were described as “fascists” whereas they were, in fact, fighting to free themselves from communist oppression and there was a left-wing element in the uprisings, the extent of which was fully brought out by Attila Szakolczai.

Ideologies have falsified the totality of historical events in order to make them fit in with the worldview they wished to present. For the communists, events could be interpreted only in terms of the class struggle, while the nazis saw history entirely in terms of racial struggle. Ultra-nationalists have regarded historical events solely as products of clashes between nations, and ultraliberals have seen them wholly in terms of the triumph of the market.

Myths, are themselves more or less elaborate falsifications of historical truth. These are either integrated into a sort of national collective unconscious or turned to their own ends by regimes or groups whose interests are served by the consequent enhancement of their image.

Abuse by fixation on a particular event

In this case, the distortion arises through a systematic focusing on one precise element in order to consign another to oblivion or to justify it. For example, Soviet historiography stressed the Munich Agreement in order to justify the Nazi-Soviet Pact. The aim was to show that, since the western democracies had done a deal with Hitler, the Soviet Union had been forced to play for time by signing the pact, so that it could better prepare for the forthcoming struggle.

That same Soviet historiography refers exclusively to the role of the Lublin Committee in the Polish Resistance, in order to deflect attention from the role of the non-communist Resistance and the way the Red Army deliberately allowed it to be crushed by the Germans in Warsaw.

French Third Republic historiography played up the death of Joseph Bara in order to justify the campaign of repression carried out in the Vendée by the colonnes infernales—a repression which it also substantially underplayed. In the era of decolonisation, it underscored the violence of the various anti-colonial uprisings, so as to omit any mention of—or justify—the violence of the ensuing repression; this was the case with the events at Sétif and Guelma on 8 May 1945, at Haiphong in 1946, in Madagascar in 1947 and during the Battle of Algiers.

For many years the fashion in post-war Austria was to present the Austrian people as having been subjected to nazi occupation without themselves being involved in nazism. Austrian victims of the nazi regime were given prominence so as to avoid confronting the reality of that involvement.

In Luxembourg, there was great emphasis on the enforced conscription of Luxembourg citizens into the German army, but no mention of their involvement in the massacres of Jews, as revealed by Christopher R. Browning.

In the Balkans, atrocities committed by other peoples are denounced, but those carried out by one’s own people are not mentioned. Ireland provides another example. Historians there have latched on to the failure of the British to provide aid during the Great Famine, which is presented as

a consciously calculated act, without explaining that the real cause of that failure was the then prevalent free-market dogma which prevented the British state from intervening.

One particularly fearful and scandalous type of fixation is the use of the “scapegoat”: when a country is confronted with serious situations or events affecting the population, scapegoats are declared responsible and all attention is diverted on to them. For example, Nero, suspected of having himself set fire to Rome, found convenient scapegoats in the Christians. As a result, there was a ruthless crackdown on that community. It is, in fact, highly likely that the fire of 64 A.D. was caused by some clumsy accident.

This technique of latching on to a scapegoat proved popular. In France in the reign of Philip the Fair, the Templars, Lombards and Jews all fell victim to it. In the Middle Ages, from the Crusades onwards, the Jews figured as the principal scapegoats, with lepers sometimes joining them in that role. In the Rhine valley, crusading sometimes amounted to little more than massacring Jews. In Spain, the Jews were expelled by the “Catholic kings”. To this Christian anti-Semitism the 19th century added a social, racist dimension which reactivated the fixation on this ideal scapegoat. The Jews, the “rulers of the age”, were clearly identified by anti-Semites as the source of all ills. In the Great Depression of the 1930s, the nazis singled them out for condemnation by the German people, holding them responsible for all the country’s difficulties.

More generally, it may be said that the writing and teaching of history in Europe have been characterised by a fixation on the European continent. European history has long been Euro-centric history: it has largely been a history with Europe as its heartland and the rest of the world forming a kind of periphery, which has been studied only with a certain degree of condescension. In the colonial age, this fitted in with a vision of the world under European domination.

For a long time history in the United States remained “white history”, its high points being the voyage of the Mayflower, the war of independence and the conquest of the frontier. The Indians, who were the first inhabitants of America and victims of white expansion, and the Blacks, who were forcibly shipped over to form a slave workforce for the southern planters, merely had a subordinate, undervalued and depreciated place in a history told exclusively from the white viewpoint.

This is a problem one finds with all ethnic minorities, since the spotlight is invariably on the dominant white people who write history: the example of the Lapps in Norway was also mentioned in this connection.

A further, related issue was the place accorded to women. They are not a minority in the strict sense of the term, but they were for many centuries treated as minors. France did not grant them the vote until 1944 and in the United States the Equal Rights Amendment has never been ratified. Many participants pointed out that history, which was first and foremost men’s history, has also treated women as minors.

On this problem of the space accorded to the various minorities and to women within history, we must bear in mind that a country like France has subscribed to an integrative, universalist ideal which, in the name of equality and secularism, values resemblance more than difference. We have seen that the French Republic sees itself more as an integrative melting-pot, unlike the Anglo-Saxon democracies which accept the idea of being a set of juxtaposed communities, as in the famous “salad bowl” of the United States. This has made a history which gives each community its place more difficult in France than in the United States, where it has developed enormously.

Lastly, in the communist countries, a general process of fixation took place on what might be seen as the regime’s successes. Thus history books laboured heavily, over-estimating and, in some cases, inventing them. This was a way of avoiding mention of the blatant failures, which were difficult to disguise, in spite of all the efforts made to do so. In Stalin’s Russia it was better to speak of the development of heavy industry¹⁷⁷ and military power than of agriculture and consumer goods.

We can see that in all these cases the dividing line between distortion by fixation and distortion by omission is not an easy one to draw.

Abuse by omission

There is a distinction between intentional omission and unintentional omission. Clearly, in totalitarian countries, where historical research and the teaching of history are wholly under government control, the deliberate intention of the government to conceal a particular, inconvenient event is patent and there can be no doubt about the intentional character of the omission. Nazism, fascism and Stalinism all practised deliberate omission as a matter of course wherever possible. Where it was not possible, they resorted to denial, falsification or fixation.

We can still find cases of intentional omission in democracies. For many years, no reference was made in France to the violence of colonial repression or to the murder by police of Algerians in Paris in October 1961. In Austria and Luxembourg, involvement in nazism was concealed for many years. In Switzerland the problem of nazi gold was covered up, while silence was maintained in Finland on the fate of the Karelians imprisoned in concentration camps, and in Iceland a national hero's syphilis remained hidden. This is not an exhaustive list.

But what proportion of these omissions is deliberate and how much is unintentional? It is often difficult to say, particularly as university researchers and teachers in democracies are not under absolute government domination and can express themselves freely. This seems to imply that a social consensus exists, somewhere on the borderline between consciousness and the unconscious, not to unearth sensitive episodes from the past. One particularly interesting case is the silence on the Vichy period in France, which was maintained until the early 1970s. Henry Rousso refers to this as an instance of repression. After the phase of post-war purges which followed the Liberation, a myth of generalised resistance grew up in France, maintained both by the Gaullists and by the communists. According to that myth, the French people had supported the Resistance in enormous numbers; only a handful of traitors had collaborated and these had been dealt with in the postwar purges. It was not until Robert Paxton's book on the Vichy period in France appeared in the 1970s that their repressed memories were revived— they were also reactivated by the film *The sorrow and the pity*. Significantly, however, though originally made for television, the film was banned at a time when the state still enjoyed a broadcasting monopoly. Thus, at a point when French society was beginning to ask itself questions – the pardon granted by President Pompidou to Paul Touvier, a Milice officer responsible for the murder of Jews, caused a great stir in public opinion—a violation of the myth of resistance was punished by conscious censorship. Historians have since set to work with a will on these questions. Many books and articles have been published and the French have learned to face up to their past. Against a background of successive “affairs”, which have even seen the role of President Mitterrand brought into question on account of his relations with Bousquet, Vichy has become that ever-present past that forms the subject of a book by Henry Rousso and Éric Conan.

The case of the massacre of Algerians in Paris in October 1961, to which we have already referred, also involves a combination of conscious and unconscious forces. The authorities concealed the scale of the killings committed by the police, which was at the time headed by Maurice Papon, and public opinion showed little concern, whereas French deaths at the Charonne metro station a few months later elicited strong public feeling. Only after the publication of Jean- Luc Einaudi's book *La bataille de Paris* (1991), the Papon trial and a report submitted to Lionel Jospin in May 1999 was this dramatic episode widely discussed in the public arena.

The propensity for forgetting finds expression at the institutional level in the granting of amnesties. All the great crises which have torn French society apart have been followed by amnesties. There were amnesties after the Commune, the Dreyfus Affair, the Vichy period and the Algerian war. This institutional form of forgetting is the counterpart to the conscious and unconscious omission we have alluded to above. In order to heal the rifts in society, the state acts

as though the events had never happened.

The difficulty of healing wounds, with all the obstacles this may put in the way of history writing, is not confined to France. Democratic Spain has for many years found it difficult to arrive at a calm assessment of the violence during the Spanish civil war, as was demonstrated by Gregorio González Roldán. In Austria, too, it was a long time before the involvement of Austrians in nazism was confronted, even though it is a proven fact.

Abuse out of laziness or ignorance

Such abuse of the historical record may result from teachers lacking the commitment to update their knowledge and being content merely to repeat a received version or a presentation of the facts which goes back to the time when they themselves were students, without taking account of recent research findings. In France, for example, it is not unknown for teachers to tell their pupils that French veterans in the inter-war years were all fascists, that during the second world war De Gaulle was the sword and Pétain the shield, that the world was divided up at Yalta in 1945, that during the civil war in Russia the peasants supported the Bolsheviks in large numbers, that the Soviet Union put an end to the “prison of nationalities” which the Tsarist Empire had previously represented, that the New Deal was inspired by Keynes or that the economic and political policy of the Popular Front in 1936 was Marxist in inspiration. This catalogue of howlers, which is far from exhaustive, shows a real danger that history may be distorted as a result of the ignorance and idleness of a few routine-bound teachers.

Abuse through the exploitation of history for the sake of commercial interests

The use of history by advertising and in publications or audiovisual products aimed at young people, which may peddle stereotypes, if not indeed crude errors or dangerous ideologies. In a more general way, the popular demand for history, which is in itself a good thing, may produce some unintended negative effects. That demand may be shaped and guided by fashions, which are transient and highly changeable in a manner incompatible with serious research, for which sustained and calm endeavour is required. Anniversaries stimulate publishing activity on a particular subject, but when anniversaries come thick and fast, we sink into a kind of historical “channel-hopping”, in which the main concern is to achieve sales on the strength of some particular year or other. It is, admittedly, gratifying that history books sell, but history must not be written primarily to satisfy publishers’ interests, at the risk of seeing its fields of investigation restricted by the expectations of the market and the moment.

Areas of history susceptible of distortion

Two questions suggest themselves here. Which are the periods of history that are in danger of being misappropriated or distorted? Which particular fields of history run this risk? The answer to the first question is simple: all periods are in danger of being distorted, even if the danger varies from one period to another.

What is known as contemporary history—the history of the most recent years—is naturally the most susceptible. The temptation to censor or distort is particularly strong in that the events are recent and still have some currency. This applies to undemocratic countries, but also to democratic ones: how is one to write the history of the Bosnian war or the war in Kosovo? The problem is even more difficult for those who have suffered as a result of the events. The delegate from Bosnia and Herzegovina pointed out during the sessions that the Bosnians would have to be given a little time before they could sit down calmly to write their recent history. We have already referred to this problem above and we have seen that the French needed time before they could study the Vichy period, and the Spaniards before they could investigate violence in the Spanish civil war.

The history of the present, where eye-witnesses to the events are still alive, is for that very reason a sensitive matter. There may be contradictory memories and it may be difficult to face up to history calmly and collectedly. There is a danger¹⁷⁹ that the work of historians may be hijacked by controversies: it is in this sense that Vichy represents what Rousso and Conan have described as

an ever-present past. The problem of the Algerian War, that “nameless war”, to use the phrase which director Bertrand Tavernier borrowed for his 1991 film, is another example. In a broader sense, modern history, which is generally dated from 1789, is equally sensitive, even if it goes back much further. That sensitivity is particularly intense in France, as can be seen from the frequent political controversies with historical references going back to the revolution, if not indeed to the ancient régime. Those controversies were very lively in 1989, the bi-centenary of the revolution. On that occasion, François Furet expressed the hope that historians might at last work with a degree of calm on a subject too long dominated by political and ideological polemics. More recently, while preparations were under way for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Zola’s *J’accuse* article and the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery, the French Prime Minister, in a speech to the National Assembly, implied that pro-Dreyfus sentiment and abolitionism were exclusively left-wing values.

More distant periods are also potentially open to misappropriation. This has to do, in part, with the role of founding myths, which can go back far into history, as is shown by the many examples already mentioned. The problem can, however, also arise from ideological re-readings of history: for example, the Marxist interpretation of antiquity and the Middle Ages or the glorification by the nazis and the fascists of medieval Germany and ancient Rome respectively.

The answer to our second question is an identical one: all fields of history run the risk of abuse. Political history is, naturally, the main area affected, but economic, social and cultural history are exposed to this same danger. The Marxist interpretation, by distinguishing between an infrastructure and superstructures, implies a re-reading which forces the economic and social spheres into its ideological mould from the outset. The nazi *Weltanschauung* is the product of a racist vision of history in all fields: the racial struggle serves as the driving force for history, as the class struggle does for Marxists. No field of history is excluded from these totalitarian explanations, in which everything is lumped together.

However, the danger of distortion across all fields of history exists in democratic countries too: as we have seen, the revival of economic liberalism has had an impact on the re-reading of economic history. And the general view of history has at times been unduly influenced by one dominant culture, as in the cases we have already mentioned of Eurocentrism and of “white history” in the United States. The tendency towards an excessively Christian view of history is another example. Against such tendencies, there is clearly a case to be made for taking account not only of the cultures of other continents, but also of the specific histories of minorities within a country- histories which have been ignored for too long. However, overconcentration on these kinds of history, against a background of self-assertion on the part of the communities concerned, might run the opposite risk of having exaggerated effects on the social, cultural or religious history of a country, in so far as its history would be seen merely as a juxtaposition of histories of communities. We should not jump from one extreme to the other.

History can be misused in many ways and all periods and fields are open to the danger. This makes the question how we are to confront these misuses even more important and renders the answer to that question even more complex.

How to Check Historical Distortion?

There are a number of approaches to countering misuses of history. One course of action is simply to promote democracy in general, given that, as we have seen, undemocratic regimes are by their very essence manipulators of history. The fact that, though democracy is a necessary condition for avoiding abuses of the historical record, it is not a sufficient one.

Old habits may die hard in countries which have just achieved democracy. In the countries which have emerged from the former Soviet Union, there is a strong temptation to produce a highly nationalistic history as a reaction against the negation of their national identity and the imposition of a Soviet socialist identity.

Those countries with long-standing democratic traditions are not themselves immune from

misuses of history, as the many examples we have cited have shown. How can abuses be prevented in countries where democracy is not itself sufficient to prevent them? It seemed useful in this connection to offer a number of recommendations.

Allowing historians and teachers to work freely

This seems an obvious point, given that freedom is a necessary component of democracy. In a democratic, pluralist system, academic research must be free from interference by the political regime: the history teacher has no “official truth” to impart on behalf of that regime. However, having re-stated this basic principle, we should also take into account some difficulties which may arise when the historian or the teacher exercises that legitimate freedom.

The freedom of the historian poses a problem, given his/her subjectivity, which may be a distorting factor. How far can that subjectivity go? The true historian strives to manage the inevitable distance between subject and object as honestly as possible. Without claiming to possess the truth, the historian must always aspire to it. The person who does not obey this imperative of intellectual honesty is merely a sham historian and some pseudo researchers who claim to be historians clearly have to be unmasked as impostors: this is the case with the Holocaust-deniers. There is a bulwark against such abuses, which Karl Popper terms “inter-subjectivity”. A historian’s research must be accorded validity only in so far as they have been subjected to the critical examination of his/her colleagues. Review by the community of historians must rule out of court what are, in view of all the evidence from the past and all serious research, clearly erroneous versions of the historical record. Manipulators of history, such as the “Holocaust deniers”, who have no right to call themselves historians, must be clearly designated as such. No place in academic circles must be given to these assassins of history: it is not for universities to offer a platform to anything which cannot be properly regarded as research. Above all, denials of this kind must not be granted any kind of academic respectability.

An incompetent teacher or one who manipulated history represents a danger for which no other remedy can be found. Can a lazy or ignorant teacher be allowed to caricature history to generations of students? Can a teacher nostalgic for the Nazi era be allowed to sing the praises of Hitler and deny the existence of the Holocaust in front of impressionable young people?

The role of inspectorates must not by any means be limited to mere monitoring. Theirs is also a role of advice, assistance and vigilance where the initial and in-service training of teachers is concerned. This latter aspect is crucial to maintaining a connection between academic research and the history that is taught in schools, which is a fundamental linkage if we do not want teachers to mistake the simple for the simplistic.

Ensuring that historians and teachers are well trained

It is, firstly, important that the history student should have training in historiography so as to understand that history has not been written once and for all and that historians attempting to reconstruct the past are people of their own times and their own countries with all that that implies. They are part of an age and a society from which they can detach themselves only with difficulty. This does not imply a thoroughgoing relativism, but it is a precondition for any form of honest historical research which is conscious of its limits.

If students are to be equipped for that honest research, they must be properly trained in the critical analysis of source materials of all kinds. They have to be taught to sort, identify and situate sources precisely, to distinguish reliable information from that which is not, and to grasp its implications. Students must understand that historical thinking is a construct supported by incontestable evidence from the past.

A grounding in how history has been misused—with historical examples of such abuses would also be desirable, in order to afford students full protection from the various dangers of manipulation, which have been further heightened by the new technologies. This initial training must enable future researchers and teachers to confront these dangers with a thorough awareness of what is involved. Furthermore, those intending to teach in secondary education should be

trained to transpose knowledge from one level to another, so as to be prepared for adapting what they have learned at university to the classroom situation. This transposition is a difficult task. Future teachers have to learn to manage the relation between academic history and history as it can be taught in schools.

In-service training must also help teachers to deal with misuses of history. Refresher courses at universities will enable them to stay in touch with research and to distinguish serious research from manipulation. This training must also help them throughout their careers to manage the problem of transposing knowledge from one level to another, taking into account changes in the curriculum. In this way, teachers who are well trained at the outset and assisted throughout their careers are in a position not only to deal with abuses of the historical record, but to enable their students to deal with them too.

Helping pupils to deal with potential abuses of history

The teaching of history must contribute to the formation of pupils' critical faculties. If properly trained in the study of the various source materials, teachers can in their turn initiate pupils in this work of selection, identification and criticism.

Pupils have to be taught that, though history must tend towards truth, it is an attempt to reconstruct the past. It is not an account that is settled once and for all; historians are not immune from subjectivity and the influence of their time.

Pupils have to learn that the aim of history teaching is not to have them accumulate facts and dates, but to teach them to accord proper importance to facts from the past and probe their meaning. In this way, their critical intelligence is shaped.

With this aim in mind, it would be desirable to sensitise them, using examples, to the problem of distortions of history in order to protect them from potential manipulation.

The value of this is all the greater for the fact that, in the contemporary world, they are overwhelmed by a flood of information which has its source outside the schoolroom – mainly in the media and the new information and communication technologies. Teachers must help their pupils to be selective within this diverse range of information sources. However, before all this work on the part of historians and teachers can begin, one thing is indispensable if we are to be forearmed against misuse: material evidence from the past must be preserved. Without this it would not be possible to write history.

Preserving the traces of the past

The material evidence of the past should be preserved. It has proved difficult to arrive at a proper evaluation of the respective levels of violence in the Spanish civil war in a country which did not emerge from dictatorship until the mid-1970s and where the wounds have not yet healed. If such an evaluation can be attempted today, it is thanks to the fact that the traces of that violence have been preserved, providing historians with the indispensable documentary evidence.

Every effort should be made to conserve the traces of the past-and not simply that evidence which, in cases of past conflict, serves the interests of the victors. The defeated must also have their place in the record.

Promoting a pluralist history with an aim of achieving harmony

Since the use of history for nationalistic ends is the source of much distortion, the national histories should be open and tolerant. And as the closed character of national histories can reach the point of mythicisation.

Considerable progress has certainly been achieved in Europe, where history is now used less frequently for purposes of nationalistic glorification. But this progress has predominantly occurred in western Europe, where, at the beginning of the 20th century, history still fostered enmities between the peoples of the major countries. The clearest examples of this are to be found in France and Germany. The maps of France in which the provinces lost in 1871 appear in colours of mourning, the school reader *Le tour de France par deux enfants*, The Petit Lavisse history textbook and the history lessons by junior school teachers whom Péguy called "the black

hussars of the Republic” may all have played their part in reinforcing hostility to Germany, even though the chauvinistic character of that teaching should not be exaggerated. In Germany, where in the 19th century national sentiment was largely constructed in opposition to France, history teaching in the schools also fuelled the antagonism towards the neighbours across the Rhine. As this century draws to a close, these two countries, which for many years regarded each other as hereditary enemies, have not only been reconciled but are often viewed within the framework of the European Union as forming a Franco-German partnership. History teaching, while facing up to the antagonisms of the past, has taken on a European dimension and no longer by any stretch of the imagination promotes conflict between the two peoples.

In a multi-ethnic country like Yugoslavia, which, since the fall of communism, has been torn apart by civil wars, this may be an obstacle to reconciliation. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina came in for special mention and the hope was expressed that that country might become reconciled to its plural history and identity, which was symbolised for many years by the tolerant city of Sarajevo, before the atrocities of the civil war tarnished that fine symbol.

A plural history is also a history which respects minorities and can acknowledge their contribution. Historical research and teaching have to take this dimension into account. However, a possible unintended consequence has to be avoided here: it is crucial that such an approach should not lead to a history which merely juxtaposes and extols the histories of individual communities. The danger here is that we may end up in a situation that is the opposite of tolerant, where everyone retreats into an exclusive concern with the history of their own community. Plural history must set itself the objective of achieving concord: enabling different peoples and different communities to get to know one another so as to live together more harmoniously.

In modern world, the proponents of secularism see that doctrine as a means to achieve such harmony. Those things which belong to the private realm and the field of individual freedom must be kept out of the public sphere. Secular education sees itself as respecting religious differences by containing them in the private sphere, in order to allow everyone to live together in harmony, both at school and in the Republics generally.

Plural history must have the achievement of harmony as its goal. It has to be an open history, a history that is tolerant in spirit. While enabling communities to discover an identity, it must not confine them in that identity.

Conclusion

Distortion, an act of altering the original shape of something for an unsound purpose, has been around people’s lives forever in many forms such as music and artworks. Historical revisionism is the denial of historical crimes and illegitimate distortion of the historical record to make certain events appear in a more or less favorable light. History and its teaching convey a common heritage which some have attempted-or are still attempting-to distort to their own exclusive advantage. Where political regimes or clearly defined groups are involved, those guilty of such abuses are easy to identify. However, responsibilities may be much more widespread throughout society, particularly in democratic countries, where abuses of the historical record sometimes occur without any clear awareness that they are happening. This common heritage must not be misappropriated for ideological ends, whether narrowly nationalistic or securing the interests of a particular community. It is legitimate for each community to feel the need to constitute its own history and identity. But this must not detract from the pursuit of historical truth and an honest teaching of history. The aim should be that the identity so constituted is able to connect and combine with other identities.

The end of the 20th century has seen the decline of ideologies which have been responsible for a great deal of historical manipulation, but the danger of abuse still exists- particularly of distortion in order to glorify a community-based or national identity. A plural and tolerant history, running the gamut of multiple identities, from the local to the universal, has to equip pupils to become

responsible citizens in their towns, villages, regions and countries-and also in Europe and the world as a whole. Geography uses a range of different scales: history has to learn to use a range of different identities. The constitution of a history and an identity would then no longer be achieved in opposition to other identities, but through a complementary relationship with them. The temptation to distort or misuse history would be correspondingly reduced.