

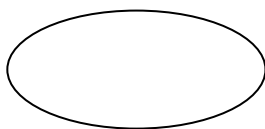


**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**BA HISTORY**  
**(1<sup>st</sup> SEMESTER)**

Course: HIS1B01

**TRENDS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY**  
**(2019 ADMISSION ONWARDS)**



# **TRENDS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY**

## **STUDY MATERIAL**

1<sup>st</sup> SEMESTER

Course: HIS1B01

### **BA HISTORY**

**(2019 ADMISSION ONWARDS)**



## **UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

### **SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Calicut University- PO, Malappuram, Kerala, India - 673 635

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**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**STUDY MATERIAL**

**FIRST SEMESTER**

**BA HISTORY**  
**(2019 ADMISSION ONWARDS)**

Course: HIS1B01

**TRENDS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY**

**Prepared by;**

School of Distance Education



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## MODULE I

### Evolution of History as a Discipline

History is the result of the interplay of man with his environment and with his fellow men. History has its origin from a Greek word *historia* which means inquiry, research or exploration from the bygone days. The German word **Geschichte** also contributes to the discipline which means the past and meaningful exploration of the past. It was in late 19<sup>th</sup> century that historians developed a philosophical approach to the subject. During this juncture both the documentation and evaluation of the events become important. Thus a scientific approach started in 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result a new deviation emerged in the path of history which is called historiography.

### Historiography

The term historiography simply means the science of writing history or the art of the documentation of history. It is also called the history of history or the theory of history. Some scholars define it as the science of history. It includes the evolution of the ideas and techniques associated with the writing of history, and the changing attitudes towards the nature of history itself.

For the careful reconstruction of history some preconditions are there. The residues and records are the first one which carry lots of information. Critical methods should be followed to analyze the source material and a scientific approach is needed. Not only that, a historical sense should be inculcated by the interpreter.

## **Quasi History**

The term quasi history denotes to explain the classical or pre-classical compositions. Quasi means half and it is evident that we are conferred with numerous classics which carry half history. We cannot rely on the information from classics as such, but there are tints of reality in it. So quasi history means half history and while dealing with the sources quasi historical in nature one should be very careful to evaluate and interpret the events and incidents.

## **Nature and Character of Greek historical writing.**

Greek historiography originated in the activities of writers called *logographoi* (logographers). Logography was the prose compilation of oral traditions relating to the origins of towns. Greek historiography refers to Hellenic efforts to track and record history. By the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC it became the integral part of ancient Greek literature and held a prestigious place in later Byzantine literature. One of the key points of Ancient Greek philosophy was the role of reason and inquiry. It emphasised logic and championed the idea of impartial, rational observation of the natural world. The Greeks made major contributions to Maths and Science. The historical period of ancient Greece is unique in world history as the first period attested directly in proper historiography.

## **Herodotus (484-430 BC)**

Herodotus, the father of history was lived in 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC. He was born in an exalted family in Halicarnassus about 484 BC. He loved to travel for distant places which moulded his historical sense. He wrote on the Greco-Persian war of 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. He depicts the history of Persian

rulers, and the rise and fall of Madian Empire. It was Cicero who called Herodotus the father of history. He travelled long distances to have an access to the sources. It was Herodotus who freed history from logography. There are many criticisms for the history of Herodotus. Such as it was over filled with the idiomatic literature which stood in the way to understand things properly. He did not approach the sources with a critical thinking. Despite all these criticisms the works done by Herodotus is noteworthy.

### **Nature of Medieval Historical Writings- St: Augustine – Ibn Khaldun.**

The Medieval Historiography is moulded by the dogmas of Christianity. It was nothing to do with the Greco-Roman traditions. We cannot see any rapport with this classical tradition. The medieval historiography was not based on rational thinking. It is also called the Church historiography.

#### **St. Augustine ( 354-430AD)**

St. Augustine was the greatest of the Church historians. He was a multi faceted personality like poet, philosopher, theologian and a political thinker. He is the author of the quasi-historical work 'The City of God', which has 22 volumes. St. Augustine tells that the world is ruled by two forces namely God and Devil. Almost always we can see the conflict of such forces everywhere in the world. Ultimately God will win over the devil or the evil force. God makes everything beautiful in his world and human being just imitates it. So this world is nothing but the city of God.



## **Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 AD)**

Ibn Khaldun is the greatest Arab historian. He is considered as the exponent of the scientific approach in history. His most important work is 'The Universal History' (7 Volumes). But he is famous with the preface of the work which is known as 'Muqquadama'. To Ibn Khaldun history is not the records of all the phenomena but the description of the social bondage and that bondage can be psychological or external. He always stood for the cyclical theory of history. He argues that the disintegration of any empire is a natural process just as the rise and ruin of any organism. According to Ibn Khaldun each society has a definite time. The society proceeds through two definite phases i.e., rural and urban. When a metamorphosis happens to a society from rural to urban, its innate vigour fades. The greatest contribution of Ibin Khaldun is that he compared the Science of History with the Science of Culture.

### Books for Study

1. R G Collingwood, The Idea of History, OUP, 1994.
2. Shashi Bhushan, Upadhyay, Historiography in the Modern World: Western and Indian Perspectives, OUP, 2016.

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## MODULE II

### **Vico and New science – Positivism- Auguste Comte and Ranke.**

#### **Giambattista Vico (1668-1744 AD)**

Giambattista Vico is one of the greatest modern historians, hails from Italy. His book is known as 'The New Science'. He interprets history as a new science. When natural science indulges the external affairs of man, social science depicts the internal affairs. A historian uses a tool much different from that of a natural scientist. He also supports the cyclical theory of history. He divides this process in to certain phases namely bestial stage, Age of Gods and Age of Heroes. The fourth phase is the Age of Man which denotes the struggle between the patricians and plebeians. The beginning of democratic age is with the victory of the plebeians over the patricians. Then the cyclical process ends with a decay of the existing society.

#### **Auguste Comte (1795-1857 AD)**

Comte was a French philosopher stood against the Church domination in every affair. Basically he was a humanist. He propagated historical objectivity through two important works namely 'The Course of Positive Philosophy', and 'The System of Positive Policy'. He called history a social physics. He believed that it is only through history that one can understand the society. He freed history from the domination of theology and metaphysics.

## **Ranke (1795-1885 AD)**

Leopold Von Ranke is considered as the first modern historian. He introduced a method of criticism (both internal and external) in historiography and that paved the way for a new era in historiography based on the criticism of sources. Ranke brought a professional touch in history. Objectivity is an inevitable part of history. His first historical work is known as 'Histories of Roman and Teutonic People'. Ranke conducted serious researches in history of Europe. He says that the duty of every historian is to approach the events and sources with an objective mind. The following are the famous works of Ranke: 'History of Popes', 'History of Reformation in Germany', 'History of France', 'History of England', and 'History of Prussia'. Ranke tells that God has His own part in history. The contribution of Ranke and his followers are known as the Berlin Revolution in history.

## **Marx and Historical Materialism**

Karl Marx (5 May 1818 – 14 March 1883) was a German philosopher, economist, social scientist, sociologist, historian, journalist, and revolutionary socialist. Marx's work in economics laid the basis for much of the current understanding of labour and its relation to capital, and subsequent economic thought. He is one of the founders of sociology and social science. He published numerous books during his lifetime, the most notable being *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and *Das Kapital* (1867–1894). Born into a wealthy middle-class family in Trier in the Prussian Rhineland, Marx studied at the University of Bonn and the University of Berlin where he became interested in the philosophical ideas of the Young Hegelians. After his studies he wrote for a radical newspaper in Cologne

and began to work out the theory of the materialist conception of history. He moved to Paris in 1843, where he began writing for other radical newspapers and met Friedrich Engels, who would become his lifelong friend and collaborator. In 1849 he was exiled and moved to London together with his wife and children, where he continued writing and formulating his theories about social and economic activity. He also campaigned for socialism and became a significant figure in the International Workingmen's Association.

### **Historical materialism**

Historical materialism is a methodological approach to the study of society, economics, and history first articulated by Karl Marx (1818–1883) as the materialist conception of history. It is a theory of socio-economic development according to which changes in material conditions (technology and productive capacity) are the primary influence on how society and the economy are organised.

Historical materialism looks for the causes of developments and changes in human society in the means by which humans collectively produce the necessities of life. Social classes and the relationship between them, along with the political structures and ways of thinking in society, are founded on and reflect contemporary economic activity.

Historical materialism started from a fundamental underlying reality of human existence: that in order for human beings to survive and continue existence from generation to generation, it is necessary for them to produce and reproduce the material requirements of life. Marx then extended this premise by asserting the importance of the fact that, in order to carry out production and exchange, people have to enter into very definite social relations, most fundamentally "production relations".

## Cultural History- Jacob Burckhardt

The tradition of cultural history appeared in the West during the eighteenth century. It resulted from the desire to synthesize the plethora of histories written about different strands of high culture, which had flourished since the Renaissance. This way of writing the history of culture envisaged it as holistic and belonging to the society of a given people, particularly a nation. Its essence was therefore believed to be present throughout all elements of that society. In this Romantic conception, culture was defined by its distinctive character or essence: 'the spirit of an age' in the words of one of its chief proponents, Jacob Burckhardt.

Jacob Burckhardt, later famous as a Renaissance Cultural historian, was born in Basel, in May 1818. Burckhardt is known to posterity as the father of cultural history. While earlier historians had concentrated on political and military history, Burckhardt discussed the total life of the people, including religion, art and literature.

Burckhardt's first important work was *The Age of Constantine the Great* (1852; trans. 1949), a study of the Roman Empire in the 4th century AD, in which he analysed the decay of classical civilization and the triumph of Christianity.

Burckhardt's *The Age of Constantine the Great* was followed by *The Cicerone: A Guide to the Works of Art in Italy* (1855; trans. 1873), which became extremely popular, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860; trans. 1878), his most famous work, and the *History of the Renaissance in Italy* (1867).

In his work titled *The civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* Burckhardt traced the cultural patterns of transition from the medieval period to the

awakening of the Renaissance period. He saw the transition as one from a society in which people were primarily members of a class or community to a society that idealized the self-conscious individual.

At the time Burckhardt wrote *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* there was little in the way of accepted knowledge about what we today regard as "the Renaissance." His work was accepted as demonstrating that the shift from corporate medieval society to the modern spirit occurred in "Renaissance" Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century and, to a great extent, moulded the modern concept of the European Renaissance as a necessary and positive break with the outlook and society that preceded it.

Burckhardt established the thesis that Renaissance art represented a break with the past, wherein representation became scientific, realistic, individualistic and humane; the visual analogue to the birth of the modern sensibility, one which left behind the superstitious mindset of the Dark Ages.

### **Arnold J. Toynbee and the Study of Civilizations.**

Toynbee (born in London on 14 April 1889) was the son of Harry Valpy Toynbee (1861–1941), secretary of the Charity Organization Society, and his wife Sarah Edith Marshall (1859–1939); his sister Jocelyn Toynbee was an archaeologist and art historian. Toynbee was the grandson of Joseph Toynbee, nephew of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economist Arnold Toynbee (1852–1883) and descendant of prominent British intellectuals for several generations. He was educated at Winchester College, Balliol College, Oxford (classics, 1911) and studied briefly at the British School at Athens, an experience that influenced the genesis of his philosophy about the

decline of civilizations. In 1912 he became a tutor and fellow in ancient history at Balliol College, and in 1915 he began working for the intelligence department of the British Foreign Office.

After serving as a delegate to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 he was appointed professor of Byzantine and modern Greek studies at the University of London. From 1921 to 1922 he was the Manchester Guardian correspondent during the Greco-Turkish War, an experience that resulted in the publication of *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*. In 1925 he became research professor of international history at the London School of Economics and director of studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

## **On Civilizations**

**A Study of History** is the 12-volume history book by British historian Arnold J. Toynbee, finished in 1961, in which the author traces the development and decay of nineteen world civilizations in the historical record. Toynbee applies his model to each of these civilizations, detailing the stages through which they all pass: genesis, growth, time of troubles, universal state, and disintegration.

The nineteen major civilizations, as Toynbee sees them, are: Egyptian, Andean, Sinic, Minoan, Sumerian, Mayan, Indic, Hittite, Hellenic, Western, Orthodox Christian (Russia), Far Eastern, Orthodox Christian (main body), Persian, Arabic, Hindu, Mexican, Yucatec, and Babylonian. There are four 'abortive civilizations' (Abortive Far Western Christian, Abortive Far Eastern Christian, Abortive Scandinavian, Abortive Syriac) and five 'arrested civilizations' (Polynesian, Eskimo, Nomadic, Ottoman, Spartan).

Toynbee argues that civilizations are born out of more primitive societies, not as the result of racial or environmental factors, but as a response to challenges, such as hard country, new ground, blows and pressures from other civilizations, and penalization. He argues that for civilizations to be born, the challenge must be a golden mean; that excessive challenge will crush the civilization, and too little challenge will cause it to stagnate. He argues that civilizations continue to grow only when they meet one challenge only to be met by another. He argues that civilizations develop in different ways due to their different environments and different approaches to the challenges they face. Toynbee does not see the breakdown of civilizations as caused by loss of control over the physical environment, by loss of control over the human environment, or by attacks from outside. Rather, it comes from the deterioration of the "Creative Minority", which eventually ceases to be creative and degenerates into merely a "Dominant Minority"-which forces the majority to obey without meriting obedience. He argues that creative minorities deteriorate due to a worship of their "former self", by which they become prideful and fail adequately to address the next challenge they face.

### **Books for Study**

1. R G Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, OUP, 1994.
2. Shashi Bhushan, Upadhyay, *Historiography in the Modern World: Western and Indian Perspectives*, OUP, 2016.

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## MODULE III

### **The Annales – Marc Bloch, Fernand Braudal**

The systematic scientific and ordered historical writing has begun only in 19<sup>th</sup> century. These new historians tried to free history from the status of amusing tales and fables. By the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the historians started new researches and they tried to assert the autonomous status of history as a separate discipline and made new areas for history by mutual relations with history and other disciplines. In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century a discussion on the question of changing the existing method of historical writing was started in France. As a part of this discussion the French government established an institute. It was known as *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, it was a center of the sociological studies and a number of sociologists and historians became the members of the institute. As a part of the activities of this institute the Annales schools of historical writing was started in 1929 with the publication of the journal '*Annales de histoire économique et sociale*' generally known as Annales. Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre had taken the initiative for the formation of this school. The purpose of the journal Annales was departure from the political history and to the economic and social history. In course of time the Annales school of historical writing is known as 'New History', History of totality, Global history etc.,

### **Features of Annales School.**

1. Instead of the traditional political history they gave more importance to the aspect related with the human life.
2. National history was replaced by continental and global history

3. Instead of narrating events they gave more importance to the analysis of structures
4. The history of common people came in to the forefront of the historical writing.
5. Documentary evidences were supplemented by visual oral tradition folk literature place names etc.

### **Marc Bloch**

He is the first editor of *Annales* journal from 1929 – 1944. He was a French and considered as one of the most important historian of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He participated in Second World War for France and was shot dead by the firing squad of Hitler's Gestapo in 1944. His important works are *Feudal society*, *The Royal Touch*, *French rural history*, *The historians craft*. He criticized the periodization in history and argued that the historians should give importance to the problems than events. He also wanted comparative method in the study of history.

### **Lucien Febvre**

He was the second editor of *Annales* journal from 1944 to 1956. He initiated the studies of historical geography, history of relation the role of contingency in history, and intellectual history. He also conducted studies on Martin Luther and Rabelais

### **Fernand Braudel**

He was the editor of *Annales* from 1956 to 1968. His important works are *Capitalism and material life*, *The Mediterranean and Mediterranean world in the period of Philip II*, *On history*. His ideas like Geo history and ***long duree*** very much influenced in the present day historical writing. Instead

of the history of the victors he writes the history of majority. He also explains the importance of time concept in historical writing and differentiated it as geographical time, social and economic time and individual time.

## **History of Mentalities- Philippe Aries**

The French historical demographer and pioneering historian of collective mentalities Philippe Ariès is best known for his *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (1960, published in English in 1962 as *Centuries of Childhood*), the seminal study that launched historical scholarship on childhood and family life in the Western world.

The "history of mentalities" considers the attitudes of ordinary people to everyday life. The approach is closely identified with the work of the Annales school. However, whereas the Annales historians refer to the material factors which condition human life, historians investigating mentalities examine psychological underpinnings. Historians who first developed guidelines for the history of mentalities were Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, who were both concerned with collective systems of belief. Later, Philippe Ariès and Norbert Elias identified and developed theories on early childhood. Finally, Michel Foucault considered the psychology of social deviants and nonconformists. This mode of interpretation provides a means of examining those aspects of life which the linear approach cannot address, such as the pressure of conformity, the sense of accelerating time, and the preoccupation with self.

While Annales historians are most likely to address the material realities conditioning man through economic processes, social structures, and environmental influences, those historians investigating mentalities prefer

to consider the psychological realities underpinning human conceptions of intimate relationships, basic habits of mind, and attitudes toward the elemental passages of life.

The history of mentalities has affinities with the historiographic that existed even before the *Annales*. Those trends had maintained mentalities or culture as the defining part of a particular society. In effect mentalities is a code name for what used to be called culture. The striking difference in interpreting the them mentalities or culture was that the traditional historians viewed the culture of elite as the defining culture of the society. Thus they largely ignored the common man. The history of mentalities thus attempts to remedy the limitations of the idealist tradition of cultural history by studying the domain of culture which seemed so remote from the work of the idealist historians: the culture of the common man. The history of mentalities thus attempts to remedy the limitations of the idealist tradition of cultural history by studying the domain of culture which seemed so remote from the work of the idealist historians: the culture of the common man.

As a field of study, the history of mentalities bears the pronounced imprint of *Annales* historiography. Conventional historians have long assumed that politics provides the chronological "backbone" of history, the *Annales* scholars counter that the study of political events merely skills the surface of the past, and thereby neglects the "deep structures" of historical reality which lie beneath.

Philippe Aries, who has studied Western attitudes toward childhood and the family, and, more recently, death. Underpinning his work is a general theory of civilization which places great emphasis upon the elaboration of social and psychological structures. Aries offers a developmental paradigm

of the way in which Western man grasped the very idea of development. The notion of the life cycle as a developmental process, Aries argues, emerged through the gradual elaboration of attitudes about the stages of life in the Western mind between the end of the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century.

In the Middle Ages, the attitudes of adulthood were accepted as normative for the human condition. In a society in which skills were rudimentary, and life precarious and short, preparation for adulthood was not an essential requirement. Children, therefore, were treated as little adults. It was not that medieval man had no conception of childhood. Rather he had no idea of a developmental link between the child's and the adult's mentality.

The recognition of childhood as a special time of life, separate from adulthood and a preparation for it, emerged gradually from the end of the Middle Ages to enter the consciousness of all strata of Western society only in the eighteenth century.

In the process, adults began to give up the sociability of public life for the intimacy of family. For Aries, the historical development of the idea of the formative stages of life of the individual prepared the way for the idea of progress through civilization. The history of the West since the Middle Ages, he argues, can be interpreted as a warring between two conceptions of historical time -one archaic, whose currency is the ceaseless repetition of life processes, the other modern, whose codes are derived from a paradigm of genetic growth. The passage from archaic to modern time (which triumphs by the eighteenth century) has, Aries contends, transformed human expectations about life experience. The modern sense of historical development is based upon man's growing confidence about his capacity to control his environment.

What had been left to chance in the Middle Ages becomes predictable in the modern age; what had seemed mysterious becomes explicable.

If modern man has made life experience less mysterious by standardizing behavior in more elaborate structures, Aries, who has traced the history of this process, is as yet unwilling to surrender the idea that life itself is a mystery to which the less structured past holds the key. The heritage of the traditional world is worth remembering not as an ideal to which to return, but as a point of reference with which to evaluate the developmental paradigm which so thoroughly saturates the modern mentality.

## **History from Below -E P Thomson**

Edward Palmer Thomson was a British Historian, writer, socialist and peace campaigner. He is well known today for his historical work on the British radical movements in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, in particular **The Making of English Working class** (1963). The Making of the English working class is a work of English Social History written by E P Thomson, a new left historian. It was published in 1963. He put forward a humanist elements to social history. Not only Thomson uses the term working class rather than “classes” throughout to emphasis the growth of a working class consciousness. Thomson’s theories on working class consciousness forms the core of his writing. E P Thomson who had visited India in 1976-77 and inspired a focus on history from below, a group of historians of South Asia came together as a part of new left that had emerged in India in the late 1970s. They consciously sought to offer a new history of modernity for the global South and posed this as fundamental review of all existing theoretical Paradigms.

## Post Modernism – Keith Jenkins

Post modernism is an intellectual movement emerged in America and Europe in the post world war period. Jean Francois Lyotard, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, Keith Jenkins etc., are the important upholders of post modernism. The postmodernism questioned the existing isms, science, technology etc and rejected the period before postmodernism. It is commonly accepted that modernity began in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and ended around the Second World War and with the fall of industrial capitalism after this post modernism. So called post modernism was developed in America which is called in different names in different states. During the 1950s Bernard Rosenberg called it as **Mass culture**. John Gallbraith called as **Affluent society**. He was an economist. Daniel Bell called it as **Post industrial society**. Wright Mills called it as **Post modern period**. Following these during 1970s and 1980s the concept of post modernism developed in France.

### Post Modern Condition

The book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* of Jean Francois Lyotard came out in 1979. He worked as a left wing journalist in Algeria and finally became a member of an extreme left group in Paris, and later he became a post modernist.

Julia Kristeva is another post modernist historian. During 1960s she was a follower of Maoist group in Paris. It was during 1980s he became an admirer of American liberalism.

The post modernists attack history on different grounds. They argue that the assumption of the historians are drawn from the evidences which are based on personal interest, and from the same set of evidences they made

several description. They also argued that the interpretation of the past are influenced by the cultural prejudices and personnel interests, the cultural bias leads the historians to misleading description to the past. Thus so called sources are also used, if only they have interested the historian. The post modernism also destructed the traditional frame work of history by reconstructing the traditional actors like individual and group.

The post modernists were also against the meta narratives like the rise and growth of Capitalism, The period of Enlightenment, Marxism and gave more importance to the little narratives like ethnic minorities local communities traditional beliefs. According to Barthes the historian's descriptions of the past only represent a number of concepts about the past and not the past itself. According to Jenkins the past and history float free from each other and they are ages and miles apart and there is no ultimate knowledge of historical truth.

### **Keith Jenkins**

Keith Jenkins is a British historiographer and post modernist. He believes that any historian's output should be seen as a story. A work of history is as much about the historian's own world view and ideological positions as it is about past events. This means that different historians will inevitably ascribe different meaning to the same historical events. In his principal books on the philosophy of history, in particular **Rethinking History** (1991), **What is History?** (1995), **Why History?** (1999), **Refiguring History**, (2003) and **At the Limits of History** (2009), he, displays a remarkable consistancy of approach, involving a thoroughly sceptical/postmodern critique of the subject, designed to reveal its ineffectiveness as a vehicle for the discovery of 'truth' about the past, or indeed any knowledge of the past. Not that Jenkins's conclusions regarding



the implications of the supposed ineffectiveness of history have remained unchanged throughout.

On the contrary, as he explains in the introduction to *At the Limits of History*, in the late 1970s, when he first became acquainted with the postmodern critique of history, he chose merely to distance himself from those historians who ignored or challenged it. Later, for a while, he argued the case for a 'postmodern' history that might replace conventional academic history (with which he was mainly concerned). But finally, in the late 1990s, he came to the conclusion that we should let 'history [and ethics] go'. Henceforth, we should simply wave goodbye to history, and look forward to a future unburdened and unspoilt by the historicised/historical past. (History here stands for histories: in Jenkins's opinion there is no such thing as mere 'history'. Postmodern/postmodernism refers to the influential currents of critical thinking generated by a group of mainly continental anti-foundational thinkers in the second half of the 20th century). Not surprisingly, Jenkins's increasingly powerful assault on conventional history provoked many strong reactions.

The outcome was an at times furious and prolonged debate, in which there were numerous accusations of insane individualism, solipsism, fantasy-mongering, left-wing posturing and hectoring authoritarianism – a debate which no self-respecting historian could easily ignore; though it has to be said that many did. In *Rethinking History* (1991), a remarkable bestseller, much translated, Jenkins argues compellingly that the conventional view of academic history – that it enjoys the benefits of a uniquely effective epistemology and methodology which enables it to discover from historical facts, properly established, some sort of historical

truth, a truth, moreover that can be conveyed to a willing audience by way of historical narrative – is fundamentally flawed. Even the most perfunctory understanding of conventional historical method, properly analysed in a postmodern way, will show that the historian, no matter how well trained he might be, can never really know the past, as the gap between the past and history is an ontological one, one that in the very nature of things cannot be bridged. Nor is it possible for the historian to attain to some kind of methodological objectivity, free from prejudice and bias. No amount of skill or expertise will make that possible. Conventional history, despite all its extraordinary pretensions, is basically just a contested discourse, an embattled terrain, on which people, classes and groups construct essentially autobiographical interpretations of an imagined past to suit themselves. Any contemporary consensus can only be arrived at when one dominant voice or set of voices silences others, either by means of overt power or covert incorporation. History, in short, in Jenkins's view, is not an epistemology but an aesthetic literary genre, incapable of making claims about the truth. Debates about history are debates about meaning, and meaning is no more entailed by facts than values are by discourse. In *'What is History?'* (1995), he compares and contrasts the thoughts and opinions regarding history of Carr and Geoffrey Elton with those of Richard Rorty and Hayden White. This he does in order to expand and elaborate the arguments regarding the fallibility of history outlined in *Rethinking History*. Thus, according to him, history remains what it has in fact always been, namely a narrative prose discourse, of which, as White famously remarked, the content is 'as much imagined/ invented as found'. In order to appear plausible any such discourse must normally look simultaneously towards the once real events and situations of the past and towards narrative-type myths common in all social formations. Moreover,

history cannot recover that past, but only such evidence of a past as remains in accessible traces. These traces are then transformed into written histories by means of a series of theoretically and methodologically disparate procedures; which historiography may then be made subject to a series of uses, logically infinite, but in practice for the most part the product of social power. Histories, that is to say, are invariably fabricated, without any real foundations beyond the textual. Far from being 'objective', as claimed by the conventional historian, they are invariably subjective-i.e. positioned, constructed in someone's interest. In *Why History?* (1999), on the other hand, he analyses the inadequacies of history by way of a series of case studies of Jacques Derrida, Jean Baudrillard, Jean-François Lyotard, Richard Evans, Hayden White etc . In this way he once again shows, as he puts it in the introduction to *WhyHistory?*, that certain postmodern ways of thinking almost certainly signal 'the end of history'. At the same time, in particular in the chapter on Derrida, Jenkins explains how, by way of the 'undecidability of the decision', postmodern thinking also leads to the end of all traditional (rule-based) ethical systems. This is because for a decision to be ethical it must first pass through a moment of radical 'undecidability'. Otherwise the ethical choice made will be merely formulaic, one intended to obey the rules of a previously worked out system or code. Postmodern thinking will, therefore, lead inevitably to the end of all rule-based ethical systems, in much the same way that it lead to the end of history. In *Refiguring History* (2003), described by Hayden White as a 'small masterpiece', Jenkins attempts, somewhat paradoxically it must be said, to breath new life into history by refiguring it as a discourse that gratefully accepts and elaborates the inevitable failure of all historical representation. This he does by trying to promote in history the endless openness advocated by Derrida and other postmodern philosophers.

Endless openness, logically unavoidable, he argues, will allow for new, disrespectful, contentious radical readings and rereadings, writings and rewritings to be produced. As for the new histories thus produced, they will be useful, even emancipatory, contributing as they almost certainly will to a radical, 'disobedient', counter-hegemonic politics, of the sort that Jenkins, apparently depressed by the failure of the Modernist experiment known as the 'Enlightenment Project', deems most desirable. Such, it seems, is the ultimate purpose of *Refiguring History*. In *At the Limits of History* (2009), a collection of essays on the theory and practice of history written in the period 1994–2008, he covers a wide range of subjects ranging from time to Marxism, the ethical responsibility of the historian and the works of Hayden White and Sande Cohen. Yet it is evident throughout that his main interest lies in the exposure of (what he sees as) the inherent inadequacies of conventional history, as essays on 'Why bother with history?', 'Postmodernity, The end of history and Frank Ankersmit', and 'The End of the Affair; on their retrievable breakdown of Fred W. Cro history and ethics' show.

### **Books for Study**

1. Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-89*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990.
2. Patrick H Hutton, 'The History of Mentalities: The New Map of Cultural History' In *History and Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Oct. 1981), pp. 237-259.
3. R G Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, OUP, 1994.
4. Shashi Bhushan Upadhyay, *Historiography in the Modern World: Western and Indian Perspectives*, OUP, 2016

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## MODULE IV

### Gender History

Gender History or better Gender Studies is a sub branch of History, and looks at history and hence human life from the perspectives of Gender. Gender is a concept that can be used in many ways. Gender, a social and cultural construct, can simply refer to studying the relationship between men and women. In other words, gender refers to the way by which men and women are socially conditioned to their respective roles not only in the family but in the society as well. To Joan Scott, the American historian on France, gender was a key category of historical analysis and that is vital to study how femininity and masculinity were culturally constructed in relation to each other in different societies. Gender History had passed through different phases to make its present form. The first stage in the development of Gender History was Women history, where historians focused on the study of famous women, although without interrelating the lives of women with the social fabric in which they lived. This phase was also characterized by the entry of larger number of women into the historical profession. The next stage began with the Feminist movements, particularly with the second wave of Western Feminism. But these trends studied women not as a historical category, but women as a monolithic category, just opposite to their counterparts. This understanding of women as binary opposite to men undermined women's role in the making of history . Thus, it was left to Gender historians to make an indepth study of the society in which women lived, so as to bring forth their marginalized nature and non documentation in the mainstream history. It stated without any doubt that the understanding of human life, for that matter, the understanding of history cannot gain perfection without paying attention to

the lives of women and men as such. It also clearly demonstrated that the study of gender roles in a given society has to be given emphasis for the actual understanding of the marginalization of women. Gender History focuses on the study of systematic differentiation of womanhood and manhood. Finally, Gender History tries to relate women not only with the society in which they live, but also with men, who determine and consciously create the ethos and spine of society.

### **Gerda Lerner (1920-2013)**

Gerda Lerner (1920-2013) was an American historian, novelist, script writer and public activist, with special emphasis on women movements. She was a Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Wisconsin and acted as a visiting Professor at Duke University. Lerner was one of the founding members of the National Organisation for Women and worked as the President of the Organisation of American Historians.

Lerner's major work, *'Black Women in White America'* is acclaimed as one of the bestsellers and most read books in History. Published in 1972, this book deals with the 350 years of the slavery of Black women in the Americas and its lasting impacts on the history of the US. It can be considered as a documentary of history of the varied levels of the lives of the Black Women in the US.

Her other prominent books are, *'The female Experience'*, *'Why History Matters'* and *'Women and History'*.

Lerner can also be considered as one of the pioneers in the study of the history of women. She started the First Women's History course in the world at the New School for Social research as early as in 1963. Through

her many articles and books, she made Gender history as a specific field of study. Moreover, she is also one of the first to apply feminist approach in the study of History.

As a true representative of Gender Studies, Lerner made an indepth study of the educational deprivations of women, their isolation from many of the customs and traditions of their respective societies, the compositions of women as expressive outlets etc. As an activist of women movements, she used history to change the definition of culture, where men have not only made culture, but determined culture, from the perspective of women.

### **Bring out the Contribution of Michael Foucault with regard to the history of Sexuality to Historical studies**

Michael Foucault (1926 -1984) was a French philosopher, historian, Literary Critic and a social theorist. He made radical changes in the study of History by his innovative ideas on power, its working, and the relation between power and knowledge. A representative of Post structuralism, Foucault revolutionized historical studies with his theory of ‘archeology of knowledge’. This theory dismissed the importance of individual thinkers or individual motives . It emphasized the inescapable mind sets that characterize different periods in history.

Foucault’s another unit of analysis was ‘discourse’. To him, discourse is a way of thinking. It is to be understood as a system of possibility for knowledge. The exclusive function of discourse is to serve as a transparent representation of things and ideas standing outside it.

But his outstanding contribution to historiography is his study of sexuality. In his work, ‘History of Sexuality’ published in three volumes, in 1976, he

made an exhaustive study of sexuality in Western World. He rejected the much accepted idea that Western society suppressed sexuality from 17<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Foucault, instead, argued that there was much interest and proliferation of the discourse on sex. This proliferation, to him was due to the development of dominant bourgeois class in Europe. This new class of people encouraged study on sexuality. Sex became a topic of debate in different areas of society. He argued that society's approach to sexuality finally determine population growth. This concept of Foucault is centered around the notion that the identities of the people are increasingly tied to their sexuality.

The book, '*History of Sexuality*' is one of the finest historic analytical enterprises. This work, divided into three volumes; the first volume is titled as "The Will to Knowledge", the second as "Use of Pleasure" and the third is captioned as "The Cave of the Self".

As a social theorist, Foucault had authored many influential and provocative works: They are

*Madness and Civilisation (Published in 1961)*

*The Birth of Clinic (1963)*

*The Order of Things (1966)*

*The Archaeology of Knowledge (1969)*

*Discipline and Punishment (1975).*



## **Food History – Felipe Fernandez- Armesto**

Felipe Fernandez- Armesto is a British historian, who is famous in history for his path-breaking studies on the history of food in the world. He is the first academic historian to make a detailed study on the history of food and society. His magnum opus, 'Near A Thousand Tables: A History Of Food' published in 2001, stands as the best read, an exclusive and most influential work on the history of food and its effect on changing the attitude of the people. Armesto traces the history of food through eight revolutionary stages. He identified 'Origin of Cooking' as the first stage, which was the first revolution; while the second stage in the evolution was "The Meaning of Eating", that was characterized by 'Food as Rite and Magic' or the Ritualisation of Eating. "Breeding to Eat" was the third Stage, where herding revolution had taken place along with the change from 'Collecting' Food to Producing It . The Fourth phase was "The Edible Earth" in which the main speciality was 'Managing Plant life for Food'. 'Food and Rank' was the fifth stage, where, 'Inequality and the rise of Haute Cuisine' was the main stay. He identifies the sixth stage as 'The Edible Horizon', in which 'Food and Long Range Exchange of Culture' was the main mark. In the Seventh stage, which branded as "Challenging Evolution", 'Food and Ecological Evolution was the characteristic. The final stage was known as "Feeding the Giants" where, 'Food Industrialisation of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was the prime feature. Armesto considers food as a universal and fundamental to human life. To him 'food is what matters most to most people for most of the time . As already stated, he makes an indepth study and vividly portrays how food had changed the attitude of human beings through centuries. His findings are that 'You are what you Eat' and that a man of average life time approximately spends ten years at dining table.

His exclusive study on food makes him a unique figure among historians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, for, his is the first detailed, authentic and exhaustive study not only on the history of food, but on the different food habits of the world.

## **Environmental History – Alfred W Crosby**

Alfred Worcester Crosby Jr. was born in Boston (USA) on Jan. 15, 1931. He graduated from Wellesley High School. He graduated from Harvard in 1952 with a degree in history and then served in the Panama Canal Zone as a sergeant in the Army, which gave him first ever experience of the Latin American culture. He obtained a doctorate in history from Boston University.

Alfred W. Crosby is regarded as the father of environmental history, Through his ground breaking interdisciplinary research, he incorporated studies of biology, ecology, geography and other sciences in his efforts to chronicle and understand human events — work that introduced sweeping explanatory concepts like “the Columbian Exchange” and “ecological imperialism.”

In “The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492,” a wide-ranging book published in 1972, Professor Crosby examined in detail how disease had devastated indigenous populations after Columbus landed in America

After Columbus landed in America, the European invasion of Americas has begun. This brought about parallel development that transformed global

ecology forever: the transoceanic movement of plants and animals, in which Europeans shipped staple crops like wheat, oats and fruit stock along with horses, goats and pigs to the Americas, where they were not known, and transported back to Europe New World cultivars like maize, potatoes and beans. The trans atlantic exchange had brought both the worlds ( Europe and America) together like never before. According to Crosby “That trend toward homogeneity is one of the most important aspects of the history of life on this planet since the retreat of the glaciers.” He had expanded on that idea in 1994 in “Germs, Seeds and Animals: Studies in Ecological History,” a collection of essays. He wrote that a venture into epidemiology had led him to “a more general subject: ecological history, the history of all organisms pertinent to human history and their (our) environment.”

In 1986, with “*Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*,” Professor Crosby, in his words, “took ‘The Columbian Exchange’ up another notch in scope and abstraction.” In this book he posited the existence of “neo-Europes,” areas and countries where Europeans settled, especially between 1820 and 1930, after they had “leapfrogged across the globe.” These settlers became so successful at food production and food export that they easily dominated indigenous cultures and then nearly decimated them. Native Americans’ downfall, Dr. Crosby said, was not so much the superior technologies or fighting prowess of the conquistadors but the smallpox and other pathogens that Spaniards unwittingly carried on their ships. The result was what Dr. Crosby called a “virgin soil epidemic,” in which diseases ravaged a population that was exposed to them for the first time.

He traced the rise of these “neo-Europes” to a kind of environmental competition that the invading Europeans won. Flora and fauna native to the Americas were so different from the plants and animals that Europeans brought with them, and so acclimated to specific growing conditions, that they couldn’t compete biologically. What Professor Crosby called “the companions of the conquistadors” conquered as well.

Crosby pointed out that how plants and animals, especially disease microbes, had radically changed human lives before the modern era.”

### **Oral Tradition and Oral History-Janvansina and Allen Nevins.**

Oral history is fundamentally different from that of oral tradition. Oral tradition is a way of transmitting general cultural issues from generation to another. The focal point is that active interviewing method is considered as the important technique for oral history. “Oral Tradition as History” is an important work written by Janvansina. It gives ample information about Oral tradition. Oral traditions have now become widely accepted as a legitimate source of history. Janvansina’s 1961 book, oral tradition hailed internationally as an important work in the field of ethno-history. Originally published in French, it was translated into English, Spanish, Italian, Arabic and Hungarian.

Joseph Allen Nevins was an American historian and journalist known for his extensive work on the history of Civil War. He was a pioneer of business history and oral history. Another of his legacies to Columbia is the oral history Research office started in 1948. He was leading exponent in oral history. It was the first programme of kind in a nation.

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2. Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, OUP, 1987.
3. Felipe Fernandez- Armesto, *Near A Thousand Tables: A History of Food*, The Free Press, 2002
4. Alfred W Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
5. Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
6. Gerald L Fetner, *Immersed in Great Affairs: Allan Nevins and the Heroic Age of American History*, State University of New York Press, 2004.

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