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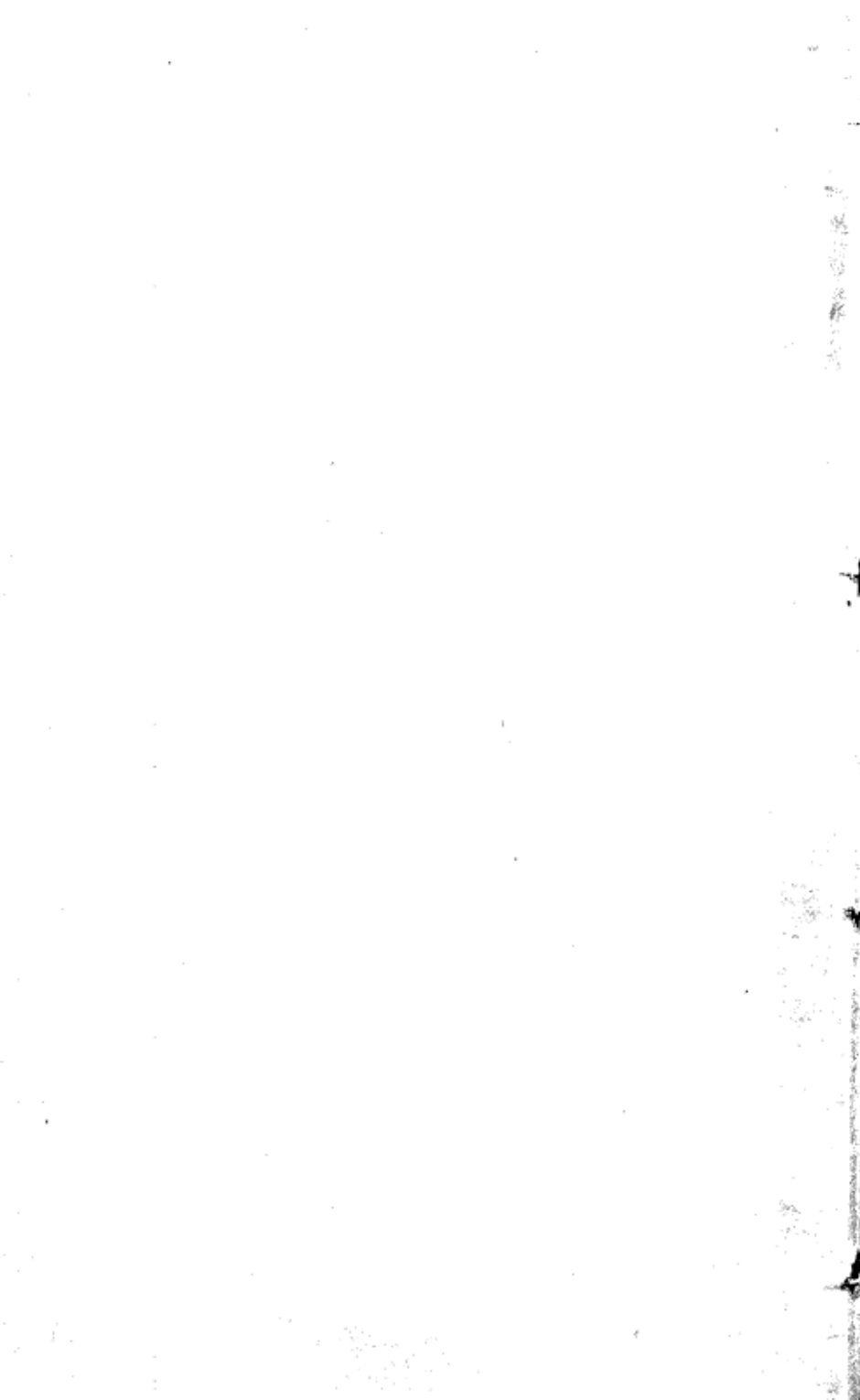
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**HISTORICAL METHODS**



# HISTORICAL METHODS



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**SARAVANA BOOKS**  
**MADRAS**



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*DEDICATED*  
*To*  
*MY FRIENDS*

*K. Jeyachandran*  
*T. K. Ponnuruvelu and S. Ravichandran*



## Preface

Number of books are already there in the field, dealing with historiography, but a work exclusively dealing with historical methods or techniques of historical research is a desideratum. The present work attempts to supply this need.

Scientific history is the order of the day. The student of history is always in search of the truth and scientific history helps him to come nearer to the truth, if not the whole truth. This book is written with a view to provide the base for scientific research. The fresher will be confronted with the problems of how to start? Of course the research guide will provide him the clues. But the student has to prepare himself for a scholarly dialogue with his guide and the clue for that is provided in Chapter I and Chapter II actually takes him on to the first step of the ladder. The following chapters deal with diagnosis and remedy. Nature of the sources, their authenticity and credibility, interpretation, pattern, bias etc. At the end the chapter on 'writing of history' deals with objectivity, proportion, weightage of the word etc.

There are certain accepted norms of citation and reference, which are elaborately discussed in the chapter on 'Foot-Notes'. Wherever possible examples have been given with a view to provide a proper perspective. A few chapters like Bibliography, Foot-Notes, etc., will be of use to all researchers in Social Sciences. It is my sincere hope that the book will be of equal interest to the student, teacher and the general researcher.

I take this opportunity to thank all the authors whose works I have consulted and Dr. K. K. Pillay, M. A.,

D. Litt., D. Phil. (oxon), my mentor and guru and Dr. Fr. Hambye, S. J. of Delhi for their valuable suggestions. Dr. Y. Subbarayalu and Thiru S. Jeyapragasam of the school of historical studies, Madurai Kamaraj University have been a tower of strength in my endeavours. I sincerely thank them.

In conclusion I must thank Mr. Pa. Raajeswaran of the Saravana Books for the unbounded enthusiasm shown in bringing out this book and for the unstinted co-operation extended to me.

MADRAS-5

S. KADHIRVEL

24-10-1978

## Contents

Prologue	1
Scope of History 3 — Uses of History 3-5 — The Philosophy of history 5-7 — History : Art or Science 7-10 — Content of History 10-12; — The essentials of historical Method 12-13 — Deve- lopment of historical Method 13-32 — Towards scientific theory and Method 32-35.	
CHAPTER I Choosing of the subject	36
the Problems 36-38 — Availability of material 39 — Propostion 39-40.	
CHAPTER II Bibiliography	41
Norms 41-44 — Library systems 44 — Author Catalogue 44 — First word of the Title — 45 Subject heading 45-47 — Varieties and Forms 47 — General Bibliography 48 — Select Biblio- graphy 48-49 — Critical Annotated Bibliography 49-50.	
CHAPTER III Nature of historical sources	51
Primary sources 51-52, — Newspapers 53 — Archaeology 54 — Epigraphy 54-55 — Numis- matics 55 — Literature 55-57 — Ballads and Folk- lore 57-58 — Contemporary Records 58-60 — Confidential Reports 60-64 — Public Reports 64- 65 — Public opinion 65-66 — Government Docu- ments 66-67 — Autobiographies 67-69 — Official or authorised history 69-71 — Secondary sources 71.	

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CHAPTER IV Authenticity or External criticism 72

Date 73-75 — Place of origin 75-76 — Identity 76-79.

CHAPTER V Internal Criticisms or Credibility 80

Credibility of historical evidence 82 — Pattern Bias and System 82-84 — Note 84-85 — Independent corroboration 85 — Forgery of Documents 86-88.

CHAPTER VI Foot Notes 89

To ensure proper flow 91-93—Additional information 93-94 — Cross Reference 94 — Agreement 94-95, — Disagreement 95-96 — Already cited 96 — Explanatory foot notes 96-97 — When to use foot notes 97-98 — Where to give Foot notes 98-100 — Book 100 — Editions and Compilations 100-101 — Split foot note 101-103 — Condensed Fashion 103-106 — Common Abbreviation 106-107.

CHAPTER VII Writing of History 108

Selection of material 111-115 — Arranging or Organising the material 115-116 — Grouping 116-117 — Topical Arrangements 117-118 — The Steps in Organising 119 — Chapters 119-122 The Paragraph 122 — Objectivity in writing History 122-123 — Objectivity's right usage 123 — Subjectivity 124 — Presentation — Synthesis and Interpretation 124-125 — Rules for Argument 125-126 — Judgements 126-127 — Clear sentences right emphasis 127-128 — Norms for Quoting 128-130 — The Rules of citing 130.

Historiography of Ancient India 131 — Puranic  
 131-133 — Buddhist 133-135 — Jain Historio-  
 graphy 135 — Puranas in South India 135-137  
 — Kalhana 137-138 — Medieval Historiography  
 138-139 — Alberuni 139-141 — Sultanate Period  
 141 — Amir Kushru 141-143 — Barani's motive  
 in writing 143-144 — Barani's conception of  
 History 144 — Abdul Fazl 146-148 — Abdul  
 Qadir Badauni 148-149 — Modern Period 149 —  
 Alexander Cunningham 149 — R. G. Bhandarkar  
 150 — Vincent A Smith 150-151 — D. D. Kosambi  
 151-152 — R. C. Majumdar 152-153 — Robert  
 Orme 153-154 — Jadunath Sarkar 154-155 —  
 K. M. Panikkar 155 — S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar  
 156-158 — K. A. Nilakanta Sastri 158 — V. R. R.  
 Dikshitar 159 — K. K. Pillay 159-160.

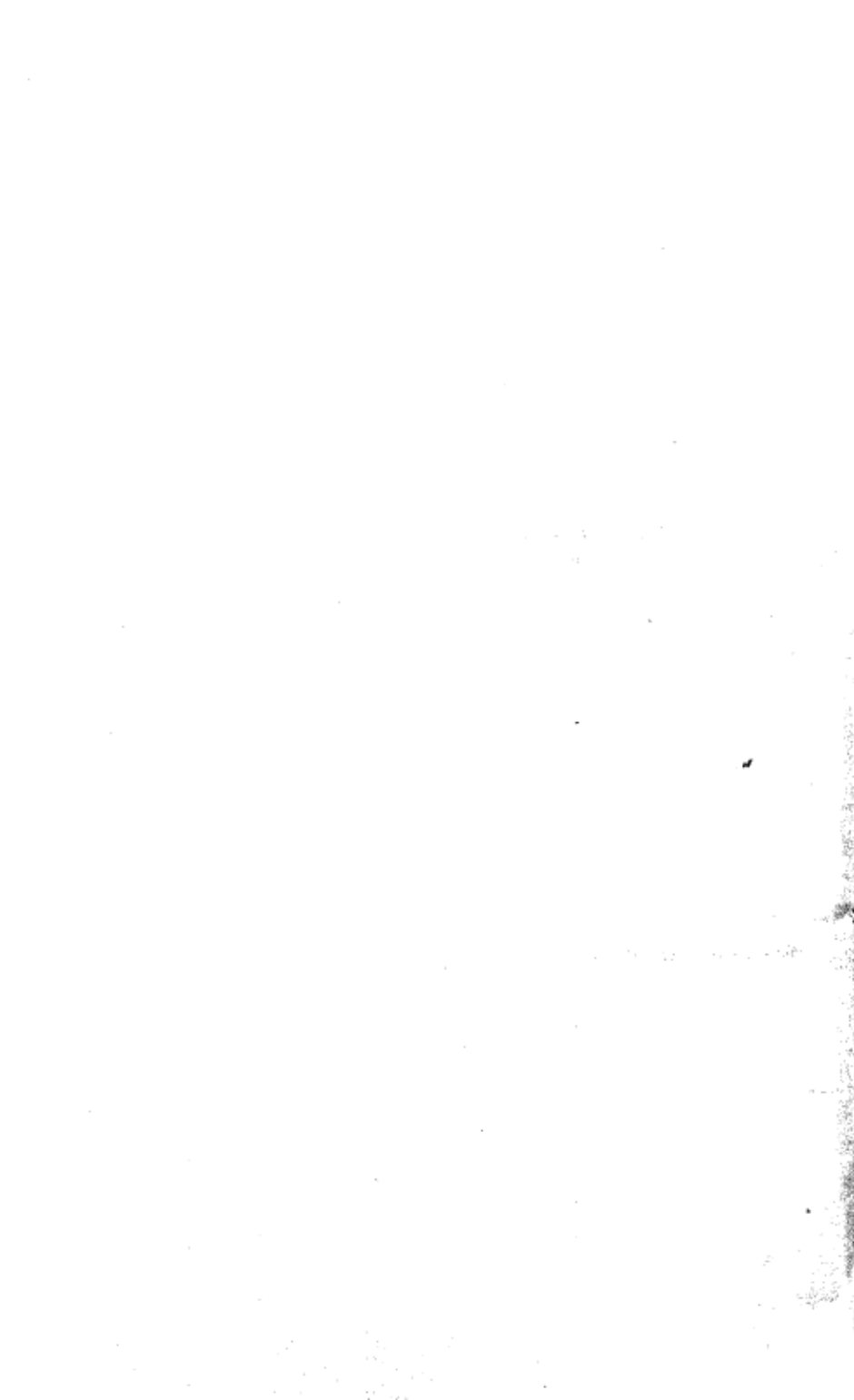
## Appendix - Hypothesis

161

## Bibliography

163





## PROLOGUE

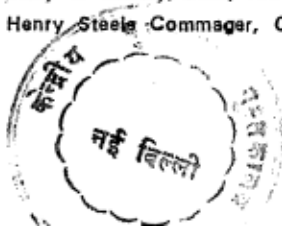
'History' is one of the most common and familiar terms, yet the most ambiguous and amorphous. It means two quite distinct things, the past and all that happened in the past. It means too, the record of the past - all that men have said and written of the past,<sup>1</sup> or "what one age finds worthy of note in another".<sup>2</sup>

The origin of the word 'history' suggests some meaning. As the Greeks were the pioneers in writing history, naturally, the first definition comes from the Greek word 'istoria' meaning 'inquiry' or research or knowledge obtained as a result of inquiry. From the Greeks, this was transmitted to the Romans and others. The German word 'Geschichte' meaning an intelligible and significant narrative of past events, suggests the improvements made on the original meaning or understanding. Later on history meant an account of an event, a systematic account of the origin and progress of a nation, a past of more than common interest etc., reflects the change in trend and conception of the term history. The different terminology used to denote history in different languages points to the meaning the respective people have for 'history' - German word 'geschichte' meaning 'event', the Arab word

<sup>1</sup> Henry Steele Commager, *The Study of History*, Ohio, 1966 p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> - Jacob Burckhardt, Quoted in Henry Steele Commager, *Op. cit.* p. 1.

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'tarikh' for dates and the Sanskrit word 'ithihasa' for tale or legend.

Till 1880, history meant mere facts. With the advent of the German school under Dilthey in 1880s and 1890s, this was changed and the philosophy of history was introduced. With that the definition of history also changed. Since then very many definitions were given: Croce of Italy held that history consists in seeking the past through the eyes of the present and in the light of the problem, the main job of the historian is 'not to record' but 'to evaluate'. Croce influenced French and British historians, particularly the Oxford Philosopher and historian R. G. Collingwood.

With the intellectuals' critical thinking and advance of scientific knowledge, the meaning, definition and interpretations were continuously modified. To E. H. Carr, "History" consists of corpus of ascertainable facts. The facts are available to historians in documents and inscriptions and so on, like fish on the fishmonger's slab. The historian collects them, takes them home, and cooks and serves them in whatever style that appeals to him."<sup>3</sup> This statement reveals the point of view of E. H. Carr. Similarly even before Carr, many people had viewed history from their point of view and defined it accordingly. St. Augustine viewed the history of Rome from the point of view of an early Christian, Tillemont from that of the 17th century Frenchman, Gibbon as an Eighteenth century Englishman, and Mommsen, 19th century German. They differed according to their adaptations.

Carr further defined history as an unending dialogue between the present and the past, and understanding the past is the key to understand the present.<sup>4</sup> To Professor Seeley history is the record of the life of societies of men,

<sup>3</sup> E. H. Carr, *What is History?* Harmondsworth, Penguin books, 1964, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

and the changes - 'past politics'.<sup>5</sup> To Lord Acton it is an "unfolding story of human freedom". R. G. Collingwood's definition that history is a kind of research or inquiry, fastening up something we do not know and trying to discover,<sup>6</sup> is relatively more appropriate.

### Scope of History :

History is human self knowledge. It enables us to enter into the minds and characters of the great figures of the past with a degree of intimacy unimaginable for our own day or society. It permits us to know the pasts of other societies and plunges us into the most enthralling eras of human experience and enables us to know some of their greatest characters - a Plato, an Aristotle, a Homer, a Milton, a Kalidasa, a Kambar, a Dhansane, a Nehru etc., more intimately than even their companions knew them.

Through history we can follow them in their every day routine, in their writings, letters, diaries etc., we can follow them in their thought.

History, and perhaps history alone permits us to live with greatness. The value of history is that it teaches us what man has done and what man is.

### Uses of History :

History, we can confidently assert, is useful in the sense that art and music, poetry and flowers, religion and philosophy are useful. Without it - as without these, life would be poorer and meaner. Without it we should be denied some of those intellectual and moral experiences which give meaning and richness to life.

History adds new dimensions to life itself, enormously extending our perspective and enlarging our experience

<sup>5</sup> John Seeley. Quoted in Commager, Op. Cit., p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *The idea of History*, London, Oxford University Press, 1946, passim.

It permits us to enter vicariously into the past; to project our vision back over thousands of years and enlarge it to embrace all the races of mankind. Through the pages of history we can hear Demosthenes deliver his oration, Mark Antony stirring the people of Rome against Brutus and the rest, Lord Krishna educating Arjuna, Churchill rallying the people of Great Britain and Mahatma Gandhi injecting non-violence to multitudes of Indians; we can see Michael Anjelo's painting, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China, the pomp of the Moghul Court, etc. History supplies to us with all those elements which are essential to life—density, variety, intricacy, richness in the pattern of thought and action and with it the sense "of the past".<sup>7</sup> Therefore, history provides us with great companions on our journey of life.

Much more use of history is the experience we derive in identifying the present with the past by adding new dimensions to places and events. This enlarges the vision of man, as he is transported into a new state of society and made to contemplate on wide diversities of law, morals and manners.

History provides mankind with memory—nostalgia. It fires the imagination, broadens intellectual horizons and deepens sympathies. It summons witness from the past and instructs and edifies each new generation and provide encouragement to future and inculcates moral precepts.<sup>8</sup> History makes mankind realise that world is larger and societies and civilization have existed long before our generation and that they have also lived creditably and contributed their mite to the world. Through this, history teaches modesty and humility.

When we are introduced to those pages of history dealing with the long struggle and endurance of man to

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<sup>7</sup> H. S. Commager, *Op. cit.* pp. 73-74.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 74.

conquer nature, to organize Government and Society, we are enjoined to patience, tolerance – tolerance towards different faiths, different cultures, different ideas and ideologies.

History assures that man is neither a creature of iron-law nor a victim of chance and fortuity.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Philosophy of history :**

The term itself is ambiguous. It may mean either one of the two, or both of them. It may mean the philosophy which one brings to the study of history and to which he confidently expects history to conform. Or it may mean, more simply, the philosophy which the student of history finds in history and to which he himself will per chance conform.

It conjures up for us those system-makers and systems of the past and present – organised fullscale philosophies of history which march to its commands an Augustine who proved that history was the working out of the will of God with men, a Hegel with his mystical sense of history as the history of freedom culminating in the present, a Condorcet who saw all history serried panorama of progress, a Karl Marx with his iron laws of history as a record of the struggle for material ends, John Firke's progressive evolution, Henry Adams imposing an irrelevant law of thermodynamics on the reluctant stuff of history, and Arnold Toynbee with his theory of the rise and fall of civilizations.

To express it in any single formula, is doomed to futility. The conclusion is that not that men have failed to solve the enigma of history or possibly there is no solution or no enigma. Can one impose his will on history? Or to require that it embraces his theme, dance to his tune? And march to his commands?

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<sup>9</sup> Idem.

We can never find some meaning in history upon which all sound men will agree. Philosophers and students for thousand years have not arrived at a common religion. No political theory is agreeable to larger sections of the people. Philosophers and teachers have been considering the nature of education for centuries, but have evolved no accepted philosophy of education. Why should we have a philosophy of history when we still lack authoritative philosophies of religion, politics or education? G. M. Trevelyan said that philosophy is not something you take to history, it is something you carry away from history.<sup>10</sup> If you cannot impose our philosophical patterns upon history, let us see if history can impose philosophical lessons on us. After prolonged study some general conclusions about its meaning, its purposes and its value have been determined. But this may not have scientific validity.

The history of a tyrant can prevent a nation from giving absolute power to a tyrant, etc., The founding fathers of American Constitution relied upon liberty for every action. Churchill on hearing the attack on Pearl Harbour, said, "I have studied the American Civil War fought out to the last desperate inch... I went to bed and slept the sleep of the saved.". All these examples have a philosophy behind.

The most familiar of all definitions of history is probably—"History is Philosophy teaching by examples"<sup>11</sup> If history is philosophy teaching by examples, what does it teach? Just like the devil quoting the scripture, people all over the world cite examples from history to protect their vested interests. The history of the French Revolution was

<sup>10</sup> G. M. Trevelyan. Quoted H. S. Commager. *Op. Cit.*, p. 89-90.

<sup>11</sup> The Phrase is Bolingbroke's, but Dionysius of Halicarnassus said the same thing two thousand years ago and fifteen centuries later, Sir Walter Raleigh wrote: "the end and scope of all history" is "to teach us by examples of times past such wisdom as may guide our desires and actions". H. S. Commager *Op. cit.* p. 91.

invoked by the monarchists in Europe to damn all popular reforms. Hitler prostituted history to prove the superiority of the Aryans over all other races. Bhutto fell back on history and declared that for the past ten centuries muslims have ruled India and hence Pakistan has a right on Indostan. Even in smaller matters, politicians do not hesitate to summon up history to vindicate their arguments. Happily it is not the whole story. History has other benevolent uses.<sup>12</sup> History inculcates moral percepts. It provides perspective. It reminds us that time is indeed long and our own life fleeting; and generations of human beings have been the object of history and people have seen crises before, had wars and turmoils but survived. Thus it makes us mingle with a larger horizon of activities. It moderates our instinctive and pervasive parochialism, a parochialism of both time and space, a parochialism which is moral as well as social or political. It teaches us that the world is large, miscellaneous and haphazard, not subject to our fiat or to our desires. It tells us that the centre of supremacy was rotating among peoples, and among civilizations and strikes a note of warning to our egotism. History teaches modesty, humility, patience and tolerance. Therefore, history teaches philosophy and philosophy is not something you take to history; it is, or should be something you carry away from history'-G. M. Trevelyan.<sup>13</sup>

### **History : Art or Science :**

There is an unending debate on the point 'whether history is an art or science'. Trevelyan held that history is 'art' while Ranke and Bury contended that history is 'science'. Art is practical skill guided by rules, human skill as opposed to nature - skill as applied to subject of taste, like the fine arts - music, painting, sculpture, architecture and poetry.

<sup>12</sup> For details see above 'under uses of history'.

<sup>13</sup> G. M. Trevelyan. Quoted H. S. Commager, Op. cit., p. 90.



Science and arts differ essentially in their aims - Science in Mill's words takes cognizance of a phenomenon and endeavours to ascertain its law. Art proposes to itself an end and looks not for means to effect it.

"History is a science, no less and no more"-Bury. "So long as history is regarded as an art, the sanctions of truth and accuracy could not be severe...that history is not a branch of literature."<sup>14</sup> Modern history is not a department of letters and just an elegant, instructive and amusing narrative, but a branch of science. This is a creation of the 19th century.

History deals with conditions of masses of mankind. It seeks to discover the laws that govern these conditions and bring about the changes we call progress and decay and development and degeneration; and to understand the processes that gradually or suddenly make up and break up those political and economic agglomerations we call 'states', to find out the circumstances affecting the various tendencies that show their power at various times. Style and the needs of a popular audience have no more to do with history than with law or astronomy. History has scientific standards and methods - causation, accuracy, exactness, freedom from bias etc. The proper aim of historical study is to get as nearer to the truth as we can.<sup>15</sup>

There was the insistence of a scientific age upon exactness, accuracy, objectivity; there was somewhat paradoxically in the light of these standards the influence of German thinkers. Most important of all, there was immense and deserved, if somewhat disproportionate, prestige of the physical sciences with their astounding achievements and practice to their credit. Trevelyan said, "science had transmuted the economic and social life of mankind and had revolutionised the religious and cosmo-

<sup>14</sup> J. B. Bury, Quoted in B. B. Kellett, *Aspects of History*, London, 1938, p. 93.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 72 - 102, *passim*.

logical outlook of the educated world. These astonishing achievements of physical sciences led many historians to suppose that the value and importance of history would be greatly enhanced if history was called a science, and if it adopted scientific methods and ideals and none others'.<sup>16</sup>

His own view was that "the analogy was faulty. For the study of mankind does not resemble the study of the physical properties of atoms, or life of animals. If you find out an atom, you have found out all atoms. Not so in mankind, too complicated, too spiritual, too various ... History in fact is more a matter of guessing from all the available facts. And it deals with intellectual and spiritual forces which cannot be subjected to any analysis that can, preferably called scientific."<sup>17</sup>

Originally the word science meant knowledge or learning, or any branch of it, as in the usage of 'moral sciences' or 'theological sciences'. But science in modern usage has become increasingly restricted to the exact sciences, those which on the basis of demonstrable truths or observed facts, systematically classified, are susceptible of general laws from which reliable conclusions may be drawn from like premises.

Can this be applied to history? Or for that matter to Social Sciences. It is not desirable to restrict the use of the word science to too narrow a sense. The Social Sciences have not the cast-iron reality of the physical sciences. For that matter even physics is not the same in the 20th century as it was in the 19th. The historians when they claim or disclaim their discipline as science "they have at the back of their minds an idea of exactness, dependable objectivity, a certain capacity for being systematised as knowledge".<sup>18</sup> Present day development in historical

<sup>16</sup> G. M. Trevelyan, *Other Essays*. London. 2nd. ed. 1930. p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Landes, David. S. and Tilly, Charles, *History as Social Science*. Princeton Holl. 1971. p. 27.

research involves Archeaology, Geography, Geology, Statistics, etc., for more accurate testing of sources, correlation of evidence etc.<sup>19</sup>

### Content of History:

For Bury history is science and for Travekyan it is not science. But there is definitely scientific element in history. What is scientific and what is not? History in any case is not an assemblage of individual facts without connection, rag-bag of things that happened anywhere. All historans have drawn conclusions and generalisations. This provides a clue for the nature of the subject. It is descriptive like other social sciences but there are generalisations from the facts viewed in sequences. The facts of history are not isolated, but concrete, like pebbles on a beach; they are connected by skeins of consequence in every direction. One state of affairs leads to another, arises out of an earlier one, they are connected causually.<sup>20</sup>

There are such elements of history capable of scientific analysis—population of a country, its number and character, it is both statistically and at the same time with the picture of life and the feel of the thing.

There is scientific element in the individual too. Otherwise why psychology? History is not merely study of man's relation with other man, but it is man's relationship with nature, (e.g) rise of civilizations on the banks of Nile, Yangtse, Sind etc.

Action and reaction as in science are found in history too. Humiliate a people. You can expect a fairly certain reaction; freeze the wages of a class of

<sup>19</sup> These are disciplines accepted as sciences and their methods scientific.

<sup>20</sup> George Haywood Jayce, S. J. *Principles of Logic*, New York 1906, p. 297

workers or attempt to take away the property of a given social group, the reactions will be fairly reliable. The character of the reaction may differ according to environment, but there will definitely be resistance. It is easy to generalize a group rather than an individual—even predict as in science.

Further, Historical Method and Scientific Method are the same. In both you proceed from the assembling of facts to generalisations and from generalisations back to the facts. In both you begin with common sense and working hypothesis; and as you go on you modify your hypothesis in accordance with evidence. And therefore, generalisation is built up and theories which illuminate the facts, in the light of which they may be interpreted and often gain significance. Both in science and history generalisation is subject to revision in the light of new evidences — it is being moulded and remoulded.

What is the purpose of these elaborate research in history? As in science it is only accuracy and complete information. Methods in both history and science are the same — science shorn of documents. Yet all these are external. The inner spirit of history is spiritual. The historian's business is like the novelists, to render life in proper terms, and by common sense interpretations. It is knowledge of human nature from experience and understanding by sympathetic insight and imagination.<sup>21</sup>

The essence of history is in the concrete fact, the manifold variety of events and happenings that once took place in the real world. The historian's business is to narrate them, to re-create them. To do that he needs to be an artist. The process of historical recreation is not essentially different from that of the poet of novelists, except that his imagination must be subordi-

<sup>21</sup> Dilthey, Quoted, E. B. Kellett Op. Cit, p. 93.

nated sleeplessly to the truth. He must consent to be ruled by the evidence and never once go against it. It is an austere, a searching vacation. Imagination insight and intuitive understanding have been the end of the historian, however scientific his methods be. Therefore, history will always remain an art.

### Historical Method:

The term historical method is used by many disciplines, but with a difference in use. Almost all social scientists use historical testimony – authentic and credible data. Authenticity and credibility, of course, depends on systematic analysis and scientific chopping of facts. "Historical method includes the process of critical examination and analysis of the records and survivals of the past"<sup>22</sup> Professor Hockett holds a slightly different view and observe- "Historical Method is, strictly speaking, a process supplementary to observations, a process by which the historian attempts to test the truthfulness of the reports of observations made by others. Like the scientists he examines his data and formulates hypotheses. i.e. tentative conclusions. These conjectures he must test by seeking fresh evidence or reexamining the old, and this process he must continue until, in the light of all available evidence, the hypotheses are abandoned as untenable or modified, until they are brought into conformity with available evidence."<sup>23</sup>

### The essentials of Historical Method:

The basic elements of historical methods are:

- a) Authenticity of the material.
- b) Credibility (established after careful examination) of the material.

<sup>22</sup> Louis Gottschalk, *Understanding History*, New York : 1950, p. 48.

<sup>23</sup> Homer C. Hockett, *The Critical Method of Historical Research and Writing* ; New York. 1965, p. 8

- c) Exposition (properly connected narratives).

Gottschalk prescribes the following steps as historical methods.<sup>24</sup>

1. the collections of surviving objects and of the printed, written, or oral material that may be relevant.
2. The exclusion of that which are unauthentic.
3. the extraction of the credible.
4. the organization of the reliable testimony.

### **Development of Historical Method:**

Scientific method of historical writing has attracted the attention of the historians to-day. The basic idea behind this is that the student of history is always in search of truth and that the scientific method will help him to accomplish his goal. Scientific method is a sophisticated form, and before reaching this stage historical method has undergone many changes. Improvements have been made at each stage of its growth. There has been retrogression even. The methods changed according to the conception.

The earliest forms of writing were theocratic and mythic, which R.G. Callingwood calls 'quasi history'.<sup>25</sup> The deeds recorded were not human actions but divine actions. Every action is conceived 'theocratically'. No unknown fact was sought to be discovered but a statement of known facts for the benefit of those who ought to know them but do not know yet, was the conception of history. It is not at all history as we understand it to-day. This is theocratic history explaining the dictates of Gods and implementations of the same by mankind.

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<sup>24</sup> Gottschalk, *Op. Cit*, p. 28

<sup>25</sup> *Idea of History*, p. 14.

The second variety of quasi-history was myth. "Myth is not concerned with human actions at all. The human element has been completely purged away and all the characters of the story are only gods. Divine actions that are recorded are not dated."<sup>26</sup> These two forms dominated the whole of Near East until the rise of the Greeks. The Hebrew scriptures contain a great deal of both theocratic history and myth.

With Herodotus and Thucydides, appearing in the historical scene in the 5th Century B. C., the historical method registered its scientific approach. The Greek historians attached great importance to 'research'. There was no legend or myth. Yet theocratic elements continued to be present in their work. The work of Homer is not research, it is theocratic legend, but contained historical facts.

### **Herodotus : (5th Century B. C.)**

Herodotus stands out as the father of history, and is set against a background consisting of the general tendencies of Greek thought. Though the methods employed by Herodotus cannot be credited as scientific as we understand them, it should be admitted that by skillful questioning Herodotus was able to elicit information from his informants and thus to attain knowledge in a field where Greeks had thought it impossible. He dealt with human elements instead of divine elements. Though not systematic, his work provides causation. He tried to explain why men did certain thing and how they did it. He also used documents pertaining to the declaration of wars and signing of treaties. He speaks about the people, places etc. His work has the distinction of writing on human element.

The father of history is not free from defects. He certainly recognises the greatness of Persia and the

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 15

Persians, but he shows that his heart is with the Athenians he being a Greek. The narrative suffers from lack of continuity and dates are not accurate. Yet, it must be admitted that Herodotus introduced a new dimension to history.

Thucydides' 'History of the Peloponnesian War' (5th Century B. C.) provides the near scientific history. It is research. He answered questions raised by him. Thucydides supplemented his own observations by the reports of other eye witnesses. He admitted that certain discrepancies existed because the accounts of the witnesses differed. He held that lapse of memory, and partisan bias were the reason for the discrepancies. He insisted that the accounts should be subjected to most severe and detailed tests. On top of it all it was human history and not divine. Where Herodotus does not speak of evidence Thucydides gives importance to it. Hence, an improvement on Herodotus.

The Greek historical method was based on 'logography', which was a serious limitation for the historian. They depended on living memory and could criticise only eyewitness, and could not apply critical method. There was no choice to the historian; he had to write about events which happened within living memory of the people. This imposed shortness of historical perspective and the historian was confined to particularism.

During the Hellenic period, as the Greek empire enlarged, Greece ceased to be the unit of history; instead the world became the unit. Therefore, eye witness was not possible and instead of writing the history of the larger area, patching up of material from other histories was followed. This method was called the 'Scissor and paste method'. The 5th century critical approach was not possible.



**Polybius: (221-144 B. C.)**

Polybius had a definite theme – “the conquest of world by Rome”. His period of writing, covered 150 years before the time of writing, that is five generations instead of one. History for the Romans meant continuity. The Romans actually conscious of their own continuity with the past, were careful to preserve the memorials of the past. They not only kept the postscripts of their ancestors, but ancient traditions of their own corporate history, also, which the Greeks did not know. The traditions were undoubtedly adulations of republican Rome but Polybius, with his philosophical and critical mind guarded against the dangers of distortion. He started the story where he thought his evidence was trustworthy and from beginning to the end of his writing he was conscious of the need to be critical. His omission of the tradition of the foundation of Rome is an example of critical approach, based on reliable facts only. However, Polybius applied the Hellenistic conceptions of ethics to history, when he said that man was no longer master of his fate. Yet he asserted that the aim of history is to ascertain truth; though his method was scissor and paste in the introductory phases.

**Livy : (59 B. C. - 17 A. D.)**

Polybius was the last of the Hellenic tradition of historical thought and with him it passed into the hands of Rome. Livy was the only original contributor to the development of historical thought in Rome. He conceived of the idea of the ‘complete history of Rome’ from her very beginning. Throughout, his method was Scissor and paste. His task was to assemble the traditional records of early Roman history and weld them together into a single continuous narrative, – the History of Rome. It was the first time anything of that sort had been done<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *Op. Cit.* p. 36.

Livy was a philosophical historian; he made no claim to original research or original method. Secondly he emphasised his moral purpose and third he was clear that history is humanistic.

Livy is charged with grossest credulity in using his authorities. But he did his best to be critical. Three courses were open to him. 1) to repeat them accepting their substantial accuracy; 2) to reject them; 3) to repeat them with the caution that he was not sure of their truth. It must be remembered at this point that the methodical criticism practised by every modern historian was still not invented. Livy's tendency was to accept tradition and repeat it in good faith.

### **Tacitus :**

Tacitus represents the start of the decline. Tacitus stands tall as a contributor to historical literature. But as an historian he was obsessed with the thought that Rome was Roman Empire. His outlook was biased in favour of the sensational opposition and ignorance of activities of warfare. Basically Tacitus never thought of the fundamental problems of his enterprise. He wrote with the spirit of a rhetorian rather than that of a serious thinker.

Tacitus represented history as essentially a clash between characters. Still worse is that he never saw the characters from within, with sympathy or understanding, but viewed them only as spectacles of virtues or vices. Scientific history cannot be written without the historian enacting the drama in his mind before writing. This is thoroughly lacking in Tacitus.

Livy and Tacitus are considered monuments of barrenness of Roman historical thought. Livy attempted a really great task but he failed because of his method, which was

too simple to cope with the complexity of material. Tacitus attempted a new approach, psychological didactic. Instead of being an enrichment this was an impoverishment - a decline in historical honesty.

### **The character of a Graeco-Roman historiography :**

The character of Graeco-Roman historiography was dominated by two factors.

- 1) Humanism the narrative of human history.
- 2) Substantialism philosophical idea is the idea of human will. That is whatever happened in history, happens as a direct result of human will; that some one is directly responsible for it, to be praised or blamed.

For Herodotus, there was an attempt of real historical point of view. To him events were important in themselves and knowledge by themselves. For Thucydides events were important chiefly for the light they throw on eternal and substantial entities of which they were mere accidents. For Livy history was a frozen solid. Incidents were actions and the agent was that counted much. Rome was Livy's here for narrative, therefore Rome was his substance. Livy thought of Rome substantially and not historically. Graeco-Roman historiography never showed how anything came into existence. All stages of history appeared to be ready-made.

The nemesis of this substantialistic attitude was historical scepticism. Events were mere transitory accidents, were realised as unknowable and substance knowable. This produced a kind of dejection about historical accuracy and an unconscientiousness in historical mind as such.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *The idea of history*, 45.

## Christianity :

During the middle ages the spirit of enquiry was spoiled by the church fathers and the historical method suffered a set-back. In the 5th century B. C. the idea of history was 'science and a form of research.' During the 4th and 5th Century A. D., after the advent of christianity, the idea of history was remodelled by revolutionary effect of christian thought. The two ideas of humanism and substantialism were jettisoned by the christian thought:

1. The moral experience of Christianity that the achievements of man are due not to his own proper forces of will and intellect, but to something other than himself carry him to desired ends that are worth pursuing. The wisdom displayed in his action is not his, but is the wisdom of God, by whose grace man's desires are directed to worthy ends. This conception of Grace is the correlative of the conception of original sin.<sup>29</sup>

2. The metaphysical doctrine of the Graeco-Romans was challenged by the Christian doctrine of creation. Accordingly, nothing is eternal except God and everything else has been created by Him — the spiritual substance.

The effect of these were :

- 1) "historical process is God's purpose and not man's.
- 2) "to carry out that many vehicles are created and they are agents of God's purposes"—This is on the basis of the theological conception of Sin, Grace and Creation.
- 3) Universalism of Christian attitude. The infusion of Christian ideas overcame not only the characteristic humanism and the substantialism of Graeco-Roman historiography, but also its particularism.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 47.

The character of Christian historiography were three-fold:

1. Universalism—different from the Graeco-Roman concept of Universalism because of its particularistic centre of gravity. The Christian vision covered the whole world going back to the origin of man. The rise and fall of all civilizations were included in the universal concept of Christianity, but in the Graeco-Roman either Greece or Rome was the pivot, round which everything revolved.

2. Providential history—with a different concept of theocratical history of the East. In the East also theocratic history was written but their concept was that each society had its own God. But the Christian theocratic history included the whole world into its realm and God (Christ) was the only director of all acts all over the world.

3. Apocalyptic history involving the period of darkness and period of light. The birth and life of Christ was taken as a datum and the period before that was the dark period. After Christ when people had the benefit of Christ's teaching it was the period of light.

Having divided the past into two divisions, they were further sub-divided into epochs and periods to distinguish other events, not so important as the birth of Christ but important in their own way. Each epoch or period had peculiar characteristics of its own and had marked difference from others, and called in technical language of historiography as 'epoch making'. All these have now become common but were not known to Graeco-Roman.

### **Theocratic Medieval :**

Medieval Historiography is in one way a contribution of the Graeco-Roman. Two methods remained unchanged—depended for facts on tradition and had no effective

weapon to criticise that tradition. There was no means of studying the tradition. The only criticism possible was personal criticism, which was unscientific, unsystematic but had style and imagination.

But unlike Livy, the Medieval historian treated the matter from a universal point of view. The task of medieval historian was the task of discovering and expounding objectivity or divine plan. Divine plan was his objectivity.

The medieval historiography was very weak in critical method. It did not depend on the limitations of the sources and materials. They did not want an accurate and scientific study of the divine attributes, a theology based securely on the double foundation of faith and reason which will enable them to determine a priori what might have happened and what might suffer.

### **Renaissance Historical Method :**

The term Renaissance is applied in a narrower sense to the revival of classical art, learning and literature and, in its wider sense, to the resurgence of the secular, individualistic and critical spirit of classical antiquity which undermined the medieval social, political and religious systems and ushered in an era of individual freedom. Humanism was revived and the individual was exalted. The cream of renaissance was the spirit of inquiry. The spirit of inquiry led to study, discussion, comment and criticism.

As a result of inquiry and criticism, Europeans thought of bringing about a fresh reorientation of historical studies. Medieval theological interpretation of history was discarded; and they adopted inductive method of observation and experiment. The scholars of the Renaissance period developed the principles of textual criticism and made an effort to restore the original writings, and abandoned the

principle of a priori Logic and reconstructed history on scientific basis.

Humanists' view of history with accurate scholarship came to the fore. Human actions were no longer felt to be pre-determined – there was no place for divine faith. History thus became the history of human passions, regarded as necessary manifestations of human nature.

The positive fruits of this new movement was demonstrated by the cleaning up operations of the ill-founded medieval historiography. John Bodin, during the middle of the 16th century rejected the Biblical interpretation of the foundation of the 'Four Empires'. Polydore Virgil (in the 16th century) disproved the old story that Britain was founded by Brutus, the Trojan and laid the foundations of a critical history of England. During the 17th century Bacon divided the knowledge into three divisions, Poetry, History and Philosophy and held that they were ruled by imagination, memory<sup>30</sup> and understanding. Camden used Topography and archaeology for the construction of history. The natural sciences started assisting the writing of history.

The Renaissance scholars, in reviving many elements of the Graeco-Roman conception of history, had revived the idea that its value was a practical value, instructing men in the art of politics and practical life. Descartes rejected this. Descartes was actually propounding a criterion by which they could be criticised and by which the truth they concealed or distorted could be rediscovered. But he did not lay down any rules or codes for historical criticism. Therefore, what remained was historical scepticism (of Descartes). Causation came as a remedy.

### **Causation or Determinism :**

No self-respecting modern historian is content merely with recording what happened, he wants to explain why it

<sup>30</sup> Memory is history is also wrong.

happened. Of all problems of history, causation is the most urgent, the most fascinating, and the most baffling. The search for the causes of things is and has been the chief pre-occupation of thoughtful historians.

The term 'causes' has been taken from the Latin word 'Causa' and has essentially a legal connotation and means a relation of connectedness between events. It is a convenient figure of speech for anyone of a number of factors which helps to explain.<sup>31</sup> Many and various definitions are offered on causation. Dr. Thomsons' seem to come very near to our understanding of 'Cause'. He says "by cause of a thing, the sum of the facts to which it owes its being".<sup>32</sup> Another apt definition of cause is "that which makes a thing to be what it is".<sup>33</sup>

In modern usage we have the immediate cause, and underlying cause" etc. Aristotle said that every material thing has four causes the efficient, the final the formal and the material. To explain the meaning of these terms let us take the illustration of a statue. The efficient cause of the statue is the sculpter, the final cause is the motive, be it honour or profit, that leads him to execute the work. These are known as the 'extrinsic' causes. The formal and material causes are termed 'intrinsic', since they are internal constitutive principles of the thing itself. The formal cause is the determining principle which gives the thing specific character — the shape of the statue.<sup>34</sup> In a natural entity such as man, or any one of the animals the formal cause is not of, course, the more external shape. The unifying principle of the material object that which makes it to be the kind of thing it is, is the vital principle the soul. The material cause is the substratum to which

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<sup>31</sup> H. S. Commager, *Op. Cit.* 79.

<sup>32</sup> *Law of thought*, 218.

<sup>33</sup> George Hayward Jodge, *Principles of Logic*, 220.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 157.



the formal principle gives its character. In the statute it is the marble.

Though the concept of "Cause" is available from the times of Aristotle, there has been no satisfactory application. Some did not give importance, others could not succeed. But the quest for knowing the "Cause" of any thing of event – the course of history was persistent. Only in the last two or three centuries the inquiry has been both openminded and independent. Socrates, in one of the most famous of his discourses, asserted the validity of inquiry. "That we shall be better and braver and less helpless if we think that we ought to enquire than we should have been if we indulged in the idle fancy that there was no knowing and no use in seeking to know what we do not know – that is a theme upon which I am ready to fight in world and deed to the utmost of my power."

Yet Causation did not attract the attention of most of the Ancient historians. Greek and Roman historians were influenced by the dictum, that whatever happened was bound to happen, that it was all in the hands of gods or fate. The question why they happened did not arise – Thucydides did not inquire into the deeper causes for the Peloponnesian war or the defeat of Athens nor did Plutarch inquire into the causes of the virtues and the vices he described.

Christian historians till the reformation and down to the age of reason were governed by dictum 'he who is destined to be hanged will never be drowned'. As explained earlier, history to them was God's purpose and man was only a vehicle to carry out. No wonder that supernatural and divine plan were the governing factors in writing history.

### **Rationalist Theory :**

During the 17th and 18th centuries historians abandoned supernatural and divine plans and greater em-

phasis was given to the role of man in the making of history and historical writing also consequently adapted that pattern. They wanted to know how and why a particular thing happened — reasons. Locke believed that mutual love among men was the dominant characteristic of natural society and that their civil institutions were derived from reason and the desire to preserve their freedom and privileges. With this conception the use of mythology and tradition had to be given up. As Vico did, they had to follow the critical method to recover by scientific analysis of data, truths, which have been completely forgotten. French historians also held the view that human history attained perfection due to accountable knowledge and the triumph of reason. They were trying to bringing the religious era of human history to an end and inaugurating a non-religious rational era. Yet writers like Voltaire and Hume did very little to improve the methods of historical research. They took over the methods devised in the preceeding generation.

Montesquieu conceived human life as a reflection of geographical and climatic conditions and historical changes were due to different stimuli. Montesquieu was uncritical in the extreme and did not realise that it is not the character of the environment that is important factor but what man is able to get out of it is more important and deciding factor; but his insistence on the relation of man to his environment and on the economic factors which in his view underlay political institutions was important not only in itself but for the future development of historical research.

The enlightenment historian Gibbon conceived history as anything but an exhibition of human wisdom; but instead of finding its positive principle in the laws of nature, he found the motive force of history in human irrationality itself. Romanticism represented a new ten-

dency to see a positive value and interest in civilizations very different from its own. To the Romantists the conception of history was a progress, a development of human reason or the education of mankind. According to this conception past stages in history led necessarily to the present. Rousseau was a child of enlightenment, but through his interpretation of its principle he became the father of the Romantic movement. Rousseau's base was the general will of the people.

Herder, the German thinker was perhaps the first to recognize National Character as a factor in history. He contended "that there are differences between kinds of men, and geography and climate cannot be the criteria in a civilization, and it is the peculiar nature of different people that is the criterion". Herder is thus became the father of anthropology in history. The racial theory of civilization has ceased to be scientifically respectable but the problem which Herder bequeathed — the distinction between nature and man — still has currency, subject to the operation of the spiritual life of man.

Kant has made a great contribution to historical thought. He outlined a programme for a kind of historical inquiry, "a universal history which shall show how the human race has gradually become more and more rational, and therefore more and more free; a history of the self-development of the man. Such a task will need two qualifications; historical learning and philosophical head. History then will be a progress towards rationality, which will be at the same time an advance in rationality".

Hegel, Comte, and Simon concluded that human emotions were the chief moving forces behind human destiny. Hegel held that history should be understood and not ascertained as to why the facts happened as they did.

To Hegel, history does not repeat itself. (e.g.) Wars reappear, but every new war belongs to a different kind. There is no history, except the history of human life and that, not merely as life, but as rational life, the life of thinking-dialectic. Hegel maintained that history is a display of reason, for reason uses passion itself as its tool in bringing about its end. And the historian's task is not knowing what people did but understanding what they thought as the main spring of historical forces is 'reason'. Political development should be conceived by the historian as integrated with economic, artistic, religious, and philosophical developments. The sum total of Hegel's conception of History was that history was 'rational' dialectic.

### Marxian Theory :

Marx's view of history has both the strength and weakness of Hegel's. Like Hegel, Marx wanted to pene- behind the facts to the logical nexus of underlying concepts—this is strength of Hegel. If Hegel's weakness is the selection of one aspect 'the political' and contending that was rational, Marx replaced the political, with 'economic' and averred that it was fully rational in itself. He offered an economic interpretation of history and claimed that was the only influencing factor in history.

To quote Marx's *Critique of political economy* is apt and self-explanatory.

"The basic factor in history is at all times the economic factor; the mode of production and distribution, the division and consumption of wealth, the relationship of employer to employee, the class-war between the rich and the poor. These determine, in the long run, every aspect of life-religious, moral, philosophical, scientific, literary and artistic. The sum of the relations of produc-

tion constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond the definite forms of social consciousness."

"First, I do not divide history into ancient, medieval and modern; that in itself is a medieval division. I divide human history into hunting and pastoral stage, the agricultural and handicraft stage, the industrial and machine stage. The great events are not political but economic; they are not the battle of Marathon, or the assassination of Caesar or the French Revolution, but the Agricultural Revolution, - the passage from hunting to tillage - and the Industrial Revolution - the passage from domestic industry to the factory system."

"Economic conditions determine the rise and fall of empires; political, moral and social conditions have little to do with it; immorality, luxury, refinement - these are not causes but effects. At the bottom of everything is the nature of the soil is it fit for tillage, or only for hunting the pasturage? Does it contain useful minerals? Egypt became powerful because of its iron, ancient Britain because of its tin, modern Britain because of iron and coal. The failing silver mines of Athens weakened her, the gold of Macedon strengthened Philip and Alexander. Rome fought Carthage for the silver mines of Spain, and decayed when her soil lost its fruitfulness."

"The French Revolution came not because the Bourbons were corrupt, nor because Voltaire wrote brilliant satires; it came because through three hundred years a new economic class, the commercial bourgeoisie, had been frising towards equality with the land-owning aristocracy and because at last they had acquired more wealth, and more economic power, than those gilded utilities who fluttered about the court of Louis XVI. Political power sooner or later follows economic power.

successful revolutions are merely the political signatures to preceding economic victories. Harrington expressed it many years ago, the form of government depends upon the distribution of the land; if most of it is owned by one man, you have monarchy; if it is owned by a few, you have aristocracy; if it is owned by the people, you get democracy”.

“Why was America discovered? For Christianity’s sake? No; for gold. Why did the English win it from the Spanish, the Dutch and the French? Because they had the money to build better fleets. Why did the Colonies revolt against England? Because they did not wish to pay unreasonable taxes, because they wanted to end the tyranny of English aristocrats holding power over them by royal grants of land; because they desired to trade without hindrance, both in rum and in slaves; and because they wished to pay their debts in a depreciated currency.”

“Individuals and groups are often moved by non-economic motives — racial, religious, patriotic, sexual; but these individuals and groups, where their action enters into the determination of history, are manipulated by persons quite conscious of economic interest. Are the politicians who send soldiers to battle, with material speech and music, altogether innocent of economic motive? They say that Coloumbus sought the Indies to present new Christians to the Pope; it is quite possible, though improbable, that the old man had such ideas in his head; but do you suppose that Ferdinand and Isabella helped him for such reasons? Individuals may act for other than economic motives; they may sacrifice themselves to their children, their fellow-men or their gods; but these stray deeds of heroism or insanity have no importance in determining the rise and fall of nations. I do not apply economic determining to individuals.

There are no moral forces in history. Economic factors lurk behind every great event. Garrison made no headway against slavery by moral appeals; and when Lincoln freed the slaves it was a war measure, intended to weaken the South; he said frankly that he would have left them slaves if that would have made for peace. The South wanted to separate from the North because it was being injured by the tariff, and had lost all hope of ever again controlling Congress; the North wanted to keep the South as market for manufactures and a source of food and raw materials. The 'ideals' on either side were fig-leaves. In every case an ideal is a material need phraseologically disguised as a moral aspiration."<sup>36</sup>

What Marx was doing was to re-assert the fundamental principle of eighteenth-century historical naturalism, the principle that historical events have natural causes. He re-asserted this principle, no doubt, with a difference. The Hegelian side in the pedigree of his thought gave it the right to bear in its arms the term 'dialectical materialism'. The difference is not unimportant but it must not be exaggerated. Dialectical materialism was still materialism. And the whole point of Marx's conjuring trick with the Hegelian dialectic was accordingly this: that whereas Hegel had broken away from the historical naturalism of the eighteenth century, and had not indeed achieved, except in a partial way, but had at any rate demanded an autonomous history. Marx went back on this demand and subjected history once more to that dominion by natural science from which Hegel had proclaimed it free.

The step which Marx took was a retrograde one; but like so many other retrograde steps, it was more retrograde

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<sup>36</sup> Karl Marx *Political economy*, Quoted, Will Durant (New York) 226 - 230.

in appearance than it was in reality; for the territory he was evacuating was territory that had never been effectively occupied. Hegel had demanded an autonomous history, but he had not in fact achieved it. He had seen, as it were prophetically, that history ought on principle to be liberated from its pupilage to natural science but in his own actual historical thinking that liberation had not been fully achieved. It had not been achieved, that is to say with regard to what he ordinarily called history, i. e. political and economic history; a field in which Hegel was not a master and in which he mainly contented himself with scissors and paste methods. In history of philosophy, however and here alone he did enter into effective occupation of an historical field, and it was here that he must have convinced himself, as he had convinced many a reader, that his claim of autonomy for historical thought was in principle justified. That is one reason why dialectical materialism has always had its greatest successes with political and economic history, and its greatest failures in the history of philosophy.<sup>36</sup>

If Marx's reversal of the Hegelian dialectic was a backward step, it was also a preliminary to an advance. It was based on the realities of the situation which Hegel bequeathed to his pupils, and, in particular, it led to a great advance in the handling of that particular kind of history, economic history, in which Hegel was weak and in which Marx was exceptionally strong. If all, modern treatment of the history of philosophy goes back to Hegel as the great modern master of the subject, all modern treatment of economic history goes back in the same sense to Marx. Nevertheless, the practice of research can no more, be left to day where Hegel left it for the history of philosophy, or where Marx left it with his dialectical

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<sup>36</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *Op. cit.*, 122-123.



materialism. These were expedients whereby a type of history which had not passed beyond the scissors-and-paste stage attempted to conceal the defects inherent in that stage by the adoption of non-historical thought. The conditions which justified and indeed necessitated them no longer exist.<sup>37</sup>

### **Towards Scientific theory and Methods Positivism**

The historical materialism of Marx and his colleagues exercised little immediate influence on historical practice, which in the nineteenth century came more and more to suspect all philosophies of history as baseless speculations. This was connected with a general tendency in the same century towards positivism. Positivism may be defined as philosophy acting in the service of natural science, as in the Middle Ages philosophy acted in the service of theology. But the positivists had their own action of what natural science was. They thought it consisted of two things; first, ascertaining facts; secondly, framing laws. The facts were immediately ascertained by sensuous perception. The laws were framed through generalising from these facts by induction. Under this influence a new kind of historiography arose, which may be called positivistic historiography.

The effect of this discovery was vastly to increase the prestige of historical thought i. e. thought about history and thought about nature, had been antagonistic. History demanded for itself a subject-matter essentially progressive with Darwin, the scientific point of view capitulated to the historical, and both now agreed in conceiving their subject matter as progressive. Evolution could now be used as a

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

generic term covering both historical progress and natural progress. The victory of evolution in scientific circles meant that the positivistic reduction of history to nature was qualified by a partial reduction of nature to history.

The historians of the early and middle nineteenth century had worked out a new method of handling sources the method of philological criticism. This essentially consisted of two operations: first the analysis of sources (which still meant literary or narrative sources) into their component parts distinguishing earlier and later elements in them and thus enabling the historian to discriminate between the more and the less trustworthy portions; and secondly, the internal criticism of even the more trustworthy parts showing how the author's point of view affected his statement of the facts, and as enabling the historian to make allowance for the distortions thus produced.

But although this growing autonomy of historical thought enabled it to resist to some extent the extremest forms of the positivist spirit, it was nevertheless deeply influenced by the spirit. As I have already explained, nineteenth-century historiography accepted the first part of the positivist programme, the collection of facts, even if it declined the second, the discovery of laws. But it still conceived its facts in a positivistic manner, i.e. as separate or atomic. This led historians to adopt two rules of method in their treatment of facts: (i) Each fact was to be regarded as a thing capable of being ascertained by a separate act of cognition or process of research, and thus the total field of the historically knowable was cut up into an infinity of minute facts each to be separately considered. (ii) Each fact was to be thought of not only as independent of all the rest but as independent of the knower, as that all subjective elements (as they were called) in the historian's point of view had to be eliminated. The

historian must pass no judgement on the facts, he must only say what they were.<sup>38</sup>

In history, the word 'fact' bears a very different meaning. It is arrived at inferentially by a process of interpreting data according to a complicated system of rules and assumptions. A theory of historical knowledge would discover what these rules and assumptions are and would ask how far they are necessary and legitimate.

At the close of the 19th century Dilthey with Hegel claimed that Universal history is a continuing process and historical events help to elucidate the development. They emphasised that history should be a quest for values providing "explanation and guidance for the life of the present day" (Historical school of Germany).

The pluralistic school rejected the notion of history as a chain of important events and deeds of the prominent men. According to them history embraces into it social, cultural, philosophic and economic developments. Therefore, there are many causes for a development in history rather than the single cause.<sup>39</sup>

As against Marx's dialectical materialism, positivism standing for progress and scientific state of history developed. But what has come to stay is the scientific theory of Ranke, Spengler and Corce. To them the historian is the Judge of the past and present. He views things through unbiased eyes. He collects material, chop them scientifically and tests them as to authenticity and value and reenact the drama in his mind and presents it in a clear way, in understandable style. This is a literary creation too. Facts are raw material and the scientific history is the finished product. The scientific theory insists on docu-

<sup>38</sup> B.G. Collingwood, *Op.Cit.*, 126 - 33

<sup>39</sup> Gardener, *Nature of Historical Explanation* (London., 1948) 9

ments, that is substantial evidence for any statement. The student of history is always in search of truth and we shall see in the following pages the methods to achieve scientific truth and writing scientific history.

## **Chapter I**

# **CHOOSING OF THE SUBJECT**

In India research is usually undertaken after post-graduation. The first problem the researcher is confronted with is the choice of the subject. Choosing a subject is of vital importance and it must be done with the utmost care. The significance of the choice of the subject is stressed in the saying "when you succeed in choosing a proper subject, your research is half done". It is true that it is an exaggeration yet there is a grain of truth in it.

A subject is normally chosen with the assistance of the supervisor; but the scholar should not entirely rely on this. The supervisor must provide the scholar with broad outlines, taking into consideration the possible avenues of research, research done in other parts of the country (to avoid overlapping), availability of material etc. Then the scholar must select a topic for himself and never a topic should be selected for him. He must pick up a theme which has attracted his attention in the post-graduate course. Such a topic will hold challenge and interest. A student while in his post-graduate studies might have felt that enough has not been known in a particular subject. An inquisitive mind may be allowed to prove further. At the M.A. level several subjects including optionals are offered. Practical experience has shown that even among the optionals, the students' attention or affinity is not equally drawn to every subject. Some are more fascinating than the others. It depends upon the aptitude of the student. For instance, one may like modern period, though he studies the ancient also. And even within the modern period, political history may be a preferred theme for a few whereas constitutional or socio-economic history may be liked by others. Therefore, in the first place,

depending on the aptitude of the scholar the period (say Ancient or Modern) and nature of the topic must be decided.

It is not merely the nature of the topic that decides the choice of the subject matter of research. Every topic requires its own preliminary training, like knowledge of different languages, diplomatic, elements of international law and the like. Therefore, the equipment of the scholar with the necessary training must also be considered before electing a topic. Or alternatively the possibility of the scholar equipping himself with the necessary training must atleast be considered before choosing a subject.

A person intending to work on 'Ancient India' must besides the historical background, be capable of culling out information from Archaeological sources, reading inscriptions, deciphering ancient scripts and must be familiar with Sanskrit. Likewise a person venturing to work on the Sangam period, must possess a sound knowledge of Tamil literature and traditions. This is a requirement over and above his basic knowledge in history.

When we come to the medieval period the languages that are to be studied, besides the regional language are Persian, Urdu, and Arabic. It will be imperfect to work on the history of the Madurai Sultanate with the limited knowledge of Tamil and English. Knowledge of Persian and Arabic sources will make the scholar understand things in the proper perspective. Of course, knowledge of epigraphy is a must,

For the colonial period of India,<sup>1</sup> the scholar's equipments are different. Epigraphy has very limited scope.<sup>2</sup> Its place is taken up by other contemporary accounts like the factory records, travel accounts, correspondence etc. Here the demand on the scholar is a knowledge of Portuguese, Dutch or French as the case might be—besides English and the regional language or languages. One or more regional languages become a necessary adjunct in some cases. Thus study on the poligars of Tamil Nadu in the 16th and 17th centuries requires a knowledge of Tamil and Telugu among the regional languages and English and Portuguese and Latin (to understand the Jeusuit letters) among the European Languages. For an understanding of the history of the Marathas of Tanjore training in Marathi in Modi script is a basic need.

There are unconventional subjects like the Foreign policy of a country, Inter-national Relations and Socio-Economic themes of a broad area involving many nations like 'The Economic History of Asia' which call for interdisciplinary knowledge. To write on the Foreign policy of India under Nehru, the scholar must be acquainted with the concept of National Power, diplomatic theories, elements of international law, international conventions, political philosophy of India and other countries involved and practical application of the philosophies etc. Such subjects are not easy for the beginners.

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to consider the period from 1498 to 1947 as the Colonial period, for the traditional three divisions of Indian History do not adequately accommodate the Portuguese and the Dutch interaction

<sup>2</sup> For South Indian history, some inscriptions of the Vijayanagar Empire and the Nayak kingdom do provide some information but they are not as useful as the factory Records. However, for the social history, these inscriptions are helpful.

## 2. Availability of sufficient Material :

After choosing the broad area of research, and before finalising the actual topic of research, the availability of adequate sufficient source material must be considered as an important criterion. It is a well known fact that not much is not known about the events in Tamil Nadu between 300 and 600 A.D. during the Kalabhara interegnum. Any reasonable student of South Indian History would like to probe into the matter and it is a viable field of research. But then he is faced with the serious limitation of paucity of material. A fresher should not be exposed to such a demanding topic. The history of the Portuguese in Tamil Nadu also falls into the same category with a difference. In this case, materials are available but they are disparate. Most of the materials are either with private individuals or in foreign countries. And they are in Portuguese and Latin languages. In this case, materials are available but not easily accessible. Therefore, for practical purposes, it should be treated as non-available and fresher should not be encouraged to work on such themes. Of course, a team of scholars or institution equipped with language training besides historical knowledge and commanding sound finance, could take up such work as projects. The supervisor must be able to furniture details about the availability of source material and help the scholar to decide on a subject.

### Proportion

Manageable proportion of time limit and size of the work must be taken into account in choosing a subject. The topic of research should be chosen in such a way that it can be completed within reasonable time limit, i.e. three to five years. A subject like 'The Development of Agriculture in Tamil Nadu from the Ancient times to the present' would involve the participation of many scholars, and consume quite a few years. The volume of the work



in proportion to the capacity of a single scholar within a given time is unimaginable. Such vague, sporadic, and disproportionate themes must be avoided. On the other hand topics like 'The trade under East India Company', 'Society in the 18th century Tamilagam', 'History of Textile industries in Coimbatore District', etc. are apt and manageable topics.

As far as possible, subjects of comparative history should be avoided by the fresh scholars. A topic of comparative study involves a triple knowledge. A comparative study like Samudra Gupta and Napoleon, or Shivaji and Gadphasis II or Puli Thevar and Shivaji or Hyder Ali involves specialization in more than one subject and a fresh scholar will not possess the acumen nor could he stand the strain. Therefore, such topics should be avoided. Likewise, theoretical subjects like 'The British Policy in India', 'Toynbee and Indian History' and 'Literature and History' should be dealt with by experienced, professional historians rather than a fresh research scholar.

Survey of the reviews of new books and bibliographical articles would provide clues for choosing a subject. To sum up, in choosing a subject, the spirit and nature of enquiry of the scholar, the availability and accessibility of source material the manageable proportion of the work and the practical aspects of a particular study must be carefully considered. It is desirable that the actual topic is chosen after a period of observation.

## **Chapter II**

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

After choosing a subject, a tentative bibliography is a must. To prepare a tentative bibliography the scholar must make extensive use of the Library. The Library is the research scholar's laboratory. There are special books which provide guidelines for the libraries to consult the catalogue, for subject and book titles as well as for authors to consult the relevant biographies, encyclopaedias, the indexes of historical monographs' Atlases, Historical biographies and other aids to prepare a list of books, articles and documents which the researcher will need

Bibliography may be prepared either on cards or on paper slips arranged in a scientific manner. Uniform size must be used. A tentative Bibliography is prepared by listing all the available published works either directly or indirectly relevant to the subject chosen for research.

Suppose a person is to work on the History of a particular region say 'Tirunelveli'. Then he has to prepare a tentative Bibliography of all the printed material already available on Tirunelveli (any aspect, regional histories of other areas, general histories of the adjoining areas. And as Tirunelveli is a district within the state of Tamil Nadu works on the history of Tamil Nadu as a whole must also be listed for the tentative bibliography. Further, works on the component units of Tirunelveli District, that is the geography, the economy, the sociology and the cultural trends, etc should also be included in the tentative bibliography. On course all the available books on historical methods must also be listed. In short anything which the scholar suspects to have any bearing on the subject must be included in the tentative Bibliography.

The scholar must face the problem of how to start? The answer is very simple. In any subject there will be one or few pioneering works which are very familiar. A person intending to work on the 16th, 17th or 18th century Tamilagam, might go to Prof. R. Sathianatha Iyer's *History of the Nayaks of Madura*. First list that book for the tentative bibliography and select other titles from the bibliography furnished by Professor R. Sathianath Iyer. This process could be furthered upto the very recent publication, by consulting book reviews and review articles.

It is also possible to list the documents to be consulted in the tentative Bibliography from the approved theses on relative subjects either published or unpublished.

The following pattern must be adopted in the tentative bibliography. For each book a separate card or slip must be used. The details recorded should be in the following order.

1. Name of the author.
2. Exact title of the book.
3. Total volumes of the work.
4. Place of publication with the name of the publisher.
5. Year of publication.

If the work is republished it must be stated specifically along with the year of republication, like 1975, second edition as the case might be. As far as possible the latest edition must be taken into consideration. For, it may contain fresh material, revised ideas, or new interpretation. In some special cases where the original edition is very different from the revised one, then both must be listed.  
Illustration:

Pillay, K. K.

**Social History of the Tamils**

Vol: I.

Madras

University of Madras Publication

1975 - (Second Edition).

If there are two authors, the prominent among the two must be given precedence.

Sastri, K. A. N. and Ramanna, H. S.

**Historical Method**

Madras

Viswananthan & Company, 1956.

In this illustration Prof. Sastri is well known in the historical world and therefore his name must be cited first. In case both the authors are of equal standard and status then the alphabetical order must be followed.

Barzun, Jacques and Graff, Henry F.

**The Modern Researcher**

New York

Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957.

It more than two authors are to be cited against the name of the authors, the well known and the prominent among them must be cited first and instead of all the names of the other authors, the word "others" may be used. So and so and others.

Fr. Hambye, S.J. F.R. and others,

**Christianity in India**

Alleppey

Prakasam Publications, 1972.

If many contribute to a work and there is an editor, then against the author's name, the editor's name must be cited with the specific appendage of 'editor'. The abbreviation in brackets(ed). may be used. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan series on Indian history is a product of joint venture of a number of stalwarts in Indian History, each one contributing in his specialized field. R. C. Majumdar is the general editor of the volumes and hence against the author's name the citation is Majumdar, R. C. (ed.)

Majumdar, R. C. (ed.)  
**The history and Culture of the  
Indian People.**

Vol. III The Classical Age.  
Bombay. 1972.

A scholar should know the system adopted in the library. 'Dictionary Catalogue' and the 'Alphabetic authors' and subject catalogues' will help the scholar to locate the particular book. The most commonly known methods of searching for a book in our libraries are to make a search under the following heads.

### **Author's Catalogue**

1. Under the surname of the author.

Suppose a student required Allen Johnson's *The Historian and Historical Evidence* he has to look into the Catalogue under the surname of the author 'Johnson'. The index card will provide the following details.

1. Name of the author.
2. Title of the book.
3. Call number.
4. Accession number.
5. Year of Publication
6. Number of copies available, etc.

At the Madras University Library this particular book will be numbered, of course along with the author's name and title of the book as 43181 V. F. 61. The letter 'V' indicates the broad subject 'History'. V denotes general history, V1 Indian history, V2 South Indian history, etc. Thus each number or letter has a significance. The scholar must first acquaint himself with these details that are available in libraries. When one knows these particulars it is easy to get at the books in the stack rooms.

### **2. Under the first word of the Title:**

When one is not sure of the author's name but know the title of the book, then the procedure to locate the book is to look into the index for the first word of the title of the book. A scholar wants to locate E. E. Kellett's *Aspects of History*. Let us assume that he does not know the author's name but knows the title of the book. Then he has to look up the title index and look for the first word of the title 'Aspects'. There may be many titles beginning with the same word 'Aspect', but there will be only one book with the same title as looked for. When the card relating to the book *Aspects of History* is found other details regarding the book, like the name of the author with year of publication etc. will also be found. For certainty and cross check, the same could be looked under the author's index, now that the name of the author is known. Other details may be followed as in the other case.

This title index will help the scholar to know more about the availability of titles relating to his subject. While searching for a particular title he might come across many a title hitherto unknown to him. When he gets such flashes he can go from the title index to the authors' index and add to his bibliography.

### **3. Appropriate subject heading:**

Some libraries and Archives maintain subject heading index. Under the broad subject 'History', sub-headings

like Indian History, South Indian History, etc. are provided. Under each head there are classifications like political, economic, social, art, architecture, diplomatic, etc. Each of these is further sub-divided say for instance under the heading *political*, you will have constitutional, war, elections, etc. and under *economic* the sub-headings are Trade, Commerce, Banking, Public Works, and Public works further divided into Irrigation, Rail road, etc. Each item can be further divided into minute divisions.

A scholar who is familiar with neither the authors nor the titles relating to his subject, will have to depend upon this appropriate subject headings, for his tentative bibliography. Once he gets the name of the authors of books and articles on his subject or vice versa, he can conveniently prepare a tentative bibliography.

Yet another important factor that must engage the attention of the scholar for his bibliography is the 'Cross entry.' A person preparing a bibliography on 'Communist China' must look both under the headings 'China' and 'Communism' for 'Irrigation in Tamil Nadu,' both 'Irrigation' and 'Tamilnadu' should be looked into. Likewise, there will be cross entries on authors too. In the library cards Nilakanta Sastri must be checked up both under 'Sastri' and 'Nilakanta'. Krishnaswamy Iyengar may appear both under 'Krishnaswamy' and 'Iyengar' Arnold Toynbee both under 'Arnold' and 'Toynbee'. But in the bibliography card the entry should be in conformity with the principle cited above.

Besides citing from the bibliographies of the relevant books, a tentative bibliography could be enriched by adding the titles found in the foot-notes of the Books, articles in periodicals, newspaper matter, citation o

government documents, etc. A careful examination of the Book stakes will add to the bibliography.

If a scholar comes across some relevant material from a book which also contains a reference to the original source then he must take the citation and look into the original source, instead of just recording the original source as found in the book.

Subject indexes are normally found for periodicals and journals and magazines and newspapers.

Compilation of bibliography is a continuous process.

### **Bibliographies : Varieties and Forms :**

Bibliography<sup>1</sup> is rather a loose term meaning information about the Book. There is another definition of bibliography, "a collection of foot-notes separated from their text and shorn of particular page references". This definition is applicable only to the Bibliography appended at the end of the book and not to the tentative bibliography which has been discussed in the foregoing pages. In this bibliography all that have been cited in the foot-notes will find a place. When a foot-note is made the intention is to point out accurately as to where exactly a particular reference occurs in a particular book or document, and therefore, the page numbers are also furnished along with the details of the name of the author, title, volume number, place and year of publication where as the bibliography is intended to furnish relevant general information about the source either a book or document, but not the specific page reference. (For further details see the chapter on Foot-notes)

There are three forms of Bibliography, General Bibliography, Select Bibliography and Critical or Annotated Bibliography.

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1. This is the final bibliography to be provided at the end of the works.



**General Bibliography :**

It is the most commonly used form of Bibliography, and contains the list of Books with all the details of the name of the author, number of volumes, place of publication and year of publication. Where there is a second edition or a reprint it should be specifically noted. It looks on the surface level as if the tentative Bibliography and General Bibliography are identical. But they are slightly different. A tentative Bibliography is the combination of all that have direct or indirect relevance to the subject, whereas the General bibliography is the list of books actually consulted by the author. Here again it must be remembered that it is not the list of books or documents actually used by the author but material having relevance to the subject and actually consulted by the author. For reasons best known to the author some of them might not have been used in the work yet relevant to the subject and hence finds a place in the Bibliography. Of course, the books, journals, articles and documents actually used by the author will naturally find a place in the Bibliography. The General bibliography is provided at the end of the work between the conclusion or appendix as the case might be and the Index.

**Select Bibliography :**

This is a more specialized and definite form of bibliography. This is not commonly used in theses but very much in use in specialized text books and research works not intended to fetch a degree. Select bibliography is given at the end of each chapter of the book. In a book on 'Modern China' there may be several chapters like 'The Taiping Rebellion', 'Yuan Shi-kai', 'The Chinese Communism', 'The Cultural revolution' and so on and so forth. At the end of each of these chapters a bibliography of works consulted or documents employed will be furnished.

This list will have direct relevance to the subject matter discussed in that chapter. This is intended for the specialist reader or researcher. A person may not be interested in all the chapters of the book but interested in a particular chapter. He may refer the bibliography of that particular chapter, either for enlarging the horizon of knowledge on that particular theme or subject matter, or for forming a critical estimate of that particular chapter, or to analyse the errors of omission and commission etc.

However, it is not the list for further reading. The list for further reading is provided, to facilitate the more than average reader, when a particular theme's scope is limited to suit the common reader and when there is scope for further depth in the same theme.

#### **Critical or Annotated Bibliography :**

This is highly sophisticated technical form of Bibliography. It is mostly used in research works not submitted for any degree. Instead of furnishing a list of books or documents used with full details about them (see general bibliography), this variety of bibliography tends to discuss about the subject matter of the documents or books. In the other two forms, we get only the outward manifestation of the work whereas in this category we are taken into the document or the book. If the other two forms are meant for information about the book or document, this is meant for the information in the book. This variety gives details about the contents of the book.

It is not a mere narrative of the subject matter or content of the documents or the books used in the preparation of the work but an interpretation and evaluation. It furnishes besides the subject matter, the authenticity of the material, the credibility of the material, the capacity of author to tell the truth, his bias, if any, the error of omission

ion and commission found in it, merits and defects, the relative objectivity, its language, style and dependability. (e. g.) K. M. Panikkar's - *Malabar and the Portuguese - Bombay - 1929* and *Malabar and the Dutch-Bombay - 1931*. In both the works Panikkar furnishes a very scholarly discussion on the documents employed in the works, and the authors of the documents. Panikkar is all praise for the historical value of these contemporary evidences but is highly critical about prejudices of the authors of the documents, namely the Colonial Governors. Panikkar gives a picturesque description of the lack of understanding of the European Governors on cultural matters and their consequent misgivings. He points out the limited dependability of these documents on such matters as Christianity in Kerala, influence of western thoughts on the Occidental people, Eastern philosophy and the like. To put it in the conventional style, the pros and cons of the subject matter of the source is critically analysed. This is what is expected of critical or annotated Bibliography.

## Chapter - III

# NATURE OF HISTORICAL SOURCES

The historian's mainstay is the sources. A first rate historian will wish to go to original sources of information.<sup>1</sup> What is source? The remains which the past leaves behind for us to examine are called sources.<sup>2</sup> The historical sources are the remains of man's unique activities in a society.<sup>3</sup> These are apt definitions of historical sources. But they are not all.

Basically there are two kinds of sources, the primary and the secondary. A primary source testifies of its own knowledge. Therefore, a primary source is testimony of a witness or a mechanical device which was present at the time of occurrence of an event, e. g. Archaeological remains, Inscriptions, Coins, Government and private Correspondence, Travel Accounts etc.

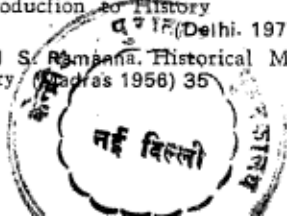
A secondary source is one which borrows its knowledge from others. In other words, the secondary source is a testimony of someone who was not present at the time of occurrence. (e.g. ) Gazetteers, books, articles, dissertations and the like.

A primary source is the raw material and a secondary source is a finished product. The former is more meaningful to the expert historian than to the lay man; the latter appeals even to the common man. The secondary source is the coherent work of history in the form of article, dissertation or book which will widen the general historical knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> Allen Johnson, *Historian and Historical Evidence* (New York, 1926) 2.

<sup>2</sup> John C. B. Webster, *An Introduction to History* (Delhi, 1977) 18.

<sup>3</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and H. S. Ramanna, *Historical Method in Relation to Indian History* (Madras 1956) 35.



A primary source may contain secondary data. Inscriptions are most commonly considered as primary sources because they are contemporary records. They are issued directly under the orders of persons concerned and in most cases under official supervision. And by and large the subject matter of the inscriptions are also contemporary like grant of land, tax exemption, capture of a country, construction of a temple etc. There are exceptions and we come across inscriptions which contain matter that is not contemporary. For example, the velvikudi grant of Paranthaka Nedunjadayan (768-815 A.D.) which speaks about the Kalabhras contain secondary information about the Kalabharas. Because the occurrence referred to in that inscription is about 300 years old and the inscription was not issued by the person involved in it. The same inscription becomes contemporary when it speaks about the restoration of some villages to the Brahmins.

The inscriptions of Asoka are primary sources for the study of the reign of Asoka. For the same history, the Junagadh inscription of Rudradaman is a secondary source. This inscription was issued three centuries later than the reign of Asoka, by an altogether different person. The subject matter is neither contemporaneous nor narrated by an eye witness therefore, it is a secondary. In the same way for the same reasons, Abul Fazal's *Ain-i-Akbari* is a primary source for the reign of Akbar and becomes a secondary source for the reign of Babur or Humayun. The administrative reports of the collectors submitted either at the end of every year or at the end of their term of office is primary source but the District Gazetteers incorporating these reports are secondary sources. Therefore, all contemporary evidence supported by eye witness are primary sources.

There are cases where an apparently primary sources containing secondary data. There are some other varieties of primary sources containing secondary data, (e. g.) A communique written by a general is a primary source, because it is contemporary, and issued by the person concerned and hence amounts to eye witness. A communique is an order and a directive, and that forms the subject matter, the data. The implementation of the order is the responsibility of the subordinate officer to whom the order is directed. And there is nothing to say whether it was carried out or not. In the absence of any specific reference for the fulfillment of the order, we cannot just on the basis of the communique decide that the order has been carried out. Therefore, in spite of the fact that the communique itself is a primary source, the data it provides is secondary.

Newspapers are primary sources but containing secondary data.<sup>4</sup> The correspondents of Newspapers depend on official sources. They are important because they contain primary particulars.(e.g.) Newspapers reporting a railway accident—the correspondent gathers information from the people involved in the accidents and reports ‘or gather official particulars regarding the accident and reports. In both cases he is not an eye witness. On the otherhand and correspondent giving weather reports is an eye witness and contemporary.<sup>5</sup> Manuscripts are considered more contemporary than printed ones and hence primary (e. g.) Orme’s MSS, Taylor’s MSS, Jesuit letters, Factory Records etc. But for matters like transactions of a ‘Government policy making’ printed matter is favoured. Among primary sources there are many different varieties.

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4. This view is not universally accepted.

5. Dependability is discussed elsewhere.

## I. ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological remains easily fall into the category of Primary Sources. They are contemporary evidence and possess knowledge in themselves. It is the study of man-made antiquities, the study of surviving objects of the past. Archaeological sources are very valuable because they are unbiased. No motives could be attributed to this class of sources. They are concrete proof and devoid of speculations, and reflect the contemporary man's culture and civilization. The remains help to identify the past without much difficulty. With the advance of science and technology it has become possible to fix up chronology with the help of archaeological remains. A knowledge of geology will widen the scope of the archaeology being used for history.

Archeological sources are more useful to the social and cultural history though its utility for political history cannot be belittled. A photographic picture of the ways of livelihood — good habits, dress, implements used for agriculture, utensils, jewels, weapons, and all that one would like to know of the past could be culled out from archeological for sources. It properly interpreted, it is one of the best sources.

## II. EPIGRAPHY

Epigraphy is generally considered as primary for its evidence is contemporary, and precise, and it contains much less of the personal element than is found in other sources. But much caution has to be exercised in dealing with the materials it affords. Allowance has to be made for royal and governmental rodomontade and spurious or forged plates have to be guarded against. Legends and exaggerations are often found and are easily recognised. More difficult is the task of making out the truth behind

partisan statements made by the witness of the records of different dynasties engaged in war. Such instances are not few in which both the parties claim victory in a war and very often there is some justification for the claim. In such cases evidence from other sources must be sought. With all the limitations epigraphy is considered as a primary source because in most cases it is contemporary and has eye witness.

### III. NUMISMATICS

Numismatics help us to reconstruct history and not merely to corroborate it.<sup>6</sup> Coins are an important source for they are commentary upon political, economic and, social movements. They enable us to know something about the personality and personal accomplishments of the sovereigns. (e.g.) The tiger-slayer type of Samudra Gupta exhibit him in Indian dress, slaying a tiger. It is through his Asvamedha type of coin that we come to know that he performed this imperial sacrifice, a fact which is not disclosed in any of his contemporary inscriptions or literature. Even administrative history could be culled out from the coins as in the case of the coins issued by the Malvas, and Vrishnis. The very fact that the people had learnt the use of metals and that they minted coins is bound to give an idea about the advanced nature of the civilization of the land. They help to find out the location and in some cases the date of a particular event, dynasty or literature.<sup>7</sup> (e.g.) Roman coins found in Arikamedu. In all these cases the information is contemporary and possess knowledge in itself, therefore, they are primary sources.

### IV LITERATURE

Literary evidence: Our purpose is limited to know how far literature is primary? Evaluation of literature as source is not attempted here. Literature could be primary



source for contemporary circumstantial evidence. For social and cultural history, information could be culled out from contemporary writing - poems, stories, novels, etc. It must be conceded that figments of imagination and exaggeration would be found in the literature and they need not be taken on their face value. Even the incident, unless found reliable by other tests, may be ignored. But the circumstantial evidence present would provide clue to the social setting or even political setting, because the author will be influenced by the contemporary settings. To a novelist writing on a contemporary theme the plot and the actors may be imaginative, but the environments, like the place, dress, food habits, customs and manners etc. are not imaginative but are in accordance with the practice in vogue. Therefore, information culled out are primary, depending on the date of composition. Allowance can be given for reasonable memory power of the author's witness also. For instance a person now writing on the political condition of the Tamils at the beginning of the twentieth century may not have personal knowledge if he is young, but the opportunities of consulting eye witness are always there and that should be considered for evaluating the material. Social changes do not take place overnight and therefore, a literary piece which speaks of the social habits of a particular community in the 18th century though written in 20th century might be given credit because the chances of checking the information with the present conditions are always fair. Therefore such of those literary pieces which provide contemporary information should be treated as primary source, of course, after careful scrutiny of its authenticity. They are self recording annals of history, as they are imprinted in the living tablets of ages <sup>8</sup>

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8. Tagore, *A vision of India's History*, 38.

Numerous examples of literary pieces serving as primary sources atleast for social conditions could be cited starting from the 'Sangam Literature' down to *The Freedom at Mid Night*.

(e.g) Kalhana's *Rajatarangani*, Bana's *Harsha Charita*, Nandikalambagam, Culbandan Begum's *Humayun Nama*,<sup>9</sup> Jedha karina (for Shivaji) 'Ananda Mudam' etc.

## V BALLADS AND FOLKLORE

These are quasi-historical material because facts and fiction are intermingled. They can be treated as primary source depending upon the date of their composition. Fancied descriptions and imaginary legends find a place in them and therefore, they have to be used with discrimination. Once their historicity and authenticity are established and if they happen to be contemporary evidence they might be treated as primary source. As for chronology and accuracy of events there are not that useful as they are for social, economic and cultural trends of the age. They are the barometers for the psychology and philosophy of the age concerned. 'Sabasad Bakkar'<sup>9</sup> on Shivaji is an outstanding example of a ballad as primary source. Sabasad had personal knowledge of Shivaji's affairs. As a close confidant of Rajaram he was well informed about the court, and as one among the citizens, he knew the people. Therefore, Sabasad could speak with certainty. It is a dependable primary record for many incidents in the life of Shivaji. (The Afzal Khan episode, the Agra adventure, the second sack of Surat, the Karnatic expedition etc., all of them have corroborative evidence.)

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9. A ballad composed by Sabasad. Which in one of the main sonnets for the history of Shivaji

Folklore: They have the same merits and defects as the ballads. *Khan Sahib Kathai* on the life history of Yusuf Khan who dominated the political scene of Madurai country in the middle of the eighteenth century, which gives a vivid picture of the various communities affiliated and alienated to the Nawab of Arcot, their traditions, social life etc., is an example of the Folk lore serving as source. Factual errors of dates and events are found in the description. But on the social side it is dependable as a primary source.

## VI CONTEMPORARY RECORDS

A contemporary record is a document intended to convey an instruction or to aid the memory of the persons immediately involved in the transaction. (e. g.) an appointment order, a command on the battle field, a direction of the foreign office to an Ambassador etc. Usually such documents have little chance of deceit or error. However, their authenticity must be tested before use.

In stenographic and phonographic matters the first draft must be treated as the primary and contemporary source. Because they portray emotions and inner feelings than the final draft or report. In a stenographic matter, the first draft is taken while the person speaks out. It is spontaneous and does not subject itself to any rule of courtesy, modesty, or etiquette. Supposing a business executive dictates a particular letter in reply to the one he has received. The letter has angered him and he reacts sharply in his reply and that has been taken down by the stenographer. But when the stenographic message is typed out, and goes for his (executive's) signature before despatch he has cooled down and reads the letter dictated by him. He has second thoughts both on the matter and the manner in which it is written. He becomes conscious of his status, thinks about the consequences of the reaction and wants to

be a little more polite and diplomatic although he has not thoroughly changed his stand on the matter. But makes corrections in such a way that the letter does not create any adverse effect. And this is not exactly his reaction, or inner feelings. Therefore, the first draft which portray his inner feelings must be considered primary and preferred to the final draft.

In the same way, phonographic details, if the first conversation are recorded it must be preferred to a record written in confirmation of the phonographic message. The argument advanced in respect of stenography holds good for phonography also.

Business and Legal papers are generally considered as devoid of motive or deceit. Correspondence between two business firms may be taken as genuine on their face value. But then it must be remembered that no one is a paragon of virtue and more so a business man. It is quite possible that a business man or a firm might employ certain tricks in their dealings, or exaggerate their achievements or plans just to further their business interest, but with no intentions of malignity. These are contemporary sources no doubt but must be employed with utmost care. Their authenticity and relative value must be tested before use.

Legal papers are akin to business papers. In an affidavit, the party concerned will produce all the material in his possession to support his claim. But then there is the danger of forged documents being presented with malicious motives. Therefore, caution must be exercised before using them. A judgement on the other hand is relatively dependable for it is an outcome of both the affidavit and counter affidavit.<sup>10</sup>

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10. There are unfortunate exceptions too.

Tax records also fall in the category of bussiness and legal papers.

Personal note books, diaries and private memoirs fall under the category of contemporary records. These are more dependable, because they are not written with any motive, since they are not for the consumption of others. Such documents present a photographic picture of the writer's mind, intentions, their likes and dislikes, recorded without fear or favour.

(e.g.) Ananda Rangam Pillay the Dubash of the French in Pondicherry faithfully recorded in his diary the day-to-day happenings in his life without reservations. He touches all subjects on earth starting with his personal relations with the Governors, the French trade and diplomacy, their set-backs, the dress, food habits and festivals of the contemporary Tamils in Pondicherry, his agreements and disagreements with the French Government etc., are faithfully recorded.

## VII CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Military and diplomatic despatches are confidential reports and such documents are contemporary and primary evidence and by and large dependable. As these are not meant for public consumption and strictly for private use, the writer need not be hesitant to record whatever he sees and feels. Much more is that even a slightest change in the actual position would mean serious consequence and hence the writers should stick to the actuals. Supposing a general in a battle field actually feels that they were not able to proceed further because of the opposition strategy, he has to report the same to his headquarters. He can ill afford to change even a fraction of the true

state of affairs.<sup>11</sup> Likewise diplomatic despatches, which decide the Nation's future are also written with care and with the utmost sincerity to tell the truth.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, Military and diplomatic despatches are primary sources as they are contemporary, and written by persons involved in them and testify their own knowledge.

The same standards cannot be applied to journals or diaries<sup>13</sup> (not personal diaries), for they are written after the date of occurrences. Such diaries are called memoirs. These memoirs are at times meant for public consumption. The author of the memoirs is aware of the fact that it is meant for public consumption and is subject to criticism. Therefore, he will exercise caution in writing and may tend to deviate from the truth either for self defence or prompted by egotistic tendencies. In a military despatch the general cannot afford to take chances. Moreover, he is not only recording what had happened but expects assistance, instruction etc, for further moves, and he records instantaneously. Therefore, military despatches are preferred to journals or diaries as primary sources.

This does not mean that the importance and utility of such memoirs could be relegated to the background,

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11. There may be persons who lack judgement and give a different picture. Even then he is giving what he feels to be the actual position. It is for the student of history to judge
  12. Announcements by the foreign offices need not be taken on their face value (e.g.) A foreign minister of a particular country may say that their relation with another country is friendly. But in practice there may be strained relations and the foreign minister with the fond hope of retrieving the friendship, may say they are friendly lest there should be further breakdown. The same day the ambassador may send a letter which may speak of strained relations.
  13. These journals and diaries are official records recording occurrences. They are different from military despatches.

They are equally important and useful. But the degree of dependability differs. For the history of the Dutch on the East Coast of Tamil Nadu, the memoirs left by the Dutch Governors of East Indies operating from Colombo are 'the sources'. The writing of such memoirs was part of their last duty as Governors before laying down office or handing over charges. They cover all subjects on earth. The motive behind such memoirs was to apprise the new Governor of the situation that existed in the political, economic and social spheres, and to serve as a guidance for the new incumbent.<sup>14</sup> There are chances for lack of understanding and personal prejudices, but their importance cannot be belittled. As they are written by persons involved in the affair they become contemporary, and as they are parties to the occurrences, they become eye witnesses, but as they include matters in which they are not directly concerned and occurrences that happened before the time of writing, these may be classified as primary sources containing a secondary data.

Personal letters are important as primary sources. Just like the personal diaries (as distinct from official diaries), they are representative of the persons concerned. They have a specific purpose of conveying one's own feelings, decisions, likes and dislikes etc. They help to unearth the concealed feelings, confidential matters, personal qualities and the like. In short they help to see the other side of the coin. In the case of public men, such

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14 The memoirs left over by Governor Van Goems dated 26.12.1663 for the guidance of Governor Hustart, speaks of the strained relations of the Dutch company with the king of Ramnad on matters relating to Pearl fishery. The Governor sounds a note of warning to his successor to keep a vigil over the Maravas, lest the Dutch should be driven off from the coast. Quoted. Valentine's History of the East India (Ceylon) Vol. V, 164

letters are very useful. Nehru's letters to his daughter Indira may be cited as a case in point.

Men in public life, identifying themselves to a particular party or political philosophy are often governed by the majority decisions of their party high command in all matters of importance. While accepting the decisions, they may have personal opinions on a particular subject, which they may give vent to in their personal letters to their friends. For the simple reason that they vote for, or speak in support of a particular item that cannot be taken as their real stand on that matter. (e.g.) Satyamurthi's letter written to one of his friends on the eve of the introduction of the Annamalai University bill in the Madras legislature in 1928.<sup>15</sup>

Ambassadors and Government officials who implement Government policies may not necessarily be parties to the policies. Their likes and dislikes may be found in their personal correspondence to their confidants or in personal diaries. For the study of such cases their personal dealings may be preferred to their official dealings. (e. g.) An officer implementing 'Twenty point Programme' can not be considered as supporting the programme. Any document carrying his name as implementing the program should not be considered as a primary source to consider the officer's affinity to the programme. As a civil servant he was doing his duty. On the otherhand if he has given shape to his ideas on the programme in any of his private

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15. Mr. Satyamurthi was personally against the bill and has committed it in writing. But the congress party decided in favour of the bill and directed him to speak in support of the bill. which Satyamurthi obeyed, Report of the Regional Committee for survey of history Records, Madras, 1962.

16. Riadhul' I Insha, Asisiah Library No. 140 Insha, Daftara-i Diwani-No. 8, The numbers refer to leaves in the former and pages in the latter.



letters or speeches, that may be considered as primary sources to decide his affinity. A distinction between being an instrument and personal involvement must be maintained.

A remarkable example is found in Mohammed Gawan's letters. His letters reflect his liberal tendencies and his ideas of kingship, different from the one in vogue.<sup>17</sup> Yet from other sources it would appear that he was a loyal general serving under the existing theory of kingship in Medieval Deccan. Therefore, for his ideas on kingship his letters become primary source.

Personal letters no doubt give first hand information but they have to be used with discrimination for the chances of personal prejudices influencing the writings are more. All that are contemporary having eyewitness and possessing knowledge in themselves though technically fall into the category of primary sources their use as primary source differs.

## VIII. PUBLIC REPORTS

Public reports are another category of primary sources. Newspaper reports and despatches are relatively more reliable, because the time gap between the event and reporting is short and the possibilities of distortion and twisting may be less. And there will be always the fear that the reporting is not exclusive and the reader can check up with other Newspaper.

For certain categories of news items the standard news papers are the only source for the common man. They are classified as public Report. Some of the Newspapers have special correspondents to cover special fields.

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17. Ibid. p. 64 (Letter to Sultan of Gilan)

Military correspondents, Economic correspondents, sports correspondence etc. Supposing a conference of common-wealth Prime Ministers is held in New Delhi and all the papers report the proceedings. If a particular newspaper deputs a specialist who is well versed in International affairs and at the same time good at reporting also, he will be in a better position to present matters in the proper perspective. In the absence of the official proceedings this special correspondent's report is preferred as a primary source. Likewise only a military correspondent can give a good account of battle field and sports correspondent on a match.

Willful distortion of facts is also a possibility by some of the newspapers with party affiliations. Some may suppress facts for fear of Government admonition. A newspaper reporting on the number of deaths in an epidemic area will have to give only the Government figures, since the Government would like to keep the number to the minimum lest it should create scare among the people. In spite of being a contemporary evidence and eye witness the paper will not be able to tell the truth. In such cases the scope of the newspaper being primary source is limited.

## IX PUBLIC OPINION

Editorials, speeches, pamphlets, letters to the editors and public opinion poll fall under the category of primary sources, for they are contemporary and reflect current trends. Editorials or leaders in newspapers reflect the impressions of at least a section of the population. The qualifications which apply to Newspapers hold good for the editorials too. These should be understood with the background of the papers' affiliation to any political party or ideology. Likewise, speeches made on political platforms

can provide fund of information on current themes but they need not be accepted as they are. Instead they should be subjected to severe tests and their trustworthiness should be identified before use.

Phamphlets and letters to the editor can also serve as primary sources provided their authenticity and value are tested and corroborated.

## X. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Government documents are often considered as primary sources. These documents are contemporary and possess knowledge. A Government order (G.O.) is an authentic Government document. It may contain particulars about the date of issue, subject matter and in some cases provide causatic factors like the G.O. was the outcome of representations made by a section of the population or necessitated by the prevalence of certain trends etc. The G.O. in its final shape is 'the decision of the Government'. But before reaching that stage there should have been many transactions and many might have expressed their opinion on the matter. Supposing the Government issues a G. O, declaring a particular community as Backward and declares that they are eligible for the benefits granted to the backward classes in that stage. A student of history who comes across such a document should not jump into the conclusion that the Government is lavish in its welfare measures, on the ground that the document that speaks about it is primary and authentic. This document could be considered as primary evidence as far as 'the decision of the Government' is concerned. But to study the motive behind the decision, or to find out the base, one has to go through the entire

procedure, beginning with the first instance where a reference to this concession is found say in a memorandum submitted by the community concerned or a call made in the Legislature, or by pressure exerted by influential persons, political parties etc. Once a start is made, the official machinery begins its operation. The file moves from person to person, and department to department and at every stage opinions are recorded based on facts. Once the official machinery completes its work the political machinery continues the work. The Minister concerned goes through the file having in mind the political significance of the action taken upon it. (this is not a must). A decision is then taken which later becomes the G.O. The entire file including the G. O. will be a primary source because it will help the student to decide the cause and effect. The G.O. left to itself will be primary source with qualifications.

There is the possibility of interpolations and expungments in government documents. For instance, the proceedings of the Legislature is a Government document. But what is recorded is that portion which the Speaker or the Chairman deemed fit to be recorded. All that expunged will not find a place in the document. Likewise when a particular Government document passes through various stages the possibility of interpolation is more. This must be guarded against.

## **XI. AUTOBIOGRAPHIES:**

Autobiographies do not confine to the affairs relating to the authors alone. They involve others who have deliberations with the writers while the authors can speak for themselves, we can rely on them, but when they speak on behalf of others or record certain details

where others also are entangled they need not necessarily be correct. And they should not be taken as having been agreed to by the persons on whose behalf they have been said. (e.g.,) Churchill's celebrated war memoirs received stout opposition,<sup>18</sup> and protests were registered by the United States of America, Belgium and France for certain observation made by Churchill. Though Churchill played a leading role in the second world war, it was a joint endeavour and others had a definite share. More so with the U.S.A. Churchill has written the memoirs from the British and personal point of view that the U. S. A., Belgium and France had to protest. Churchill's memoirs are considered to be a great literary piece as well as historical source. But his comments are objected to by the other countries involved in the war on the side of Great Britain. The writer was a contemporary eye witness to events. Those who objected were also contemporary eye witnesses, but they differ in their opinion on the same object. Therefore, the autobiographic memoirs can at best be treated as raw material and primary source. Opinions expressed therein should be tested before accepting. Of course this is true of any historical source. Babur's memoirs are treated as primary source. It also contains Churchill's deficiency. It also contains overstatements, under estimates, exaggerations, lack of understanding of the cultural trends though in many respects it is a useful contemporary source. It should also be treated as raw material but primary.

Autobiographies have the merits of eye witness and contemporaneity and suffers the defects trying to speak for others too. Still worse is that if a ghost writer is employed. It is as good as a third person writing. But

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18 Though the title of Churchill's memoirs is not autobiography the contents amount to that.

unless it is known beyond doubt that a ghost writer is employed, it should be treated as a primary source at least as far as the author and his dealing are concerned. Here again it is primary raw material.

## XII THE OFFICIAL OR AUTHORISED HISTORY:

Court historians were a common phenomena with the Muslim rulers, but not exclusive to them. Some of the Sangam poets have played a role most akin to that of a court historian. Bana may be cited as another example. In India some of the courts had a department to record the daily happenings. This has both the advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, such records are contemporary and written by people who saw things for themselves and had all the material at their disposal. In cases of doubts that could have been cleared then and there by investigation. Dates could be accurate etc.

On the minus side they suffer the charge of being biased. Such accounts tend to be one-sided. They highlight the achievements of the king or Government to which they are constituents or affiliated to and are silent about even the misfortunes of the king or Government, not to speak of the failures. (e.g.) Abul Fazal's *Aini-Akbari*. Abul Fazal ventures to proclaim that he was writing scientific history by prescribing norms of writing history.<sup>20</sup> But he commits himself unconsciously by saying "Service to Akbar is service to God".<sup>21</sup> This statement is self explanatory for the defects of Abul Fazal. The 'Time capsule' of Mrs. Indra Gandhi's Government (1974) may be cited as an example of official history in Modern times.

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19. For a detailed discussion on Abul Fazal — See Abul Fazal as historian.

20. Elliot and Dawson — History of India as told by her own Historians, Vol. VI, 21-146.

21. *Ain-i-Akbari* Passim.

Authorised histories more or less fall under the category of official history. Both in the past and present such accounts are encouraged. Abul Fazl, Ferishta, Kafikhan, etc., were official historians. Barani, Abbas Khan, Robert Orme, were all authorised historians, only to cite a few. Abbas Khan's account on Sher Shah was contemporary and hence primary. Barani's work was partly primary and partly secondary. He has recorded certain details to which he was an eye witness and for others he has depended upon the already available works. Robert Orme's work on the otherhand is more primary for two reasons.

1. Orme was a participant in some of the battles he describes and was a party to certain decisions.
2. He had all the contemporary accounts at his disposal.

It is true that the official or authorised historian has access to material and provided with more facilities than others and must be in a better position to furnish a more meaningful account. It holds good while writing about the past, and while coming to the contemporary period, the historian is hesitant to put forth the short comings of the person or institution who commissioned him to write. This is true not only of the benefactor but also of the ancestors of the benefactors. Likewise they may belittle the importance of some of their predecessors who do not belong to the line or dynasty of the benefactors. In the modern world in place of ruling houses or dynasties we have political parties and the character of adulation is the same if not more. The Government affiliation to a particular dogma certainly interferes in the official writings and authorised writings.

**SECONDARY SOURCES :** All that are not primary, yet useful for research are secondary sources. They help :

1. To derive the setting into which contemporary source must fit.
2. Bibliographical data.
3. For citation of contemporary works.
4. To derive drawn hypothesis and to test them.

Secondary material must be studied first. It is generally best to read all the printed materials first, otherwise much time may be lost in doing over again works that has already been done satisfactorily. And the printed material will often point to the existence, whereabouts, and character of unpublished matter.



## Chapter - IV

# AUTHENTICITY OR EXTERNAL CRITICISM

In historical studies doubt is the beginning of wisdom.<sup>1</sup> In the process of writing, many sources are consulted and used. If all of the sources that are consulted are used indiscriminately, there is no chance for new and independent views. The scholar should not take the sources on their face value. Any document before use must be tested as to its authenticity and value. It must be established that the document or source is genuine and credible as evidence. This part of the historian's work is called criticism. This is criticism of the material and not criticism of the subject, which falls into two categories - the external and internal.

It is only by resolutely questioning the authenticity and value of sources that a mastery of historical facts can be won.<sup>2</sup> Once facts are gathered, they are evaluated and used to write history. But detailed examinations of source material about its authenticity must precede evaluation of its worth. Unless this is done, it may not be of any value for historical purposes. The authenticity of any historical material involves, first of all, determination of the time when it was fabricated, written, or printed and of the place where it originated; then, the more difficult determination of its authorship.<sup>3</sup> This process is usually described as external criticism. External criticism determines the degree of authenticity of documents.

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1. A. Johnson, *Op. Cit* , 50

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid*, 51

**Date :**

An undated document is worthless for historical purposes. Sometimes it will be suffice to know that a document belongs to one epoch or another, (e.g.) documents dealing with social history. Since social changes do not take place overnight, it is enough if a broad dating could be ascertained. In case of writings or printings or of court practices or of administrative procedures, it may be said that they belong to a particular century, a region or a dynasty etc. One can call a literary work as belonging to the sangam age or can call a particular practice as a Moghul tradition, but cannot say that the Battle of Panipat between Babur and Lodi took place in the 16th century. Here, as in most cases, a more precise date must be assigned. To cite another example, to a biographer of Mahatma Gandhi, the letters written by Mahatma Gandhi are one of the main sources, but if they are not dated he will lose chronology and they become useless. He has to find out the dates. As Gandhi belongs to the modern age many a contemporary corroborative evidence will be available to aid the scholar to determine the date of the letters. But the same cannot hold good for Medieval and Ancient periods. In ancient and medieval periods, with technical training in palaeography and philology, one can readily assign an undated document to a definite period because of peculiar hand-writing, language and style. For more precise dating, significant allusions or phrases must be sought out in the document. An allusion to some well known occurrence - an eclipse, an earthquake, a riot, an important royal event (Asvamedha sacrifice of Samudragupta or Akbar's coronation,) whose dates are known - may point to an approximate date. A chance reference to another point of time will lead to a precise dating of the document. (e.g.) In the official and semi-official documents of the East India Company the expression 'during the time of assignments', 'during our war with the Poligar', etc., are

used. If such references occur in undated letters, they could point to some dates, because their dates are known. The first expression could lead us to 1785, and the second to 1799-1801. To cite another example from the 'Sabasad Bakkar'<sup>4</sup> that "during the year when Sivaji Maharaj sacked Surat . . . this happened". The main deficiency of Sabasad is lack of chronology, but in this case the precise date of the occurrence could be ascertained because the sack of Surat in 1664 is a well known incident to a student of Maratha history. With the aid of this date the particular incident mentioned in Sabasad can be dated.

A document may be given an approximate date by ascertaining the earliest and the latest points of time when it could have been written. This method will be of great use to determine the dates of indigenous sources like the ballads, *villuppattu kummi*, and the like, which rarely furnish either the date of happenings or the date of composition, because they are composed by unsophisticated writers who do not realise the importance of dates. It must also be remembered that their intention was not to provide historical source. Their object in writing was different. Therefore, they were either ignorant of the importance of the dates or indifferent to it. But their importance to historical research cannot be relegated to the background; since these sources are indispensable for the reconstruction of social history. Therefore, some date must be assigned to the nearest proximity and the document could be used. (e.g.) A rare manuscript dealing with the sale of slaves in the Sivakasi region (Tamil Nadu) was discovered by the Research Assistant to the Regional Committee of Survey of Historical Records, Madras, an Arm of the Indian Historical Records Com-

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\* One of the main sources (indigenous) for the history of Shivaji in Maratha.

mission during 1964.<sup>5</sup> The manuscript is undated. But there are references to Rani Mangammal's reign and Jackson's Collectorship. These are the two prominent names in the southern parts of Tamil Nadu and their dates are well known. The former reigned upto the morning of the 18th century (1706) and the latter at the evening of 18th century. Therefore, the date of the document is between the year Mangammal ascended the throne and the last year of Jackson's Collectorship, both are known dates. Many such examples could be cited.

#### Place of origin:

A printed book or pamphlet rarely fails to bear the outward and visible mark of its origin. There is usually little difficulty in finding the place of printing. But there may be great difficulty in ascertaining where it was composed, for when a strict censorship of the Press is maintained, authors may send manuscripts to foreign countries for printing. (e.g) Manuscripts from Communist countries, printed in democratic countries is a common feature. A more striking example is the printing of Nationalist revolutionary writings written in Tamil Nadu during the days of the freedom struggle, printed in Pondicherry which was under the French, while we were under the British.<sup>6</sup> In such cases outward characteristics such as language, dialect, and style may furnish some clues to the birth place of a manuscript, (e.g). Indian, English, American spellings, slangs, etc.; labour, labor;<sup>7</sup>

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5. Kadhivrel's Report to the Regional Committee for Survey of historical Records Madras, March, 1964.

6. Book printed in friendly countries since the production cost is cheap do not fall into this category; (example) Japanese Books printed in Malaysia.

7. An American living elsewhere will also use the same spelling

A particular usage could easily be assigned to a particular region (e.g) Eighty in Tamil is 'Enpathu', if one writes, 'Empathu' he is Tirunelvelian and if he writes 'Emplathu', he is a Tanjorean or hails from South Arcot.

### Identity of the Author:

However, the immediate goal of external criticism is information about the personality of the author whose work has presumptive value as a historical source. If the author is popularly known and had already attained acclaim for his integrity and ability, methods of presentation etc., the critical scholar has only to pass rapidly to the evaluation of his writings. [(e.g) A.L. Bhasham, *The Wonder that was India*, A.L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great* K.K. Pillay, *Social History of the Tamils*; K.A.N Sastri's *The Cholas*; R.Sathiyanaatha Iyer's *History of the Nayaks of Madurai*.] The same cannot be said of all authors. Authenticity must be examined first. But what is more difficult and problematic is the case of anonymous books, pamphlets, articles and manuscripts.

Here again it is not the identity of the author that is important, but the revelation of his personal characteristics and social background that matter much. Because the personal characteristics that make a writer a trustworthy witness or the reverse are of prime importance. Therefore 1) The nationality of a writer should be ascertained in case of a document involving political or diplomatic issue. Chances for biased version are more in these cases. (e.g) A British (17th, 18th and 19 centuries) Writer's account of colonialism will not normally give a fair deal. 2) Vocation or position must be ascertained to decide the nature of testimony. (e.g) A Buddhist writing on slaughter house will definitely be biased and coloured. A Catholic

<sup>8</sup>. Thier views need not be accepted in toto.

priest's writing on conversion will be different from a Hindu priest's writing on the same subject. While the former would say in their traditional style that the moment they (people) heard the name of 'the Lord' they swarmed like bees; while the latter would concentrate on the baits employed by the missionaries. None of them would dwell on the socio-economic factors which really influenced the conversion.<sup>9</sup> In all times and places religious predictions have resulted in coloured accounts.

Party affiliations deflect testimony. It is essential to know the political identity of the author of the source. For instance a communist writer would censure the Janata Government for its failures in the economic front, whereas a D. M. K. or A. I. A. D. M. K. would highlight 'imposition of Hindi' as the chief defect of the Janatha Government, while the Congress- I would swear that Janatha Government is anti-nationalist. All these may be true or may not be true. That is not our objective here. An example is given just to illustrate how the line of thinking deviates with different political parties, because of their commitments to certain ideals. Their thoughts and approaches would be in relation to their political philosophies and motives. Therefore, it becomes necessary to know whether the document on hand is a coloured version or not, and that can be determined if the identity and social background of the author is known.

No man can walk except on his own shadow. Every writer, inspite of himself, reveals himself in his writings. Peculiarities of handwriting (in the case of manuscripts), of language and of composition can furnish clues to his nationality, and perhaps to his identity, while betraying

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<sup>9</sup>, May be that my affinity towards socio-economic aspect of history has made me to say this.

personal allusions are almost certain to appear in the text, no matter how carefully an author may try to efface himself.

The last inquiry in studying the external characteristics of a historical record is to decide whether it is an original or a secondary source of information.<sup>10</sup>

The problem of the existence of two or more records which testify to the same events is quite challenging to the scholar. The independence or relative dependence of these sources must be ascertained. Two or more original records will go far to establish the facts recorded. If A is an original source and B and C are derived from it, the weight of evidence is no greater than that contained in A. If A, B and C are independent original sources, the historical probability of the events recorded is by so much stronger. In any case, the relationship of A, B and C must be determined.

If no light is thrown upon this relationship by these preliminary inquiries as the date and authorship of A, B and C, another test may be used, based on self-evident axioms. Two persons rarely see complicated happenings in exactly the same way. And what they have seen will never be told in exactly the same language and style. Therefore, if details of events appear in the same order in two sources, one is probably derived from the other or both are derived from a third source. In such cases which is the original? A conclusion could be arrived at probably by cumulative evidence, if the style is polished and elaborated in one source and awkward and crude in the other, if the events are given a determined twist to convey an impression in one and artlessly told in the other, the presumption is that the latter is the original source and that should be tested for authenticity.

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<sup>10</sup> *Supra* Chapter. III

External criticism deals with the critical investigation of date, authorship, nature (Primary or Secondary) and hand writing and source of document. It detects forged documents and finds out anachronisms, interpolations and additions. The testing of certain portions of historical material requires the aid of several highly specialised branches of learning. They are technically known as 'The Auxiliary Science of History'.<sup>11</sup> They are palaeography, diplomatics, politics, economics, archaeology, anthropology, sociology etc. A scholar cannot master all these subjects and therefore, he may seek the help of experts in the various subjects. Geography and Chronology are more than of equal importance to history. Geography plays an important part in the writing of history. Chronology enables us to find out the true nature of documents. For the modern period a knowledge of economics and politics is absolutely necessary to understand the subjects in the proper perspective.<sup>12</sup> Thus, these various techniques mentioned above enable the researcher to find out the degree of authenticity and probability of the document. Thus the work of external criticism is mainly preliminary. It studies only the outside form of the documents. It identifies the author of the document and determines its age with the help of the various auxiliary sciences.

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11 K.A.N. Sastri, *Historical Method*, 21

12 For the proper understanding of the modern history of India, a knowledge of British and European History is a must.



## Chapter - V

# INTERNAL CRITICISMS OR CREDIBILITY

Internal criticism endeavours by the help of analogies mostly borrowed from general psychology, to reproduce the mental states through which the author of the document passed.<sup>1</sup> In other words internal criticism is the process by which the trustworthiness of the document is studied. It is mainly concerned with the inner meaning and truthfulness of a document and further investigates the mental state of the author at the time of the writing of the document. Thus, the main function of the internal criticism is to determine what in a document may be accepted as true.<sup>2</sup>

Internal criticism consists of two parts: positive and negative. The former is the interpretative part aiming at the literal and real meaning of the text. The author's motive and conception are clearly understood in this process. Determination of the literal and real meaning becomes imperative. To determine the real meaning of any document as envisaged by the author, the determination of the literal meaning is a must and the language of the document must be understood in the proper perspective. The proper meaning of the language at the time of writing must be understood. As the languages are subjected to continuous change, the same usage in one period may convey a particular meaning and a different meaning in another period (e.g.) Many words in the Sangam literature used in a particular sense are now used in a different sense.

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<sup>1</sup>. Langlois and Seignabos, Introduction to the study of History. London 1925. pp 66-67

<sup>2</sup>. K.A.N. Sastri Historical Method, 22.

In the 16th and 17th century Jesuit letters and also in British documents the word 'Marava' was used to denote the Ramnad country, now the same word is used to denote the 'Marava' community.

The language of the author in official documents and private documents may be decided on circumstantial evidence if a direct interpretation is not possible. Therefore, both literal and oblique meanings are possible. "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"<sup>3</sup>

The negative criticism deals with the truthfulness of the author. That is his competency, ability to tell the truth, willingness to tell the truth, accuracy in reporting plus the availability of independent corroboration to confirm the truth. To arrive at the truth, there is a need for eliminating statements and facts which are wrong, false and/or contradictory. Therefore, all that cannot be proved must temporarily be regarded as doubtful.

Incompetency of the author may prevent him from knowing the facts and untruthfulness of the author may prevent him from telling the truth even if he knows it. Therefore, the personal qualities of the author which is very important, must be determined. By competency we mean the ability to determine; that is—

1. Whether the author of the document had the opportunity to know the facts as an eye-witness?
2. If not, what was his source and the relative historicity of that source and the time gap between the event and the record.

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<sup>3</sup>. Langlois and Seignabos. *Op. Cit*, 151.

Even if the author was an eye-witness, his ability and willingness to observe and tell others must be considered before accepting the document, because "all eye-witnesses are not good observers". However, there is a possibility that a clever liar can deliberately create conditions to establish credibility of his statements (forged documents). Therefore, nothing should be accepted without proper investigation.

#### **Credibility of historical evidence:**

Once a source has been tested as to the date, place of origin, identity of the author and nature of the document (primary and secondary), its credibility as historical evidence is to be tested. Louis Gotischak, prescribes the following tests for credibility of historical evidence;<sup>4</sup>

- (a) Was the ultimate source of the detail (primary witness) able to tell the truth?
- b) Was the primary witness willing to tell the truth?
- c) Is the Primary witness accurately reported with regard to the detail under examination.
- d) Is there any independent corroboration of the detail under examination.

Credibility depends upon the capacity of the person to tell the truth. Even if he was capable of telling the truth, he must be willing to tell the truth, and if both these are accomplished, then the problem of reporting accurately remains. When that is also solved, then a corroborative evidence should be sought. If all these are satisfied then it must be held that the source is authentic and credible.

#### **Pattern, Bias and System:**

Before making use of any particular document it must be checked up whether the material has been influenced by

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<sup>4</sup> Understanding History, 150

any pattern or bias or system. For example, the Muslim sources are biased with religious bigotry. The evidence of Communists are patterned on materialism, etc. Barzun and Graft prescribe the following tests to identify the documents as to whether they are from pattern, bias or system.<sup>5</sup>

1. Was the writer fastidious or crude in selecting and marshalling his facts? That is, was he hard upon his own hypothesis,<sup>6</sup> fair-minded to opponents, or committed to the truth first and foremost?

That is the writing must be evaluated in the light of the writer's personal affiliations. Gibbon's abhorism to Christianity, Bismarck's aversion of Socialism and Communism, Asoka's attachment to Dharma or humanism, Appar's devotion to Siva, Nehru's affinity to socialism and D. D. Kosambi's to materialism are well known commitments. Therefore, allowance must be made for their personal pattern and bias, while evaluating their evidences. In all these examples all of them are capable of telling the truth, and willing to tell the truth. They are men above average and could accurately report. But all of them are committed to one thing or other and their definition of truth varies. The student of history must be aware of the fact that in every thing he comes across, there are chances of such pattern, bias or systems being present and that must be detected before use.

2. Was he self-aware enough to recognise, perhaps to acknowledge, the assumptions, connected with his interest? Every man has his own assumptions. But only few realise that they have and only very few do not allow that to influence their judgment. This should be cleared up.

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<sup>5</sup>. The Modern Researcher. 161.

<sup>6</sup>. See Appendix.

3. Does the work as a whole exhibit the indispensable scholarly virtues, however noticeable the bias? (e.g) Babur's Memoirs, Abdul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*, Churchill's War Memoirs etc. Every one of these examples has some bias, yet all of them, in spite of defects are worthy historical materials.

All these apply to the researcher himself when he raises these questions.

**Note:**

- a) **Ability to tell the truth:** Competence and the degree of observance. For instance, only a person with scientific knowledge could report the proceedings of a science conference on 'atom'. With the background he possesses he will be able to report matters in the proper perspective. Thus capacity in turn determines ability. A cricketer cannot comment on a foot-ball match.
- b) **Willingness to tell the truth.** Consciously or unconsciously people tell lies.
  1. Perversion of truth for the benefit of some one or cause dear to him (Eg.) Badauni on Akbar's Religious Policy.
  2. Biased towards the subject of his testimony. (e.g) Nehru on Democratic Socialism.
  3. Truth may be twisted to please somebody. (e.g) Party Newspapers boosting up the number of delegates who attended a party convention.
  4. Truth may be sacrificed for the sake of literary style. (e.g) Amir Khusuru's *Tugluq-Nama*.
  5. Inexact dating of historical documents due to conventions and formalities: (e.g) Declaration of American independence dated 4, July 1776 but actually signed on 2 July 1776.

**c) Accuracy of Reporting**

Accuracy of reporting may be ascertained by corroborative evidence. In the absence of corroborative evidence and in case that the reporter in spite of his capacity and willingness to tell the truth is not in a position to tell the truth, accuracy could be established by circumstantial evidence. (e.g) when a statement is made on the destruction of the enemy Air Crafts in a battle, the figures could not be checked by corroborative evidence. Because the country which destroyed would tend to amplify the figure to the maximum in order to boost the morale of the army and the people at large and for the same reason, the country whose air crafts were destroyed will keep the figures at the minimum possible. In such cases the reporter must be in a position to give the true numbers from circumstantial evidence. In this case he must be able to gauge the relative air strength of both the countries involved, the duration of the air battle etc., and decide on probabilities.

Similarly when the witness makes certain statements which are not in keeping with his thought, they possess high degree of credibility.

**Independent Corroboration:**

Particulars can be accepted which rest upon independent testimony of two or more reliable witnesses, apart from the one in hand. That is corroboration. Cases of perfectly conclusive agreement are few and far between, and therefore, they can be depended upon.

General credibility is determined by the reputation of the author for veracity, lack of self-contradiction within the document, the absence of contradiction by other sources, freedom from anachronisms and the way the author's testimony fits into the otherwise known facts

## FORGERY OF DOCUMENTS

No one can pursue the study of sources without detecting their genuineness. Many documents may seem original on the surface level but a deep study may point out that they are copied from others without acknowledgement - Plagiarism. Many a writer who seems to speak on his own authority as a contemporary is often only repeating what others have said. Before such material can be used, of course, the component parts must be carefully separated, a task which often calls for a wide acquaintance with the literature of the period and a high degree of critical acumen.<sup>7</sup> If this is not done, the researcher is misled by the plagiarism, and if he proceeds on this document, his whole hypothesis must be considered as built on wrong foundation. Therefore, he must guard against plagiarism.

Not only plagiarisms beset the path of the historian but forgeries as well. And forgeries are committed with motives. And these motives cover the whole gamut of human instincts and emotions, from love of gain to desire for revenge. There are many examples of charters having been forged to secure grants of privileges of immunities, deeds to secure claims to title or property; letters to win personal or party advantage or to frustrate opponents; anecdotes and tales to enhance or to damage reputations; cook and bull stories, to excite wonder or to gratify a malicious desire to deceive; and documents of many kinds to establish scholarly claims or to vindicate a theory.<sup>8</sup>

Forged letter of Sher Shah to Maldeo of Marwar<sup>9</sup> to prevent an alliance between Humayun and Maldeo, at a time when Humayun was making his efforts to recapture

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<sup>7</sup>. A Johnson - *The Historian and Historical evidence*, p. 63

<sup>8</sup>. *Ibid*, p. 65

<sup>9</sup>. Opinion on this is divided.

his empire. and the forged letter of Deccani Muslims on the intentions of Mohamad Gawan, presented to Sultan, are well known examples of forgeries that changed the course of history.<sup>10</sup> The general impression among scholars is that such forgeries were very common in the Medieval period, especially in Medieval Europe. (e. g) Forgery of Papal Letters, The account of Ancient Britain and the itinerary attributed to Richard of Cirencester.

Forgeries of formal official documents are less common in modern times, partly because the modern mind is less credulous and partly because the means of the detection are more complete. This is not completely true of Indian history and more so in South Indian history. Even in the twentieth century we have cases of forged documents detected by courts of law. Two reasons could be attributed to this, one is that historical research is not that advanced as to claim that all forged and spurious documents have been identified and declared unfit. Secondly with the changing trends in society the once economically superior persons or communities (who naturally had a social status too) lost their position to others who did not previously have any status; adulation of one's self has become very common; and the newly rich want to establish that their prosperity is only a continuation lest they should be characterised as 'upstarts', and denied rights and privileges in common places, like the temples. But when this is challenged by other communities they have to seek legal protection from courts and evidence becomes necessary. As they have none they forge documents in support of their claims. The Privy Council's declaration of the documents presented by the Nadars of Kamuthi, in the

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<sup>10</sup>. It will be redundant to discuss the details, for every student of Indian History is familiar with these incidents.



temple entry case as 'forged' may be cited as an example.<sup>11</sup> There is another interesting example, in which two Vaishnava Mutts in Thirukkurungudi and Nanguneri in Tirunelveli District were involved in a prestigious fight as to who should first receive the temple honours at Alwar-tirunagari. The case came before the High Court of Madras in 1932 and both the parties had furnished copper plates in support of their claims. The Court referred the plates to Dr. S.K. Iyengar who on the basis of the genealogy found in the prasasti of the Thirukkurungudi plate, declared it as a forged document and the case was decided in favour of Nanguneri Mutt.<sup>12</sup> Numerous such examples could be cited even in Modern history. Therefore, any document before use must be cleared of doubts of plagiarism or forgery.

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<sup>11</sup>. Privy council Proceedings in the 'Kumuthi Temple Case' between the Nadars of Kumuthi and Sivakasi Vs the Raja of Ramnad 1921.

<sup>12</sup>. S. Kadhirvel's Report to the Regional Committee for Survey of Historical Records, Madras, December 1963.

## Chapter - VI

### FOOT NOTES

Footnotes are an important accessory of any important work and communicate a part of the historian's meaning and attest the responsibility. There are two kinds of Footnotes — one is an assertion in the body of the work and is therefore reading matter; the other is source reference. The purposes of the Footnote are<sup>1</sup>:

1. To cite the authority for, or source of statements in the text.
2. To relieve the text of matter which interferes with its flow and tends to distract the reader's attention or to lessen his interest, such as technical discussions and incidental comments.
3. To cite other discussions or give additional information on the matter in the text.
4. For cross — references.
5. Or for a combination of two or more of these purposes.

Authority or source is given to enable the other historian to check the author's conclusion by checking the sources. Source must be indicated even when an idea or part of it is borrowed, it need not necessarily be the actual expression of facts. Reference must be given for all that is not his own — opinion, conclusion, interpretation etc. For common and well known facts source need not be recorded. (e.g.,) No reference need be given for the statements that "Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the first premier of Independent India".

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<sup>1</sup> Homer C. Hockett: *The Critical Method in Historical Research and writing*, 147.

If statements of the same para is to be cited, reference might be given at the end. But if suspicion arises then many citations may be given.

The chief purpose of citation is to acknowledge the indebtedness of a writer to a particular source, in addition to enabling the other historian to check the source. Honesty in citing a source from a secondary work is a must. That is when a scholar comes across an original source that is used or cited in a secondary work, and when he has not himself checked up the original source, and yet uses it as an original source, he must honestly say that he borrowed the source from a secondary work. The citation must be that such and such source cited in so and so's work. (e.g.,) A telugu document belonging to the Raja of Singampatti, dealing with the origin of that palayam has been used and cited in S. Kadhivel's *A History of the Maravas*. Anyone who comes across this reference and wants to use it for a different work must say in his footnote as :

'A Telugu document dealing with the origin of the Singampatti Palayam'. Cited in S. Kadhivel, *A History of the Maravas*. Madurai, 1977., p. 8.

Instead, if the person just cited the document as his source without even seeing the document, he is not sincere and it amounts to plagiarism.

Likewise when a source in an article is cited, both the article and the magazine or Journal in which the article is found must be acknowledged in the footnote. If an article is cited, it becomes the source and the reference to the Journal or Magazine is appended only for the location of the authority.

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<sup>2</sup>. I have chosen this example, because the document in question personally collected by the present writer is still unpublished and was made public first only through my thesis on the history of the Maravas.

## 2. TO ENSURE PROPER FLOW:

All matters that are directly connected with the flow of the narrative should be given in the body and all that indirectly connected should be given in the footnotes. Narrative of an incident should be in the body, and if the cause of the incident does not form part of the main narrative, then it should be discussed in the footnote.

Let us suppose that X is writing on 'British expansion in the Tamil country during the 18th century.' While narrating how the British gradually grabbed power from the local rulers one after another, he discusses the various political tangles which the British encountered. X further goes on to deal with the annexation of the Principalities, the Marava country was annexed, and that was followed by the annexation of the Madurai country. Now, the reader is engrossed in the process of annexation and his anxiety is kindled to know the next stage. The next was the annexation of Tanjore which presented a different political situation. There was confusion and chaos in Tanjore politics. Unless this state of affairs is explained the narrative will be incomplete. But the anxious reader will be more interested in knowing how Tanjore was annexed than in acquainting himself with the details of the confusion and chaos which is less important for the continuity of the narrative and more important for the completion of the details. Now the writer who understands the situation well must state in the body that confusion and chaos prevailed in Tanjore was the cause for annexation and continue the narrative on annexation; the details of the confusion and chaos must be given in the foot note. This will ensure proper flow. The ordinary reader may not care for the footnote. He will be satisfied with the statement made in the body but an inquiring mind may read both the body and footnote. The footnote now ensures proper flow and satisfies both the ordinary reader and the specialist.

In the same way some technical details which are adjuncts to the main theme, yet may distract the attention of the reader and interfere with the flow of the narrative must be given in the footnote. Let us assume that a scholar is narrating the history of a particular kingdom, whose law of succession is different from others--where the first born male alone could ascend the throne while the neighbouring countries followed the law of primogeniture, the scholar must state, in the body, that according to the law of succession followed by that particular country, so and so ascended the throne, and furnish the details of the peculiar law of succession in the footnote with the source and discussions.

(e.g.) In the Ramnad Country In 1674 after the death of Thrumalai Sethupathi Raja Surya Thevar ascended the throne in accordance with the law of succession of the Maravas. In this case Raja Surya was not even a direct descendant but on the male line he was the nearest to the late king. Although the late king had a daughter the Marava community law of succession did not permit her to become the sovereign. According to their law the first born male or in the absence of any male-descendant the nearest male relative of the king on the paternal side should succeed. Whereas in the neighbouring Nayak country, Rani Mangammal could become the sovereign. Now while writing, the scholar should point out in the body that Raja Surya became king according to the Marava Law of succession and in the footnote discuss the law of succession with its source.

Incidental comments must also be given only in the footnotes. Suppose a scholar while discussing the social customs of a people feels that the particular custom was borrowed from a different people, he can make a comment to that effect in the footnote. Or when someone writes that group rivalries in the late nineties were the bane of

orderly administration in a particular place and the groups have made up their differences at the time of writing, then a comment to that effect may be made in the footnote. Comments that are not directly linked with the narrative must be made in the footnote.

### 3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Additional information which may deviate from the main text also be pushed to the footnote. By furnishing additional information the author can convey that he knows more about the subject but the same cannot be done in the main text. For example the author says that Arjuna was the third in the filial line of the Pandavas. This will suffice for the text but the author knows the name of all the five of the Pandavas. In that case he may say in the footnote that Dharma and Bhima were the two elder and Nagula and Sakadeva were the two younger brothers of Arjuna. Now, the narrative will not suffer with over loading of additional information, at the same time the author has conveyed that he knows more about the subject.

To cite another example, anybody writing on the recent political history of India will have to say that Morarji Desai became the first non-Congress Prime Minister of India. He has to provide information about how he achieved that feat, and in that process discuss Mrs. Indra Gandhi's Prime-ministership, the Allahabad judgement in her election case, the clamping of emergency, and the excess committed during the emergency, the announcement of the election, formation of the Janata Party and their success etc. must be discussed in the main body. But if the same incident has to be cited in the recent economic history of India as "with the first non-congress ministry under Morarji Desai the Government of India's economic policy underwent a change" then the scholar can furnish all the other details mentioned above in con-

nection with Morarji Desai becoming the Prime Minister in the footnote; only the matter within quotation marks above will find a place in the body.

#### 4. CROSS REFERENCE

Cross references are given when the author agrees with the conclusions of others or disagrees with some one who had already worked on the same subject but arrived at different conclusion or hypothesis. And when a source has already been cited in the same work, when it occurs after the first citation, instead of repeating it a cross reference is given. This is applicable to details also.

#### AGREEMENT :

A scholar dealing with the Social history of the Sangam Age, will have to naturally speak about the date of the Sangam. If he agrees with others and has no further different information on the date of Sangam, he has to say that the Sangam belonged to the first three centuries of the christian era, and in the footnote must state that "I have taken the widely accepted date". In this example, the date of Sangam is still a subject of controversy among scholars, though the above date is mostly accepted. Prof. K. A. N. Sastri, Dr. K. K. Pillay, and a host of others agree on this date. However, there are people, who still hold the view that the Sangam age could be stretched over from 5th century B. C. to 5th century A. D. (V. R. R. Dikshitar's date).

A scholar arrives at a conclusion derived from his own material and argument which is identical or similar with the conclusion drawn by a different scholar using different material and argument. While stating his conclusion in the body of the work, must state his agreement with the other scholar or scholars in the footnote. (e. g.) Dr. K.K. Pillay in his recent *History of the Cholas*, is in agreement with many of the conclusions of Professor

Nilakanta Sastri and he has given in the footnotes details about the agreement in conclusions. Dr. K. K. Pillay, *History of the Cholas* - (Tamil Nadu Text Book Society, Madras 1978) passim. To cite one specific example, Social life of the Tamils of the Sangam Age is discussed in page 77 of the above book cited in the *History of the Cholas* K. K. Pillay, *History of the Cholas*, 77 f. n. 33 is in Agreement with K.A.N. Sastri's *The Cholas*, 90.

#### DISAGREEMENT:

When an author disagrees with a particular view of another author or others, if the disagreement relates to the main theme, then it must be discussed in the body by stating the arguments and conclusion of others, and show how and on what basis the author disagrees. Let us take example of the 'Rayatwari System' under Shershah or the Revenue system in general of Shershah. While Iswari Prasad, A. L. Srivastava and others hold the view that Shershah was the innovator of the Rayatwari system, on the basis of a common source, Nural Hassan on the basis of Abbaskhan's evidence holds a different view. If the main theme is Revenue Policy of Shershah or Rayatwari system then all the views must be discussed in the body along with Nural Hassan's difference of opinion, his source and argument.<sup>3</sup> If the theme is just administration of Shershah, and the author endorses Nural Hassan, then while narrating the Revenue policy, as part of administration, it has to be stated in the body that though Sher Shah is said to have introduced Rayatwari, he did not introduce it.' and in the footnote source for the statement namely Nural Hassan with his sources must be given, along with the other contrary views with their sources. If Nural Hassan himself is the author then he has to say the same as above in the body and cite Abbaskhan as

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<sup>3</sup>. Only the reference to his source will be in the Footnote.



source in the footnote and state his difference of opinion with others by citing the exact references. Therefore, all primary agreements and disagreements might come in the body and secondary and indirect ones must be cited in the footnote.

### ALREADY CITED:

If a particular reference has already been cited and it so happens the author has to use it again in a different place than he has to simply use a cross reference and say of reference such and such in chapter so and so etc., or cite *supra* or *infra* and give details like the number of the reference and the number of the page where the reference occurs.

Of the four different items of citation in the footnote, if two or more than two occur at the same time, then all of them must be given in the footnote. For example, if a source, an agreement and additional information have to be given all of them must be given under the same index number in the Footnote (e.g) R.S Tripathi's *Ancient History of India*, 319 Ref. 1 wherein he says that the inscriptions of the Pratiharas trace their origin to Lakshmana, Rama's brother. In the footnote he has given the source as E.P. Ins. VIII, pp. 95-97, v. 7 and gives additional information that Lakshmana came to be known as 'Pratihara'.

### EXPLANATORY FOOTNOTES :

There is another type of footnote called explanatory footnote. When an author uses a word or phrase which is not ordinarily known or commonly used, he has to explain it in the footnote. (e.g) When a word like the 'Poligar' corresponding to the Zamindar is used, a footnote at the place where it first occurs must be given explaining the meaning and significance of the word. In this case even the origin of the word may also be given. In the same way the word 'Kaval' meaning 'watch and ward' is commonly

known to the scholars of Tamilnadu who have some knowledge of modern history of Tamilnadu. But it will be alien to a reader outside Tamil Nadu and hence an explanatory footnote is a must.

When phrases such as 'Cultural Revolution' 'Poligar war', 'Marxism' etc which denote a movement, a philosophy etc., which are not directly involved in the narrative still have a bearing on the subject must be explained in the footnote. If their explanations are lengthy, then they have to be shifted to the appendix with a note. See Appendix. (e. g) The 'Cultural revolution' in communist China is a very important landmark in Modern Chinese History. An author who deals with the foreign policy of communist China wants to say that the repercussions of the 'great cultural revolution' reflected in her foreign policy. In the normal course after stating that he will explain the Cultural Revolution in the footnote. But the vastness of the subject (Cultural revolution) is such that it cannot be accommodated in the footnote. And the importance of the subject is that great that it warrants a separate treatment. Therefore, the cultural revolution must be dealt with in the Appendix and its essence must be given in the main body of the work. Therefore, matters that will normally be accommodated in the footnote, because of proportion and importance are dealt with in the appendixes.

### **When to use footnotes :**

For quoting other than a passing phrase, footnotes are used. All novel and startling assertions and distinct elements of an argument must be provided with a footnote. A good rule is to write a note whenever you think an alert person might feel curiosity about the source of your remarks.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Barzun, Op. Cit., 346

New subjects will have more notes. Subsequent writers will use less footnotes. If a choice between a book and a periodical is given to be cited in the footnote, book should be preferred for it is easily available for comparison.

### **Where to give Footnotes : Rules for Citation**

a) Normally index figures are given to indicate the footnote. They are given in the body and the corresponding figures are given at the bottom and the details of the references follow. In the body Index figures should be slightly elevated from the line to call the attention of the readers. Likewise when given at the bottom, the corresponding figures should be given slightly elevated as to be distinctly seen. The figure must be given so as to be just one space above the line of the reference, leave one space and then give the details of the reference.

#### **BODY :**

Dr S. K. Iyengar took his M. A. degree in 1899, when he was twenty-light.<sup>1</sup>

#### **FOOT NOTE :**

<sup>1</sup> Dr S. K. Iyengar Commemoration Volume, 11

b) Consecutive numbers for the whole work for each chapter should be given. Footnotes may be given at the bottom of each page or at the end of each chapter or at the end of the Book.

c) Figures should be given at the end of the citation. See example above. Footnotes should be avoided in titles sub-titles and at the beginning of a para. When more than two authorities are quoted in the same sentence index

numbers should be given at appropriate places, but reference should be given in the same footnote with a semicolon to separate them. If two or more sources are cited for the same idea then only one index number should be given, and all the references should be cited as above. The following order should be observed, in citing a reference in the footnote.

1. Name of the author.
2. Title of the work (For printed material in *Italics*, and if typed must be underlined).
3. Place of Publication.
4. The year of publication.
5. Page (or pages) numbers (Usually the abbreviation 'p' (for page) or pp (for pages) is omitted unless it is very necessary to differentiate the page number from any preceding number, say year of publication etc.)

If there are more than one volume, then the number of volumes should be given in capital Roman numerals. Books or newspapers in *italics* (underlined when typed), page numbers in Arabic figures, and the introductory pages in lower Roman numbers or in Arabic and chapter numbers in Capital Roman numbers or in Arabic should be used as a rule.

In the footnote when the author's name is cited, the full name of the author should be given first whereas in the bibliography the surname or the family name of the author should be given first.

Example - K. K. Pillay—Footnote.

Pillay K. K. — Bibliography.

If a manuscript is being cited the abbreviation 'MS' meaning manuscript should be used and the

citation should commence with the abbreviation 'MS' (or MSS plural).

(e.g.) MS. Diary of Swartz, March, 18, 1836.

If the manuscript has a title then the title in quotation marks should be cited first as "Orme MSS"...

When a magazine article is cited the following order should be followed :

- a) Author's name.
- b) Title of the article in Quotation Marks.
- c) Title of the Magazine (Journal) in Italics or underlined.
- d) Number of the issue in Roman numbers.
- e) Month and year in brackets.
- f) Number/s and page/pages.

(e.g.) K. V. Raman and Y. Subbarayalu "A New Tamil Brahmi Inscription" *Journal of Indian History* Vol. XLIX, (Dec. 1971) 229-232. Any printed material when cited must appear in italics, or underlined if typed.

### **Book :**

While citing a book, the author's name appears first, John C. B. Webster, *An Introduction to History*, Delhi, 1977.

### **Editions and Compilations :**

In case of editions and compilations either the title of the work or the author may be given first according to

the degree of prominence. If the work is prominent than the author, then give the name of the title first.

(e. g) *Hindustan year Book* : (ed) authors name.

If the author is more prominent than the work then start with the author. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (ed.) *Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. II, etc. Encyclopedias, dictionaries, anthologies and the like must be cited in the same way as above.

When a particular person's writings are edited by different authors giving the title as so and so's collected papers or collections of so and so, or writings of so and so etc., and more than one of these are used in a work, then in the citation of the footnote, the editor's name rather than the author's should come so as to enable the reader to quickly distinguish.

(e. g.) Worthington C. Ford, ed., *The writings of George Washington*, 14 Vols., New York, 1889 - 1893.  
John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* 39 Vols, Washington, D. C., 1931-1944.

### Split-Footernote :

When the author and a work are cited in the body of the writing the note citing would require only the details of page place and year of publications. This is called the split footnote. (e. g) Dr. T. V. Mahalingam's *Social and Economic Conditions under Vijayanagar* is cited in the body as "In Dr. T. V. M.'s *Social and Economic Conditions under Vijayanagar* ..." then the footnote should be Madras - 1977 (Second edition). Since the author's name and the title of the work are stated in the body of the work there is no need to repeat them. If the author's name alone appears in the body, then the

title, place and year of publication and page must be given in the footnote. The converse is also true.

Smaller forms and rules, become second nature. But one must be sure of the abbreviations, for instance, that a colon always separates a title from its sub-title. Likewise rules of citation are also a must. Minute details should be mastered. When a footnote is made for the newspapers, citation of a newspaper must be in italics and the name of the place of publication should not be in italics.

(e. g.) when the Madras Mail is cited the footnotes should be.

Madras Mail, June 27, 1978. Here Madras in ordinary letters and Mail in Italics should be the proper citation. If two papers are of the same title then both the title and the place should be in Italics.

(e. g.) *London Times* and *New York Times*. In this case both the title and place of publication must be in Italics, so as to make the reader understand that there is another paper with the same title but published from a different place. (e. g.) *London Times* - Jan. 3, 1956.

If the town from which a newspaper is published is obscure and not familiar to many, then the name of the state in which the town is situated should be given in brackets. It is called 'Parenthesis'. (e. g.) When a citation is made for the *Malai Murasu* newspaper from Tirunelveli, the parenthesis requires that the name of the State (Tamilnadu) in which Tirunelveli Town is situated should be given in brackets. For a person in Delhi Tamil Nadu will be more familiar than Tirunelveli. The citation in the Footnote should be

Tirunelveli (Tamil Nadu). *Malai Murasu*  
—Jan. 31, 1975

In this case even Tirunelveli should be in italics, because there are other Malai Murasu titles the *Salem Malai Murasu*, *Madurai Malai Murasu* etc.

Anonymous or Pseudonymous authors or pen names should be given within quotation marks i.e., " ". If the real name is known that should be given in brackets. "Kalki" (R. Krishnamurthi), *Ananda Vikatan*—7th July 1927. Date and place of publication and certainly the publisher's name need not be given when it is planned to furnish them in the bibliography. In this V. R. R. Dikshitar's *Mauryan Polity*, University of Madras, Madras, 1932, p. 27, may be cited as V. R. R. Dikshitar, *Mauryan Polity*, 27.

### Condensed Fashion :

Certain condensed forms are in vogue for certain type of classics. Two things are important in this :

- a. Name and work are to be furnished if more than one work of the same author is extant. If only one work is available either the name of the author or the work is to be given.
- b. Two numbers are to be used. One for the "Book" and the other for the "chapter". (Chapter and paragraph)

(e.g.) In the case of the poets, the line number must also be given. Herodotus, 3. 14. 3 denotes Book or chapter and 14 the line. Kautilya's *Arthasasthra* Book I chapter III Bk. I, Ch. III. line 64.

Kautilya's *Arthasasthra* I iii, 64.

I indicates Book, iii indicates chapter and 64 line number.



## Silapathigaram XII-6. 14.

If the work is that popular that everyone knows the name of the author then the title is enough.

Manimekalai Canto 22, Ch. 11 pp. 60-61.

If different editions are available then the name of the exact edition that is used should be given. (eg) For Thirukural, many editions are available. It should be clearly stated as to whose edition is cited.

Footnotes that refer to books previously cited in the same book or essay are indicated by certain latin words abbreviated or in full (Symbol). These symbols are not often italicized. The abbreviation is done with a view to save space and not to puzzle the layman. This has become the international shorthand just as the musical notation or typographic marks, and they are pronounced as written: "e. g." is ee gee; "Op. cit" is Opp. sit, and so on.

The most commonly used symbol is *ibid*, which is the abbreviation of *ibidem* meaning "in the same place." That "Place" is, and commonly be, the book cited in the footnote immediately preceding. For example, an author cites R. Sathianatha Iyer's, *Tamilagam in the Seventeenth Century* as his first reference and the second reference is also from the same book then the citation in the footnote should be:

1. R. Sathianatha Iyer, *Tamilgam in the Seventeenth Century*, (Madras, 1955) 27.
2. *Ibid*. 32.

If the footnote number 3 then refers to a different book, and footnote number 4, harks back to Sathianatha Iyer's same book (as in 1 & 2) then it should be

written as, Sathyanatha Iyer, *Op. cit.*, the shorthand form of *Opere citato*. meaning the work cited :

1. R Sathyanatha Iyer, *History of Tamilagam in the Seventeenth Century* ( Madras, 1955 ) 27.
2. Ibid, 32
- 3 S. Kadhirvel, *A History of the Maravas* 41
4. Sathiyanaatha Iyer, *Op. Cit.*, 45

The perfect clarity of this will not be affected by the fact that a page may be turned between notes 1 and 2, and several pages between 3 and 4. But the author must be careful in using 'Op. cit', when citation is made from more than one book by the same author. Each citation must unmistakably tell us which is meant. In such cases it is better to have sub-titles or short titles, because full and long titles will cluster the page or text. Care must be taken to see that the short title given is not a title of another book.

( e.g. ) If K. K. Pillay's *Social History of the Tamils and South India and Sri Lanka* are to be used, then the citation should be :

K. K. Pillay, *Social History* p.

K. K. Pillay, *Sri Lanka*, p.

Suppose a fact or idea appears in not one or two places in a particular work, but almost everywhere, then the symbol given by the word 'passim' meaning here and there. For instance an idea of merterialism is to be borrowed from Karl Marx's *Political economy*. Where the idea is found spread over the book and does not appear in a specific page or pages. Then the citation in the Footnote should be : Karl Marx, *Political economy*, passim.

A citation of an article for the second time immediately following 'Ibid' must be used. It is intervened by another reference and again the same article is to be cited then it should be 'loc. cit' instead of 'op. cit'. However, the name of the author must be given as in 'Op. cit'. This establishes a distinction between a book and Magazine or Journal.

While citing newspapers reference to column and page number should be given. In the case of court decisions, along with the name of the case, a reference to where it could be located should also be given.

Government Reports should be cited just like the Books.

### Common Abbreviations for :

A. D.	in the year of our Lord
anon	anonymous
B. C.	Before Christ
C, / Ca	about
Cap	Capital letter
Cf	Compare, See
Ch., chap	Chapter
ed.	Editor, edition, edited, edited by
e. g.	for example
et al	and others
etc.	and so forth
et. seq.	and the following
f, ff	and the following page (s)
Ibid	in the same place

id; idem	the same as before
i. e.	that is
infra	below
ital	italics
l, ll	line ( s )
loc. cit.	in the place cited
MS / MSS	Manuscript ( s )
n	note, foot note
n. d.	no date.
Op. cit	in the work cited
p. / pp.	page ( s )
passim	here and there
q. v.	which see
rev.	revised, revised by, revision
rom	roman letter
Sic	thus ( to show that an apparent error is an exact reproduction of the original )
supra	above
tr.	translation, translated, translated (by)
V. / vide	see
V. / vol.	Volume.
Viz.	namely.

## Writing of History

There is no formula for historical writing. There are no special techniques or special requirements, except the techniques of writing clearly and the requirements of honesty and common sense. It is useful to have special training, for almost everything that one wishes to do well—piloting a plane, or tailoring a shirt or sculpturing an image etc. But special training is by no means essential and most of the great historians have been innocent of formal training.<sup>1</sup> Though no formula or formal training is essential for historical writing, there are some important requirements—integrity, industry, imagination and common sense.<sup>2</sup>

The requirement of integrity is an exclusive to history. It is an essential in all other forms of scholarship, even in all walks of one's life, therefore, they need to elaborate on that. But it must be remembered that the standards of integrity are not universal, and this is common even among honest men, because they differ on the nature of truth in history as in all other realms of thought. Therefore, when we say that the historian must have integrity, the minimum requirements is :

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Steele Commager, *The Study of History* (Ohio, 1966) 37

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

- 1) that he must be honest according to his lights,
- 2) that he should never consciously distort, twindle or twist his evidence (to suit his convenience) even by literary artistry,
- 3) that he should guard himself against religious racial, class, communal, regional or national preconceptions and prejudice,
- 4) that he should try to see every problem from all possible points of view,
- 5) that he should search diligently for all evidences, and not be content until he has exhausted the available resources and,
- 6) that he should always be conscious of the fact that he is not an advocate but a judge; but he is not God and that final judgement is not entrusted to him.<sup>3</sup>

The requirement of industry, too, is elementary and rigorous and needs no definition or explanation. Examples are not found wanting of men who worked day in and day out. Momsen who customarily worked for eighteen hours a day complained that he could manage only twelve hours of work on his marriage day. It is often said of P. J. Thomas, the economist who spent his nights in his study room and not in his bedroom. These are all exceptions and one need not necessarily emulate these examples. But what is important is that one must have patience, devotion, and indefatigable industry, much of it is tiresome. One will have to accustom himself to spending long hours and days tracking down some source or other, may be without tangible results. There is no guarantee that all that one comes across might provide

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<sup>3</sup> He must defect a hypothesis from his material and argument and should not have a hypothesis and try to fit in the material to prove the hypothesis.

relevant information which he is seeking for, but if one is going to come up with something that is new, original, fresh, and valuable one cannot avoid undergoing the ordeal of studying everything that has a semblance of relevance to his subject. Yet one may not give even a scrap of information.<sup>4</sup> It is an occupational hazard.

As for imagination, that is in all probability something that cannot be cultivated, either one has it or he does not. If one does not have it he may be a worthy compiler of facts, a good analyst, a safe guide through the labyrinths of the past, but he will never be able to recreate the past, never set the blood coursing through the veins of his readers or ideas tumbling each other in their heads.<sup>5</sup> An historian without imagination could create a man with bone and flesh (skeleton) but cannot infuse blood in it. Can this ever make a man?

As for "Common sense" it is not that common as the term implies. It is an all-inclusive term which embraces such disparate qualities as moderation, balance, judiciousness, critical intelligence, open-mindedness, tolerance, proportion, good humour, practicability and all other good qualities of man as well. Without it most scholarly and interesting works misfire; it becomes biased, partisan, subjective and invites abhorism instead of appreciation.

Let us assume a person is honest, has integrity, industry, imagination and common sense. He having chosen a topic has collected ample material and has a working hypothesis—rough idea of the structure of his work and plans to write. Then the procedure should be.

<sup>4</sup> This is equally true of locating the sources. Months of search may not provide any clue, but fastidious search may land to Junks of information.

<sup>5</sup> H. S. Commager - Op. cit., 38.

1. Selecting material
2. Organising or Arrangement of material i. e part, chapter and (a) chronological arrangement (b) Topical arrangement.
3. Elements of Reason. Causation and objectivity.
4. Presentation—Synthesis, interpretation, etc.
5. Art of quoting and Rules of citing,

### 1. Selection of material :

Selection of essential material is one of the practical primaries which a research scholar has to do with the utmost care and sincerity. It is almost a rule. A beginner in his anxiety, immediately after choosing the subject and preparing the tentative bibliography, starts collecting what all material that seem to be relevant. At that stage he is not mature enough to distinguish between the relevant and irrelevant, the essential and non-essential, the important and the less important material. It is wrong to have a preconceived hypothesis at the time of the commencement of research or while in progress. But a working hypothesis is a must.<sup>6</sup> With the knowledge of the working hypothesis he may now frame an outline of his proposed work, say parts, chapters etc. He will now find that some of the material in his possession are useless, some are redundant and some are wanting.

With the outline and broad divisions in mind the researcher must proceed to classify the material in his possession,<sup>7</sup> into relevant and irrelevant. All the irrelevant should be discarded. Once this is done he should go

<sup>6</sup> See note on Hypothesis - Appendix. A.

<sup>7</sup> Let us assume that these have been subjected to external and internal criticism and their authenticity verified and value found credible.



in to distinguish between the important and less important. That is, such of those material that would be immediately connected with the subject either directly or indirectly must be treated as important, and such of those relevant material that may present a problem of doubt as may or may not be useful at a later stage must be treated as less important, or indirectly useful and must be kept in reserve. At the top of the material cards, the scholar may use his own symbols to distinguish the important and less important ones. He can now discard all the useless and redundant material\*. Once all the irrelevant material is discarded, the research scholar may find some material still wanting if he is to follow the outline he has drawn, or as he writes he will discover the lacunae in his knowledge and hence would need fresh material. Once again he has to adopt the same procedure in both the cases.

Let us take an example to illustrate the selection of material. A scholar after careful consideration chooses a subject say "Irrigation in the eighteenth century Tamil Nadu". In the beginning he will start collecting material from the Sangam Literature, where the first reference to a dam built in Tamilnadu for the purpose of irrigation occurs. From then onwards, his collection would include all that has any bearing on irrigation. Possibly to have a proper perspective of his subject he could have collected abundant material both primary and secondary dealing with the irrigation, in other parts of the country also. Say much material about irrigation in North India and more so about Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala. Moreover, these sources may relate to the periods that are not under the purview of the scholar. Even for the background he collects so much. And actually when he comes to his own period of research, here again, he will collect material on resources of Tamil Nadu, vegetation, nature of land, lands

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\* The temptation to use all the hard earned material should be mercilessly, curbed.

watered by natural irrigation, lands covered by artificial irrigation, crop pattern and its impact on society, political conditions, general economic condition, and the social changes and such other matters that have connection with the history of irrigation. The scholar now has a heap of material and statistics that he can confidently embark upon writing.

The scholar's first idea was just the history of irrigation during the 18th century in Tamil Nadu. He did not have specific ideas on chapters, or conclusions. Now at this stage he has a working hypothesis<sup>9</sup> and has a skeleton plan of his would-be work.

I. An introduction which traces the history of irrigation in Tamil Nadu from the earliest times upto the commencement of the 18th century, with the general background of the history of irrigation in India upto the same period.

II. And in a series of chapters, he wants to trace the proportion between the arable land and the available irrigation facility in 18th century Tamil Nadu, the need for improving artificial irrigation, the measures taken there of, and the impact it had on society etc.

III. A conclusion drawn from his arguments.

In his initial enthusiasm, the scholar might have collected so much of information on the early history of irrigation in India and particularly in Tamilnadu. At that time he did not know the scope of the subject, therefore, at the time of writing for section I. Introduction, he will find that part of the material he has collected may not have any relevance to the subject. For example he could have collected hundred and odd references from the Vedas which speak about agriculture and irrigation—as to how agriculture came into being,

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix. A.

what was the concept of the Ancient man on agriculture, how it developed etc. But the scholar in question needs material only to say that during such and such period Agriculture as an occupation came into being and the importance of watering the land was felt. All other material must be discarded. In the same way he will have to choose material that speak about the earliest idea on irrigation in India and more so in Tamil Nadu. From the material culled out from the Sangam classics, that part dealing with Karikala Chola who is credited with the construction of the Grand Anicut will be more important than the others. Only such of those material from his collection will be chosen for use and others will have to be discarded. By adopting the same process for the development of irrigation in Tamil Nadu upto the end of the 17th century, such of those material which help him to write about the various stages of development above will be useful. Others must be discarded.

As for section II, only the data relating to the Topography of Tamil Nadu in the 18th century, the relief and the relation between cultivable land and irrigation etc. will be useful. They are relevant and important. Of course material on the course of action taken by the Government, etc. are also relevant and important. The scholar might have come across a reference to certain war in the middle of the 18th century in Tamil Nadu and could have collected material on that, thinking that would have hampered the progress of irrigation either directly or indirectly. But while writing he finds that a war which normally affects the routine in any country, did not have any effect on irrigation in this particular case. Therefore, all material on that should be discarded.

While the scholar descends to the III section, while writing about the impact of irrigation, he feels that there has been tremendous change in the socio economic

pattern, but finds his material on this subject wanting. He has to collect fresh material and repeat the process as before.

### **Arranging or organising the material :**

A researcher or a historian while writing wants to convey his ideas to others as well. And anything that is to be conveyed well must have a form. The materials collected by the researcher are the skeleton and the artistic writing skill of the researcher gives flesh and blood to the skeleton and makes it a human being. For any narrative or description there must be some form or order. Disconnected and disparate facts make no sense either to the author or to the reader. Therefore an order becomes necessary. While writing, the author must be able to convey his intentions, impressions, and expressions as they are formed in his mind. Such feelings which an author derives from a careful analysis of the material gathered, he wants to communicate to others as well. Therefore, the contents he is delivering through writing should be precisely those he intended. A whole mass of truths, expressions and impressions cannot be conveyed in one stretch. Secondly all that the researcher wants to say are not uniform, or belong to a group. Therefore, some structure or form is essential. The truth will be exemplified through the larger forms of part, chapter and paragraph.

The ordering of the parts – that is the researcher's first problem, once he acquired a body of material and is turning his thoughts to the work as it shall be when finished.<sup>10</sup> Depending on the size and proportion a viable division for proper understanding is made by dividing the material into parts. For example, a scholar who writes on the economic history of India from 1858 to the present day, may for convenience and proper under-

<sup>10</sup> Barzun, *Modern Researcher*, 232.

standing divide the whole subject into two parts namely part I, dealing from 1858 to 1947 and part II from 1947 to the present day. In this example the two different parts are indicating two different periods of Indian History, the former under the crown, the latter Independent India. Here, the division is made based on events. The two phases differ in many ways like policy and implementation, yet deal with the same subject. Hence, the division into parts. It must be remembered that such parts are not made merely on the basis of quantity but on the basis of quality too.

Another example, suppose a scholar is working on the history of a community whose political and social histories are important and the scholar visualises the proportions to be large then he should divide it into two parts, namely Part I, Political and Part II, Social. The divisions are based on quantity and nature of the subject.

Barzun and Craft's *Modern Researcher*, contains Part I, dealing with First Principles and Part II, dealing with writing of history. These two though are linked, and interdependent, are distinctly different features of one and the same subject.

In the same way, in the above example part one contains First Principles, that means more than one facet of the principles. Therefore, the different facets are discussed in different chapters. Each facet will contain different ideas yet connected with each other, therefore each idea is discussed in a paragraph or more and hence the smaller division of chapters and paragraphs.

### Grouping :

We must now discuss the usual pattern of grouping the material. The most conventional is the chronological order. Supposing a writer is contemplating to bring out the history of the Portuguese in India. He has to start

from 1498 and trace upto 1960 that is from the arrival of Vasco da Gama to the take over of Goa by the Government of India. Here one cannot afford to ignore chronological order, because the events will have continuity and what happen in 1520 cannot be explained after the explanation of what happened in 1610, because the latter may be a result of the former. The importance of chronology is obvious but that is not the criterion for grouping. In this example if one follows the chronological order alone, then it might read as follows :

The portuguese came in 1498. Settled in Goa 1510. Fought with the Deccan kings 1530. Clashed with Shivaji in 1664 ... left India in 1960. This will be a chronicle of events but not history. In history one must explain the events as to why it happended, how it happended, and what was its result etc., that is the cause and effect must be clearly brought out. (The king died, the Queen died is a chronicle whereas the king died and out of grief the Queen died is history.)

In our example a proper grouping would be :

- a. The coming of the Portuguese.
- b. Portuguese settlements in Goa.
- c. Their relations with the Deccan kingdoms.
- d. The Portuguese and Shivaji (or Maratha).
- e. Their exit from India.

Here, the divisions are made on hallmarks of history, rather than based on mere chronology.

### **Topical Arrangements :**

This is the order dictated by subjects instead of time (chronology). And subjects are characterized by Unity. They are intelligible units suitable for description. The pure topical order will deprive the narrative

of coherence and cogency, without which history will be incomplete or the narrative becomes useless. It would confuse instead of enlightening. If the time sequence is left out that will surely kill the interest. It would be like seeing the second half of the movie first.

The fault of strict chronological order is that it mixes events great and small without due subordination, and that it combines into a parody of life incidents that occur only once with permanent truths about habits and tastes, character and belief. The mind asks for something better than this jumble it says: "One thing at a time", meaning that it wants one subject one idea gone into thoroughly, even if the parts of it were separated by many years.<sup>11</sup> Yet the purely topical treatment will not do either.

Let us take an example of a biography then the purely topical order would be :

in boyhood, youth, maturity, old age

1. Character :	"	"	"	"
2. Hobbies :	"	"	"	"
3. Health :	"	"	"	"
4. Income :	"	"	"	"
5. Friends :	"	"	"	"

This looks like a statistical chart and not a history. Facts or truths are disconnected, and they lack cogency, and coherence. The only way therefore, is to combine, the briefest narratives, in the topical and the chronological arrangements.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 233.

### **The steps in organizing :**

In the combined form, the chronology moves forward within each topic, giving an occasional backward or forward glance as needed. Each section of the work deals with a topic or one of its natural sub-divisions at some length, and completely as far as that subject goes.<sup>12</sup>

The last sentence must be grasped with its full meaning. It matters much in the narrative of events. Any detail about a person or an incident is to occur in many places in the same work, it is better to discuss it at full length at the first instance and cross references should be given for later occurrences. This will avoid anachronism.

(e. g.) In a history of Modern China one has to deal with the 'Long March'. And references to the Long March would occur on and oft. But the long march must be dealt with in its fullness with its first occurrence and cross references must be given, wherever it occurs again.

In certain cases, the nature of the subject will be such that that it will have different facets and calls for discussion at more than one appropriate place. And wherever they occur again cross references should be given.

(e. g.) Supposing a scholar attempts at writing on 'India under Nehru' he will necessarily be making repeated references to Nehru's socialism, Non-alignment, anti-colonial policy etc. All these concern about Nehru but calls for independent treatment. They cannot be treated together. Therefore, they should be treated separately and cross references should be given later on.

### **Chapters :**

To be effective a mass of words must have forms. That form must satisfy the requirements of unity and

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 234.



chronology, at the same time maintain cogency and coherence. There is no formula to achieve this, the writer has to use his intelligence and common sense. Let us take an example of a piece of business history. Assuming a person works on the B and C mills, Madras and has collected a mass of material. After fulfilling the primaries he starts writing and divides the whole theme with divisions as :

1. The founding of the B and C.
2. Successful career upto 1924.
3. The 1924 Strike.
4. Reorganization and expansion.
5. Branching out into new fields.
6. Research.
7. Charitable endowments.

The researcher must now take stock of the divisions. He has to satisfy himself as to the division and distribution. First he has to test whether all these matters are in equal importance. If so, in the finished work their treatment should be of approximately equal length. A glance at the stock of classified notes will give an idea of the length of each division. Supposing division 3 is expected to run to about 50 pages and 6, to 70 pages, whereas others will swallow only 25 to 30 pages each, then the two long divisions 3 and 6 must be thought of as parts and not chapters. Barzun and Craft would have for example twenty to twentyfive double-spaced type-written pages — 6,000 to 7,500 words, for a chapter.<sup>13</sup> But it is not a rule.

A chapter is not a set form like the fourteen line sonnet, but it has the characteristics of a set form. The

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid - p. 235.

two essentials for a chapter are unity and completeness, and length can also be added as a third essential. But length cannot be always determined or restricted as unity and completeness. The purpose of a chapter is to dispose of one topic comfortably and to enable the reader to consume a certain amount of detail in one sitting; that is as much as he can. Therefore, it is better to have a right length of a chapter. Once the length of one chapter is approximately arrived at, then that can serve as a guideline for other chapters in the matter of words and length. A more or less uniform length may be achieved. But it should be remembered that there are certain subjects and topics which elude equitable divisions. Chapters must be arranged in such a way that the topic (or idea) which come at the end of one chapter must link with that of the beginning of the next. Sub-divisions in the chapter must be made following the same pattern. This interlocking of ideas makes a right book. Yet this cannot be followed as a rule. Sometimes a new chapter will hark back to a much earlier topic in order to make clear the forthcoming facts, and this backward jump often provides variety in what would otherwise be a forced march at a relentless pace. Likewise flashbacks like in the movies is also a must in certain cases. All these are left to the discretion of the author, he must use his common sense as whether a backward or forward motion is needed. What is essential is that he must assure that continuity does not suffer for lack of coherence and cogency.

A good beginning is good not only for the reader but also for the writer. It is like a take off board to a long jumper or a take off for the plane. At the surface level one wonders where is the difficulty when you have all the material and the outline? But in practice it is often found that it is not as easy as it looks to be, and the perfect beginning cannot be found by mere thought. One should make a beginning according to the direction of his thought. Even after the commencement of writing the thoughts waver, and he will

discover the right beginning when he has written five or six pages. And he will rewrite the whole thing with a new perfect start.

### **The Paragraph :**

A paragraph should preferably convey one idea or connected ideas. And paragraphs should be formed as to serve as links between ideas expressed in the same topic. They should not be disjoined units. Perfect coherence should be the aim of paragraphs. No man who writes attains adequate coherence throughout his first draft. Everyone must revise, which means displace, add missing links, remove repetitions, in short tinker.<sup>14</sup> This results in improvements and polish.

### **Objectivity in writing History :**

Having selected the material, and arranged them in a convenient way, the scholar now faces the problem of writing. He has all the raw material at his command and has to bear in mind that the student of history is always in search of truth, and therefore, his account must be a true, reliable, unbiased and scientific to the best of his knowledge and ability. How to achieve it? The answer is objectivity.

Objectivity in modern physics is the relationship between the observer and the object under observation. The historian is the observer and his object of observation is the history he writes. Man is both subject and object and both investigator and the thing investigated, he is the matter for arbitration and at the same the arbitrator. This is incompatible with the theory of scientific knowledge which pronounces a rigid divorce between subject and object. What is objectivity in history? The word itself is misleading and question begging. It is not possible to apply the scientific knowledge of difference between subject

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 247.

and object in history - A rigid separation between the observer and the matter observed is not possible in history.

At best a relative approach to interrelation and action is justifiable. The facts of history cannot be purely objective, since they become facts only by virtue of the significance attached to them by the historian. Therefore, objectivity in history cannot be an objectivity of facts but only of relations, of the relations between the fact and interpretation, between past, present and future.

At the sophisticated level, normally we do not condemn a work of a historian of the past absolutely false, but as inadequate, or one-sided, misleading or irrelevant etc. This may be due to the fact that additional evidence is available or the historian's interpretation might have been biased, preconceived etc. (e. g.) To say that the stupidity of Nicholas II or the genius of Lenin was responsible for the Russian revolution if inadequate and misleading yet it is not false. Objectivity lies in distinguishing between the real and significant facts and accidental facts could be ignored, therefore has a relevance to the goal in view.

The historian in his task of interpretation needs his standard of significance which is his standard of objectivity. He can do this only with the relevance to the end in view.

### **Objectivity's right usage could be obtained when**

1. We have documents, and
2. They are critically tested.
3. The rule governing judgement in probability is realized.
4. And the notion of an absolute past will be true if only the men do not produce faulty copies in dealings.

**Subjectivity :**

Subjective and bias are not synonymous. Subjective is one person's opinion usually odd or false. Objective is taken to mean what everybody agrees on or correct opinion. "Subjective" and "Objective" probably apply not to persons and opinions but to sensations and judgements — right and judicious judgement.

An objective judgement is one made by testing in all ways possible one's subjective impressions, so as to arrive at a knowledge of objects. To the researcher the events of history are his objects. Comparison and testing may lead to objectivity. New evidence may modify objectivity. Honesty and competence of the writers, knowledge of facts and knowledge of cause help attain relatively high level of objectivity.

Aim at objectivity naturally involves reasoning. The writer has to say why and how he derived his hypothesis. Moreover, throughout the narrative he has to maintain the reasoning.

**Presentation :****Synthesis and Interpretation :**

The ultimate goal is the pursuit of truth and that should be methodically pursued. Systematic manner of carrying on the search for truth must signify both analysis and synthesis. Analysis is consequent to antecedent and synthesis is antecedent to consequent. Analysis embraces not merely regressive deduction but further induction. For by induction one argues from facts to findings. Synthesis is sewed when components of causes are involved and therefore, in history it is

synthesis that is more useful. But without Analysis, synthesis is not possible. It involves sifting of material, interpretation and argument. Sifting of material is done even while choosing the material.

As already stated the student of history is always in search of the truth. Whatever is presented to him should not be taken on their face value and he should interpret it to understand it in the proper perspective. The material he has may be biased or have vested interest. Therefore, the historian subjects it to various tests and decides its historicity, and value (see chapter on external and internal criticism). Likewise, while writing also, interpretation plays a major part. (e. g ) Let us take a statement. "A famine commission was appointed in 1868". In this sentence it is not specifically stated that there was famine in 1868, but it could be interpreted to mean that there was a famine in 1868 and the Government wanted to take steps to meet the situation etc. Interpretation unearths the inner meanings. Interpretation enables to evaluate cause and effect. (Also see, 'Interpretation, bias' - in chapter on internal criticism).

Hypothesis must be arrived as conclusions drawn from argument that is systematic manner of carvings on the truth.

### **Rules for Argument:**

1. Nothing should be wanting or redundant.
2. The separate parts should agree with each other.
3. Nothing should be treated save what is suitable.
4. The separate parts should be connected with suitable transition.

In brief there must be completeness, harmony, relevance and continuity. These must be observed as a

law. The arrangements of the arguments should be in such a way that it should ensure not only the fact, but the reason for the fact also. This can be achieved by passing from cause to effect or from the law to the fact employing the law or property to the essence or particular events to universal laws.

### Judgements :

The historian must be conscious of the fact that he is not an advocate but a judge, and further the ultimate judgement is not with him. His judgement is only a professional judgement like a teacher who gives a grade, the Physician who diagnoses an illness, or an automobile engineer condemning a car as unfit. These are all professional judgements delivered after careful scrutiny and evaluation. They are not moral judgements. In the same way to historian after painstaking study of all available evidence (at his disposal) and after cleaning himself of all the perilous stuff which might distort his vision, concludes that Mahatma Gandhi was instrumental in India attaining freedom, that emergency excess was responsible for the emergence of the Janata party, that with the Watergate, the rout of Nixon started, that the creation of E. C. C. forced England to revise her economic policy, etc. All these are findings and are never final. Fresh materials and arguments may alter the conclusions. Therefore, the historian must be conscious of the fact that his hypothesis is subject to change.

Another important aspect is documentation. Whatever is said must be substantiated by evidence. Any statement, any fact, which is not his own should be clearly stated of its origin.

Apart from these there are certain norms of writing : There must be logic, throughout. Whatever is said and found must be explained of its basis, cause and effect (why and how, and on what basis). Repeti-

tion must be avoided. Clarity and continuity of thought must be maintained. Too many quotations should be avoided. It should be understood that the purpose of language is communication and superfluous language never serves the purpose. Facts should not be sacrificed for the sake of literary style. Conclusive statements should be avoided, and should always lean on probabilities. Statements like 'Crystal Clear' should be avoided. Public school expressions and slangs like a 'snack in it' should not be used. On top of it all self contradictions must be avoided.

### **Clear sentences, right emphasis :**

There is no satisfactory definition of a sentence, but every educated person recognizes a sentence when he sees it. A sentence is a collection of words used to express a thought, or idea, and its functions are dynamic and establishing relations. And as thoughts are moving, their tracts must be smooth. The structure of the sentence should be in such a way that it is not burdened with ideas. Clauses and phrases must fall into the right pattern of syntax, that they make the sentence more meaningful and communicative. The sentence should be simple and not complicated but should be at the same time effective. Avoidance of jargons will also ensure right emphasis. Sentences should serve as proper links too.

Next in importance is terminology. Words should be chosen in such a way that they directly convey the meaning beyond doubt. Apt words convey the intentions of the writer in the proper perspective.

1. To employ the most commonly accepted terms in their most commonly accepted meanings.<sup>1</sup>
2. Where any doubt as to the meaning of a term can arise, to define carefully and in points of great importance to make use of technical terms.



3. Never to employ a term to which a precise and clearly defined meaning cannot be assigned.

When one borrows any matter without any alteration it should be given in quotations. Quotations are given when the writer or speaker feels that to repeat the original will be more emphatic and meaningful. Occasionally when the writer does not shoulder the responsibility he quotes from others, that is to say that he makes only a statement and not a commitment. Of course for concurrence, endorsing views and committing oneself, quotations can be used but it has to be said; "as so and so rightly feels" and then quote that so and so, or "I endorse his views, etc. In any case quotations must be kept short, and they must as far as possible be merged into the text. Too many quotations will spoil the originality of the work. If in a long sentence only a portion of it has relevance to be quoted, then such portion alone should be quoted and the rest omitted. Likewise if a particular word or words is/are found redundant or out of place it/they can be omitted by using proper symbols. If while speaking one has to quote then the speaker has to announce "I quote" or "quote" for the portion which is not his own and which he uses without any change from the original. When he ends the quotation, he has to declare "unquote" or "quotation ends."

### Norms for Quoting:

1. A quotation is introduced and closed by double quotation marks "...". A quotation within a quotation carries single quotation marks, and a third quotation, if required, brings double ones again.
2. The omission of a word, phrase, or sentence is shown by three dots ...; if that omission

occurs at the end of a sentence a fourth dot denotes the end of the sentence.

3. The addition of a word or phrase in the quotation to explain the meaning or inner sense: The added words should be in square brackets. [ ]. These words will generally be possessive adjectives e. g. [ his ] [ your ], or the definite article [ the ] or a pair of words expanding a pronoun, e. g. an "it" in a quotation which would be unintelligible without an antecedent. One replaces this "it" with [ the document ]. If the word is ambiguous in the quotation, another word to explain it may be supplied in square brackets.
4. The spelling, capitalization, and punctuation of the quoted passage must faithfully be reproduced unless (a) you modernize these features when quoting ancient texts, in which case you state your principles at some convenient point, or (b) you correct an obvious typographical or other error, in which case a footnote is required to draw attention to the change.
5. The quoting of titles and the like in the text is more properly called "Citing". All book titles should be printed in italics (underlined in type scripts) and that all essay titles are enclosed within double quotation marks.

In citing and quoting, the author's name must be given. Many current quotations need no author's name. For instance if one is quoting "To be or not to be", he should leave the author in decent obscurity. In decorative and trifling quotations source need not be

shown. It should be remembered that quoting is for illustration and citing is for possible verification.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Rules of Citing :**

See chapters on Bibliography and Foot-notes.

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<sup>18</sup> Barzun, *The Modern Researcher*, 290-93.

## Epilogue

### **Historiography of Ancient India :**

There is an hackneyed saying that the Indians lacked historical sense. This is partly true. Though India did not produce a Herodotus or Thucydides, it will be too much to say that the Ancient Indians were devoid of historical sense. It was a fashion for western scholars to say that the Orient was bankrupt in many fields.<sup>1</sup> Yet, it must be accepted in all essential particulars that Ancient Indian historiography was not well developed as in the case of Greece and Rome.

### **Puranic :**

Though the Vedas serve as the earliest source for the reconstruction of Indian history, they cannot be classified as 'history', even when employed in a loose sense. The conception, purpose and meaning of the Vedas were different. Anything that had some semblance of history as we understand it to-day, could be found only in the 'Puranas'. But we must hasten to add that the 'Puranas' do not conform to any definition of history existing to-day. However, they are a class in themselves. Like the Ancient Greek and Roman Literature the Puranas are also a free mixture of myths and facts. Facts and fiction are freely mingled without any

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<sup>1</sup> This opinion is not universal. There are scholars who give due recognition to the Oriental way of life.

discrimination. Their substance was temporal and spiritual and not materialistic.<sup>2</sup> Neither interpretation nor a distinction between Myths, legends and supernatural elements and history proper are attempted at.

The ancient kings of India employed officials called the Sutas, who maintained a sort of official record of their patrons. The Sutas were Brahmins and their office was hereditary. However, later record show that they could have been from the warrior classes too. Bhrgu, Angiras and Kasyapa made useful contributions to ancient historiography.

Although the Puranas did not conform to any definition of history extant to-day, as pointed out earlier, they were histories according to the conception of history of those days. There was a pattern prescribed called the Panchalakshanas of the Puranas.

They were :

- 1 Sarga (creation of the world)
- 2 Prati Sarga (recreation of the world)
- 3 Vamsa (genealogy of Gods and Saints)
- 4 Manuvantara (Ages of Manu)
- 5 Vamsanucharita (Dynastic history)

Manuvantara was geography and Vamsanucharita was history. History with a geographical background is really a good concept. They used past, present and future tenses in their narratives. They went to the extent of predicting the future. There are textual corruptions and inconsistent statements, (e. g) the history of Satavahanas in Matsya

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<sup>2</sup> Not in the sense Marxists would understand the term.

Purana can be cited as an example. One of the major defects of the Puranas are that they treated contemporary dynasties as successive dynasties. But their testimonies are corroborated by Buddhist and Jain traditions and archaeological evidences as well. However, no discrimination is made between major and minor events. A few dynasties like the Kushans and Kshatrapas are omitted. They assign an interval of 2500 years between the Mauryas and the Guptas. This error might be due to the confusion of treating the contemporary as successive. Therefore, there is complete lack of chronology and hence the Puranas are not considered to be of independent historical value. Yet they provide the earliest historiography in India.

Puranas were handed over to from generations to generations and had to depend on accuracy of memory power. For this simple reason they cannot be dismissed as thoroughly useless. If Brahmanas could preserve Vedas by verbal accuracy why not Puranas too? Rapson remarked "Puranas have preserved independent testimony, however perverted and diffused they are, and supplement the priestly traditions of the Vedas and Brahmanas".

### **Buddhist :**

The Buddhists made important contributions to historiography, though the *Tripitaka*, which throw light on the important episodes in the life of the Buddha, the discourses in which he (Buddha) formulated his doctrines and the events connected with the founding of the *Sangh* (community) The cultural and economic life of the age are pictured in the Buddhist works. These are called the Pali Canons, since they are in Pali language. They were committed to writing only during the reign of *Vattagamani* (29-17. B. C.) of Ceylon, and might be assigned to the 3rd century B. C. or even earlier in terms of composition.

The Pali canons or *T(r)ipitaka* consisted of Three *Pitakas* - testaments - Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma.

Vinaya - rules prepared by monks and nuns for consumption of every body - Contains details about the Buddha, accounts about his disciples etc.

Sutta - Sermons of Buddha, laity, Dhama etc.

Abidhamma - definitions and clarifications expounding Dhamma in a scholastic manner.

The *Digha Nikaya*, comprised of 34 long discourses explaining virtue and philosophical speculations on soul, throws light on social life. *Ambatha Sutta*, another canon represented the Kshatriya caste as the highest. *Dhamma pala* spoke of pleasures of heaven and discomforts of hell. Besides these, the *Theragattas* and *Jatakas*, contained names of kings, towns, republican tribes etc. of Ceylon and North India. These were not written with an objective of presenting history. Their motives were decidedly different, yet spun round history. Their compositions were in line with their conception, and naturally they were biased with Buddhist trends. Shorn of the deficiencies, they rank as a development on the Puranic historiography. Buddhist historiography has centred round human activities and though they attempt at moral teachings, they contain historical detail.

Following the traditions of the Buddhists, the Jain Agamas or canons also provide some fruitful historical studies. Here again, their object was the realm of religion and not history. The eleven *Angas* and other works, deal with the right conduct for clearly, the laity etc. The works were compiled during the 5th century, A. D., based on older material and traditions are found embodied in them. As in Buddhist historiography,

Jain historiography also deal with human interest—Socio economic histories—and of the importance of spiritual life as they understood it.

### Jain Historiography :

By far the period covered by the Buddhist historians and the Jain historians, is the same, and there is not much of a difference in the general method and treatment followed by both. The Jains presented historical events in the legendary form; and tried to interpret existing legends in the light of Jainism. *Vyakhyaprinjnapti*, *Sthananga*, *Samavayana* and *Padmacarita* may be cited as examples. Vimala's narrative of Rama's story in his *Padmacarita* is quite opposite to the narrative of Valmiki in his *Ramayana*. Vimala depicts Ravana as a Jain possessing super-human powers and dismisses Valmiki's portrayal of Ravana as a demon. Though Vimala is critical of Ravana's abduction of Sita, on that score he would not consider Ravana as a demon, for he would brand only those who were perpetuating the animal sacrifice. In the same way Mahabharatha story was twisted to suit Jain philosophy of didactic based on good and bad actions. Besides their own, the Jain historians modified Brahminical histories with a bias of the Principles of Jainism. However, the lists and legends of the Jain teachers incorporated in their works help construction of the general Indian chronology.

### Puranas in South India :

The influence of the Puranic writings seem to have influenced South India also.<sup>3</sup> We have in Tamil the *Periya Puranam*, *Thiruvilayadal Puranam*, *Thiruthondar Puranam* etc. The term 'Puranam' seem to have been

<sup>3</sup> To satisfy chronology Purana in South India is dealt with here and not along with that of the North.



used to denote story or history. Thiruvilayadal Puranam deal with God, (Siva) His activities, His relations with human beings and the Pandya King, people of Pandya country, their customs and manners etc. The Periya Puranam, dealing with the biographies of Saints, is a great treasure house of 'Saiva hagiology'. The *Guru Parampara* is the Vaishnavite equal to the Periyapuranam. Sthalapuranas are of later origin and if used discretely, they can be of great use. But it calls for greater caution and criticism.

Between these class of history, and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, the first of the really historical type, we have Sanskrit literature of the Gupta Age, and Bana's *Harsha Charita*. Bana's account of Harsha should be treated as atleast 'Quasi historical' in character and composition. *Harsha Charita* is poetic in character and romantic in treatment. It is a Kavya and not history proper as understood now. But the very title *Harsha Charita*, suggests that Bana wanted to write history. And the subject matter dealt with in the work - namely the King, his country, the people, their way of life etc., confirms the authors intentions and justifies the title. The work is full of superstition and mythological beliefs reflected in the metaphors. Bana has made free use of puns and in searching for romantic language, Bana often loses the main thread of the narrative.

As a literary source even Ramayana and Mahabharatha are useful for Socio-economic history. As such *Harsha Charita* is par excellence when compared to some of the other literary sources. Although Bana's work cannot be bracketed with Pathuppattu (Ten Idylls) and Pathinen Kilkanakku (eighteen anthologies),<sup>4</sup> the South Indian Parallels of *Harsha Charita*, it can stand comparison with *Silappadikaram* and the like.

<sup>4</sup> These are Sangam classics which form the major source for the history of the Tamils of the ancient times.

Again in the south there are different type of quasi-historical poems in Tamil-Ulas, Kovai, and Parani.<sup>5</sup> Ulas on both deities, like the *Ekambaranathar Ula*, and on Kings like Ottakkuttan's on three successive Chola monarchs, are extant. History and legends are mingled, yet they are far better than the Puranic evidence. Of the Parani type, *Kalingattupparani* stands aloof as a better historical account.

All these are quasi-historical yet very valuable addition in historiography. They have registered an improvement on Indian historiography compared to that of the Puranas and Jataka stories. Bana's *Harsha Charita* and the Tamil works mentioned above mark a transition between the mythic age of the Puranas and the historical age of *Rajatarangini*.

### Kalhana :

The much-regretted absence of an Indian Thucydides is questioned with the aid of Kalhana.<sup>6</sup> Both the comparison and credibility of the statement may be a bit exaggerated. But there can be no denial of the fact that Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* comes nearer to (scientific) history in spite of its short comings.

Starting in 1148 A. D., Kalhana completed his work in 1150 A. D. It gives a connected account of the dynasties of Kashmir. While writing this book Kalhana made a thorough use of the past resources, contemporary documents, edicts, inscriptions, coins, ancient monuments etc. There is internal evidence which tells us that while

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<sup>5</sup> Ula - Class of literature which speaks about the exploits of some one.

Parani - Class of literature dealing with warfare.

<sup>6</sup> R. Sathianatha Iyer, *A. Political and Cultural History of India*, Vol. I, Madras, 1972, p. 15.

composing *Rajatarangini* he studied not only the eleven existing historical books on Kashmir but also corrected errors in them by 'inspection of ordinances of former kings and laudatory inscriptions as well as written records' - Kalhana held the view that a true historian should recount the events of the past after having discarded bias as well as the prejudice. To cite Kalhana:- "In general the poet alone is worthy of praise whose word like that of a judge keeps free from love and hatred in relating the facts of the past."

Kalhana's datum sounds like that of a modern scientific historian - in as much as it professes to collect, analyse and to be critical. He followed this to some extent by providing his narrative in proper chronological order and offering judgements on the various events recorded. But for the early period the popular legends were recorded without any comment and their credibility was taken for granted. To cite only one example, 'one Ramaditya is said to have ruled for 300 years'. Possibly in spite of himself, he was led away by the legendary character of the early records. "From the 7th century his account becomes generally sober, and the chronology tenable". The contemporary part of the Kalhana's history is based on his own direct knowledge and on that of his acquaintances. On the whole, he exhibits an impartial and independent outlook. His general accuracy is equally unimpeachable. Though he fails necessarily to conform to our present-day standards in some respects, he deserves to be called a historian, as distinct from an analyst or chronicler.<sup>7</sup>

### Medieval Historiography :

The Muslims like the ancient Chinese and Greeks were fond of knowing the past and preserving the records-

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 348-349

collecting and keeping the records of men and events, happenings and occurrences. They possessed an innate sense of enquiry and historical consciousness – rescuing the past from oblivion. They began to compile biographical sketches, historical anecdotes and chronicles of events, public or private.

With the coming of the Muslims to India different type of historical literature flourished in India starting from the early medieval period. Historical writings were of different variety in respect of style, literary forms outlook, *method*, content and value. Starting with Alberuni down to Kafikhan each one of the Muslim historians both professional and non-professional,<sup>8</sup> were different from one another, but there was some thing in common. The view of history in that age was quite different—that historical works should be written in a special style combining oratory and poetry; in following this pattern there was change to miss factual narrative. The modern historian is fascinated towards factual detail and a narrative of what actually happened. To-day the essence of history is enquiry into the past—dedication to truth, objectivity, cause and effect of events and movements, sound and unbiased interpretation and critical evaluation by sifting of material. The muslim concept of history was different and hence the medieval historiography also reflected a different trend in line with the concept of history envisaged by each one of them. Yet, the Islamic conception of theistic history was followed by all of them

### Alberuni (937-1048)

Mohammad Ibn Ahmad Alberuni, marks the transition from Ancient to Medieval times. He was born in Khira in Central Asia. Alberuni accompanied Mahammad

<sup>8</sup> *Professional* : Barani, Ferishta, Siraj Hassan, Nizami, Afif, Abu Fazl, Kasikhan etc.

*Non-Professional* : Babul, Jahangir, Amir Kuzhru etc.

Ghazni to India for the first time and revisited the country many times. Though, by profession he was a court astrologer, he devoted to writing books of which *Tahkik-i-Hind* is perhaps the most outstanding from the point of view of Indian historiography. Alberuni was a keen observer and has faithfully recorded what he has seen and heard from the Pandits of India. He is different from the other Muslim writers in the sense that he wrote about the people, their customs and manners, their economic conditions, social practices, etc. Being himself a good scholar in mathematics Alberuni is all praise for the Hindus because of their good knowledge in mathematics and astronomy and philosophy too.

For a person from Central Asia, and belonging to a different religion the Hindu customs and manners seemed peculiar. Therefore, he exclaims instead of appreciating, when he makes references to certain habits of Hindus like cleaning the floor with cowdung, seeking permission to leave a house, marriage customs etc. However, he does not condemn them or attack them. May be due to the lack of understanding of the cultural background of India he might have failed to appreciate certain things in India.

One has to agree with B. N. Lunia when he says, "The work of Alberuni is unique in Muslim literature, as an earnest attempt to study an idolator's world of thought, not proceeding from the intention of attacking and refuting it, but uniformly showing the desire to be just and impartial, even when the opponent's views are declared to be inadmissible".<sup>9</sup>

As for the methods of writing history is concerned Alberuni differs with from the Hindu, Buddhist and

<sup>9</sup> Some historians of Medieval India, 18.

Jain historiographers on the one hand and the Muslims on the other. He did not deal with the distant past and as such there is not much scope for speculation. His writings on India are mostly contemporary, although he makes reference to the Vedas, Brahmanas and the Smrithis. Nor were his writings influenced by Muslim ideology. However, his remarks on the attitude of the Hindus are remarkable. "At the most they (the Hindus) fight with words but they will never stake their soul or body or their property on religious controversy". Possibly as a Muslim Alberuni might have expected the Hindus to take the sword to defend their religion. But Hinduism does not preach that. In such cases Alberuni's limitations are exposed.

### **Sultanate Period :**

Starting with the Delhi Sultanate down to the fall of the Moghuls, Indian historiography had a series of contributions by Muslim historians – some of them were court historians, and a few like Babur, Gulbadan Begum, and Jahangir, belonged to the court. All of them have used only literary sources, that too belonging to one set of literature – the Islamic. Of course, Babur's was different because of its character and composition.

### **Amir Khusru (1252-1325) :**

He wrote 92 works in all. Of these six of his works could be considered historical. Yet all the six are characterised by disjointed themes. They lack clarity and sequence. Even *Tugluq Nama*, which is supposed to be the best among his historical works does not attain perfection as a historical work.

Amir Khusru's *Raisail-i-Isaz-i-Khusravi* is slightly different from other works of the same author. The utility of the large and ponderous volumes (5 in number)

on epistolography, written in a most grandiloquent verbose style has been doubted by scholars, but one interested in social history cannot afford to neglect the cultural pasts and the glimpses of the social and religious life which form the core of the book but are lying hidden in involved style of words and phrases, puns and puzzles.<sup>10</sup> Amir Khusru was an eye-witness of the multitude happenings of a varied character and had become fully acquainted with manners and morals of the men not only in his surroundings but also of whom he came in contact from different parts of the land during a fairly long period covered by the reigns of Sultans from Balban to Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. He held strong views on ethical and religious aspects of life, and had a certain antipathy against those who led lives of heterodoxy, immorality and corruption.<sup>11</sup> His purpose of history seems to be not merely a narrative of facts but moral instruction too.

A striking feature of Amir Khusru's treatment is juxtaposition, or comparison by contrast, of man and things, placing one against the other. He applied the same standard of morals—morals based on Islamic concepts—on various social classes, Muslims and Hindus, Turks, Mongols, Afghans, Sayyads, Mashaikh or Sufi Mystics, Ulamas, or theologians, Jurists, nobles, officials, peasants, wage-earners, artisans, craftsmen, and the slavery. He has unmistakably shown his dislike for profession not approved by Islam and invoked the blessings of God on those who took to professions approved by Islam. Interesting references to trade, internal or external, or markets, and cheapness of commodities etc., are found but everything is attributed to 'His Grace'—it is committed history. On top

<sup>10</sup> S. H. Askan "Life and Conditions as depicted in Risāl-i-Isaz-i-Khusravī", in *Journal of Historical Research*, Vol. X (1967) Ranchi, 69-85.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

of it all, the narrative both in this work and other works of Amir Khusru suffers for lack of clarity and sequence and overloading of verbose style, hyperbolic tone and artificial literary device. Even accuracy of historical and topographical details are sacrificed for the sake of literary style.

For Amir Khusru history involved courses of fate and interpretation of Divine nature in human affairs in total disregard of their (human) good and bad deeds. His concern was Divine decrees rather than human action. He wrote in the 13th century when poetic and pure literary style was the order of the day. Moreover, Amir Khusru's prime concern was religion, love of arts and literature. Hardly said, "he wrote poetry and not history", and even that was full of bias.<sup>12</sup>

### **Maulana Ziyauddin Barani : (1286-1359)**

Barani's writings depict the growth of Muslim historiography in India. He is definitely different from Amir Khusru in many respects, although there are certain qualities in common. As Barani himself confessed, he had definite motive in writing history and had his own conception of history too, and he wrote accordingly.

#### **Barani's motive in writing :**

Barani says that but for Firoz Shah Tughluq he could have perished in the mother earth. He attributes his fall partly to his moral failings and to regard the *Ta'rikh* as in part an atonement for past sin. The sin referred to here is "not speaking out against the action of Sultan Muhammadbin-Tughlaq, during his life time". Everywhere he says that he would now propitiate to divine wrath and to secure himself a good hearing on the day of judgment". The statement is self explanatory and

<sup>12</sup> P. Hardy, "*Historians of Medieval India*", London, 1960., 14.



mirrors the religious and ethical islamic canon which influenced Barani to write history. Therefore, the character of his writings could easily be expected to portray a certain committed tendency—pro-Islamic.

Barani's own statement on his motives of writing *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* is proof positive for the pre-conceived ideas of Barani on Sultan Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq. Barani sincerely felt that the actions of the Sultan were against Islamic law. When Barani considered even refraining from condemning his (Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq) acts was a sin, we can very well imagine what proportions of sin Barani could have assigned to its performer. And that would naturally reflect in his writings. Therefore, it would be that Barani had formed an hypothesis on Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and might have fitted in the material to suit his hypothesis. This was his method.

### Barani's Conception of History :

Barani's conception of history, however, is very interesting. "It gives mankind an acquaintance with the heavenly books, the words of God...." "History is that science which provides a capital stock of examples for those with eyes to see". Barani conceived history to have a didactic religious purpose (words and deeds of the prophet).

Yet Barani knew the value of history and was fully aware of the duties and responsibilities of a historian. He said, "I took care to sift the matters and to distinguish between fabrication and reality". "To be honest" he continued, "in observing incidents, and in chronicling them as such is the most essential duty of a historian"<sup>13</sup> He also knew how necessary it was for

<sup>13</sup> Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* (ed.) Saiyid Ahmed Khan, Calcutta, 1862, 468.

a historian to be free from religious bigotry. In his own words "Many writers from excessive bigotry have been induced to tell lies".<sup>14</sup> "In the preface to his *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, Barani pledged to write the truth and the whole truth alone, and asserted that he would write about the good and bad qualities of men on whom he was to write. On top of it all his reasoning for being truthful was the fear of God.

As for the methods of Barani, he collected existing histories and interpreted them in his own way. To quote Barani, "I have devoted myself to the study of books and I have read plenty of ancient and modern books concerning every subject ... Traditions, theology, and the Principles of Saints; ...".<sup>15</sup> Even for the contemporary history of Firoz Shah he does not seem to have made use of documents. Although Barani was aware of methods that are akin to the modern scientific method of collecting material, telling the truth in an unbiased way etc., his conception of truth was different and his interpretation of events fluctuated accordingly. To cite one example "Sultans should know how to act according to an ethical golden mean".<sup>16</sup> This was the guiding principle and Barani's interpretations were based on this dictum and he selected material to suit his purpose. In spite of these defects, he is one of the few historians who furnishes much welcome light on all aspects of history, (e. g.) his account on Al'adin-Khilji's economic measures, market regulations, revenue administration etc. Barani comes nearer to the modern historian in being scientific, but he conceives history to have a didactic religious purpose. The essentially muslim idiom of his thought is indeed underlined by his criteria for the truthful and accurate historian.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Barani is no exception.

<sup>15</sup> Anmad Khan (ed). *Op. Cit.*, 9

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 469

<sup>17</sup> P. Hardrs. *Op. Cit.*, 23

By far the Moghul history is well known both for the richness of sources and the studies made making use of the sources. Many of the Moghul emperors were themselves men of letters and have left us their records of the events of their reign. The other members of the royal family have also written histories of their times. Moreover, the Moghul rulers regularly maintained court historiographers and encouraged them to write the official histories of their times. The last mentioned writings help us to understand the development of historiography during that period.

### **Abul Fazl (1551-1602) :**

Abul Fazl's *Akbar Namah* was written at the instance of Akbar. He was a man of vast learning and had assiduous devotion to his master, emperor Akbar. Both these qualities found expression in his works. Giving allowance to the shortcomings of his works, both *Akbar Namah* and *Ain-i-Akbari* stand as monumental contribution to the history of the Mughals prior to Akbar in general and Akbar in particular. For the period of Akbar, he was a contemporary witness and this was both a virtue and weakness; virtue in the sense that he was an eye witness and able to understand things in the proper perspective and could command any document or facility as he was close to Akbar; his weakness was that he was writing the history of Akbar to be presented to Akbar himself. And he had unqualified devotion to Akbar and this prompts any one to suspect whether Abul Fazl could have been that critical as would be expected of a man of his stature and calibre?

Apart from these considerations, the methods adopted by Abul Fazl in collecting material are interesting. To quote him, "Assuredly, I spent much labour and research in collecting the records and narrative of his Majesty's action and I was a long time interrogating the servants of the State and the old members of the illustrious family.

I examined both prudent, truth-speaking old men and active-minded, right-actioned young ones and reduced their statements to writing. The royal command was issued to the provinces that those who from old service, remembered with certainty or with admixture of doubt, the events of the past, should copy out their notes and memoranda and submit them to court".<sup>18</sup> This statement is self explanatory and bears testimony to Abul Fazl's sincerity of purpose.

As in modern times he collected all available sources, examined them before use and selected only the relevant and useful material. While writing he revised his original draft five times, to achieve perfection. In all he had spent seven years when he completed *Akbar Namah* in 1596. (*Ain-i-Akbari* was completed earlier, and was submitted to Akbar in 1593). He divided *Akbar Namah* into three parts; Part I dealing with the reign of Babur and Humayun, Part II on Akbar's reign from the beginning to the 42nd year and Part III, *Ain-i-Akbari* dealing with the systems of administration and control through various departments of Government. Details of population, industry and wealth etc., were minutely recorded. On top of it all his accounts are the main pillars on chronology.

From his own statements of collection of material, selection of the relevant ones and aiming at perfection of writing, and the distinction drawn between history and chronicle, it would appear, that Abul Fazl does not lag behind any scientific historian of the modern times. But, 'Objectivity' which is the spinal chord of scientific method is conspicuous by its absence in Abul Fazl. Being a master of style and unexcelled in epistolary art Abul Fazl gave expression to these qualities throughout which made the narrative suffer from lack of precision and commitment. To Quote Elliot and

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<sup>18</sup> B. N. Laniza. *Op. Cit.*, 161.

Dowson 'Though he was a man of enlarged vision and extraordinary talents, his style is unnatural, and professed rhetoric. His narrative is florid, fickle, and indistinct, overloaded with common place reflections and pious effusions, generally ending in a compliment to his patron'.<sup>19</sup> Abul Fazl was the champion of Akbar's causes or claim. Whatever Akbar did was accepted as legitimate acts by Abul Fazl and they were glorified too. He wrote as advocate and apologist and never as a judge. His object was to exalt his master and he never deviated from that. Without due discussions or reasons he established the claim of Akbar as the spiritual and temporal head of his subjects; as the only reasonable view. Abul Fazl's dictum that service to Akbar was service to God is proof positive of his subjective approach. He was more of a literary artist than of a scientific historian.

### **Abdul Qadir Badauni (1540-1615) :**

Badauni is equally important as Abul Fazl, but with a difference; in being a non-official historian. Badauni was a non-official historian of the Islamic world. *Tarikh-i-Baduni* and *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh* deserve mention among his works. As he was an orthodox Muslim belonging to the Sunni sect, he freely criticised Akbar for his non-Islamic activities. In his works though information is available on the political, religious, social, commercial and agricultural scenes, which add to the knowledge obtained from Abul Fazl, it must be remembered that the projection had a distinct prejudice.

As for his contribution to methods, not much can be said. Though in the Preface to his *Tarikh-i-Baduni*, he claimed that his object was to write correctly, he never deviated from the approach of a bigoted Sunni Muslim.

There were many other writers of the period, but their contributions to historical method does not warrant any discussion. On the whole historiography during the Moghul period was different from the Sultanate period in as much as it tended to be secular, and more humanistic than divine.

### **Modern Period :**

The western domination over India has left indelible impressions on India in many fields. Historiography is no exception. Following the western concept of scientific history, western scholars of Indian History attempted to rewrite Indian history, with the fresh material brought to bear upon the subject, using scientific methods. Whether they really succeeded is another question. But the Indian scholars too modified their method in scientific methods. We will take a sample survey of this concept.

### **Alexander Cunningham (1814 - 1893)**

One of the pioneers in the field of Indian Archaeology. Archaeological finds came as a boon to the historians who had to depend on literature and epigraphy alone. Archaeological evidences are contemporary and free from bias, interpolation, propaganda etc. Alexander Cunningham joined the service of British India as an ordinary Surveyor and by pure merit rose to the status of Director of Archaeology in the Government of British India.

He excavated and published his findings in his reports. On the basis of his excavations he wrote his *Ancient Geography of India*. His two volumes on the great stupas of Sanchi and Bharhut, *the Asokan inscriptions*, edited by him, etc. served as source for future historians of India.

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<sup>19</sup> *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. VIII, 209.

**R. G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925)**

Among his contributions three works 1. *Early history of Deccan* (1884) 2. *A Peep into the early History of India* (1890) and 3. *Vaishnavism Saivism and Minor Religious System* (1913) are outstanding. Besides he has contributed number of articles on copper plates and inscriptions. His date of Patanjali is widely accepted. His equipment in Sanskrit has stood him in good stand for his deliberation in Ancient history.

He often went in for original sources and his method was critical examination. He put forth his views with courage of conviction, often he was a judge and never tried to be an advocate. To him history was not merely political but had social economic and religious aspects too. He was objective, his narrative was matter of fact and his interpretations were unbiased and critical and his conclusions were not coloured. Therefore, he can be called the father of Scientific historical scholarship in Ancient Indian History.

**Vincent A. Smith (1843-1920)**

After a brilliant academic career. Vincent Arthur Smith joined the Indian Civil Service in 1871. His responsibilities as a Civil servant was quite demanding. Yet his enthusiasm and love for history made him devote a part of his time for study and history. Smith was credited as the author of the first complete history of India when in 1904, he published the *Early History of India from 600 B C. to the Muslim conquest*.

Smith's concentration was distributed over Indian History, art, archaeology and numismatics. His main contributions were in Indian History, notable among them being

1. *Asoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India*
2. *Akbar, the Great Moghul*
3. *Oxford History of India.*

*History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon and Catalogues of Coins of India* bear testimony to his interest in Art and numismatics. Besides he has contributed number of articles

Smith was well acquainted with Western ideas of historical methods and followed the modern method of inductive enquiry – leading to deduction. He neither dismissed Indian traditions and myths nor accepted them in toto, but subjected them to examination and analysis. It may be difficult to accept some of his conclusions, but it is certain that they lead the students of Indian history to new horizons

### **D. D Kosambi**

Dr. Kosambi attempted interdisciplinary approach. As he was equipped with archaeology and anthropology, he tried to apply them in history. He was not a professional historian but a mathematician turned historian. His important and significant contributions include

1. *Introduction to the Study of Indian History*
2. *Culture and civilization of Ancient India in historical outline*

and

3. *Myth and Reality in Indian History.*

His method was analytical and scientific, shorn of romantic and traditional history. As a Marxist he believed in materialism and human motivation and therefore, believed in the possibility of determining the



future "History is the presentation in Chronological order of successive changes in the means and relations of production," Kosambi observed, "the more important question is not who was king or whether a given region had a king, but whether its people used a plough, light or heavy, at the time. Dynastic changes, however, may be studied in so far as they indicate powerful changes in the productive basis".

### **R. C. Majumdar :**

Doyen R. C. Majumdar was born in 1888 After early education he obtained his M. A. and Ph. D. from the Calcutta University where he served as Professor of History. Later on he became Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University before partition. He was elected President of Indian History Congress and was President of Oriental Conference too. Prof. Majumdar was nominated Vice President of the International Commission of the UNESCO for editing the history of mankind.

The unique feature of Dr. Majumdar is that he can handle all the three periods—Ancient, Medieval and Modern with equal mastery and thoroughness. Among his works, *Corporate life in Ancient India*, *History of Bengal*, and *Advanced History of India* in association with two other historians Ray Chaudri and Dutta are outstanding. Of late, the moment we hear about R. C. Majumdar, what strikes our imagination is his *History of Freedom Movement*, and the Bharathia Vidya Bhavan's *History and Culture of Indian People* of which he is the General editor for all the eleven volumes.

Majumdar has offered a new interpretation for 1857 events. He is a nationalist historian and his method is scientific chopping and analysis. He wants to carefully

eliminate interpolations and strive to find truth. He shares the views of Dr. J. N. Sarkar on the writing of History.<sup>20</sup>

### **Robert Orme (1728 - 1801)**

Robert Orme came to Calcutta in 1742 and entered into the services of the East India Company in 1743. By degrees he became the member of the Madras Council in 1754 and continued to hold the position till 1758. He was the official historiographer of the East India Company from 1769 to 1801.

Orme was an eye witness to many of the political developments in India at a time when the British was striving hard to establish themselves in India. As a person involved in some of the deliberations he was able to gain first-hand information about the British and his knowledge about the Indian groups like the Marathas and the Muslims was based on the available literature. In some cases he has consulted people although that cannot be called the 'interview method' of the modern times. He has given credit to the Muslim chronicles without much reservation and that has deprived him of critical approach. But however, there are instances where he conducted personal investigations but it did not carry him too far, because he was inclined to believe the secondary sources in toto.

As for his writings on the military transaction of the Carnatic are concerned, he was an eye witness, being a member of the policy making body and himself directing some operations, therefore, on the British side his information was complete. Yet, they should be used only as raw material as his conclusions are based on only one source, that of the British and represent the British view point. With all the short comings, it should be appreciated that he was inclined to collect material,

<sup>20</sup> R. C. Majumdar. *Historiography in Modern India* p. 56.

investigate atleast to some extent and tried to add information from secondary sources, although he failed to corroborate evidences.

The most significant contribution of Robert Orme is his collection of the manuscripts called 'Orme MSS'. They form the very basis for the writing of modern history of the Carnatic. Other works of importance include,

- 1 *History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the Year 1745 (1764)*
- 2 *Historical Fragments of the Moghul Empire of the Morattoes and the English concern in Indostan from the year M. Dc. Lix. (1782)*

### **Jadunath Sarkar : (1870-1958)**

Sir Jadunath Sarkar, affectionately called J. N. Sarkar is one of the greatest historians of India. The moment we hear about J. N. Sarkar, what strikes our imagination is his '*A History of Aurengazeb*' in five volumes and the '*Fall of the Moghul Empire*' in four volumes, although his '*Shivaji and his times*' and '*House of Shivaji*' cannot be relegated to the background. Besides, he has published works like '*India through the Ages*'; '*Short history of Aurengazeb*' etc. He has contributed more than sixty original papers to '*Modern Review*' and edited '*Poona Presidency Correspondence*' and '*Ain-i-Akbari*' etc.

J. N. Sarkar wrote to Dr. Rajendra Prasad in November 1937, "National history, like every other history worthy of name and deserving to endure, must be true as regards the facts and reasonable in the interpretation of them. It will be national in the sense that it will try to suppress or white-wash everything in our country's past that it is disgraceful, but because it will admit them and at the same time point out

our nation's evolution which offset the former... In this task the historian must be a judge. He will not suppress any defect of the National character but add to his portraiture those higher qualities which taken together with the former help to constitute the entire individual."<sup>21</sup> The foregoing statement reflects Sarkar's concept of history. The methods employed by him were cartography, identification, chronology and corroboration.<sup>22</sup>

Well equipped with languages, Sarkar went hunting for original sources. He treated the muslim chronicles just as raw materials and searched for corroborative evidences from elsewhere. He sought for internal and external evidence of the sources, subjected them to a thorough scientific scrutiny to ascertain their authenticity. He blended circumstantial and environmental factors with hard core facts and moulded pleasingly reliable history.

### K. M. Panikkar (1895- )

K. M. Panikkar was a Journalist, diplomat, academician, administrator and an historian. Although his contribution to Indian History is numerous, he is renowned for his two original works, *Portuguese in Malabar*, and *Dutch in Malabar*. From the point of view of historical methods, it is a demonstration of the proper use of colonial documents, by a blend of indigenous, tradition and culture.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> S. R. Tikekar, *Historiography* p. 5.

## Historians of South India at the University of Madras

### S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar (1871-1953)

He became the first Professor of Indian History at the University of Madras when he assumed office on 1st November 1914. On his assumption of office, he chalked out three lines of work. In the first place he used to deliver every year a series of advanced lectures to the students of the Honours Classes on chosen topics of Indian History. Secondly, he supervised and trained University Research Students. Thirdly, he himself engaged in research work and published the results, whenever ripe. The first of the advanced lectures concerned Vijayanagar and in the coming years practically the whole of the Hindu period down to the foundation of Vijayanagar was dealt with in those 'ordinary lectures'. Under the second plan he guided during the fifteen years of office, the work of five research students allotted to him. The works of these included the *Sources of Vijayanagar History* by the late Mr A Rengaswami Sarasvati; the *History of the Nayaks of Madura* by Mr. R. Satyanatha Iyer; the *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi* by Mr. R. Gopalan, and lastly the *Hindu Administrative Institutions* by Mr V. R. R. Dikshitar. Two Research fellows, besides these, Mr. C. V. Narayanan of the Presidency College and Dr. A. Appadurai of the Loyola College, worked respectively on the *Early History of Saivism* and the *Economic Condition of South India from 12th to the 16th centuries*.

Under the third head, the Professor delivered a number of lectures, which have been published in one form or other. These were : -

1. *The antiquities of Mahabalipuram.*
2. *A little known chapter of Vijayanagar History.*
3. *Beginnings of South Indian History.*
4. *Early History of Vaishnavism in South India.*
5. *South India and her Muhammadan Invaders.*
6. *Rajendra, the Gangaikonda Chola.*
7. *The origin and early history of the Pallavas.*
8. *The Vakatakas and their place in Indian History.*
9. *King Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar.*
10. *Manimekalai in its Historical setting.*

Amongst the miscellaneous works of the Professor may be mentioned his Source Book 1) Reading Book on Indian History for Messrs. Cooper & Sons, Bombay; his Monograph on Penugonda for presentation to His Excellency Lord Willington on one of his visits to that place; and his contribution on the history of South India down to Vijayanagar times, in Vol. III of the *Cambridge History of India*. He revised Vincent Smith's Oxford Students' History for vernacular editions, and edited for the University the *Historical Inscriptions of South India* by Mr. Robert Sewell. He delivered in 1934, the Sir William Meyer Lectures on Hindu Administrative Institutions with particular reference to South India.

Mr. Iyengar broke new ground in historical research in South India. He had to deal with literary sources which often evaded accuracy and laudatory inscriptions which were very often adulating the donors. He exercised great caution and balance of approach and kept his ground with an unbiased outlook of a historian. When regional enthusiasm and language chauvinism were trying to fix up a date for the Sangam Age as early as the 5th century

B. C. to 5th century A. D., Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar in his paper, the *Agastan Age of Tamil Literature*, asserted that it must be assigned to the 2nd and 3rd century B. C. He is justifiably recognized as the doyen of South Indian History.<sup>23</sup>

### K. A. Nilakanta Sastri (1892-1975) :

Professor Nilakanta Sastri served as one of the most distinguished Professors of Indian History and Archaeology of the Madras University from 1929 to 1947. Prof. Sastri's most outstanding contributions are *The Colas*, *The Pandyan Kingdom*, *Studies in Cola Administration*, *Foreign Notices of South India* and the *Srivijaya Kingdom*.

He had the honour of receiving the title of "Padma Bhushan" in 1958. He was the general President to Indian History Congress in 1946, and that of All India Oriental Conference in 1951.

Prof K. A. Nilakanta Sastri edited the volume of *The age of the Nandas and Mauryas* and wrote many chapters in it himself. In his researches Prof. Sastri has used both Tamil and Sanskrit language to the best advantage. But, it must be admitted that he was not carried away by the literary charm of his material. He was aware of the fact that he was a student of history always in search of the truth. One of the most important of his contributions of Prof. Sastri to South Indian History is his use and interpretation of the inscriptions. His views on history and methods are well illustrated in his book, *Historical Methods in Relation to Indian History*. It must be admitted that he did pioneering work in writing South Indian History.

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<sup>23</sup> All details from *Dr. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar Commemoration Volume*.

**V. R. R. Dikshitar**

V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar started as a research scholar under the celebrated Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar. His work as a research scholar at the University of Madras during the years 1923-27, was published in 1929, under the title *Hindu Administrative Institutions*. This is the first of its kind in South India. Dikshitar possessed command over Sanskrit, Tamil and of course, English. His equipment in languages helped him to exploit, the literary sources to their best advantage. His works *Tamil Language and Literature* can be cited as an example. Important among his other works are *Mauryan Polity*, besides many papers. Dikshitar ended up his career as Professor of Indian History and Archaeology at the University of Madras. Most of his contributions were made when he was a Lecturer.

Dikshitar followed the synthetic method. He gave due credit to traditions but occasionally tended to give them over-emphasis. His dating of the Sangam Age from 500 B. C. to 500 A. D. does not conform to synthetic method. Possibly because of the nature of the literary sources he handled he could not precisely follow the chronological order in some of his works.

**K. K. Pillay (1905 - )**

Dr K. K. Pillay, the last of the giant historians of the University of Madras received two D. Litt. Degrees from the University of Madras (1946) and from Oxford (1948). He succeeded V. R. R. Dikshitar at the University of Madras in 1954, which position he held till 1966. He continues to spearhead the research activities at the University of Madras in various capacities. His monumental work *The Suchindram Temple* is a demonstration of how best indigenous material such as literature, inscriptions etc., could be used for the reconstruction of South Indian History. His other works include. *History of*



*Local Self Government in the Madras Presidency* (Oxford), *Early History of Nanchinad, Nāṟṟinai in its historical setting; South India and Sri Lanka* (Sir William Meyer Lecturers).

Dr K. K. Pillay does not fall under the category of people whose specialization is either Ancient, Medieval and Modern periods. He could handle any period with equal familiarity and candidness. As an oriental scholar he possesses the rich cultural traditions, which he combines creditably with the occidental training he had. If his *Suchindram Temple* (covering Ancient and Medieval period) is built on literature and inscriptions, his *Local Self-Government* (Madras Period) is based on modern documents.

At present Prof. Pillay is the Director of Traditional Culture at the University of Madras. To stress the fact that mother tongue is the best medium of communication, Dr. Pillay has contributed many books in Tamil. The best among them being *History and Culture of Tamil Nadu* (1976).

He is a pioneer writer in *Social History of the Tamils*. His oft-repeated dictum is "the balance approach to the people's history". This is reflecting of his attitude to history. All along he has followed the scientific method and objectivity has reigned supreme in his work. In a recent paper, he gave expression to his ideas of history. He stressed that the integrity of the historians as a "must". To quote, "By far the must imperative need of the hour in the field of research in humanities is the development of an objective outlook. Under critical and uncritical adulation of the past imbued by sentimentalism, chauvinism, regionalism, linguism and communalism which mar the objective approach to history must be discarded".

## Appendix

### HYPOTHESIS

An hypothesis is a supposition made with evidence recognized as insufficient, in order to account for some fact or some law known to be real. In other words an hypothesis is a provisional or tentative explanation.

Discovery is almost entirely dependent on hypothesis. No man is likely to distinguish the law which lies hidden behind the complex phenomena of experience, unless he hazards an hypothesis, and then by observation and experiment forces nature to declare whether his hypothesis is correct or not. The first task of the investigator is to ask himself what various hypotheses, in themselves possible, may be imagined, which are capable of accounting for the phenomena. Rigid testing of the suggested hypotheses is more important than the hypotheses themselves. The aim of all investigation is the discovery of truth. To this hypotheses are but means and instruments. An investigator must not be so captivated by the ingenuity of his hypothesis and the accuracy with which it appears to explain the phenomena, as to accept it as true before he can say with certainty that his evidence is such as to exclude every other supposition.

### **Descriptive Hypothesis :**

Hypotheses are employed for another purpose, besides what we have just considered. When a number of facts relating to a certain subject have been gathered together, and the true explanation of the facts is still to seek, it is often useful to group them round some hypothesis, even though it should hardly seem likely that this hypothesis will be found to represent the actual truth. Such a mode of collating the facts, as it has been termed, enables us to describe them in terms of a coherent system, and may afford us a basis for deductions – this is called the descriptive hypothesis.

### **Working Hypothesis :**

The expression 'Working Hypothesis' is used when it is desired to lay special stress in the Provisional character of the assumption, and on the conviction of the investigator that it will need large modifications, before it will be found satisfactorily to account for all the facts, for which it should provide an explanation.

### **Theory : Hypothesis : Fact :**

In physical science the terms theory and hypothesis are employed in contrast to each other. The term theory is ordinarily understood to signify that the suggested explanation is held to have been satisfactorily proved, and to be no longer open to question. Thus we find writers use the expression 'Theory of Gravitation' and not 'Hypothesis of Gravitation'.

The term 'Fact' is sometimes restricted to signify the particular concrete facts of experience. Sometimes it is extended to include whatever has been proved to be real and in this sense can be used a theory whose truth has been established.

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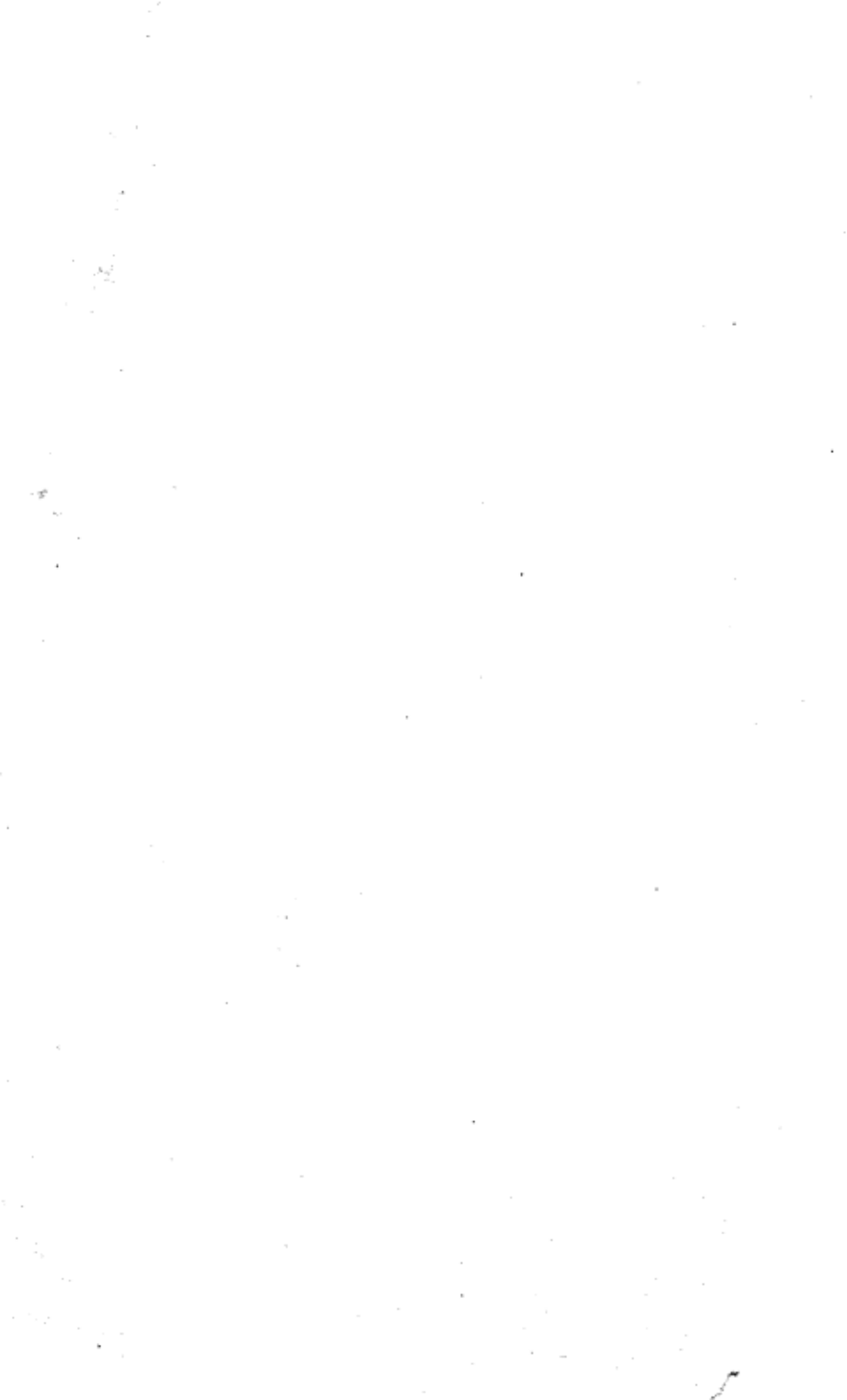
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