CHAPTER I

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY TILL THE BEGINNING OF AREA STUDIES (THIRD WORLD)

Historical scholarship in the United States began with the works of the early explorers and settlers. The first references to America are to be found in the accounts dealing with the experiences of the Norse explorers in the ninth century who discovered Iceland and the Faroes and also sighted the east Greenland coast. These are contained in two sagas, *The Vinland History* and *The Saga of Eric the Red*.\(^1\) According to these early works the actual discoverer of America was Lief Ericson in the year 1000 A.D. Later writers have however dismissed this event as a mere episode and not much importance is placed on these accounts of the Norsemen since the latter did not assimilate any information in a systematic manner to be used by later generations.

Historiography of America can be said to have been given a definite impetus by Christopher Columbus. He fired the imagination of the European mind by his discovery of America in 1492 and he definitely initiated the process of European colonization. "The discovery of Christopher

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Columbus altered the history of the world by changing the history of Europe. European culture ... mariners and English explorers transformed the Atlantic into a commonplace route of traffic ... "2 and made America their new home.

English explorers and settlers played a pioneering role in the writing of history in America since the early seventeenth century. The names which immediately come to mind are those of Captain John Smith and Governor William Bradford. The accounts of these pioneers were amateurish and lacked objectivity. "The earliest histories of the New England settlements in North America were written in two dissimilar manners: one according to the biblical view of human destiny and the other as secular reporting of a collective venture in economics and politics ... the Virginia histories stressed greater material well - being whereas those in New England focused on God's glory."3

By 1776 these two divergent views merged and led to regional and colonial historiography. Captain John Smith wrote "A True Relation in 1608 and General History of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles in 1624. Both

2. Ibid., p. 59.
works pertained to Virginia, the oldest of the Colonies. Smith was impressed by the commercial prospects of America and therefore, both his works stressed this point. In this manner he hoped to lure more English migration to Virginia.

The Pilgrims, on the other hand, sailed into Massachusetts Bay in 1620 and established the settlement of Plymouth. They were fired by religious zeal and felt that they were chosen by God to spread His message in the new land. In Massachusetts they "set about the work of building a new Zion (or Canaan). It would be a centre of redemption where God carried on his work ... the settlers had a precise role: they were to defend the Christian faith against spiritual corruption."\(^4\)

William Bradford was the leader amongst early colonial literary men. He wrote the *History of Plymouth Plantation* in 1646 immortalizing the Pilgrims of Plymouth. These early works recorded the exploration and colonization of North America, the problems encountered by the original settlers, their aspirations, and other aspects of their life in the new land. Some other books written in a similar vein were: John Winthrop - *Journal* (1630 - 49); Edward Johnson - *the Wonder Working Providence of Zion's Saviour of New England* (1628 - 51); William Hubbard-*General History of New England* (1628 - 51).\(^4\)

It is generally accepted that American intellectual tradition begins with the accounts of Pilgrims and Puritans who "crossed the ocean, fought the Indians and wrote history with conscious purpose." Historical scholarship was undoubtedly revolutionized with the coming of Romanticism to America in the 1820's and 1830's and has largely been shaped by European historical ideas. Romanticism, born in Germany, spread quickly and found its way in the writings of American historians: George Bancroft, William Prescott, John Motley and Francis Parkman.

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1800, George Bancroft was America’s first professionally trained historian. Bancroft belonged to an old and traditional New England family where at home the atmosphere was intellectually inspiring. He "was fortified by a philosophy of tolerance and a sympathy for ideas not his own." Bancroft was rational in his views and thinking, deeply interested in politics and much impressed by European standards in historical scholarship. He grew up in an era

5. Ibid., p. 196.
when momentous developments were taking place which made him a keen observer and a prolific writer, and therefore America's most influential nineteenth century historian.

George Bancroft learned the new historical methods at Gottingen, where he earned his Ph.D., and Berlin from Van Heeren, Eichhorn and Bockh. On his return to his country, Bancroft introduced these invigorating German historical ideals in America and devoted himself "to the promotion of justice, liberty, and learning ...".

Bancroft was a patriot and was greatly influenced by democratic ideals. His major work was The History of the United States from the Discovery of the Continent to the Present Time, (10 volumes) (Boston, 1834 - 74) in which "Bancroft presented his story of the American past with enthusiasm, told it in a lively narrative, and in comparison with most contemporary historians, did careful research." Infact, despite his democratic and Protestant prejudices, his work was the best treatment of many subjects for many generations due to his large-scale use of primary sources and documents. Today, however, he only arouses a literary interest amongst modern American historians. Although critics seldom attack his fundamental assumptions, with a

8. Ibid., p. 243.
growing emphasis on scientific methods and theories, Bancroft's ornate style and "large-scale interpretations" are not too popular today.

The other three Romantic historians, Francis Parkman, William Prescott, and John Lothrop Motley, had a lot in common: New England, Massachusetts Bay, Harvard, and financial security. All of them had a gift for writing well and were greatly fascinated with various aspects of the American past. "The drama of peoples, the clash of civilizations, the role of great men, stimulated their imagination."

Prescott became an authority on, and wrote at length about Spanish activity in the New World; Motley traced the rise of freedom in the Netherlands; and Francis Parkman studied the struggle between Europeans and natives in the wilderness of North America.

The works of the Romantic historians, however, were not free from religious bias. Being avowed Protestants, in their writings, "Protestantism had a close relationship to freedom and democracy, while Roman Catholicism was despotic, absolutist and deceptive." They were all supporters of the "Great man theory" and therefore the character of the hero


received detailed attention. Despite their verbose style and Protestant prejudices, the Romantic historians were sincere scholars. They made large-scale use of primary sources in their works though later historians consider their methods outdated.

Both Parkman and Prescott were virtually blind but their independent financial resources made it possible for them to hire researchers to ferret out countless primary sources and read out the material to them. Parkman, especially, greatly valued the primary source and did not let the distance, expense or his disability come in the way.

Prescott's best-known work is *A History of the Conquest of Mexico* in three volumes. His books were highly acclaimed at Oxford University, the French Institute and the Royal Society of Berlin. His critics of course accuse him of depending too much on Spanish archival sources which were biased against the Aztecs and Incas.

Motley, almost a generation younger than Prescott, learnt the historical craft in Germany. A diplomatic assignment in Europe gave him the opportunity to spend many years in the archives of Brussels, The Hague, Dresden and Berlin. His most acclaimed work was *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* in which he placed the Dutch war for independence in the same category as the American Revolutionary War.
Parkman's scholarly output was impressive and his eleven volumes of *France and England in North America* (Boston, 1851–92), is considered his major work. Parkman's books command respect even today and many people still consider him the greatest American historian. He is regarded as a genius and his writings bear ample testimony to his style, clarity of thought, logic and organization of facts.

The Civil War had a tremendous impact on all aspects of American life. It also shifted the concern of intellectual activity from Romanticism to the so-called scientific historiography which was more critical, discriminating, looked upon the course of American history with an impartial eye and had a broad-based field of investigation. Money was spent lavishly for educational purposes; universities and libraries were enlarged and modernized, creating professional demands on historians. Leopold Von Ranke with his emphasis on objectivity, accuracy, critical analysis, search for archival sources and depiction of the past as it had actually happened, came to be regarded as a Messiah of the new approach to the study of history. "To be scientific was to be objective. To be objective was to study critically the genuine sources, and subsequently to describe impartially the facts of history with the same detached mind and in the same manner in which it was believed, other scientists regarded natural
In the US the scientific tradition in historical writing was initiated by Herbert Baxter Adams. He introduced the teaching of history in John Hopkins University in 1876 after having recently concluded his studies in Gottingen, Berlin and Heidelberg. Till this time there were virtually no professors of history to undertake the writing of history in America. Infact even the teaching of history was entrusted to men who were more interested in other subjects.

H.B. Adams is credited not only with "the establishment of the seminar method of instruction in America, but also the organization and creation of the first great training school for historians in the United States." Consequently,"there was scarcely a great American university at the opening of the twentieth century which did not have in its department of history one or more men trained in the John Hopkins seminar."\(^{13}\) In his seminars he stressed upon the "German germ" theory in which he insisted that "American institutions began in the dark German forests, travelled to England, and then came over to America."\(^{14}\)

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Adams also laid too much stress on the importance of political history. His two most important students were Frederick Jackson Turner and Charles McLean Andrews. They both repudiated Adam's emphasis on the German germs.

Within a short span of time H.B. Adams had brought about a revolution in the field of historical scholarship in the US and his contribution to late nineteenth century intellectual history cannot be overlooked. Herbert Baxter Adams was a capable "organizer and promoter of research" and the moving force behind the creation of the American Historical Association in 1884 in order "to insure and promote the continued expansion of systematic training and study in history."15 He hoped that the AHA would become an important forum and provide opportunity to teachers and students to meet periodically and exchange their ideas which would "widen their horizons and make their work more fruitful."16 HB Adams became founder Secretary of the AHA in 1884, a position he continued to hold till 1900. During this period he firmly established the new profession, and became one of its outstanding leaders.

The scientific tradition continued to gain in popularity and its greatest champion in the United States

16. Ibid., p. 935.
was Henry Adams, the great grandson of President John Adams and the grandson of President John Quincy Adams. Henry Adams has been acclaimed by a wide circle of American intellectuals as his country's leading and most complete historian. "The fluency of his style places him with the literary historians, while his vigorous critical standards, comparative objectivity, and influence over academicians prompt his classification"\(^{17}\) with the scientific group.

Born in 1838, he graduated from Harvard and then spent a number of years travelling abroad. In 1871 he was invited by President Eliot to become assistant professor of history at Harvard. By his strict adherence to academic discipline and hard work, Henry Adams "became a leading member of the minority faction of the faculty bent on imparting new life to the stagnant curriculum rooted in the vanished outlook of the eighteenth century."\(^{18}\)

He was highly acclaimed as a teacher and scholar but did not seem satisfied with his work. He remained at Harvard for seven years and resigned his post to devote time to the research and writing of history. Adams wrote a number of books, the most important being *History of the United*

States of America During the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison in nine volumes, completed in 1889. It was an excellent piece of work based on authentic facts drawn from original documents after subjecting them to careful scrutiny. This nine-volume product is a classic blend of literary style and scientific use of archival sources. In it he carefully examined the differences between European and American civilizations besides defending the administration of his great grandfather against the attack of the writers belonging to the Jeffersonian period.

Henry Adams was greatly concerned about the deterioration of society which led him to "search for universal principles of historical explanation." After 1890 especially, he became impressed by the natural sciences and was convinced that their mastery would disclose the universal law of history. He gave preference to physics over biology and propounded, firstly, that "history is fatefully enmeshed with the laws of force of the physical universe and, second, that this same universe is steadily, if slowly, moving toward its inescapable, ordained extinction." He put forth his scientific ideas in his


Letter to American Teachers of History (1918). Between 1900 and 1918 Adams wrote at a furious pace. During this period Mont-Saint Michel and Chartres (1913), a book with cultural overtones in which he compares modern chaos with the twelfth-century medieval order, and the Education of Henry Adams, published after his death in 1918, are considered to be his important writings. In Education his pessimism comes across. Despite his reputation as a historian and writer, it is generally believed that he regarded himself a failure, maybe because high political office eluded him. He considered "his teaching futile, his writings dull, and his life a failure." Henry Adams also felt his education had been defective because "it was out of tune with the changed conditions of his lifetime." Adams lived during a period of transition when America was passing "from the agricultural-rural stage to the urban-industrial stage, from relative simplicity to increasing complexity." Although his knowledge of science was not adequate and momentous changes were taking place in the USA during his lifetime, he has assumed "a place amongst the immortal historians" by virtue of his objectivity, style and imagination.

22. Ibid., p. 545.
23. Ferdinand Schevill, Six Historians, p. 189.
During the twentieth century scientific history was replaced by a new school of "Progressive" historians whose leader was Frederick Jackson Turner. The Progressives were critical of the scientific historians' sole concern with political and constitutional history to the exclusion of intellectual, economic and social considerations. They were opposed to a study of history where "almost everything was classified under kings' reigns; and the policy of their Governments and the wars in which they become involved..."24 For them history was much more than politics, diplomacy, and a study of military annals.

The Progressives dominated the field of history during the first half of the twentieth century and the "pivotal ideal of the Progressive historians was economic and political conflict."25 Infact, "the heart of their story was the conflict between democracy and privilege, the poor versus the rich, the farmers against the monopolists, the workers against the corporations, and at times, the Free -Soilers against the slaveholders."26


According to the Progressive historians economic and social conditions, geography, individual will and other factors too played an important role in shaping human destiny. For this reason the Progressives "sought the causes of progress through the impact of economic conditions, geography, and exercise of individual will. They also placed greater emphasis on professional orthodoxy."27 The Progressive era was the golden age of history in America during which the discipline attained maturity.

Frederick Jackson Turner was born at Portage, Wisconsin, in 1861. He studied at the University of Wisconsin and then went to John Hopkins where he received his Ph.D. in 1890 under the guidance of Herbert Baxter Adams. He however differed from his mentor and opposed the "germ theory" of history. Turner began his career by writing a series of remarkable essays in the early 1890s. In 1893 at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago he read his famous paper, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" in which he put forward "the idea of an American nation that was unique in character and development because it had been shaped less by cross-Atlantic links than by the dramatic


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conquest of a vast continent. The specific purpose of his paper, well-known for its frontier thesis, was to refute the Germanist thesis which Turner's teachers had propounded..."28 Turner stressed the role of the common man in American history and the importance of economic life. He argued that the frontier was the "primary agency" through which the immigrant was Americanized and declared that "the existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development."29

Turner called for a better understanding of the economic aspects of history and of the bearing of economic interests upon politics. He argued that history is not just about politics, diplomacy, constitutions, and battles, not just about the doings of a ruling elite, but must deal with the full range of human activities and with the life of the common man. He spoke boldly for the broadening of the historical enterprise and felt that history should not be just past politics but also past literature, past religion and past economics. "History is the biography of society in all its departments." Turner's preachings as well as the


practice of his historical followers, helped to lay the groundwork for the more aggressive use of the economic interpretation of history that came with Beard's generation.

In all, F.J. Turner wrote five notable essays between 1891 and 1903, and despite criticism for possessing an inflexible and dogmatic mind, his work is impressive. Turner opened a new phase in America's complete historiographical independence from Europe, which established him as the first of the great professional historians in the United States.

Under Turner's able guidance the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin soon ranked amongst the two or three best in the country and easily the foremost in the West. His influence was so pervasive that the historical profession came to be referred to as one large "Turnerverein". Unfortunately, by the time he was forty, Turner's ideas became "remarkably fuzzy ... bland and unproductive." 30 Turner's charisma and aura however remained. "He became the John Dewey of American history," 31 and continued to influence historical scholarship right up to the 1930s.

30. Ibid., p. 13.

Charles A Beard, undoubtedly the best-known and most prolific of the Progressive historians, enjoyed considerable influence among scholars and the general public. Beard insisted that scholarly research should help reformers solve contemporary problems\textsuperscript{32} and therefore had implicit belief in the economic interpretation of history. He was deeply affected by the Depression of the 1890s and the industrial and political struggles that grew out of it. He visited Chicago during the Depression and saw for himself the evil consequences of the industrial revolution and its resultant working-class miseries. He was also deeply moved and impressed by John Ruskin's "Unto This Last" (1862), a set of four essays which Ruskin himself thought were "the truest, rightest worded and most serviceable things I have ever written."

In 1901 Beard published his first book, \textit{The Industrial Revolution}. However, his most significant and controversial work was written in 1913 at Columbia from where he also obtained his Ph.D. At Columbia a number of professors were engaged in economic interpretations of society, and Beard became famous when he published \textit{An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution}, where he analysed the motives of the framers of the Constitution. "Beard stressed the economic class interests that seemed to

motivate many of the framers of that document, and how opposed many of them were to majoritarian rule.33 His other important book was the Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy, which was based on original research.

For his bold and out-spoken work, Beard was criticised for being unpatriotic. He continued to remain a public figure until his death and in the 1920s became the most influential historian in the country largely due to the success of his book, The Rise of American Civilization (New York, 1927). Despite his teaching commitments, Beard wrote almost fifty books on both American history and politics, besides publishing many works on the primary sources of history which proved immensely useful to young students. A tremendous achievement indeed!

By the 1930s Beard underwent an intellectual conversion from a firm adherence to the economic interpretation of history to a form of historical relativism. He now argued that historians should overcome their bias and should change their ideas with time. Charles A Beard typified the cross currents of American historiography as it came to full maturity. He established canons and criteria of his own, and in volume after volume he flung a series of challenges at traditional historical sanctities. The Constitution, the motives of the Founding

33. Ibid.
Fathers, the role of economics in historical causation, and the philosophy of scientific history itself were subjected to his encyclopedic data.\textsuperscript{34}

The third major Progressive historian was Carl L Becker, a student of Turner at the University of Wisconsin. Although Becker was not a good archival researcher, he "was certainly the equal of (Henry) Adams in his mastery of scholarly techniques; he had a comparable, incisive mind; he, too, probed deeply into human action while viewing events with philosophical calm, and his literary power equalled as well as resembled that of Adams."\textsuperscript{35} His two notable books which are still widely used and respected are \textit{The Declaration of Independence}, (New York, 1922) and \textit{The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers}, (New Haven, 1932).

Becker’s writings were pragmatic, liberal and humane. He rejected the view that scientific history could actually depict the past as it had actually happened. The real past could never be captured and historians were "fooling themselves if they thought they could emulate science by simply accumulating evidence or hypothesizing laws ... he insisted that all historical insights were

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relative to current problems and the interest of the historian asking the questions ... A historian’s job is to ask useful questions about the present and enrich the lives of his readers. He should not confuse his answers with anything of permanent value because the present is always changing and thus truth and history are always changing."36

Around 1950 the Progressive movement began to decline as a new intellectual mood favouring "Consensus" against "Conflict" started gaining favour amongst intellectuals. Infact, from 1933 onwards it was an era of continuous crisis and "pre-eminently the age of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who dominated these years as few men have ever dominated an era."

37 Roosevelt convinced American intellectual that both the Depression and totalitarianism were enemies against which a united America would have to fight in a determined manner. "The collapse of Europe, the horrors of the war and the death camps, ... The cold war brought a certain closing of the ranks, a disposition to stress common objectives, a revulsion from Marxism and its


tendency to think of social conflict as carried a outrance."

Surprisingly, it was the rise of totalitarian dictatorships in Germany, Italy and the USSR which greatly enriched "American intellectual and cultural life. The expulsion of some of the most gifted scientists, artists and literary men from Italy and Germany meant an enhancement of the cosmopolitan tone and the distinction of cultural life all over America ... Every leading American university and many colleges profited from the presence of refugee scholars."39

World War - II, while focusing attention on internationalism, also led to a growing sense of pride amongst Americans for their country, its democratic institutions and heritage. Those very people who were earlier critical of social inequalities and the unchecked growth of capitalism in America now developed feelings of nationalism and came to love their country despite its many faults. "However bad America was, it was not Nazi Germany or Communist Russia, and great numbers of scholars turned into what seemed to be patriotic celebrants of national virtues. They began to emphasize America's unique contribution to


world history and developed the school of "Consensus historians."

The years following the Second World War are known as the Age of Consensus in American historical writing when historians saw consensus instead of conflict in the American past. The leaders of this school were Daniel Boorstin and Louis Hartz. Boorstin, who was Professor of History at the University of Chicago made a "conscious effort to find homogeneity, unity and consistency in the American past." In his works, The Genius of American Politics (Chicago, 1953), The Americans: The Colonial Experience (1958), The National Experience (1965), and The Democratic Experience (1973), Boorstin has "argued a highly controversial case for American spontaneity, pragmatism and popular creativity... 41

Around the same time, Louis Hartz, Director of the History of American Civilization Program at Harvard began work on two projects, The Liberal Tradition in America (New York, 1955) and The Founding of New Societies (New York, 1964). In the former "Hartz criticized Progressive historians for failing to see the liberal consensus which marked America's past, and he illustrated the nature of the

41. Ibid., p. 19.
consensus by contrasting it with the dramatic conflicts in European history."42 In his second work, Hartz compares development in the USA to the development of countries like Canada and Australia.


Another parallel development was the emergence of the New Left historians after 1960, who challenged the Consensus school. The New Left historians emphasized on conflict and violence in American history and challenged the complacent attitude of the Consensus school. Although there are a number of gaps in their coverage of the American past, the noteworthy New Left historians, Clifford Solway, Gabriel Kolko and William Appleman Williams, infused American historiography with a new dynamism. The New Left

The New Left historians were mainly engaged in "Turning History Upside Down," to borrow Solway's title, "by writing about losers past and present: rebellious slaves, abolitionists, freed men then and now, radical Populists, the old Socialist Party, the Wobblies, those to whom the New Deal dealt no cards, the inarticulate, the poor, the socially impotent middle class." They hoped to "offer a new American Dream" through their writings.

44. *Ibid*.
Solway wrote, extensively on Populism, Progressivism and the New Deal, while Kolko was considered to be the most important New Deal author of the Progressive era. According to Kolko, "increasing competition and decentralization moved big businessmen to engineer progressive federal legislation in order to assume their control over the economy." William Appleman Williams provided the lead for the New Left writings in the area of American foreign policy. He advocated the Open Door approach in a "desire to create the worldwide trade and investment opportunities for American capitalism that it requires in order to survive."

But the New Left historians could not hold their ground for long. Their critics found them "guilty of exaggerated present-mindedness, of partisan and propagandistic distortion in order to create a usable radical past to provide direction for the new radical community." Charges of basing their writings on incomplete and selective sources and arguments were also levelled against the New left historians. Their works were criticised for distorting reality and gradually the New

46. Ibid., p. 297.
47. Ibid., p. 307.
48. Ibid., p. 281.
Left movement too faded into oblivion like their predecessors, the Consensus School.

What emerged was the New History movement, which had made a tentative beginning at the time of the rise of Progressive historiography under James Harvey Robinson and Henry Elmer Barnes. The new historians called for an alliance of history with sociology and economics in order to study all aspects of society. This new "school" of historians controlled most of the major graduate schools and universities in the USA and "contemporary" and "interdisciplinary" history are the rage in American Universities. "One of the considerable achievements in higher education in the United States in the post-second World War era has been the widespread movement to make the humanities more cosmopolitan and the social sciences more universalistic."49

The nature, methodology and scope of historical research has therefore widened greatly and the study of the new economic history, new urban history, new social history, and even new political history with its interdisciplinary overtones, are all post World War II developments.

In the United States historians became greatly "concerned with the scientific purpose and direction of

their work. Quantitative history and the history of the "Common man" are two major aspects of American historical research.\textsuperscript{50} History came to be regarded as the "mistress of life" which made psychology, sociology, economics, demography and theology, integral parts of the subject.

Another parallel development in American historical studies fostered by World War - II was the beginning of Third World studies. The area - studies movement received impetus after 1945 to combat the threat posed by Communist Russia on the international arena. America was "suddenly catapulted to the heart of world politics" to "emerge as the leading national power in the struggle against the Communist revolution."\textsuperscript{51} The "Red scare" became an international problem and a serious threat to American security because after World War - II, US military pre-eminence had vanished. The end of the Second World War also meant the end of European dominance of Asia, where millions of peoples were fired by nationalism and the desire to shake off foreign yoke. It therefore became necessary to ensure that this political vacuum was not filled solely by the USSR, that American interests were safeguarded. On account of the highly fluid political situation, especially in Asia, the US


felt that it had to be more actively involved in "Asian affairs at a time when Asia is becoming an increasingly important factor in international relations. In the new Asia, India is playing a major role ... The United States clearly has a vital stake in India's efforts to improve the lot of the masses of her distressed people and in her survival as a democratic state. Thus the great interest of Americans in India is a reflection of the new position of both India and the United States."

To meet this new challenge, a new type of historiography evolved in the United States of America. Historical scholarship became an "international enterprise." "The topics of current interest cannot easily be catalogued. Anyone interested in the whole range of innovative scholarship ... is involved in the latest refinements in the study of the discoveries and explorations in parish records of France and England, in family, community, and demographic studies from everywhere, ... in the evolution of royal courts, state offices, and parliamentary bodies, in mobility patterns and migrations, in the everyday lives of workers and witches, in race conflicts, social stratification, the uses of leisure, sex practices, burial customs, magic, ..."

mentalités and ideologies of all kinds, and attitudes to everything: to birth, to life, to work, to age, to death and to life after death.\textsuperscript{53}

This new spirit of internationalism meant acceptance of the belief that "people, ideas and institutions" the world over had a basic underlying unity and history must "study these interactions with a sensitivity to issues of economic, cultural, military and interpretive power." The result was that contemporary American historiography became greatly concerned with the question of "multiculturalism" not only within American society but in "other multiethnic and multiracial societies"\textsuperscript{54} as well.

The debate over "multiculturalism" is an ongoing one and two emerging viewpoints have been identified by scholars: "particularism" and "pluralism". The academicians involved in this "clash of ideas" are divided into two groups - Allan Bloom, Diane Ravitch, and Arthur Schlesinger versus Gerald Graff, Henry Louis Gates, and Ronald Takaki.\textsuperscript{55}


The former groups is somewhat conservative in its approach, and especially Bloom has a closed mind and is "unwilling to allow the (university) curriculum to become more inclusive" as is clear from his work *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. (New York, 1987) Bloom's work shows a racial bias against blacks whom he finds "uncivilised" and "indigestible." Similarly, Ravitch and Schlesinger, while professing to be supporters of the pluralistic or multicultural perspective, lay great emphasis on "the essentially European origins of American culture." They also want to discourage the trend of harping on "specific group identities" as "the dividing of society into fixed ethnicities nourishes a culture of victimization and a contagion of inflammable sensitivities. This danger threatens the brittle bonds of national identity that hold this diverse and fractious society together."

The group led by Ronard Takaki on the other hand sees American cultural and ethnic diversity as a source of

56. Ibid., p. 112.
57. Ibid., p. 111.
strength, a "rich and complex mosaic of our national pluralism" to which immigrant groups from various countries have contributed significantly. Takaki and others have suggested the introduction of "courses offering a comparative and integrative approach" to enable students to understand and appreciate "American society in terms of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and European Americans."60 Thus the debate on "multiculturalism" is currently in fashion in American academic circles.