24. RESEARCH TOPIC

> *Historical research is the systematic investigation, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning past events.*
> -*Walter R.Borg*.

24.1 RESEARCH ✓

What is research? The term 'research' is derived from the French word 'rechercher', meaning to search back. Re-search means to search again in order to re-examine the facts. Research is undertaken to find out new facts or to re-examine the facts already known or to interpret facts or to revise or revalidate accepted conclusions in the light of newly discovered facts. Research may be positive or negative. *Positive research* may formulate new principles and generalizations on a scientific basis. *Negative research* may dismantle old assumptions and conclusions. In short, research is a pursuit of truth, a purposeful study and an attempt to provide new insight into the problem selected.

24.1.1 OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

Research simply means systematic search for new knowledge. It unlocks the storehouse of knowledge to bring to the surface new facts. The objectives of research may be listed as follows: 1) To find out the truth by applying the time-tested scientific procedures. 2) To gain new insights into the phenomena. 3) To study the unique characteristics of a society, culture, a situation or an individual. 4) To investigate the recurring nature of phenomena with a view to generalize and to formulate laws. 5) To test a hypothesis of causal relationship between events. 6) To contribute to the existing quantum of human knowledge.

24.1.2 REASONS FOR RESEARCH /

Why do people undertake research? Thousands of students all over the country have been engaged in research for one reason or the other. They are motivated to engage in research for the following possible reasons: 1) To earn a research degree. 2) To fulfill the partial requirements of the course of study. 3) To get respectability and social status. 4) To

derive intellectual pleasure of doing some creative work. 5) To be of service to society. 6) To satisfy career conditions.

24.1.3 TYPES OF RESEARCH

There are several types of research: 1) *Basic research,* also known as Pure or Fundamental research, is concerned with some natural phenomenon. It's aim is to generate knowledge for knowledge's safe. 2) *Applied research* is action oriented and it seeks to find a rational solution to practical problem. 3) *Quantitative research* is based on measurements to quantity a phenomena. 4) *Qualitative research* is concerned with investigating the underlying causes, motives and desires for human behaviour. 5) *Conceptual research* seeks to offer abstract philosophical ideas and theories about nature and human nature. 6) *Empirical research* relies on experiment or observation, not on system or theory. It is used to prove or disprove a given hypothesis. 7) *Descriptive research* narrates the state of affairs as it exists or existed. 8) *Interpretative research* goes beyond the descriptive one and interprets evidences and facts. Descriptive – interpretative research is better suited to study historical events.

24.2 HISTORICAL RESEARCH

What is historical research? Historical research is conducted on the basis of historical data. In a way, all research is historical in nature, since research depends on the findings recorded in the past. But the problem treated in historical research is essentially historical in nature. Since historical facts could not be repeated accurately as can be done under laboratory conditions, historical research necessarily depends on source materials. Only problems as are based on historical records can be taken up for investigation. Historical research is the systematic   investigation, evaluation, synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning past events".[1]

Historical research is concerned with establishing the occurrence of unique events. Historical research is not only determines past events but also interprets such events and establishes pattern of relationships.[2] "Historical research is digging into the past in order to re-enact the past in its entirety... to explain the meaning and significance of the past events, to correct the wrong notions... and to elaborate, analyze, synthesize and philosophize ideas in the light of the knowledge we possess".[3] The aim of historical research is to apply the method of reflective thinking to unsolved problems by means of discovery of past trends of events, facts or attitudes.[4]

24.2.1 LEVELS OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Historical research may be primary, secondary or tertiary. The research may be called *primary* if the researcher is engaged in the task of collecting original documents with a view to find out new information. It is *secondary* when the researcher goes beyond the level of collecting and selecting sources and interprets the evidences gathered. The research is *tertiary* if its aim is to synthesize the historical knowledge and offer philosophical explanation to the recurring historical events.

24.2.2 HISTORICAL METHODOLOGY

History is unique and therefore its methodology is bound to be special. Historical methodology indicates the nature, character and limits of historical knowledge. Besides being scientific it has its own system, plan and procedure to unravel the complexities involved in historical research. It is difficult and demanding. In short, historical methodology is a process-series of steps-consisting of 1) selection of the topic, 2) collection of sources, 3) analyzing evidences, 4) synthesizing the findings and 5) writing the thesis. Techniques such as statistical analysis, computation, diagrammatical analysis, quantification, ethno-archaeology etc are being used within the frame-work of historical methodology.

24.3 REQUISITES OF A RESEARCHER

24.8.1 Researcher

"In scholarship, as in marriage, a man should know his own mind", says William Mulder. The research scholar must be unambiguous about the purpose and scope of his research. He should not select a research topic in haste and repent at leisure! Before choosing a topic for research he must ask himself: what actually he wants to do, to achieve, to prove or disprove? Will he add anything new to the existing quantum of knowledge in his field of specialization? Will he offer new explanation or interpretation or advance a new theory? Whether his research writing would be exposition, argument, narration or description in the form of a report or dissertation or thesis? The researcher should not stray into research but stay and search for truth. He must love research and leave no stone unturned in his pursuit. He must be smart, sharp and sincere. Patience and perseverance pay in research.

24.3.2 Required Qualities
Mental Qualities

Intellectual excellence is not inherited; it is acquired through education, training and effort. Studies have shown that the human brain is

capable of much greater learning and remembering than had been previously imagined. The researcher should, therefore, be open-minded so that he can acquire knowledge without prejudice or bias. His mental magnet must attract all relevant information regarding his area of research. He must use his mental tool effectively. Sharp intellect and critical thinking will enable him to cut the Gordion knot of historical complexities; to test, for instance, whether a source is credulous or credible. Since he has to enact the past in his mind by using evidences his ability to think critically and constructively must be strong. The researcher must internalize what he learns. And he must also acquire some rudimentary knowledge of related subjects such as anthropology, ethno-archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, economics, sociology, psychology etc. To know about the basics of statistics and computers will be useful to do research.

Physical qualities

Sound mind and healthy body go well together. Physical endurance is as essential as mental toughness. Since sustained hard work and persistent efforts are required to engage in meaningful research the researcher needs to be healthy if not sturdy. He may have to work for a long period of time. Also he may have to study away to pursue research. He may have to run from pillar to post, visiting libraries, archives, museums, epigraphy offices and so on. So, he requires indefatigable physical stamina, strength and toughness to bear the strain and stress of research. The researcher need not be a weight-lifter or a prize-fighter but he shall have robust health. In short, research must begin in the body of the researcher!

Moral Qualities

The researcher has to be truthful to the subject he has selected for research. He need not be a moral purist like Buddha, Jesus or Gandhi, but he must be loyal to his field of specialization. No one expects him to be a Socrates but he can be a man of moral courage born out of conviction. Qualities like honesty, integrity and uprightness are non-negotiable. Political-party-ideological neutrality is a necessity. Then only the researcher can remain untainted by bias, prejudice and subjectivity. He must be courageous enough to defend his work and counter negative criticism. He must deliberately desist from plagiarism, replication and duplication of research. Do research yourself; don't depend on ghost-writers or dishonest 'scholars' who work for monetary gains. This is moral dishonesty at its worst. Involve yourself with your work and enjoy doing it.

Social qualities

Researcher is a social being. He is not a human ostrich always sticking his mental neak into archival bush. He must get out of archival racks and library shelves and get along well with his colleagues, superiors and co-workers. He has to be an optimist, extrovert and a good mix. He needs to be good in inter-personal relations since he has to deal with people in his department, library, archievs, epigraphy centre, study area etc, understand people and act accordingly. Through healthy happy human relations research work itself will receive atmost attention; the researcher will be able to make his work productive and achieving. Act, react and interact will people with sympathy and empathy so that you can bear the burden of research lightly.

24.3.3 Psychological Factors

Research requires from the researcher lot of adjustment, adaptation and accommodation with people, places and problems. A good researcher is one who has the capacity and capability for self-education, self-expression and self-motivation. Self-motivation is the best motivation since no one can motivate a researcher towards self-development; it must come from within. Achievement motivation impels his desire to excel, perform and succeed. The achivers differentiate themselves from others by their desire to do things better; look for challenges; remain relaxed under adverse situation; analyze, check and recheck in order to ensure accuracy of evidences and facts; focus attention to details; and set high standards for themselves. For them precision performance and high quality work are motivators. A few research to find facts, a few to conceptualize and many to get a degree!

24.3.4 Problems faced by Researchers

Almost all the Universities in India offer M.Phil and Ph.D courses in history. In most of the universities the students are asked to take an entrance test and another pre-Ph.D examination as the case may be. In both the examinations the candidates are asked to tackle Research Methodology as one of the subjects. After passing the tests they have to write and submit their thesis for approval. Those who successfully pass the defense test and, or viva voce they are declared eligible for the award of the research degree. From registration to the award of the degree the researcher encounters many expected and unexpected problems.

The following are some of the problems faced by the researcher:
1) *Unhelpful Guide.* Often the researcher has little option to select his guide. If he is allotted to a guide who has little experience in research and

less helpful the researcher may become a square peg in the round hole. 2) *Unsuitable Topic.* Selection of a suitable topic itself is a problem to the beginner. If the guide selects a topic and thrust it on the unwilling throat of the researcher then the latter may have to grope about in the dark. Mismatch of topic causes lot of misery to the researcher. 3) *Methodological problems.* For want of proper training in modern research methodology research scholars are unable to use methods and techniques such as serialization of sources, paradigmatic expression through graphs and different geometric methods, computation of data etc. 4) *Inadequate Sources.* Scholars who select a topic in ancient or medieval history are faced with the problem of paucity of unexploited source materials. Hence the temptation to choose a problem in modern or contemporary history. 5) *Language Problem.* Researchers who had their post-graduate course in vernacular medium find it difficult to write the thesis in English. Technical terms, reference materials and secondary sources are not available in their native language. Research results are scaled in international standard and thesis is sent to a foreign examine for second valuation. Standards of linguistic expressions are not uniform. The examiners may not be proficient in the language in which thesis is written. Those who select a topic in ancient or medieval Indian history must have knowledge in related languages like Sanskrit, Parkrit, Pali, Arabic, Urdu etc. 6) *Paucity of Finance.* Quality research is costly. True, institutions like the University Grants Commission, the Indian Council of Historical Research, the Indian Council of Social Science Research, the Universities and State Governments offer grants or scholarships. But all the research students are not fortunate to get this assistance; even if they get it they find the grant inadequate to meet the expenses.

24.4 THE RESEARCH GUIDE

Depending his interests, abilities, aptitudes, and skills the researcher has to select the topic for research. Before selecting a topic he may seek suggestions from his research guide, but should not ask for a topic. The guide must guide and should not misguide the research scholar! It is often found that the guide in his hurry suggests half-baked, ill-thought out topics. A topic selected in a hurry will cause lot of delay, disappointment and frustration. A researcher who asks for topics is not ready to embark on research. Research topics must emerge "like Pirandello's six characters in search of an author".[5]

The guide may show the researcher the way to select a suitable topic for research. With his experience and expertise he may give clues or cues to topics and draw attention to previous work done in a particular

area. He may show the map of research and point out 'the territory ahead'. With the help of the guide the researcher must seek and select a suitable research topic. The responsibility of selecting a topic rests squarely on the researcher though. Seek, Ye shall find a suitable topic!

24.5 SELECTING A SUITABLE TOPIC

24.5.1 The Criteria for Selection

Selecting a suitable research topic is a stepping stone to research. Choosing a viable topic is a challenge to the uninitiated and one must think thrice before selecting it. The criteria for selecting a suitable research topic are:

1) The topic must be selected from an area which is near and dear to the researcher. The topic selected must hold his interest and challenge his efforts. That is, the topic must be appropriate.

2) The researcher must satisfy himself about the availability of sufficient source material on the topic selected. Paucity of material will lead him to trouble. Insufficient data will end in inadequate research.

3) The topic must be manageable. If a topic is selected carefully it may be expanded subsequently depending on the availability of material. That is, the topic must be limited in scope.

4) Select the topic which can be completed within reasonable time limit. An M.Phil dissertation may have to be completed within three months and a Ph.D thesis within three years.

5) The source material required for research must be easily accessible. Material difficult of access will halt and hamper research work.

6) Select the topic for which the data are available in a language or languages known to the researcher.

7) Select a single subject which can be dealt with straightly. Subject of comparative history will cause concern.

8) Select the subject which may need further investigation.

9) The topic selected should have a unifying theme and must lead to specific conclusions.

10) Make sure that the topic selected is not researched already. Consult the checklists of research projects completed and projects under progress.

24.5.2 Types of Topics

Research topics are many and varied. They may be classified into the following types: 1) Biographical. 2) Study of families or dynasties. 3) Regional studies. 4) Inter-disciplinary research like socio-economic study. 5) Study of administration. 6) Subaltern study. If *cultural research* is attempted one will have to study monuments like temples, stupas, basadis, forts and religions and overlapping relations with archaeological sources and art history. A *study of temples* will involve iconography and sculptures. *Study of religions* will require a thorough analysis of literary and philosophical evidences, religious institutions and practices. Influenced by Marxism socio-economic study has gained momentum after Indian Independence. Subaltern study or the history-from-below rely on non-conventional sources like oral or eye-witness accounts and information surveys.

24.5.3 Some suggestions

The beginner should be carefully guided to select a suitable subject for research – suitable in terms of the researcher's aptitude, attitude, interest, involvement, physical and mental qualities, availability of time, resources and so on. The novices often have difficulty in locating a research problem even at the Ph.D level. In this regard the following suggestions will be helpful: 1) Be sure that sufficient sources are available for the study of the subject selected. 2) Define the topic unambiguously. 3) The subject, besides being interesting, informative and relevant should be narrow enough to permit examination in some depth. 4) Know yourself and your abilities and skills well and select the topic accordingly. 5) You are not expected to discover or to contribute to knowledge but just permit the development of research skills. 6) Avoid subjects that are inherently difficult to study, involving illegal or unethical activities.[6]

24.5.4 Seek and Get

The importance of selecting a suitable topic for research cannot be over-stated. It is indeed crucial to research. It is the starting point. The researcher must choose the topic to suit his objective, interests, abilities, expectations and requirements. The subject selected must be interesting and absorbing enough to sustain his interest as he proceeds along with his research work. Before selecting the topic the researcher must be unambiguous about the purpose of the research project. The researcher who asks for the topic is not ready to undertake research. He needs to study more and enough before selecting the subject himself. The guide may give cues to previous research done in a particular area and show the

'map of research' and point out 'the territory ahead', but should not impose a topic on the hapless researcher! Topics are just waiting for the researcher to search, seek and get a suitable subject.

24.5.5 Plan of Action

Once the preliminary or preparatory work is completed ie the topic for research is chosen, a plan of action has to be prepared. An action plan is a time-frame of activities. The plan will cover the entire period of research work commencing from registration of the topic to the submission of the thesis. For M.Phil dissertation the time table may be for three months and for Ph.D thesis it may be for three years. The plan of action will include the time required for 1) identifying the places where sources could be located and tapped; 2) collecting and consulting sources; 3) identifying the places for field study, if necessary; 4) framing budget estimate; 5) formulating a tentative synopsis; and 6) preparing an outline of the proposed research work.

24.6 FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS

24.6.1 What is a Hypothesis?

A researcher is engaged in discovering facts, establishing relationship between facts and explaining events so as finally to lead to rational conclusions and generalizations. The initial stage in this process is the formulation of hypothesis. What is a hypothesis? A hypothesis is a temporary assumption that needs to be established before it is accepted. It is a provisional explanation and a tentative solution. It is a guide to the problem under study. It may be modified during the course of the investigation if necessary.

If a hypothesis has been tested and established and a conclusion is proved it becomes a *theory.* When a theory is verified and firmly established and adopted as the basis of further inferences it becomes a *law.* When the law becomes the foundation of the belief that other ideas in the particular field can be organized around it and makes other ideas deducible from it, the law becomes an *oxiom.* The nature of history is such and its tools and techniques are relatively crude and unsophisticated it is not possible to frame laws or axioms as in physical sciences. But historical hypothesis may be formulated.

24.6.2 Purpose of a Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a suggested explanation on the basis of existing knowledge. Its *purpose* is to indicate the direction of the investigation and to suggest what facts are to be collected. It gives focus to research. It

guards the researcher from a pointless empirical wandering. "The function of the hypothesis is to direct our research for order among facts".[7] A hypothesis may offer solution to the problem under study. It gives focus to the research. Without a hypothesis the researcher may collect non-essential, irrelevant and even useless data and may even overlook significant facts. As the gathering of data is time consuming, expensive and trying part of research, the formulation of hypothesis is most crucial.

24.6.3 Working Hypothesis

A hypothesis must be concise, precise, specific and testable. It must be clearly defined in a communicable form. It must be amoral. It must be related to the investigational methods and techniques. It has to be based on a body of existing knowledge. A great deal of thought and time has to be given in formulating hypothesis. The more carefully the hypothesis formulated the easier will be the further investigation.

A working hypothesis can be formulated when 1) the researcher is free from preconceived beliefs and solutions; 2) he concentrates on the nature of the problem so as to enable him to reach relevant facts; 3) he is familiar with the technique of phrasing the hypothesis avoiding vague terms; 4) he reads and re-reads the literature on the subject; 5) he familiarise himself with alternative ways of collecting facts; and 6) he keeps himself away from the temptation to select only interesting matter or an isolated enquiry.

24.6.4 Is it Indispensable?

Is hypothesis indispensable in historical research? In historical research the formulation of hypothesis may be useful but not indispensable. In physical science it is inevitable. But in historical research useful facts may be discovered, organized and presented purposefully even without a hypothesis. This does not mean that there can be no objectives or basic assumptions upon which the study should be based. It must however be borne in mind that the major part of research effort in history could be more useful and purposefully handled with a clear hypothesis at the commencement of research.

24.7 PREPARING A WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

24.7.1 Use of Library

After selecting a suitable topic for research the researcher has to prepare a preliminary or working bibliography. To prepare a working bibliography the research scholar must make the maximum use of the

library which is his laboratory. The library has to be used fully, carefully and properly. A suggested list of references is often included with set assignments. Reference books themselves contain further references and these, if available in the library, provide promising leads. Special books provide guidelines for the proper use of the libraries. Library catalogue contains entries for subjects and book titles as well as for authors.

Another method for locating source material for a particular topic is to check the library shelves or card catalogue for books having the same classification number as other books to which reference has been made. In addition, there are a number of other sources that might provide relevant information. These include biographies, encyclopedias, the indexes of historical monographs, atlases, historical bibliographies, handbooks, yearbooks, indexes, abstracts, newspaper clippings etc. Preparing a working bibliography is a pre requisite of research. It may be expanded further as the scholar proceeds on his research. Later he can build a complete and uptodate bibliography.

24.7.2 What is Bibliography?

A bibliography is a list of sources used in the preparation of a dissertation or thesis. It gives the researcher an idea of the range and volume of materials available on the subject. In short, a bibliography is an alphabetic list of all source material to which reference has been made. A working bibliography is a card file of articles, books, reports, documents etc.

24.7.3 Bibliography Card

As the research work is a continuous process the researcher is well advised to make out bibliography cards from the beginning. Usually scholars write each reference of the working bibliography on 3" by 5" cards because these are easy to sort out alphabetically and to store. It is called a *working bibliography* because new cards can be added as one progresses in his research. Each card will contain 1) author's surname and initials; 2) the name of the book, journal or article; 3) the imprint, i.e. place of publication, publisher and date of publication; 4) the call number of the book or journal; 5) the library where the book or journal may be located; and 6) a phrase or sentence indicating the contents.[8]

24.7.4 Master File of Sources

The bibliography cards constitute the master file of sources consulted and to be consulted by the researcher. Want-list of items as required by him can be prepared from this file. As he progresses in his reading, constant reference may have to be made to existing cards, and

addition and corrections to cards are to be carried out. New references can be added to the sequence easily. Thus the use of card bibliography saves lot of time. Complete citation and consistent form has to be maintained so that at the thesis writing stage complete citation for sources could be incorporated in the final completed bibliography and at the typing stage the bibliography can be typed directly from the information recorded on the cards.

24.8 MAKING NOTES

24.8.1 An Art

Notes making in an art. Since the researcher can not afford to rely on his *memory* he has to make extensive notes of the source materials he comes across. Few may prefer using *notebooks* allotting a page for each and every single idea. But the notebook or ledger system is inappropriate for historical research. It will be cumbersome, inadequate and inefficient. Again the *card system* is the most appropriate method for making notes. In the place of cards *paper slips* may also be used. For notes taking a little larger than the bibliographic card is recommended. The optimum size of the card is either 4" by 6" or 5" by 8".

24.8.2 Nature of Information

Before filling up the cards the researcher must be very clear in his mind about the nature of information which is to be entered on the cards or slips i.e whether verbatim copy of the document should be copied or a gist of it must be entered. Therefore, the notes making may be *Corpus* or *Regesta*. In a *Corpus* type of notes taking the entire matter of the document is reproduced inextenso. But in *Regesta* only the relevant points are set down.[9] A research scholar in history may have to use both these methods with advantage.

24.8.3 How to Make Notes?

While making notes the following points must be borne in mind: 1) Use a separate card for each idea or fact or concept. Cards are convenient and helpful for arrangement and preservation. They can be easily sorted into categories. They are easy to shift and rearrange. They can be attached to the draft outline. In subsequent redrafts, much writing time is saved. 2) Write a heading at the top of each card. Such headings usually consist of key words or phrases. This will help identify the note without having to read it through. 3) Record sufficient information to identify each note. Indicate the date of the document precisely. In the absence of the exact date, note down the approximate date. Record this information on the top right-hand corner of the card. 4) Enter the page or folio number of the document on the left hand margin of the card.

5) Indicate whether the information is quoted verbatim or paraphrased.
6) Give the fullest reference about the document, the name of the author, the title of the book, the volume number, publisher, year of publication and the page number.

In historical research, especially research in modern history, the scholar is confronted with a flood of information! So, there may be too much information for one card. If so, the information may be continued on another card or cards labeled a, b, c and so on. Information may be paraphrased or summarized with verbatim quotes. But quotation marks must necessarily be used for direct quotes. The author's ideas, even if stated in the scholar's words, should be acknowledged. True, notes taking is laborious, tedious and time consuming but it pays and rewards the researcher, who is well advised to keep a good stack of cards or slips.
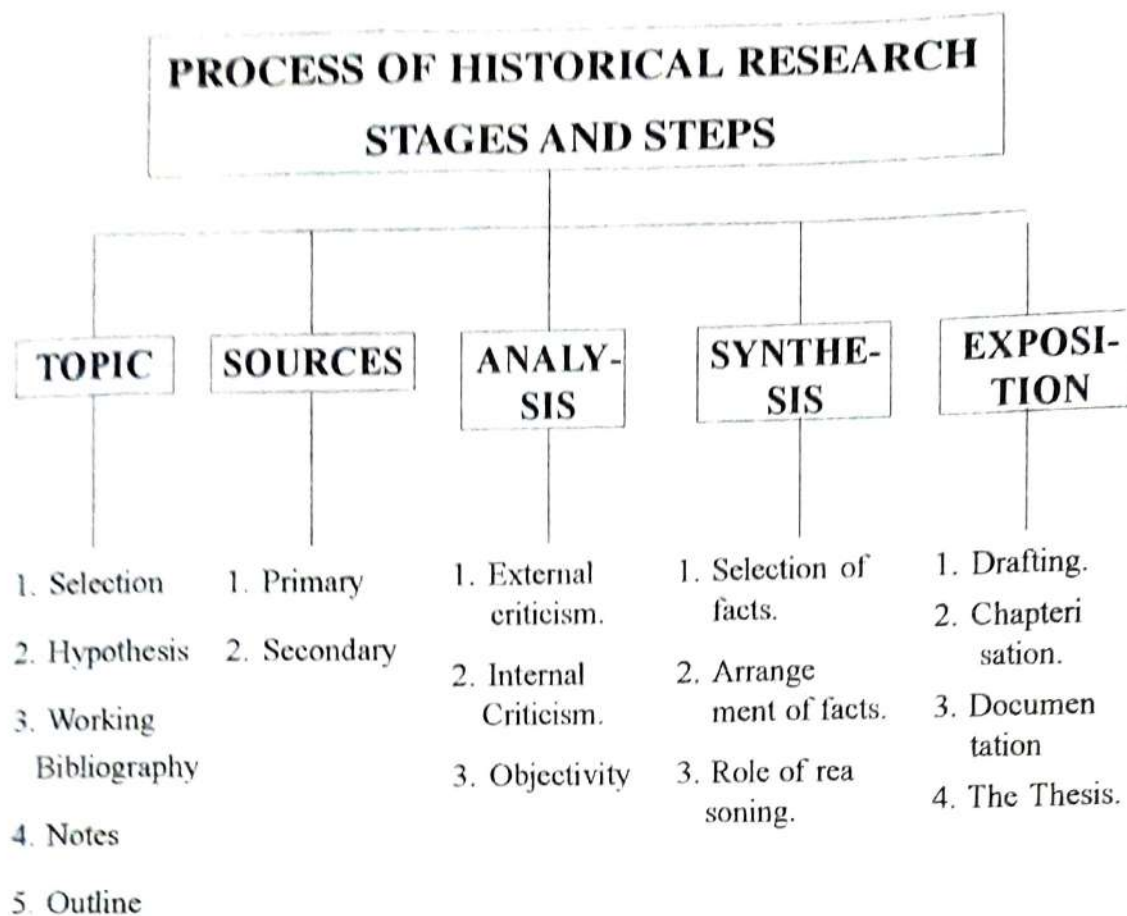
24.9 THE PRILIMINARY OUTLINE
24.9.1 What is an Outline?

Research is a process consisting of certain sequential steps. Selection of topic for research, the preparation of a bibliography and the development of an outlining are the first three major stages in the historical research process. An outline is a framework, a blueprint and a layout according to which the research superstructure is built. "Just as the carpenter or the engineer follows his blue print to the letter in order to avoid costly structural blunders, so also the research scholar follows his outline carefully so that he may arrange his ideas effectively".[10] The outline provides a format to work upon. It is an experimental exercise. As the researcher proceeds on his sojourn of research he may have to revise his preliminary outline.

24.9.2 Outline Preparation

How to prepare the preliminary outline? This outline may be prepared on the basis of the information collected from secondary sources. The researcher has to jot down the relevant ideas and facts. Then he must relate these ideas and facts to the central theme. It will be easy for him to classify these ideas into groups and categories, main headings and sub-headings in a logical order. The research topic may be developed logically or chronologically. The logical development of the topic is made on the basis of the mental association between one thing and the other by means of analysis. Scientific studies are examples of logical development. Since historical researches rely more on narrating events in terms of sequence or connection in time and space chronological developments is preferred.

24.10 PROCESS OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

| PROCESS OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH |
| STAGES AND STEPS |

TOPIC	SOURCES	ANALY-SIS	SYNTHE-SIS	EXPOSI-TION
1. Selection	1. Primary	1. External criticism.	1. Selection of facts.	1. Drafting.
2. Hypothesis	2. Secondary	2. Internal Criticism.	2. Arrange ment of facts.	2. Chapteri sation.
3. Working Bibliography		3. Objectivity	3. Role of rea soning.	3. Documen tation
4. Notes				4. The Thesis.
5. Outline				

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25. SOURCES FOR HISTORICAL WRITING

> *There is no dearth of source material, but the progress in its elucidation and interpretation has not been as great as one would wish.*
>
> — *K.A.Nilakanta Sastri.*

25.1 COLLECTION OF SOURCES

Collection of sources is the second stage in the process of historical research. As soon as the research topic is finalized the hunt for sources starts in right earnest. Source hunting is a laborious work; a strenuous search. To identify and to locate the sources is no easy task. Before locating the sources the researcher must have a clear conception of the nature of sources. He must know in what form the sources are available; whether they are classified or unclassified, edited or partially edited and so on. He must also distinguish between traditional and non-traditional sources; and material and non-material sources. Greater efforts are required to get hold of non-traditional sources such as eye-witness accounts, survey results, ethno-archaeological evidences, 'living traditions' etc. More important, the researcher should have a clear idea of and complete details abut the location of places–archives, libraries, museums, epigraph centers, and private collections–where the source materials are preserved.

25.2 WHAT IS A SOURCE?

Events constitute the material for history. They all happened in the past. The historian can not have a direct knowledge of past events. He therefore looks for their relics. Relics are traces or features surviving from a past age and serving to remind people of them. The Latin word *'vestigium'* means trace left by the sole of the foot. The implication is that there is an intimate relation between a trace and that by which it was left.

The traces may either be left unintentionally by men in the course of their activities or they were intended by them to inform posterity of their deeds. Traces appear in bundle. "A trace is nothing but the still perceptible termination or culmination of a sequence of events or of several sequences of events".[1] The trace is itself an event in the sense that events stand behind traces. By acquainting with a trace one can come

scarce to the event. *This trace is known as source.* The researcher in search of events looks for sources that are still there. All are agreed that historical knowledge come from historical sources.

25.3 NATURE OF SOURCES

Sources are the historian's raw materials. The remains which the past leaves behind for the posterity to examine are called sources.[2] The historical sources are the remains of man's unique activities in a society.[3] Sources may be historical or non-historical. *Historical sources* are those which lead the historian to find out through them sequence of past events that would be of value to the composition of history.

25.3.1 Material Sources

The historical sources may be material or immaterial. The *material sources* may be written or unwritten. In other words, the sources may be classified into 1) Material; 2) Immaterial; and 3) Written. Material sources of the past are objects that result from the activities of men who lived in the past. Monuments, furniture, pictures and portraits, tools and utensils, weapons, coins and all the objects that are brought to light through excavations are material sources.

25.3.2 Immaterial Sources

Immaterial sources could be found in social institutions, the customs of the people, religious cults and doctrines, ethical principles, traditions, legends and superstitions. Faiths and languages are also immaterial sources. They are subtler, intangible and alive. They form part of accepted history. They are the result of a long sequence of events and they reveal the existence of the sequence and may lead together with other sources.

25.3.3 Written Sources

Written sources result from the medium of language. They can be reproduced in print. A piece of writing carefully edited and printed may be relied upon as an original source. *The written sources are called documents.* The documents might be either self-consciously produced or those that were not. They might have been produced with the intention of presenting a point of view to posterity or those that were actually produced in the course of transacting business. Among the documents that are not records are those of a personal nature like diaries, memoirs and letters. Certain documents such as medieval annals and chronicles are narrative and might be looked upon as part of the accepted history.

The historian is at liberty to make as much use as he wishes of these sources. Material sources can be handled only by those who have mastered the appropriate technique. Immaterial sources will often proclaim their message without formal consultation. The historian is mainly concerned with written sources. These sources may be consulted at convenient places at a time convenient to the researcher.

25.4 KINDS OF SOURCES

Primary and Secondary Sources

Generally historical sources are divided into the primary and the secondary. A *primary source* is testimony of a witness or a mechanical device like archaeological remains, inscriptions, coins, correspondence, travel accounts etc. which represent the occurrence of an event. It is the raw material for history. It is more meaningful to the historian. A *secondary source,* on the other hand, is the finished product. It is produced out of the primary source. It is an indirect testimony of some one who was not present at the time of occurrence. "The secondary source is the coherent work of history in the form of article, dissertation or book, which will widen the general historical knowledge".[4] The secondary source is the stepping-stone towards reaching primary source. So, the researcher is advised to study the secondary material first.

25.4.1 Primary Sources

1. Archaeological, Epigraphical and Numismatical Sources

Archaeological remains are unpolluted primary source. They are contemporary evidence, unbiased and unvarnished. This direct source helps to identify the past without difficulty. *Epigraphical evidences* are contemporary and precise, though often exaggerated. Some of them may be spurious and even forged. Yet they are valuable because they are eye-witness account. *Numismatics* or the study of coins is an important primary source as it throws light on the personalities and personal accomplishments of the sovereigns as well as the political, economic and social movements.

2. Literary Source

Literary source, though embellished and coloured by imagination, serves as a primary circumstantial evidence to understand the social and cultural conditions of the people. Ballads and folksongs, though imaginary and fanciful, are "the barometers for the psychology and philosophy of the age concerned".[5] Contemporary records such as

business and legal papers; personal note books; diaries and memoirs; stenographic and phonographic matters; records of correspondence, governmental proceeding and newspapers, when their authenticity is tested and an allowance given to personal bias, "can be profitably utilized as research material".[6]

3. Confidential Reports

Confidential reports like military and diplomatic despatches constitute contemporary evidence and hence primary. Since they are written with care and caution these reports are dependable. Personal letters convey the writer's feelings, impressions, opinions etc. *Public reports,* editorials, speeches, pamphlets, newspaper reports and despatches, public opinion survey reports etc. fall under the category of primary sources and they can be treated as such provided they are authentic and could be corroborated.

4. Government Orders

Government Orders (G.Os) are authentic official documents. They represent the decisions of the government. These documents may be considered as primary evidence and their value can well be appreciated if the circumstances which led to the issuance of these orders are understood. *Auto-biographies,* despite several deficiencies, can be treated as contemporary source. Authorized or official or *Court histories,* though often biased and one-sided, are contemporary eye-witness accounts. All these sources can be used as research material provided they are used diligently and discreetly.

5. Characteristics of Primary Sources

A historian recreates the past on the basis of sources available to him. *'Go to the original'* is his guiding star. Primary source is the contemporary evidence to rely on. It has a direct bearing on the construction of history of a particular period. The researcher converts the primary evidence into an intelligible secondary source. No researcher who has not worked on primary sources can be regarded a sound scholar. The following are the *chief characteristics of primary sources:* 1) They are original records of information. 2) They are more authentic than the secondary sources. 3) They are eye-witness testimonials. 4) They are raw materials for history writing. 5) They are 'records in good fails' since they are genuine records of transactions. 6) They convey instruction to aid the memory of the person immediately involved in the transaction.

25.4.2 Secondary Sources

1. What are the Secondary Sources?

The researcher starts his work with secondary sources. They are so-called because they are not original and used as supplementary materials to primary sources. They are no substitute to the later. Secondary sources are generally found in the form of books, journals, periodicals and research publications. These sources also deal with the past, but indirectly. The published materials make use of primary sources. One need not bother much whether the secondary sources must be consulted first or the primary documents. A close reading of the secondary sources will lead the researcher to the primary sources.

2. Advantages

The advantages of consulting secondary sources are many: 1) The researcher will be acquainted with the subject similar to his research area. 2) He will know about the utilisation of previous sources. 3) He will be familiarised with methodological variations. 4) He can find a model or adopt a concept to workout a frame work for his research project. 5) He can enrich his research work. 6) He can use them as a stepping stone to move ahead. 7) He may derive the setting into which to fit the contemporary evidence upon his research problem. 8) He can get the lead to bibliographical data. 9) He can get quotations or citations. 10) He may derive interpretations of and hypothesis for his research topic. Secondary sources may be abundant but uncritical acceptance will lead to difficulties. Moreover, the researcher must guard himself from being influenced by the views, opinions and judgments of the authors of the secondary sources.

3. Attributes of Secondary Sources

A study of secondary sources is absolutely necessary because it provides knowledge of the primary sources. It provides the key to unlock the store house of original evidences. The chief attributes of secondary sources are that they: 1) provide the background for better understanding of primary sources; 2) enable to fit in the original evidences at relevant places in the thesis in the form of quotations or citations; 3) are mostly in the form of published materials like books, journals, periodicals and articles; 4) are the digested version of the primary sources; 5) are explanatory and interpretative in nature; and 6) are used as supplementary sources.

25.4.3 Review of Literature

The researcher may not be the first to discover the sources. Number of pioneers might have already covered the ground. So, he has to

locate the works of his predecessors that are related to his research area of specialisation. This can be done chronologically, theamatically or topographically. Review of literature will serve as 1) a standard to indicate to what extent the researcher is depending on or departing from previous works; 2) a vital link with related trends, tendencies and phases in the research area; 3) a model structure that could be adapted to formulate the research work; 4) part of 'introduction' to the thesis.

25.5 SOURCES FOR HISTORY OF INDIA

25.5.1 Sources for Ancient History

Sources for the ancient Indian history are extremely scarce. The historian is confronted with the paucity of sources. The sources are not only scarce but also varied, diverse and scattered. To make matters worse the sources are in many languages and scripts, Indian and foreign. As a result, even the best portrayal of Ancient India on the basis of available sources will be at best fragmentary.[7]

1. Archaeological Sources

Archaeology supplies the most direct evidence of the past. For prehistory it is the mainstay. For the historical period it helps the historian in many ways. The archaeological finds unearthed at Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and other places exposed the existence of the Indus-Valley Civilization spread over India. It was contemporaneous with the civilizations of Iran, Mesopotamia and Egypt. The Indus culture is proved to be the starting point of Indian history, thanks to archaeological sources. The confusion of Kanishkan chronology has been removed by archaeological finds. The Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain monuments illustrate the history of their respective sects. In short, archaeological sources help to trace the artistic evolution of Indian civilization.

2. Epigraphical Sources

A study of epigraphs or inscriptions on stone and copper plates yields invaluable information about the genealogical, geographical, administrative, economic and cultural dimensions of ancient India. The inscriptions of Asoka, "sermons in stone", Kharavela, Rudradaman I, Samudragupta and Yasodharma of Malwa are of historical importance. The historical introductions to Chola inscriptions and the epigraphs bearing on Chola administration are exceptional epigraphical sources. The Leyden Grant of Raja Raja I and the Tiruvalangadu plates of Rajendra Chola provide copious information about the Cholas and their administration.

3. Numismatical Sources

The study of Indian coins and coin images and symbols help to bring back the history of a few ancient Indian dynasties and enrich our knowledge of some others. Numismatical evidence, though subsidiary and corroborative, contains valuable information about the chronological, political, administrative, religious, economic and cultural history of ancient India. The Indo-Greek, Saka, Kushan and Gupta coins and the bilingual coins of the Indo-Greeks, Sakas and Indo-Parthians have "supplied the master-key to the decipherment of Indian inscriptions". The Gupta coins are noted for their artistic beauty. The Chalukya and Pallava coins contain emblems and legends. The Roman coins found in Arikamedu are proof for the prosperous Indo-Roman commercial connections in the early centuries of the Christian era.

4. Literary Sources

Literary sources are the historian's mainstay. The indigenous sources-historical, quasi-historical and non-historical-provide valuable historical information. Patanjali's *Mahabhashya,* Gargi's *Samhita,* Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa,* Dandin's *Dasakumaracharita* and Rajasekhara's *Kavyamimansa* provide precious historical and geographical data. The texts of the Brahminists, Buddhists and Jains and the Puranas and Ithikasas and the dramas of Visakhadatta and Kalidasa are the repositories of Indian tradition. Kautilya's *Arthasastra* and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* are quasi historical works. Bana's *Vikramankacharita* and Bilhana's *Harsha-charita,* though 'defectively historical', provide glimpses of the glory of the respective sovereigns. The voluminous *Vedic literature,* well preserved and contemporary, not only helps to trace the progress of the Aryanisation of India but also to get into grip of the early phases of Indian life and thought. The *Sangam literature* consisting of Thirukurual, the twin epics Silappadikaram and Manimekhalai, the anthologies like Purananuru, the Ahananuru, the Narrinai and Kuruntokai are the veritable historical information about the Sangam polity, society and culture.

The foreign writers, visitors and observers provide valuable testimony to the political and social institutions as well as the life and thought of ancient Indians. The *Indica* of Megasthenes, though fragmentary and credulous, gives authentic topographical account of the Mauryan metropolis Pataliputra; accurate description of the imperial and municipal administrative system; and a fairly good picture of contemporary social life. The author of the Periplus and distinguished geographers like Strabo, Pliny, Plotemy and Cosmos indicopleustes throw

light on the commercial contact between Indian and the Western world. The Chinese pilgrims–Fahien, Hiuen Tsang and Itsing-are helpful for knowing the condition of Buddism in India, administrative history, literary history and Indonesian religious history. The Chinese and Tibetian annals assist the historian to know about Indian overseas expansion. Alberunis *Kitab-ul-Hind,* an erudite work, throws much light on ancient Indian culture.

25.5.2 Sources for Medieval Indian History

The advent of Islam in India, "produced a bumper crop of genuine historical literature".[9] The sources of medieval Indian history are varied and abundant. They are directly relevant to the conditions of the times. The Muslim mosques, forts, palaces, gardens, works of art are of historical interest. The Muslim-Mughal paintings and portraits have "helped in the study of social customs and military techniques that were in vogue".[10] Epigraphical and Numismatic sources supplement the study of the period.

As indicated earlier abundance of *literary sources* are available for the history of the medieval Muslim and Mughal rule in India. Zia-ud-din Barani and Ibn Batuta are the contemporary authorities for the reign of Muhammed bin Tughlak. Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* is the history of the Sultans of Delhi from Balban to Firoz Thughlak. Barani besides narrating the deeds of kings also describes the administrative system, legislation, cuvasions and expeditions. Barani's work is practically a continuation of the *Tabakat-i-Nasiri,* general history of the Muslim world. Ibn Batuta, the African traveler, gives an account of the Sultans of Delhi from Kutb-ud-din Aibak to Muhammad bin Tughlak. He thows light on the Sultanate of Madura. Both Barani and Ibn Batuta have painted faithful pictures of their patron Muhammed bin Tughluk. Amir Khusru's *Tughlak-nama* is useful for the early career of his patron Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlak. The history of Wassaf contains references to India.

A master of Turki prose and a poet, Babar wrote his autobiography giving his impressions about Hindustan. His first impression about the country and the people are not however his best impressions! *Humayun-nama* of Gulbadan Begam, Babar's daughter, written at the suggestion of Akbar, contains the story of the 'transference' of the prince's illness to his father Humayun and the early days of Akbar. Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari, or Institutes of Akbar* is a detailed descriptive record of the Mughal empire in the 16th century. His *Akbar-nama* or History of Akbar traces in detail and in full the ancestry of Akbar from Timur and deals in detail with Humayun, and the history of Akbar's reign.

Nizam-ud-din Ahmad's *Tabakat-i-Akbari* or Annals of *Akbar* is the history of India down to 1593, which was largely used by Badauni and Ferishta. *Tarikh-i-Bada-uni* is a general history of the Islamic world including the account of Akbar's reign down to 1595. Badauni's work is "a necessary corrective to the over-laudatory composition of Abul Fazl".[11] *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* is important for the Dakhan affairs. The accounts of Fr.Monserrate, Fr.Du.Jarric, the French historian and Ralph Fitch throw light on the visits of the Jesuit missions to the court of Akbar, Akbar's religious activities and on the twin cities of Agra and Fathpur-Sikri.

The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangir or Memoris of Jahangir* gives information on the personal lives of Jahangir and his nobles and is full of political and administrative details. Mutamad Khan's *Ikbalnama-i-Jahangiri* deals with the Timurids upto the accession of Shah Jahan. Kazwiri's *Padshah-nama* and Abdul Hamid Loharis' *Padshah-nama* are the principal sources for the first two decades of Shah Jahan's reign. Wasis' *Padshah-nama* covers the third decade of the emperor's reign. Sadik's *Shah Jahan-nama* and Kambu's *Amal-i-Salih* are accounts of the whole reign of Shah Jahan. Kazim's *Alamgir-nama* covers the first decade of Aurangzib's reign. Mustaid Khan's *Maxsir-i-Alamgiri* is the history of the reign of the emperor. Kafi Khan's *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* is a history of the Mughal Emperors from Babar to 1733, the year in which the work was completed. An ardent admirer of Aurangzib he was not in agreement with his anti-Hindu policy. Bhimsen's *Nusaha-i-Dirkasha* contains information about social and economic life of Dakhan. Ishwardas' *Fatuhat-i-Alamgiri* narrates the happenings in Rajputana and Malwa during 1657–1698. Shah Nawaz Khan's *Maasir-ul-umara* is a biographical dictionary of the Mughal nobility from Akbar's reign. Aurangzib's letters are "the very raw materials of history".[12] Local histories like the *Basatin-i-Salatin* or the history of Bijapur throw light on the Mughal relations with the Dakhan Sultanates.

European travelers like captain Hawkins, Sir Thomas Roe, Terry, Pelsaert, Tavernier, Thevenot, Bernier, Manucci, Dr.Frier, and Dr.Careri have left valuable accounts of the Mughal court and Emperor Jahangir's daily life; political intrigues; the customs and manners of the people; economic condition of the Mughal empire, politics and administration; the oppressive provincial administration; description of Golkonda; the great war of succession, description of Delhi, Agra and other cities and the resources and the administration of the Mughal empire; the Mughal institutions; the greatness of Sivaji; and the demoralized state of the army respectively. Despite inevitable drawbacks, the European travellers' accounts "convey considerable information about the character of the

rulers, nature of their administration and the political, social and economic life of the people".[13]

25.5.3 Sources for Modern History of India

The sources are strong and systematic for the modern Indian history. From the very beginning, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, the Danes and the English recorded their official transactions in India on state papers. Their well preserved records are very valuable to know about their relations in India. The archives at Lisbon, Goa, Pondicherry and Madras were literally storehouses of precious historical information.

The *indigenous sources* are available in many places and in different languages. Poona was a great centre of Sanskrit learning during the rule of the Peshwas. The Peshwas, particularly Balaji Rao, gave much attention to public records and to manuscript collection of valuable books. The *bakhars* are historical accounts in prose. For example Sabhasad Bakhar deals with the life of Sivaji.

Anandaranga Pillai's voluminous Diary in Tamil covering the period, 1736 to 1760 is "a very valuable source of history for that period, particularly for the Governorship of Dupleix".[14] Abu Dubois' *Hindu Manners, Customs* and *Ceremonies* is self-explanatory. Dr.Francies Buchanan, under instruction from Governor General Richard Wellesley, studied the animals and birds of India. Systematic study of India's past was promoted by the enthusiastic efforts of history conscious persons like Warren Hastings, Sir William Jones, James Princep, Max Muller, Wilson, Cunningham, Marshall and others Lord Curzon's interest in the preservation of ancient monuments made archaeological research possible. Many other European scholars "led the way in modern Indian historiography".[15] Besides historical works of contemporary value, journals, periodicals and dailies serve as sources of historical information. All these sources must, however, be critically evaluated before they are used for historical writing.

25.5.4 Sources for South Indian History

The history of South India is an integral part of the history of India. The Deccan is one of the oldest inhabited regions of the world. Its prehistoric archaeology and contacts with neighbouring lands constitute an important chapter in the history of world's civilizations. Lot of source material is available for the ancient history of South India. Inscriptions are the most copious and authentic source of South Indian history. The earliest are in the Brahmi script and they were found in Siddapura,

Jatinga-Ramesvara and Brahmagiri in Mysore state; Maski in Raichur district; and Yerragudi and Rajula-Mandagiri in Kurnool District. These inscriptions reveal the extent of the Mauryan empire in the south. The short inscriptions found in natural caves in the Tamil districts, the inscribed relic casket from Bhattiprolu in the Krishna valley, and the early inscriptions of the Satavahana dynasty show the extent of the Jain and Buddhist ascetic orders.[16]

Archaeological remains of the places of Kolhapur; Paithan, Kondapur in Bidar; Chandravali and Brahmagiri in Mysore; the temples forts and palaces in Tamil Nadu and Andhra State; the excavations at Adichanallur; and monuments discovered at Amaravathi, Nagarjunakonda and Pondicherry speak volumes about the South Indian commercial contact with the Roman Empire, the existence of the settlements of the microlithic age, and the monumental achievements of South Indian Kings.

Next to epigraphical and archaeological sources come the *numismatic evidences*. Ancient coins are rare and contain no dates and less legends. The rectangular silver coins with punch marks were found in South India and they belong to the centuries before Christ. Copper punch marked coins were also known. Later, the principal coinage of the South was struck in gold, not silver. The gold coins of the Rajendra I, and Rajadhiraja I Chola and of Rajaraja I, E.Chalukya, discovered at Dowlesvaram, are of considerable historical value. Chola coins with a design of a tiger seated under a canopy in the centre of the field, the Pandya coins with fish on one side and Chera coins with the bow at the bottom indicate conquests. The pagodas of Vijaynagar kings are well known. The coinage of the Sultanate of Madurai and the Bahmini Sultans followed the contemporary Delhi models.

Both indigenous and foreign *literary evidence* is an important source of knowledge. The later vedic literature and the epics contain clear hints of the progressive penetration of Aryan influences in the southern lands. The earliest extant stratum of the Sangam Tamil literature exhibits the results of Aryanisation of South India. Legends bearing on this blend of cultures are preserved in the southern literatures.

Tamil *prabandha* class of literature such as the *kalambakam, ula, parani* and *kovai* narrate much history. The verses of the *Kovai* mention the names of several battles fought by the Pandya kings on the line of Kadungon. Pallava Nandivarman III is the hero of Nandik-kalambakam, which is "much more trust worthy and of real value on the history of the time".[17] *Kalingattupparani* of Jayangondar treats the invasion of Kalinga

by the Chola forces in the reign of Kulottunga I. Ottakuttan's triple ulas deal with the three successive sovereigns-Vikrama Chola, Kulottunga II and Rajaraja II.

In Kannada, the *Pampa-charata* and Ranna's *Gadayudda* shed much light on contemporary Rashtrakuta and Chalukya history. Bilhana's *Vikramankadeva – Charita* has limited historical value. Kalainanas provide literary evidence for the history of Vijayanagar.

The Persian historical works composed under the patronage of Muslim monarchs in the Deccan are genuine historical writing. Isamy's *Futuhsalatin* is the only surviving contemporary source on the history of the Bahmani kingdom. Late compositions like *Burham-i-maasir* of Ali bin Aziz-ullah Taba Tabai of Persia is a history of the Nizam Shahis. Shirazi's *Tazkirat-ul-muluk* is a contemporary account of some aspects of Bijapur history.

Foreign sources of South India are many and varied. The first direct notice of South India occurs in Megastheneus. He gives an attractively odd account of the Pandyan Kingdom ruled over by Pandaia, a daughter of Herakles. Strabo records the increase in the knowledge of India among the Romans of his time. Pliny the Elder, the anonymous author of the *Periplus* of the Erythraean sea, and Ptolemy represent the further stages in that increasing acquaintance of the Romans with South India.

The celebrated Chinese traveler Yuan Chwang spent many months in the states of Deccan and South India and has made interesting observations on the religious and social conditions of his day. There are records in the Chinese annals of embassies exchanged between China and Pallava court of Kanchi in the 8th century and the Chola court in the 11th. Wang Ta-yuan, a Chinese merchant, visited many countries and wrote the *Tao-i-chi-lio* or Description of the Barbarians of the Isles, giving glimpses of ports and noteworthy localities in South India. Fei Hsin's *Hsing-cha-sheng-lan* or Description of the Star Raft and Mahuan's *Ying-yai-sheng-lan* or Description of the coasts of the ocean are valuable for their notices of Ceylon, Cochin and Calicut.

Among the Arab travellers and geographers Ibn Khurdadbeh, Abu Zaid Hassan, Ibn al-Fakih, Alberuni, Ibu Said and Ibn Batuta are important. The most important among Arab writers is Ibn Batuta. He gives an accurate account of his travels and experiences in South India. His work contains much authentic information on the state of politics, religion and society of the time.

Of the many European travellers Marco Polo, the 'prince of medieval travellers', passed through some parts of South India on his way to Persia and has left an astonishing amount of information about his short sojourn. He tells many things about the manners, beliefs and practices of the people of South India. John of Monte Corvino, the Franciscan frior; Frier Odoric of Pordenone; and Friar Jordanus who visited South India soon after Marco Polo represent the other side of the culture contacts between the West and East.

Nicolo Conti who visited Vijayanagar in 1420 gives a good description of the Vijayanagar court and its festivals, its currency and other matters. Abdur Razzak, the Persian ambassador, visited Vijayanagar and the record of his mission is "the testimony of a trained official on the state of administration and society at the time".[18]

Athanasius Nikitin, the Russian trader, spent some years in the Deccan and had described the court, the army, and the condition of the people under Bahmani rule. Ludovico di Varthema of Bologua, an Italian soldier knighted by the Portuguese has left a vivid account of Goa and Calicut and other ports of the west coast. His description of the city and empire of Vijayanagar is valuable. The Portuguese Duarte Barbosa, who mastered the Malayalam language wider ground. Other Portuguese writers like Domingos Paes, Fernao Nuniz Caesar Frederick, Ralph Fitch, Nicolas Piementa and Pietro della valle have left a good crop of foreign evidence on South India.[19]

The sources for the modern history of South India include ecclesiastical correspondence, diaries, government records, reports and journals. The Jesuit records, though essentially religious in nature, yield information about political and social issues. *The Diary* of Ananda Ranga Pillai in dozen volumes is indispensable for the study of Anglo-French relations in South India. The extensive government records are available in English, French, Portuguese, Danish and Dutch languages. Mir Ismail Khan Abjadi's *Anwar-nama* and Burhan Ibn Hasan's *Tuzak-Walajai* describe the history of Wallajah rulers of the Carnatic.

The accounts and observations of the European writers are copious and more useful for the study of Modern South Indian History. Robert Orme's *History of Indostan* describes the early history of the English East India Company in South India. Marx Wilks' *History of Mysore* traces the historical developments in Modern South India with reference to Mysore. James Welsh's Military Reminiscences is a detailed account of the British military operations against the rebels of Tamil Nadu and

Travancore. Buchanan's *A Journey* explains the geographical features and social conditions in Madras, Mysore, Canara and Malabar in the 19th century. Dubois, the French missionary wrote about the Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies. Fullarton's *Report*, Lushingtons' *Diary*, and Munro's *Report* deal in detail the historical and administrative matters of South India. "It is possible to write a comprehensive history of South India by utilizing the different branches of source material and making a critical analysis of the data".[20]

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