

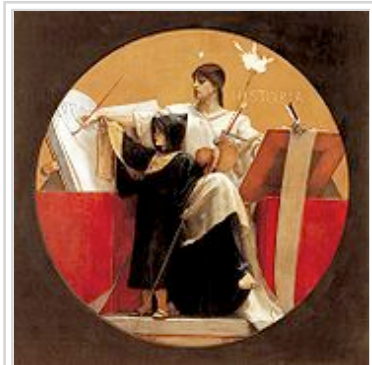
History

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History (from Greek *ιστορία* - *historia*, meaning "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation"^[2]) is the study of the human past, with special attention to the written record. Scholars who write about history are called historians. It is a field of research which uses a narrative to examine and analyse the sequence of events, and it often attempts to investigate objectively the patterns of cause and effect that determine events.^{[3][4]} Historians debate the nature of history and its usefulness. This includes discussing the study of the discipline as an end in itself and as a way of providing "perspective" on the problems of the present.^{[5][3]}^{[6][7]} The stories common to a particular culture, but not supported by external sources (such as the legends surrounding King Arthur) are usually classified as cultural heritage rather than the "disinterested investigation" needed by the discipline of history.^{[8][9]}

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.^[1]

—George Santayana



Historia (Allegory of History).
By Nikolaos Gysis (1892).



The Historian
By E. Irving Couse (1902).

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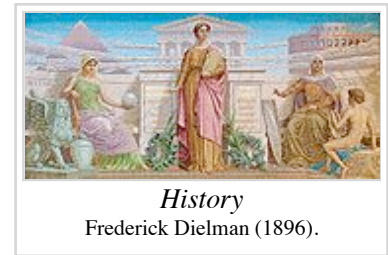
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Etymology

The word *history* comes from Greek *ἱστορία* (*historia*), from the Proto-Indo-European **wid-tor-*, from the root **weid-*, "to know, to see".^[2] This root is also present in the English words *wit*, *wise*, *wisdom*, *vision*, and *idea*, in the Sanskrit word *veda*,^[10] and in the Slavic word *videti* and *vedati*, as well as others.^[11] (The asterisk before a word indicates that it is a hypothetical construction, not an attested form.)

The Ancient Greek word *ἱστορία*, *historía*, means "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation". It was in that sense that Aristotle used the word in his *Περὶ Τὰ Ζῷα Ἱστορίαι*, *Peri Ta Zoa Historiai* or, in Latinized form, *Historia Animalium*.^[12] The term is derived from *ἵστωρ*, *hístōr* meaning *wise man*, *witness*, or *judge*. We can see early attestations of *ἵστωρ* in Homeric Hymns, Heraclitus, the Athenian ephebes' oath, and in Boiotic inscriptions (in a legal sense, either "judge" or "witness", or similar). The spirant is problematic, and not present in cognate Greek *εἶδομαι* - *eídomai* ("to appear"). The form *ἱστορεῖν* - *historeîn*, "to inquire", is an Ionic derivation, which spread first in Classical Greece and ultimately over all of Hellenistic civilization.



History
Frederick Dielman (1896).

It was still in the Greek sense that Francis Bacon used the term in the late 16th century, when he wrote about "Natural History". For him, *historia* was "the knowledge of objects determined by space and time", that sort of knowledge provided by memory (while science was provided by reason, and poetry was provided by fantasy).

The word entered the English language in 1390 with the meaning of "relation of incidents, story". In Middle English, the meaning was "story" in general. The restriction to the meaning "record of past events" arises in the late 15th century. In German, French, and most Germanic and Romance languages, the same word is still used to mean both "history" and "story". The adjective *historical* is attested from 1661, and *historic* from 1669.^[13]

Historian in the sense of a "researcher of history" is attested from 1531. In all European languages, the substantive "history" is still used to mean both "what happened with men", and "the scholarly study of the happened", the latter sense sometimes distinguished with a capital letter, "History", or the word *historiography*.^[12]

Description

Since historians are observers and participants, the works they produce are written from the perspective of their own time and sometimes with due concern for possible lessons for their own future. In the words of Benedetto Croce, "All history is contemporary history". History is facilitated by the formation of a 'true discourse of past' through the production of narrative and analysis of past events relating to the human race.^[13] The modern discipline of history is dedicated to the institutional production of this discourse.

All events that are remembered and preserved in some authentic form constitute the historical record.^[14] The task of historical discourse is to identify the sources which can most usefully contribute to the production of accurate accounts of past. Therefore, the constitution of the historian's archive is a result of circumscribing a more general archive by invalidating the usage of certain texts and documents (by falsifying their claims to represent the 'true past').

The study of history has sometimes been classified as part of the humanities and other times as part of the social sciences.^[15] It can also be seen as a bridge between those two broad areas, incorporating methodologies from both. Some individual historians strongly support one or the other classification.^[16] In modern academia, history is increasingly classified as a social science. In the 20th century, French historian Fernand Braudel revolutionized the study of history, by using such outside disciplines as economics, anthropology, and geography in the study of global history.

Traditionally, historians have recorded events of the past, either in writing or by passing on an oral tradition, and have attempted to answer historical questions through the study of written documents and oral accounts. For the beginning, historians have also used such sources as monuments, inscriptions, and pictures. In general, the sources of historical knowledge can be separated into three categories: what is written, what is said, and what is physically preserved, and historians often consult all three.^[17] But writing is the marker that separates history from what comes before.

Archaeology is a discipline that is especially helpful in dealing with buried sites and objects, which, once unearthed, contribute to the study of history. But archaeology rarely stands alone. It uses narrative sources to complement its discoveries. However, archaeology is constituted by a range of methodologies and approaches which are independent from history; that is to say, archaeology does not "fill the gaps" within textual sources. Indeed, Historical Archaeology is a specific branch of archaeology, often contrasting its conclusions against those of contemporary textual sources. Mark Leone, the excavator and interpreter of historical Annapolis in New Jersey (a town on east coast), has sought to understand the contradiction between textual documents and the material record, demonstrating the possession of slaves and the inequalities of wealth apparent via the study of the total historical environment, despite the ideology of "liberty" inherent in written documents at this time.

There are varieties of ways in which history can be organized, including chronologically, culturally, territorially, and thematically. These divisions are not mutually exclusive, and significant overlaps are often present, as in "The International Women's Movement in an Age of Transition, 1830–1975." It is possible for historians to concern themselves with both the very specific and the very general, although the modern trend has been toward specialization. The area called Big History resists this specialization, and searches for universal patterns or trends. History has often been studied with some practical or theoretical



aim, but also may be studied out of simple intellectual curiosity.^[18]

History and prehistory

Further information: Protohistory

The history of the world is the memory of the past experience of *Homo sapiens sapiens* around the world, as that experience has been preserved, largely in written records. By "prehistory", historians mean the recovery of knowledge of the past in an area where no written records exist, or where the writing of a culture is not understood. Human history is marked both by a gradual accretion of discoveries and inventions, as well as by quantum leaps — paradigm shifts, revolutions — that comprise epochs in the material and spiritual evolution of humankind. By studying painting, drawings, carvings, and other artifacts, some information can be recovered even in the absence of a written record. Since the 20th century, the study of prehistory is considered essential to avoid history's implicit exclusion of certain civilizations, such as those of Sub-Saharan Africa and pre-Columbian America. Historians in the West have been criticized for focusing disproportionately on the Western world.^[19] In 1961, British historian E. H. Carr wrote:

The line of demarcation between prehistoric and historical times is crossed when people cease to live only in the present, and become consciously interested both in their past and in their future. History begins with the handing down of tradition; and tradition means the carrying of the habits and lessons of the past into the future. Records of the past begin to be kept for the benefit of future generations.^[20]

Such a definition would include within the scope of history peoples such as Australian Aboriginals and New Zealand Māori who, before contact with Europeans, already possessed a strong interest in the past and maintained oral records transmitted to succeeding generations.

Historiography

Main article: Historiography

Historiography has a number of related meanings. Firstly, it can refer to how history has been produced: the story of the development of methodology and practices (for example, the move from short-term biographical narrative towards long-term thematic analysis). Secondly, it can refer to what has been produced: a specific body of historical writing (for example, "medieval historiography during the 1960s" means "Works of medieval history written during the 1960s"). Thirdly, it may refer to why history is produced: the Philosophy of history. As a meta-level analysis of descriptions of the past, this third

Human history and prehistory
↑ before <i>Homo</i> (Pliocene)
Three-age system prehistory
■ Stone Age >> Lower Paleolithic: <i>Homo</i>, <i>Homo erectus</i>, >> Middle Paleolithic: early <i>Homo sapiens</i> >> Upper Paleolithic: behavioral modernity >> Neolithic: civilization ■ Bronze Age >> Near East India • Europe • China • Korea ■ Iron Age >> Bronze Age collapse • Ancient Near East • India • Europe • China • Japan • Korea • Nigeria
History
■ Earliest records (2500 - 500 BCE) ■ Antiquity (500 BCE - 500 CE) ■ Middle Ages (500 - 1492) ■ Early modern (1492 - 1789) ■ Modern (1789 - 1989) ■ Contemporary (1989 - present)
see also: Modernity, Futurology
↓Future

conception can relate to the first two in that the analysis usually focuses on the narratives, interpretations, worldview, use of evidence, or method of presentation of other historians. Professional historians also debate the question of whether history can be taught as a single coherent narrative or a series of competing narratives.

Philosophy of history

Main article: Philosophy of history

Philosophy of history is an area of philosophy concerning the eventual significance, if any, of human history. Furthermore, it speculates as to a possible teleological end to its development—that is, it asks if there is a design, purpose, directive principle, or finality in the processes of human history. Philosophy of history should not be confused with historiography, which is the study of history as an academic discipline, and thus concerns its methods and practices, and its development as a discipline over time. Nor should philosophy of history be confused with the history of philosophy, which is the study of the development of philosophical ideas through time.

Professional historians debate the question of whether history is a science or a liberal art. The distinction is artificial, as many view the field from more than one perspective.^[21] Recent argument in support for the transformation of history into science have been made by Peter Turchin in an article titled "Arise Cliodynamics" in the journal "Nature".^{[22][23]}

Historical methods

Further information: Historical method

The historical method comprises the techniques and guidelines by which historians use primary sources and other evidence to research and then to write history.

Herodotus of Halicarnassus (484 BC – ca.425 BC)^[24] has generally been acclaimed as the "father of history". However, his contemporary Thucydides (ca. 460 BC – ca. 400 BC) is credited with having first approached history with a well-developed historical method in his work the History of the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides, unlike Herodotus and other religious historians, regarded history as being the product of the choices and actions of human beings, and looked at cause and effect, rather than as the result of divine intervention.^[24] In his historical method, Thucydides emphasized chronology, a neutral point of view, and that the human world was the result of the actions of human beings. Greek historians also viewed history as cyclical, with events regularly recurring.^[25]

There were historical traditions and sophisticated use of historical method in ancient and medieval China. The groundwork for

History's philosophical questions

- What is the proper unit for the study of the human past — the individual? The polis? The civilization? The culture? Or the nation state?
- Are there broad patterns and progress? Are there cycles? Is human history random and devoid of any meaning?



A depiction of the ancient Library of Alexandria

Historical method basics

The following questions are used by historians in modern work.

1. *When* was the source, written or unwritten,

professional historiography in East Asia was established by the Han Dynasty court historian known as Sima Qian (145–90 BC), author of the *Shiji* (Records of the Grand Historian). For the quality of his timeless written work, Sima Qian is posthumously known as the Father of Chinese Historiography. Chinese historians of subsequent dynastic periods in China used his *Shiji* as the official format for historical texts, as well as for biographical literature.

Saint Augustine was influential in Christian and Western thought at the beginning of the medieval period. Through the Medieval and Renaissance periods, history was often studied through a sacred or religious perspective. Around 1800, German philosopher and historian Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel brought philosophy and a more secular approach in historical study.^[18]

In the preface to his book, the *Muqaddimah* (1377), the Arab historian and early sociologist, Ibn Khaldun, warned of seven mistakes that he thought that historians regularly committed. In this criticism, he approached the past as strange and in need of interpretation. The originality of Ibn Khaldun was to claim that the cultural difference of another age must govern the evaluation of relevant historical material, to distinguish the principles according to which it might be possible to attempt the evaluation, and lastly, to feel the need for experience, in addition to rational principles, in order to assess a culture of the past. Ibn Khaldun often criticized "idle superstition and uncritical acceptance of historical data." As a result, he introduced a scientific method to the study of history, and he often referred to it as his "new science".^[26] His historical method included role of state, communication, propaganda and systematic bias in history,^[27] However Ibn Khaldun had no followers and established no school; his work was unknown in the west until the 19th century and had no influence there.^{[28][29][30]}

In the West historians developed modern methods of historiography in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially in France and Germany. The 19th century historian with greatest influence on methods was Leopold von Ranke in Germany.

In the 20th century, academic historians focused less on epic nationalistic narratives, which often tended to glorify the nation or individuals, to more objective and complex analyses of social and intellectual forces. A major trend of historical methodology in the 20th century was a tendency to treat history more as a social science rather than as an art, which traditionally had been the case. Some of the leading advocates of history as a social science were a diverse collection of scholars which included Fernand Braudel, E. H. Carr, Fritz Fischer, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Bruce Trigger, Marc Bloch, Karl Dietrich Bracher, Peter Gay, Robert Fogel, Lucien Febvre and Lawrence Stone. Many of the advocates of history as a social science were or are noted for their multi-disciplinary approach. Braudel combined history with geography, Bracher history with political science, Fogel history with economics, Gay history with psychology, Trigger history with archeology while Wehler, Bloch, Fischer, Stone, Febvre and Le Roy Ladurie have in varying and differing ways amalgamated history with sociology, geography, anthropology, and economics. More recently, the field of digital history has begun to address ways of using computer technology to pose new questions to historical data and generate digital scholarship.

In opposition to the claims of history as a social science, historians such as Hugh Trevor-Roper, John Lukacs, Donald Creighton, Gertrude Himmelfarb and Gerhard Ritter argued that the key to the historians'

produced (date)?

2. Where was it produced (localization)?
3. By whom was it produced (authorship)?
4. From what pre-existing material was it produced (analysis)?
5. In what original form was it produced (integrity)?
6. What is the evidential value of its contents (credibility)?

The first four are known as higher criticism; the fifth, lower criticism; and, together, external criticism. *The sixth and final inquiry* about a source is called internal criticism.

work was the power of the imagination, and hence contended that history should be understood as an art. French historians associated with the Annales School introduced quantitative history, using raw data to track the lives of typical individuals, and were prominent in the establishment of cultural history (cf. *histoire des mentalités*). Intellectual historians such as Herbert Butterfield, Ernst Nolte and George Mosse have argued for the significance of ideas in history. American historians, motivated by the civil rights era, focused on formerly overlooked ethnic, racial, and socio-economic groups. Another genre of social history to emerge in the post-WWII era was *Alltagsgeschichte* (History of Everyday Life). Scholars such as Martin Broszat, Ian Kershaw and Detlev Peukert sought to examine what everyday life was like for ordinary people in 20th century Germany, especially in the Nazi period.

Marxist historians such as Eric Hobsbawm, E. P. Thompson, Rodney Hilton, Georges Lefebvre, Eugene D. Genovese, Isaac Deutscher, C. L. R. James, Timothy Mason, Herbert Aptheker, Arno J. Mayer and Christopher Hill have sought to validate Karl Marx's theories by analyzing history from a Marxist perspective. In response to the Marxist interpretation of history, historians such as François Furet, Richard Pipes, J. C. D. Clark, Roland Mousnier, Henry Ashby Turner and Robert Conquest have offered anti-Marxist interpretations of history. Feminist historians such as Joan Wallach Scott, Claudia Koonz, Natalie Zemon Davis, Sheila Rowbotham, Gisela Bock, Gerda Lerner, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Lynn Hunt have argued for the importance of studying the experience of women in the past. In recent years, postmodernists have challenged the validity and need for the study of history on the basis that all history is based on the personal interpretation of sources. In his 1997 book *In Defence of History*, Richard J. Evans, a professor of modern history at Cambridge University, defended the worth of history. Another defence of history from post-modernist criticism was the Australian historian Keith Windschuttle's 1994 book, *The Killing of History*.

Areas of study

Periods

Main article: Periodization

Historical study often focuses on events and developments that occur in particular blocks of time. Historians give these periods of time names in order to allow "organising ideas and classificatory generalisations" to be used by historians.^[31] The names given to a period can vary with geographical location, as can the dates of the start and end of a particular period. Centuries and decades are commonly used periods and the time they represent depends on the dating system used. Most periods are constructed retrospectively and so reflect value judgments made about the past. The way periods are constructed and the names given to them can affect the way they are viewed and studied.^[32]

Geographical locations

Particular geographical locations can form the basis of historical study, for example, continents, countries and cities. Understanding why historic events took place is important. To do this, historians often turn to geography. Weather patterns, the water supply, and the

Particular studies and fields

These are approaches to history; not listed are histories of other fields, such as history of science, history of mathematics and history of philosophy.

- Ancient history : the study from the beginning of human history until the Early Middle Ages.
- Atlantic history: the study of the history of people living on or near the Atlantic Ocean.
- Art History: the study of changes in and social context of art.
- Big History: study of history on a large scale across long time frames

landscape of a place all affect the lives of the people who live there. For example, to explain why the ancient Egyptians developed a successful civilization, you must look at the geography of Egypt. Egyptian civilization was built on the banks of the Nile River, which flooded each year, depositing soil on its banks. The rich soil could help farmers grow enough crops to feed the people in the cities. That meant everyone did not have to farm, so some people could perform other jobs that helped develop the civilization.

World

Main article: History of the world

World history is the study of major civilizations over the last 3000 years or so. It has led to highly controversial interpretations by Oswald Spengler and Arnold J. Toynbee, among others. World history is especially important as a teaching field. It has increasingly entered the university curriculum in the U.S., in many cases replacing courses in Western Civilization, that had a focus on Europe and the U.S. World history adds extensive new material on Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Regions

- History of Africa begins with the first emergence of modern human beings on the continent, continuing into its modern present as a patchwork of diverse and politically developing nation states.
- History of the Americas is the collective history of North and South America, including Central America and the Caribbean.
 - History of North America is the study of the past passed down from generation to generation on the continent in the Earth's northern and western hemisphere.
 - History of Central America is the study of the past passed down from generation to generation on the continent in the Earth's western hemisphere.
 - History of the Caribbean begins with the oldest evidence where 7,000-year-old remains have been found.
 - History of South America is the study of the past passed down from generation to generation on the continent in the Earth's southern and western hemisphere.
- History of Antarctica emerges from early Western theories of a vast continent, known as Terra Australis, believed to exist in the far south of the globe.
- History of Australia start with the documentation of the Makassar trading with Indigenous Australians on Australia's north coast.
- History of New Zealand dates back at least 700 years to when

and epochs through a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Chronology: science of localizing historical events in time.
- Comparative history: historical analysis of social and cultural entities not confined to national boundaries.
- Contemporary history: the study of historical events that are immediately relevant to the present time.
- Counterfactual history: the study of historical events as they might have happened in different causal circumstances.
- Cultural history: the study of culture in the past.
- Digital History: the use of computing technologies to produce digital scholarship.
- Economic History: the study of economies in the past.
- Futurology: study of the future: researches the medium to long-term future of societies and of the physical world.
- Intellectual history: the study of ideas in the context of the cultures that produced them and their development over time.
- Maritime history: the study of maritime transport and all the connected subjects.
- Modern history : the study of the Modern Times, the era after the Middle Ages.
- Military History: the study of warfare and wars in history and what is sometimes considered to be a sub-branch of military history, Naval History.
- Natural history: the study of the development of the

it was discovered and settled by Polynesians, who developed a distinct Māori culture centred on kinship links and land.

- History of the Pacific Islands covers the history of the islands in the Pacific Ocean.
- History of Eurasia is the collective history of several distinct peripheral coastal regions: the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Europe, linked by the interior mass of the Eurasian steppe of Central Asia and Eastern Europe.
 - History of Europe describes the passage of time from humans inhabiting the European continent to the present day.
 - History of Frisia is the study of the rich history and folklore of the Frisians and their languages, battles, culture, cuisine, and so forth.
- History of Asia can be seen as the collective history of several distinct peripheral coastal regions, East Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East linked by the interior mass of the Eurasian steppe.
 - History of East Asia is the study of the past passed down from generation to generation in East Asia.
 - History of the Middle East begins with the earliest civilizations in the region now known as the Middle East that were established around 3000 BC, in Mesopotamia (Iraq).
 - History of South Asia is the study of the past passed down from generation to generation in the Sub-Himalayan region.
 - History of Southeast Asia has been characterized as interaction between regional players and foreign powers.

cosmos, the Earth, biology and interactions thereof.

- Paleography: study of ancient texts.
- People's history: historical work from the perspective of common people.
- Political history: the study of politics in the past.
- Psychohistory: study of the psychological motivations of historical events.
- Pseudohistory: study about the past that falls outside the domain of mainstream history (sometimes it is an equivalent of pseudoscience).
- Social History: the study of the process of social change throughout history.
- Universal history: basic to the Western tradition of historiography.
- Women's history: the history of female human beings. Gender history is related and covers the perspective of gender.
- World History: the study of history from a global perspective.

Military history

Main article: Military history

Military history conflicts within human society usually concentrating on historical wars and warfare, including battles, military strategies and weaponry.^[33] However, the subject may range from a melee between two tribes to conflicts between proper militaries to a world war affecting the majority of the human population. Military historians record the events of military history.

Social history

Main article: Social history

Social history is the study of how societies adapt and change over periods of time. Social history is an area of historical study considered by some to be a social science that attempts to view historical evidence from the point of view of developing social trends. In this view, it may include areas of economic history, legal history and the analysis of other aspects of civil society that show the evolution of social norms, behaviors

and more.

Cultural History

Main article: Cultural history

Cultural history replaced social history as the dominant form in the 1980s and 1990s. It typically combines the approaches of anthropology and history to look at language, popular cultural traditions and cultural interpretations of historical experience. It examines the records and narrative descriptions of past knowledge, customs, and arts of a group of people. How peoples constructed their memory of the past is a major topic.

Diplomatic history

Main article: Diplomatic history

Diplomatic history, sometimes referred to as "*Rankian History*"^[34] in honor of Leopold von Ranke, focuses on politics, politicians and other high rulers and views them as being the driving force of continuity and change in history. This type of *political history* is the study of the conduct of international relations between states or across state boundaries over time. This is the most common form of history and is often the classical and popular belief of what history should be.

People's history

Main article: People's history

A people's history is a type of historical work which attempts to account for historical events from the perspective of common people. A people's history is the history of the world that is the story of mass movements and of the outsiders. Individuals not included in the past in other type of writing about history are part of this theory's primary focus, which includes the disenfranchised, the oppressed, the poor, the nonconformists, and the otherwise forgotten people. This theory also usually focuses on events occurring in the fullness of time, or when an overwhelming wave of smaller events cause certain developments to occur.

Gender history

Main article: Gender history

Gender history is a sub-field of History and Gender studies, which looks at the past from the perspective of gender. It is in many ways, an outgrowth of women's history. Despite its relatively short life, Gender History (and its forerunner Women's History) has had a rather significant effect on the general study of history. Since the 1960s, when the initially small field first achieved a measure of acceptance, it has gone through a number of different phases, each with its own challenges and outcomes. Although some of the changes to the study of history have been quite obvious, such as increased numbers of books on famous women or simply the admission of greater numbers of women into the historical profession, other influences are more subtle.

Pseudohistory

Main article: Pseudohistory

Pseudohistory is a term applied to texts which purport to be historical in nature but which depart from standard historiographical conventions in a way which undermines their conclusions. Works which draw controversial conclusions from new, speculative or disputed historical evidence, particularly in the fields of national, political, military and religious affairs, are often rejected as pseudohistory.

In many countries, such as Japan, Russia, and the United States, the subject taught in the primary and secondary schools under the name "history" has at times been censored for political reasons. To give just a few of many examples: in Japan, mention of the Nanking Massacre has been removed from textbooks; in Russia under Stalin, history was rewritten to conform with communist party doctrine; and in the United States the history of the American Civil War had been censored to avoid giving offense to white Southerners.^{[35][36][37]} This practice goes back to the earliest recorded times. In Book Three of The Republic, Plato recommends that citizens be taught lies in order to instill patriotism.^[38]

For more details on this topic, see political historical revisionism.

See also

Main articles: Outline of history and Glossary of history

- Annals
- Chronicles
- Experiences
- Narratives

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