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Tom Bender has been a foundational figure in Transnational American Studies, both in his scholarly writing and his interventions as a public intellectual. His 1986 article, “Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History,” challenged historians to find ways to bring together the fragmented narratives and points of view generated by the new social history to form a unified synthesis. In the years that followed, whether in his studies on antislavery debates, or the role of universities in urban spaces, he sought to indicate ways to expand historical studies to take in diverse points of view. Finally, his interest in bringing together the “plentitude of narratives” led him to organize a group of distinguished historians from the United States and abroad to explore ways of rethinking and reframing the American national narrative in a wider context. The result, the volume *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, provided a discussion of ways to study and teach American history in a transnational context. In *A Nation Among Nations*, Bender then took on the task of producing a synthesis of American history that would challenge conventional nation-state narratives. It is an admirable example of a transnational American history, one that positions the development of the United States within wider transnational political and economic developments.

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