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ARTICLES

HOWARD ADELMAN, Rational Explanation Reconsidered: Case Studies and the Hempel-Dray Model XIII, 208-224

Both William Dray's and Carl Hempel's models of rational explanation share a common paradigm of decision-making in history. They define a rational decision as a deliberative selection of a particular deed, according to a rationale and after a consideration of circumstances and possible consequences, in order to achieve some pre-determined objective. But Dray's and Hempel's own examples of historiographical practice reveal that decisions are generally concerned not with which deed to perform, but with whether or not to perform a certain deed. A paradigm of "opportune" decision-making would more correctly view a decision as a matching of a set of objectives with the probable consequences of the action in question, on the basis of the apparent opportuneness of circumstances.

HARRY J. AUSMUS, Schopenhauer's View of History: A Note XV, 141-145

Schopenhauer's position on the nature of history did not change to be accommodated by his attacks on Hegel. Analysis of Volumes I and II of Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung shows that Schopenhauer's view of history was held before the charges of Hegel's "fraud." In Volume I he does not claim that history is strictly a science, like mathematics, and then go on in Volume II to degrade it. Throughout, he understood history as having positive aspects. Schopenhauer did not reject Hegelianism, particularly for its metaphysical justification of the idea of progress, but he saw value in the study of history for preserving rational self-consciousness and understanding the significance of human actions and motivations.

PAUL MERRITT BASSETT, The Use of History in the Chronicon of Isidore of Seville XV, 278-292

Modern criticisms of the historical works of Isidore of Seville have generally mistaken them for mere chronicle, and poor chronicle at that. Isidore saw biblical and secular history merging into a universal history moving toward "the divinely appointed consummation." This is a marked change from the emphasis of Augustine's Civitas Dei, and involves a different periodization of historical eras. Isidore's emphasis on social as well as temporal continuity is the result
of a conscious effort toward universalism. He incorporates the litera-
ture and mythology of antiquity into a summation of history and an
explanation of the origins of peoples and arts. Universal history is
bound up with the history of the Universal Church. Isidore’s works
show the interaction of the historian and his “Sitz-im-Leben.”

RENA TE BRIDENTHAL, Niebuhr’s Thesis and Its Critics XI, 193-213

In 1811-1812 Barthold Georg Niebuhr claimed that Roman historiog-
raphy had its Homer, an indigenous poetic oral tradition. A century
and a half of debate on this point seems to have come to a close,
 inconsolably. Niebuhr’s hypothesis was not verifiable, since too
much had been lost even of the known writers. He posited three
stages in the development of civilizations: a completely poetic
period, a mythico-historical period, and an historical period.
Niebuhr thought he could reconstruct the Roman ballads on this
framework by scraping off accretions of misinformation resulting
from the biases of ancient historians. His elaboration of this
hypothesis stands as unique, but also tends to overshadow his larger
contributions: his overall method, and the breadth of his critical
treatment of early Roman history.

ILSE N. BULHOF, Structure and Change in Wilhelm Dilthey’s
Philosophy of History XV, 21-32

Dilthey’s philosophy of history showed that in the same way that the
individual’s life is a structural coherence of the consciousness of
present and past experiences, a period of history is a structurally
unified whole, and history in general is a system of interlocking
cultural structures. Structures rather than particulars are given in
consciousness and the objectification of these is culture. The anal-
ogy between the psychic structure of the person and the collective
mind of a culture extends also to the concept of development. The
structure is influenced by circumstances but also forms its own
character with potential for making some changes probable while
precluding others. Dilthey’s middle course between closed systems
of development and pure contingency anticipates modern structural
analysis and provides a resolution of the problem of assessing histor-
ical significance of events by making it a function of the cultural
system being studied.

STUART CLARK, Bacon’s Henry VII: A Case-Study
in the Science of Man XIII, 97-118

Francis Bacon’s History of Henry VII (1622) was an admired classic
for almost three centuries, but in the twentieth century has come to
be regarded as unreliable, as representing no contribution to source
criticism, and as largely derivative from Edward Hall’s Chronicle
and Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia*. However, a comparison with these sources shows an entirely original psychological analysis of Henry VII and thereby supports the thesis that Bacon was carrying out a case-study according to his project for a "science of man" outlined in the *Instauratio Magna*. It was, in fact, the first scientifically-oriented biography in English, and thus differs from the tradition of "literary" history with which it otherwise shares a didactic purpose.

A. T. CLIMO and P. G. A. HOWELLS, Possible Worlds in Historical Explanation XV, 1-20

An examination of historical cases shows the failure of both a regularity analysis and a traditional counterfactual analysis of causation to handle the problems of distinguishing genuine causes from effects, epiphenomena, and pre-empted potential causes. For this reason, the suitability of either as a theory of causality is rejected. A counterfactual interpretation grounded in the logic of possible-world semantics is preferred and supported.

PAUL K. CONKIN, Causation Revisited XIII, 1-20

Historians cannot escape the obligation to give the best possible causal explanations but should recognize that they cannot be more rigorous than the subject matter permits. Rarely if ever can historians identify necessary and sufficient conditions of events, or even sufficient conditions; their aim is usually to seek out the necessary antecedents. Also, they inevitably deal with the teleology of ends and purposes, and with the variable symbolic meanings that constitute culture. But the converse of the limitations on causal claims is the ability to deal with questions of value, taste, and policy. Reductionism is logically appealing, but it leads to a non-historical form of knowledge which has achieved no success in understanding the activities of cultural man.

GEORGES DUBY, L'Histoire des systèmes de valeurs XI, 15-25

Historical change occurs at many levels, and the tempo of change is very different at different levels. It is most abrupt at the superficial level of political events, of longest duration in the history of value-systems, that is, of culture underlying political, economic, and even social change. For example, all the latter went through great transformation between 1125 and 1275, but the value-system of Abelard's contemporaries, at the earlier date, survived among the contemporaries of Jean de Meung, at the later; and only by reconstructing its continuity can one discern its actual changes of deep structure, toward a new recognition of the relativity of human cultures and away from the *contemptus mundi*. If the historian can preview the
future at all, it cannot be by discovering any law of events which ignores the reality of deep structures.

S. N. EISENSTADT, Studies of Modernization and Sociological Theory

The sociological paradigm of modernization which began to disintegrate in the 1950s assumed that all societies develop according to a common pattern, and that traditional forms of organization are impediments to modernization, which was conceived as a continuous, covariant development of all the institutional spheres of a society toward some fixed endpoint. Criticism of this model has established that traditional and modern elements may coexist in a developing society, and that modernization is not a universal process characterizable in terms of Western European experience. This suggests that although modernization generates a set of common problems, it must be viewed as a process bound to historical conditions, and one which provokes different responses from different societies.

ROY ENFIELD, Marx and Historical Laws

Whether Marx indeed discovered a law of epochal transition requires an examination of his analysis of epochal change, as in the Grundrisse and Capital. Objections that Marx's theory of socioeconomic change is formally inconsistent can be dealt with through analysis of its content. Marx is shown to have formulated a schema for the understanding of social revolution in general, which can be properly understood only in terms of the increasing complexity of successive social formations.

MARY FORRESTER, Practical Reasoning and Historical Inquiry

Both the Hempelian and the Dravian models of historical explanation are inadequate. They are based on the belief that in some way action may be deduced from a given reason for it. The chief difficulty is in showing how reasons are logically related to actions. An act can never be shown deductively to be necessary for the achievement of an end. Rather, practical reasoning enables us to infer inductively that a particular act will result in the achievement of some goal. An act is explained not when it is inferred from a set of premises one of which states the reason for it, but instead where the end may be inferred from a set of premises one of which states that the action has been performed. Studying an agent's other actions and the actions of other people enables us to determine which ends are desired, which are not, and whether the agent was rational or irrational.
HARRIET GILLIAM, The Dialectics of Realism and Idealism in Modern Historiographic Theory XV, 231-256

Realism and idealism in modern historiographic theory share a common origin and their internal dialogue is a series of efforts to accommodate and reconcile the views of the two schools. Over the questions of the idea of fact, historical truth, the subject-object relationship, and history as narrative, the conceptual and methodological poles are not so extreme as they appear, and both schools borrow from each other as they become increasingly sophisticated. That they address the same issues and share epistemological presuppositions enables them to maintain an interreactive and interdependent relationship. The positions of Mandelbaum, Cassirer, Becker, Collingwood, Oakeshott, Dray, and others are shown to be less fundamentally opposed than generally believed. Although there is a significant concurrence between realist and idealist positions, their dialogue is crucial to understanding the nature of historical knowledge.

DAVID GODDARD, Max Weber and the Objectivity of Social Science XII, 1-22

Neither a Weberian methodology of social science, nor the rationale provided by Anglo-American logical positivism, can give an adequate account of the objectivity of the human sciences with the sole exception of history. The Kantian theory of objectivity presupposed by Weber's sociology left it with no object, but rather an indefinite range of phenomena defined from an indefinite number of points of view. Here cultural phenomena can only be perceived under the category of meaning or value which accentuates selected aspects of reality. The root of the dilemma is Weber's conception of the subject matter of the social sciences as a contingent flow of actions and events. Nothing can be objectified from the synthesis of this manifold except limited historical sequences. However, the subject matter of the social sciences presents itself as already synthesized by the activities of conscious social subjects, and this organized reality can be theoretically articulated. Society is not conceivable at all without the idea of a system which lies behind it.

BALKRISHNA GOVIND GOKHALE, Gandhi and History XI, 214-225

The combination of influences from the disparate religious traditions of Hinduism and Jainism was the dominant element in Gandhi's philosophy of history. Selected parts from the Christian biblical tradition and the works of Tolstoy and Ruskin were used only to sharpen the concepts inherited from the Hindu-Jain tradition. Progress takes place in the inner being of man rather than in the extension of man's power over nature and other men, the stuff of conventional history. History teaches ethical lessons and is stated in periods and cycles
which are parts of cosmic processes. Gandhi envisions a peasant-centered society of village republics in which the work-creativity conflict is reduced to a minimum. Thereafter, he believed that man would ultimately embrace the doctrine of nonviolence and genuinely realize his own being as a part of God.

LIONEL GOSMANN, Augustin Thierry and Liberal Historiography XV, Bei. 15, 3-83

For Augustin Thierry, rewriting the story of the past was, until 1830, explicitly a way of making the future, and after 1830, implicitly a way of justifying the present. In subverting traditional historiography — perceived as a legitimation of royal authority — Thierry did not follow the Enlightenment strategy of opposing history and reason. Writing after 1789, he discovered reason in history. Constant and the Saint-Simonians had already distinguished two ages of history — an age of conquest or violence, and an age, just beginning, of commerce and reason — but these appeared as discontinuous. Thierry’s aim, especially after 1830, was to reveal history as a continuous, providential unfolding of reason, culminating in the bourgeois nation state. The violence of history was thus to be subsumed by reason. Historiographically, narrative (the history of violence) and commentary (rational reflection on it) were not to be discontinuous, as in Enlightenment historiography; meaning was to emerge instead from the narrative itself. Correspondingly, the historian’s role was to be construed as a mediating, not a constructive one. The historian is the mouthpiece of history, as the bourgeois, the true hero of history, uniting in himself conquered and conqueror, represents what in history was divided — the nation. In neither case is control to be viewed as a mark of division or violence; historian and hero are alike agents or representatives of totality (reality, reason, the nation). Violence reasserts itself thematically, however, in the stark, unresolved opposition of conquered and conqueror, subject and lord, female and male, victim and executioner, which structures Thierry’s most successful historical narratives.

ANTHONY T. GRAFTON, Joseph Scaliger and Historical Chronology: The Rise and Fall of a Discipline XIV, 156-185

Scaliger (De emendatione temporum, 1583) brought critical standards and methodological innovations to the already extensive sixteenth-century interest in chronology. He invented the Julian Period, a device for the reckoning of dates, exposed historical forgeries, and showed the independent value of non-Biblical sources — even acknowledging Egyptian dynastic chronology antedating the Biblical Creation, although he could not satisfactorily resolve this conflict. After Scaliger, the quality of chronological studies declined as questions were argued less on historical grounds than on theological ones, but the confusion this created eventually
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contributed to breaking the hold of the Bible on chronology, along the lines anticipated by Scaliger.

DAVID GROSS, The "New History": A Note of Reappraisal XIII, 53-58

The "New History" of which James Harvey Robinson's book of that name (1912) was the manifesto, has itself become a proper object of historical inquiry, which needs to investigate the attitudes and premises which underlay it. One important assumption was that adaption to the world as given is the only "reasonable" position. Robinson argued that the historian must select and construct a "usable past," but the past he constructed was designed to make industrial efficiency the overriding contemporary value and to reconcile the working population to the lot it "must" accept. One can see by contrast with the "New History" the possibility of a history which leads to re-thinking rather than accepting the givenness of the present.

PAUL HERNADI, Re-Presenting the Past: A Note on Narrative Historiography and Historical Drama XV, 45-51

Narrative historiography and historical drama can be revealingly compared with respect to authorial perspective. Classical, Elizabethan, and modern drama are contrasted with narrative history in a consideration of the representation of the past "from within and without at the same time." The historian is expected to present envisioned action indirectly, while the playwright directly re-presents action. The content of historiographical narrative and the dialogue form of drama claim to offer unmediated insight into the past, while the form of the former and the content of the latter acknowledge the reproduction of represented events in a human mind. The playwright's retrospective attitude toward the represented action is considered historically. The narrative historian's dual vision of events from within and without is explored by an analysis of his use of verbal signs compared to that of the scientist and novelist.

DAVID L. HULL, Central Subjects and Historical Narratives XIV, 253-274

A central subject is the main strand around which the fabric of an historical narrative is woven. Such a subject must possess both spatial and temporal continuity. It is integrated into an historical entity through the relationship between those properties which make it an individual, and their interaction with the historical event. Scientific theory is useful in the reconstruction of past events and the definition of the central subject. Ideas used as central subjects present the problem of finding internal principles of integration which will make
the idea continuous over time. The purpose of narratives is to explain an event by integrating it into an organized whole.

GEORGE HUPPERT, Divinatio et Eruditio: Thoughts on Foucault XIII, 191-207

Michel Foucault, in Les Mots et les choses, claims to have developed an original, structural method for the study of intellectual history. Foucault believes this "archeological" technique can afford total understanding of the thought of a particular period. However, when applied to sixteenth-century France, Foucault's method yields unsatisfactory results. Foucault asserts that prior to Descartes, all thinking was qualitative and magical, but in support of his thesis he can cite only marginal figures whose work had been thoroughly discredited by the learned humanists who constituted the mainstream of sixteenth-century French thought. When he does examine respected thinkers, he misinterprets their work.

GERALD IZENBERG, Psychohistory and Intellectual History XIV, 139-155

Psychohistory is a limited historical tool, best used in inquiries about irrational behavior and beliefs. Irrational behavior is either an unsuitable means for accomplishing the agent's self-proclaimed purposes or an inappropriate response in terms of social norms. When the agent's behavior displays internal inconsistencies, the historian must look beyond the agent's own reasons. But before looking for unconscious motives, the historian must reconstruct the objective situation from the historical standpoint of the agent to see if the action is intelligible in its context. Irrational beliefs are those which are impervious to disconfirming factual evidence. It is the thought processes behind beliefs which determine their rationality; irrational beliefs only make sense in terms of the social and emotional needs they fulfill.

LINDA GARDINER JANIK, Lorenzo Valla: The Primacy of Rhetoric and the Demoralization of History XII, 389-404

Lorenzo Valla's historical methodology was linked to his stress on rhetoric; he believed in oratorical persuasion, not logical argument. Refusing to screen historical events according to their moral value, he included accounts of all events. Truth was not for him an external standard, but a standard for judging propositions. Truth lay in the correct usage of words; correct language could create a correct picture of the world. Valla's concept of verisimilitude hinged on historical plausibility, not moral worth. History should be a true account, correctly worded. Because of his talent to persuade the
reader, plausible (yet not necessarily true) events illustrating his point were also included.

**PAUL JANSSENS, Histoire économique ou économique rétrospective?**

XIII, 21-38

The New Economic History has revived epistemological awareness among historians, and calls into question the positivist evasion of the problems of subjectivity and constructive synthesis. Although historians have resisted science as well as scientism, they cannot give an adequate account of concrete reality without a global theory of society seen as a structured whole. But unlike the scientism of much social science, the historian must discriminate between chance, necessity, and free will; and this is not incompatible with scientific explanation. There remains a difference between economics and history. To the extent that economic models generalize contemporary patterns, the historian of another period must find models appropriate to that period — i.e., become an economist of that period.

**HANS D. KELLNER, Time Out: The Discontinuity of Historical Consciousness**

XIV, 275-296

Historical thought resembles the model of human consciousness in that the destruction of information, rather than its transmission, constitutes the major activity of both systems. The destruction of information is structured and may be analyzed. Analysis of missing or destroyed information reveals a phenomenology of missing information, ranging in kind from the unrecorded to the unimaginable. Some categories of missing information are usually dismissed as fictitious or imaginary by normal historical practice. However, a close examination suggests that standard historical writing uses tacit conventions not so different from certain highly controversial current trends.

**ISAAC KRAMNICK, Reflections on Revolution: Definition and Explanation in Recent Scholarship**

XI, 26-63

Recent efforts to define or describe revolution have centered on discussions of the mode, impact, and purpose of political change. It is generally conceded that the characterization of revolution as strictly a violent mode of political change is too limiting, that such change must have an impact beyond ruling-class circles for it to be truly revolutionary, and that "revolution" has represented an effort to reconstruct society along theoretical principles animated by some vision of an ideal order, an ideology. That revolution is also a cultural phenomenon is emphasized in the most fruitful inquiry with
respect to definition, the paradigm notion of Schrecker and Kuhn. The political explanation of revolution is decisive in each of the other models; the economic, sociological, and psychological.

**LEONARD KRIEGER, Elements of Early Historicism: Experience, Theory, and History in Ranke** XIV, Bei. 14, 1-14

The tension between individualism and universalism in historicism goes back to Leopold Ranke's version of the movement's early stage. Ranke's experience of the Revolution of 1830 helped to effect the first of the many resolutions which this tension would receive, but it helped also to endow this resolution with the one-sided individualistic distortion which has burdened the movement ever since. The initial emphasis on the individual as particularizing comes from Ranke's conservative reaction to revolution as a universalizing aspect of history. But despite this overt emphasis, Ranke actually moved toward universal truths in his history, harmonizing them with his historical individualities.

**ADRIAN KUZMINSKI, The Paradox of Historical Knowledge** XII, 269-289

The problem of universals versus particulars is central to the paradox of historical knowledge. History interpreted in terms of a closed set of universals denies qualitative change; history interpreted in terms of unique events allows no support for generalizations. Three approaches to this problem are: rationalist, intuitive, and philosophic history. Rationalist and intuitive history are unsatisfactory. Rationalist history is deterministic, reducing experiences to strictly defined universals. Intuitive history, stressing the particular, is subjective. To overcome this dilemma, philosophic history would have to develop a notion of universals stable enough to sustain order and flexible enough to allow for real change. Such a notion can be found in the manner in which entities are created through metaphoric conflation.

**C. BEHAN MC CULLAGH, Historical Instrumentalism** XII, 290-307

Instrumentalists use history to explain present entities or situations, not to explain an independent past. They incorrectly view historical hypotheses as imaginative reconstructions designed to explain present data. In fact, historical hypotheses do not imply the evidence, the evidence implies the hypotheses. Despite instrumentalist claims, the fact that an historical hypothesis best explains the evidence does not necessarily prove it true. Instrumentalists analogize history to science, but the incompatibility of subject matter and method invalidates the analogy. Scientific hypotheses discuss postulated abstract entities; historical hypotheses discuss common occurrences about which there is much general knowledge. Scientific explanations use
laws and theories; historical explanations use events and circumstances.

BRUCE MAZLISH, The Tragic Farce of Marx, Hegel, and Engels XI, 335-337

Marx begins his *Eighteenth Brumaire* by attributing to Hegel the remark that "all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce." Marx has stung us here with another of his famous inversions. For Hegel, in the passage in question, describes repetition in world history as a mark of ratification, sanctifying what has happened. He has not "forgotten" to add, the first time as tragedy, the second as *farce*; for such an addition would utterly contradict what he is saying. Actually, Marx borrowed the whole tragedy-farce notion from comments by Engels in a letter dated December 3, 1851. Marx has, however, held fast to Hegel's formulations about man being free only when he comprehends his history.

JACK W. MEILAND, The Historical Relativism of Charles A. Beard XII, 405-413

Despite seemingly ambiguous writings, Beard is a relativist. Beard states that if historical conceptions are relative, then relativity is relative; this is not a rejection of relativism. As times change, doctrines become outmoded. Beard's times were right for relativism, so he was a relativist, despite his knowledge of its eventual demise. Relativism cannot provide the historian with a frame of reference to interpret the "totality of history." He must choose a comprehensive and informed frame. Beard seems to indicate that historians can forecast the future; yet, this contradicts his rejection of absolute historical truths. He is not discussing forecasting future events, but forecasting future frames of reference.

JAMES MILLER Merleau-Ponty's Marxism: Between Phenomenology and the Hegelian Absolute XV, 109-132

The development and changes in Merleau-Ponty's Marxism are analyzed by an examination of the relationship of his phenomenology to the rationalism and determinism of the Marxist dialectic. From *Humanism and Terror* (1947) to *Adventures of the Dialectic* (1955) Merleau-Ponty made explicit and worked out the philosophical dilemmas in his own Marxism and eventually abandoned the determinism of the Hegelian-Marxist autonomous dialectic of history. This rejection of a determinism "executed behind humanity's back" was the heart of Merleau-Ponty's social thought, and meant
that the teleological meaning of history incarnate in the proletariat had to be criticized. Merleau-Ponty put the practical focus of the emancipatory social philosophy on the individual conceived concretely "as a potential participant in a universal history."

**ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO**. Tradition and the Classical Historian

XI, 279-293

The "great" historians of ancient Greece and Rome emphasized the emergence of new institutions, habits, and vices; they were dominated by the *sense of change*. Histories sought to describe changes in the past which would help future generations to recognize the causes and foresee the consequences of similar changes. Implicit in the whole attitude of the Greeks and Romans toward history was that the variety of events was somehow inherently limited. None of the texts available to us gives a satisfactory account of long-term changes in laws and customs. Violent change during wars and political revolutions is the preferred subject. Finally, the cumulative importance of a "minor" historiography in ancient Greece cannot be underrated. City and temple chronicles emphasized the individuality of each Greek center and collected the local myths.

**SUE NICTERLEIN**. Historicism and Historiography in Indonesia

XIII, 253-272

European colonial domination brought with it the Western historicist *Weltanschauung*, and as third-world nations regained their autonomy, they sought new political and historical paradigms to characterize their past and present. In Indonesia, the attempts of intellectuals to constitute a truly Indonesian historiography reveal the special features of historical consciousness there. Because of the pluralism of Indonesian culture, Indonesian historians have been concerned with defining a collective identity or nationalism, which has tended to politicize their historiography. But Indonesian historiography has embraced both academic and polemical orientations, and, utilizing a broad spectrum of coexisting viewpoints to build a new historical awareness, has very early recognized the legitimacy of subjectivity in history.

**ERNST NOLTE**. The Relationship between "Bourgeois" and "Marxist" Historiography

XIV, 57-73

"Bourgeois" and "Marxist" historiography are neither irreconcilable nor simply coordinated. While "bourgeois" historiography is characterized by relative distance from its subject, most "Marxist" historiography is absolutely identical with ideology and state interest, often clearly distorting the past. This does not correspond to
Marx's concept of scientific method. But there is a difference between "state Marxism" and "free Marxism." Free Marxism exists only in a liberal society, "the West," representing the maximum of critical distance and being, insofar, a characteristic part of bourgeois scholarship. Only State Marxism is clearly antagonistic to it, being the product of a mobilized state led by a small minority whose dissensions do not find public expression.

ROBERT NORTH, Bibliography of Works in Theology and History XII, 55-140

JOHN PASSMORE, The Poverty of Historicism Revisited XIV. Bei. 14, 30-47

Popper's use of the word "historicism" is too encompassing. Does "historicism" refer to a theory of the social sciences, a way of doing them, or a "well-considered and close-knit philosophy?" Here the term is taken to mean a theory about the aims of the social sciences. But even with reference to his other works, Popper's argument proves not to be against historicism as he defined it, but rather against one of the other varieties of Historismus. Nor does the doctrine involve or entail much that Popper seems to think it does. Notwithstanding this critique, Popper has sketched a number of arguments which might be further developed into a refutation of "evolutionary historicism."

PETRARCH's Prefaces to De viris illustribus; with an Introductory Note by Benjamin G. Kohl XIII, 132-144 [Classics in the Philosophy of History Series]

Petrarch worked intermittently at his biographies of generals and statesmen over a period of forty years, with four different plans which reflect marked changes in his attitude toward antiquity. Originally intending to cover the period of republican Rome, in the 1350s he expanded his plan to cover all ages, beginning with Adam; in the 1370s he contracted it again to cover ancient secular heroes from Romulus to Trojan. The prefaces he wrote for the latter two plans, however, show no change in his views on the nature and utility of history; in this respect he was the first to sound all the themes of Renaissance historiography.

PHILIP POMPER, Problems of a Naturalistic Psychohistory XII, 367-388

In the absence of a generally accepted biopsychological theory, naturalistically inclined psychohistorians have only been able to establish speculative typologies of historical human behavior. Al-
though the Freudian conflict theory has proven an attractive psychohistorical tool, it is inherently methodologically deficient, and its assimilation to salvationist ideologies has obscured its naturalistic aspects. Epidemiological data on the incidence and distribution of mental distress might prove invaluable in determining criteria for psychological survivability in a given culture, but little useful data of this kind have appeared. In analyzing revolutions, psychohistorians have failed to correlate conclusively such upheavals with specific shifts in the psychological makeup of the society in question.

DALE H. PORTER, History as Process XIV, 297-313

Alfred North Whitehead’s theory of creative process can resolve the conflict between the deductive-law and narrative models of historical understanding. Process theory defines events as actions, extended in time, developing genetically, analyzable according to empirical rules. This testing involves the “mode of presentational immediacy,” which measures spatial and temporal connections between events. Beneath this operates the “mode of causal efficacy,” recording reactions sensed below the level of consciousness. Creative process incorporates these two modes, defining all occasions as patterns of relationships with other occasions, not substances but creative processes. Every phase of process has both subjective and objective elements. The objective action collects data from new occasions, but each datum has the subjective intensity of aiming at its own satisfaction.


PIETRO ROSSI, The Ideological Valences of Twentieth-Century Historicism XIV, Bei. 14, 15-29

Popper is wrong in regarding historicism as a unified idea. On the contrary, later historicism was associated with a variety of ideologies. Meinecke’s historicism is closely associated with the development of the German state. Croce emphasizes the development of liberty, looking to the French Orleans monarchy as a model. Meinecke’s argument is directed against the idea of natural law. Croce’s against the Enlightenment. These were united in the conservative, anti-democratic rejection of the principles of 1789. Weber’s system gives rise to a multiplicity of ideological positions. Unlike the retrospective philosophical attitudes of Meinecke and Croce, which use the past to justify the present, Weber’s emphasis on understanding the present as a product of the complexities of the past and as a factor in the creation of the future leads away from conservative politics.
Our contact with men of distant lands has made possible the notion of universal history. All societies are members of the same human civilization, though at different stages in its development. From the small sum of known past events the universal historian selects only those whose influence on contemporary life has been essential and readily discernible, and moves backward in time toward the origins. This produces an aggregate of world-changes which fit together only in a disconnected and fortuitous way. But his philosophical understanding transforms the aggregate into a coherent whole: the unity of the laws of physical and human nature allows him to infer backward to phenomena which had been left hidden or unrecorded. The universal historian transplants his reasoned harmony into the nature of things, a teleological principle into the course of world history. This elevates our every deed to immortality in the progression toward human perfectibility.

As a study in social structure and the movement toward revolution, the case of the French Revolution, though unique, offers vast possibilities for the discovery of general principles and uniformities of social organization, change, and development. The methodology involves the interpretation of systematic covariations through a procedure of "Concrete Analytic Coding," i.e., code-aided content analysis. This permits the production of a detailed index available to other researchers with a code that is analytic and mnemonic. The materials for the analysis are the cahiers de doléances, the most complete indicators of public opinion from all of France at the time.

The unorthodox German historian Eckart Kehr published in 1931 his study of the politics of the building of the German navy; against the historicist view of the primacy of foreign policy, he argued the primacy of domestic politics. Largely rejected in Germany, Kehr's ideas strongly reinforced Charles Beard's growing belief that the United States should disengage itself from foreign economic and political relations as far as possible; Beard even made his own study of U.S. Navy politics, with conclusions like Kehr's. By the late 1930s, however, both Beard's preoccupation with historical relativism and his political activism led him to abandon the belief that
external policies could be explained as resulting from domestic pressures.

GABRIELLE M. SPIEGEL, Political Utility in Medieval Historiography: A Sketch XIV, 314-325

The chronicles of the French Abbey of Saint-Denis illustrate medieval society’s dependence on the past for legitimacy. The historical mentality of the Saint-Denis chroniclers was shaped equally by rhetorical principles of classical historiography and by techniques of Biblical typological exegesis. The chroniclers tended to use historical exempla drawn from the past in the same way that Biblical exegesis used types; that is, not only as rhetorical, hortatory examples of morally desirable behavior but as actual prefigurations of events to come with prescriptive force for contemporary life. In this way the chroniclers were able to create an historical framework which permitted them to utilize analogies with events of the past both to explain and to legitimate contemporary political life.

EHUD SPRINZAK, Weber's Thesis as an Historical Explanation XI, 294-320

Max Weber's analysis of the Protestant origins of the spirit of modern capitalism is often alluded to, but is generally held to be untenable. Neither the approval nor disapproval rests on a clear vision of what Weber meant. The most destructive argument decries Weber's one-directional and unicausal relationship between Protestantism and capitalism. Others argue that he mislocated the rise of modern capitalism, misinterpreted Protestantism, and misunderstood Catholicism. Yet Max Weber's self-assigned task was not to analyze the official intentional doctrines of Protestantism, but to call into question the ability of the social sciences to contribute to the settlement of major historical questions. The four most substantial arguments made against his thesis were anticipated by Weber and invalidated by his own cautious remarks. It is clear that Weber was interested primarily in the logical structure of his argument and that only by tracing his explicit methodological rules could a key to his thesis be suggested.

RANDOLPH STARN, Meaning-Levels in the Theme of Historical Decline XIV, 1-31

"Decline" is a concept which organizes a certain randomness of history to formalize a sense of movement. It posits a disjunction from some norm and implies a comparison between norm and "other." Historically, decline was a value-free concept which subsequently came to connote a movement in values from better to worse. The use of decline involves an interplay of ethical norms and a sense
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of distance between ideal and subsequent states. Decline can be linear (from a specific beginning moving toward an end), or cyclical or spiral, in which a decline is only one part of an overall pattern of historical movement.

LAWRENCE S. STEPELEVICH, August von Cieszkowski: From Theory to Praxis XIII, 39-52

A neglected Young Hegelian, Cieszkowski published prolifically in economics and philosophy, but the work most influential on the Hegelians was his Prolegomena Zur Historiosophie (1838). Rejecting the conservative interpretation of Hegel, it denied that the end of history had been reached, celebrated the will as transcending thought, and anticipated a future in which being and thinking would find their syntheses in praxis. At once a critique of Hegel and a development of Hegelianism, his work is most notable for its millennial optimism.

ROBERT STOVER, Responsibility for the Cold War — A Case Study in Historical Responsibility XI, 145-178

Sixteen works are analyzed to shed light on historical practice in regard to praising, blaming, and ascribing responsibility. Agents are held responsible for the Cold War only if (1) they had an opportunity to prevent it, (2) specified goals or norms required that they utilize that opportunity, but, instead, (3) their actions, under the circumstances, brought about the Cold War. Historians’ diverse ascriptions of responsibility reflect different views as to opportunities, applicable goals or norms, appropriate standards for determining culpability as distinguished from answerability, and bases for comparative judgments. Analysis also discloses that Dray’s thesis regarding the interdependence of moral and selective causal judgments is simplistic.

TRACY B. STRONG, History and Choices: The Foundations of the Political Thought of Raymond Aron XI, 179-192

The apparent liberalism of Raymond Aron’s thought can be understood only in the context of the questions asked by the “continental” philosophical tradition. Aron contends that the strong neo-Kantian and existentialist trends which came together in Weber’s work serve to split man off from meaningful intercourse with the social world. Aron intends to re-establish that intercourse. He attempts to show precisely what the consequences and responsibilities of making choices are for a man “thrown” into the world. Politics becomes focused around the choice of values in a world delineated only in negative terms. Aron’s program yields a low number of
generalizable empirical conclusions and policy recommendations, and this is instructive to those who wish to practice "good" social science.

CHARLES D. TARLTON, Historicity, Meaning, and Revisionism in the Study of Political Thought  
XII, 307-328

J. G. A. Pocock, Quentin Skinner, and John Dunn try to introduce historicity into the study of political thought. Believing that meaning is relational, they attempt to build cognitive contexts in which to fit events. Yet, their structural focus is often either ill-defined or overly simplified. They claim that if any statement is fixed into its proper context, the context will help to explain it. But the historical context is not always clearly understood itself; this is acting under the "illusion of historical solidity and substance." They see language as the limitation of action, while actually it is a tool for inventiveness of thought.

JERZY TOPOLSKI, Lévi-Strauss and Marx on History  
XII, 192-207

Lévi-Strauss' proposed link between his theory of history and Marx's is misleading. Believing that social reality and human actions are determined by unconscious and universal structures of the mind, he discounts the historical process as a contributor to man's consciousness. The codes of the unconscious structures are a priori rules for decision making; possible options are determined by chance. History consists of accidental events determined by discontinuous choices. Unlike Lévi-Strauss, Marx based his theories on praxis informed by man's consciousness. Rational decisions are limited solely by our awareness of surrounding conditions, which we can change. Unlike Lévi-Strauss' models, Marx's are verifiable and his history is continuous.

W. PAUL VOGT, The Uses of Studying Primitives: A Note on the Durkheimians, 1890-1940  
XV, 33-44

This study of the Durkheimian school attempts to bridge the gap between so-called "external" and "internal" modes of analysis in the understanding of social-scientific thought. The Durkheimians' switch from the study of modern Europe to the study of primitives is considered from three angles. First, "internal," methodological and state-of-the-discipline factors are analyzed. Second, the relationship of this professional group to others in academe is described to add a further perspective on its needs and characteristics. Third, "external" factors such as contemporary ideology and political problem-solving goals of the group are examined to round out the character of the Durkheimians. The showing of the mutual interdependence and
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simultaneous significance of all these elements provides a greater measure of accuracy in the consideration of questions of this type.

W. H. WALSH, The Causation of Ideas XIV, 186-199

Historians generally see ideas as the product of circumstances, looking beyond the idea to the external factor which influenced its acceptance. Behind an idea there are acknowledged or, more commonly, unacknowledged clusters of assumptions shared by a social group. Although these clusters influence thoughts, they cannot be traced as direct causal agents. In the connection between situations and ideas, how the situation is perceived is more important than what is objectively true. Rough causal laws can be outlined by correlating types of social conditions with types of states of mind. Sets of ideas point beyond themselves to the background against which they were framed.


An examination of the statement, criticism, and reformulation of the Pirenne, Turner, and Weber theses as causal explanations makes possible a clarification of the nature and justification of causal theses in history. Criticisms of such theses typically attack either the description of the cause-phenomenon or the effect-phenomenon, or they attack the (sometimes implicit) generalization or theory which justifies the claim of causal connection. Theses are defended by redescribing the phenomena so as to make the underlying theory (e.g., the psychological mechanisms postulated by Turner and Weber) a stronger justification. The analysis clarifies the essential connection between description and explanation, and shows that "colligatory" descriptions are always theoretical relative to lower-level factual descriptions.

HAYDEN V. WHITE, Foucault Decoded: Notes from Underground XII, 23-54

Michel Foucault’s Les Mots et les choses correctly asserts that the attempts of the human sciences of the past five hundred years to represent the world in language have failed because these sciences did not recognize the opacity or thingness of language itself. Foucault pretends to have written a plotless anti-history of the human sciences which stresses the discontinuities that characterize the succession of one "episteme" by another. In fact, he has explained these vicissitudes by the changes of tropological strategy that underlie epistemic shifts. Although he disavows the movement, Foucault’s interest in revealing the poetic basis of all linguistic rep-
resentations of reality places him in the eschatological wing of the structuralist establishment.

**HAYDEN V. WHITE, Historicism, History, and the Figurative Imagination**

XIV, Bev. 14, 48-67

Historicism is often regarded (e.g., by Popper) as a distortion of properly "historical" understanding; but if one attends to the rhetorical aspects of historical discourse, it appears that ordinary historical narrative prefigures its subject by the language chosen for description no less than historicism does by its generalizing and theoretical interests. Descriptive language is, in fact, figurative and emplots events to suit one or another type of story. Rhetorical analysis shows even an apparently straightforward passage (by A. J. P. Taylor) to be an encodation of events in the form of pseudo-tragedy. Generic story-types constitute the latent meaning of narratives and are understood by readers, often subliminally, through the figurative language of the story. The acknowledgement of linguistic determinism resolves a number of problems of historical theory and entails a qualified relativism of historical accounts.

**PETER WILES, The Necessity and Impossibility of Political Economy**

XI, 3-14

In economics there is chronology but no history. Ideas may develop, but the motivation is always the same. This assumption gives economics a basic, workable simplicity, which manifests itself today as an obsession with methodology and simple assumptions. Economists try to deduce practical conclusions from much ratiocination and few data, and trespass into the normative. But history is positive. Public finance, monetary policy and detailed planning are normative, and these are the areas that impinge most closely upon — in fact, that constitute — political economy. Political economy is useful when we do not ask too much of it. The aspects of economics which it touches are precisely the least developed. As for politics, no adequate generalization is yet possible on how power is acquired or on how it is used. Therefore, there can be no scientific political economy.

**J. O. WISDOM, General Explanation in History**

XV, 257-266

The covering-law model of historical explanation works only for explanation of particulars by particulars, or narrative questions and person and action questions. Wisdom suggests three other explanatory theories that may be integral to historical explanation. What are called Challengeable-cover laws, Function-type laws, and Theoretical-type explanations are introduced and their ranges with respect to covering laws described. The first type are non-trivial generalizations the historian forms where existing covering laws are irrelevant.
or insufficient, for isolated aspects of their subject matter. Function-type explanatory laws are systemic and answer questions basic in the social sciences where they point beyond particulars to general functions of systems. Theory-type explanations, like Mary Douglas' explanation of taboos, involve theoretical entities or unobservables and operate analogously to theoretical explanations in the natural sciences. Historians often condense generalizations into concepts and treat them as particulars. History thus becomes generality-impregnated narrative.

ASTRID WITSCHI-BERNZ, Bibliography of Works in the Philosophy of History, 1500-1800

ALLEN L. WOLL, The Philosophy of History in Nineteenth-Century Chile: The Lastarria-Bello Controversy

The emergence of independent Chile in the early nineteenth century fostered debate over the appropriate model and function for historical study within the new nation. One school of thought, represented by Andres Bello, shunned all foreign historiographical models as inapplicable, and held that since Chilean historical knowledge was incomplete, priority ought to be given to close study of the facts. José Lastarria argued that the historian must be a philosopher of history, searching out the meaning of historical facts in order to draw lessons for the present. In contrast to Bello, Lastarria believed the historical work should serve an active political function and offer judgments on both past and present.

MYRIAM YARDENI, Journalisme et Histoire Contemporaine à l’Epoque de Bayle

The efflorescence of journals, gazettes, and "mercures" in France beginning in the seventeenth century not only created a Republic of Letters but transformed the conception and practice of contemporary history and even of history in general. They recorded and documented events to an extent before unimaginable, and specialized journals enlarged the concept of history from politics to culture in all its aspects. Though journalists had the lowest status and reporting was unreliable, such savants as Bayle, Vigneul-Marville, and Camusat saw clearly the importance and potentialities of journalism as a resource for contemporary historiography.

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