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1982-1986

ARTICLES

JAMES SMITH ALLEN, History and the Novel: Mentalité in Modern Popular Fiction  XXII, 233-252

The historical use of literature poses a methodological challenge: used directly as a document, fiction is unreliable. Postformalist criticism and theory suggest approaches to the novel more appropriate than those historians have traditionally used. Historians should not conceive of the text as document but think of it instead as a structuralist system, discourse, or code. Reader-response criticism merits the historian's serious attention; by studying how readers in the past responded to fiction, the social historian may read the novel to understand its audience and the socially significant conventions it preferred in the novel. The novel is a mental world with an actual historical context peopled by ordinary readers through which mentalities can be investigated.

ROBERT ANCHOR, Realism and Ideology: The Question of Order  XXII, 107-119

Critics of Realism such as Foucault assert that "reality" has no existence until prefigured by acts of the literary imagination, and that the literature of Realism falsely and ideologically creates the impression that it is continuous with life itself. For Foucault, discursive practices are the only possible objects of historical inquiry since human activity can never be understood apart from the ways in which it is articulated. He mostly investigates order, the codes of order, reflections upon order, and the experience of order. The fetishization of order, the substitution of the order of words for the disorder of events, is postmodernism as ideology. Realism does not provide a definition of reality at all—rather a description of the world which does not impose order on chaos. Instead it reveals disorder amidst apparent order. No knowledge of language or discursive practices can disclose the particular experiences which shape our sense of reality.
WILDA C. ANDERSON, Dispensing with the Fixed Point: Scientific Law as Historical Event XXII, 264-277

Hayden White’s tropes of the imagination purport to give the historian the vantage point from which the historical object can be stabilized and eventually understood. Ludwik Fleck, a scientist, found that all scientific, all creative thinking is a highly figurative procedure, a complex weaving together of a conversation of voices from past traditions, historical and mythical, as well as voices from the present. The fixed or the real or the unrelevatized can always be shown to be a construction, if one moves to another vantage point. Some of the best scientific thinking, such as Einstein’s and Heisenberg’s, has been done by those who dispensede the necessity of a fixed epistemological vantage point. White’s discourse analysis cannot claim to be a fixed point from which the other texts are formalized.

F. R. ANKERSMIT, The Dilemma of Contemporary Anglo-Saxon Philosophy of History XXV, Bei. 25, 1-27

The narrativist philosophy of history and the epistemological philosophy of history are opposed to each other and have remarkably little in common. Within the epistemological philosophy, the debate between the covering-law model advocates and the analytical hermeneutists has always been moving towards synthesis more than towards perpetuation of the disagreement. But the revolution from epistemological to narrativist philosophy of history enacted in Hayden White’s work made the philosophy of history finally catch up with the developments in philosophy since the works of Quine, Kuhn, and Rorty. White stresses the “making” or “poetic” function of narrative at the expense of the “matching” function so dear to the mimetic epistemology of positivism. Philosophers of history should shake off this positivistic past and make history narrativist.

CHRISTOPHER J. BERRY, Hume on Rationality in History and Social Life XXI, 234-247

Like other Enlightenment thinkers, Hume provides a formal account of social life with a substantive theory of rationality. Hume has a noncontextualist theory of human nature. Human nature possesses certain constant and universal principles, the operation of which are unaffected by history of sociocultural contexts. Some social practices are more rational, more “in tune” with human nature, than others. Although Hume is resigned to the fact that customs are too deep-rooted to be eradicated, his theories of rationality and social life permit him to identify and censure superstition.
The German tradition of Historik is reflection on what historians do: on the writing of history, on historical research, on historiography. Four different traditions of Historik can be discerned by evaluating lectures on Historik between 1750 and 1900: the humanistic-rhetorical, the scientific-auxiliary, the historicophilosophical, and the epistemological. Historik was pursued by many scholars as an integral part of their academic endeavor, and it serves didactic-preparatory purposes. Historik contributes to the systematization of historical knowledge; the specialization into distinct research methods and areas of work; the systematic foundation of the autonomy and function of historical studies in relation to other sciences and to the practical context of historians and their audiences; and the historical safeguarding of standards arrived at in the development of science.

The computer is an appropriate tool for three levels of activity in teaching history. It is efficient in analyzing quantities of statistical data into manageable and relevant units of information. It is effective in making the structure of events salient. Above all, it is a valuable device for exploring the structure of the possible. The simultaneous presentation of actual and alternative pasts can be effected, for example, by programs embodying the counterfactual principle. The computer program can, by virtue of its prescribed logical structure, force the pupil to recognize and reflect upon his own mental processes. The computer is a great asset in teaching history, a subject so complex and replete with information that the significance of that information is often obscured for the child.

Research into children's historical thinking based on a view of Piaget's theory which emphasizes the age-stage structure and the development of hypothetico-deductive thinking appears to be inappropriate, for such thinking has only limited connection with imaginative, empathetic response, which is the hallmark of historical understanding and the purpose of historical study. Content and teaching technique are more important than increased maturity and intelligence. A teacher's concern should be with the elements of historical thinking — knowledge, concepts, cognitive skills, empathy, interest, personal experience — and the ways in which these can
be woven together to produce adductive historical thought. The eight-year-old's historical understanding can be considered on its own terms: genuine historical thinking which is more limited than the older pupil's, but comparable and equally valid.

DAVID BOUCHER, The Creation of the Past: British Idealism and Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History XXIII, 193–214

Michael Oakeshott shared the general concerns of British idealists and leaned heavily upon their conclusions. As with any mode of understanding, history creates its own object of inquiry. History is an activity built upon postulates and capable of generating conclusions appropriate to itself. The past in history is different from any other past. It can only be evoked by means of subscription to the historical present in which each artifact is recognized as the vestige of a performance which is transformed into circumstantial evidence of a past which has not survived. A great deal of what Oakeshott has to say, especially about coherence, continuity, and identity in difference, stands in sharp contrast to Collingwood's ideas on the reenactment of the past. A living past, relevant to the present or evocative of a future state of affairs, is modally irrelevant to history.

LUCIANO CANFORA, Analogie et histoire XXII, 22–42

In his preface Thucydides claims that historical knowledge is possible only insofar as facts can be compared with similar facts. Analogy is thus essential in "finding" them. This conception has been important in subsequent historians and philosophers of history. In Droysen's Historik analogy is perhaps the most important heuristic for the historian. Dilthey, in his attempt to make a critique of historical reason, points to the importance of analogical thinking in historical judgment, but leaves the nature of analogical association as a vehicle of historical comprehension as an open question. Analogy is a kind of a priori form of historical knowledge; different analogies will naturally arise in different historical circumstances, and only subsequent events can determine which are the most useful ones.

DAVID CARR, Narrative and the Real World: An Argument for Continuity XXV, 117–131

Narrative and the real world are not mutually exclusive. Life is not a structureless sequence of events; it consists of complex structures of temporal configurations that interlock and receive their meaning from within action itself. It is also not true that life lacks a point of view which transforms events into a story by telling them. Our focus of attention is not the past but the future, because we grasp configurations extending into the future. Action involves the adoption of an anticipated future-retrospective point of view on the present. The actions of life can be viewed as the process of telling ourselves stories. The retrospective view of the
narrator is an extension and refinement of a viewpoint inherent in action itself. Because storytelling is a social activity, the story of one's life is told as much to others as to oneself. Social human time, like individual human time, is constructed into configured sequences. The practical first-order narrative process that constitutes a person or a community can become a second-order narrative whose subject is unchanged but whose interest is primarily cognitive or aesthetic.

L. B. CEBIK, Understanding Narrative Theory XXV, Bei. 25, 58–81

Any comprehensive theory of narrative must accommodate both the justificational and the creative elements of narrative, the activities leading to narrative, and reflections upon the finished product. This examination of four levels of theory reveals the incompleteness of most extant theories, including those of Hayden White and Ricoeur. The four levels are: 1. narrative discourse and temporal language; 2. narrative and historical constructions; 3. narrative objects or stories; and 4. narrative functions and purposes. We remain far from our goal of achieving a comprehensive theory. However, by placing theories and partial theories within a metatheoretical framework, we can see more clearly their nature, ramifications, and limits, thereby differentiating between the contributions and the philosophical fads.

LEON CHAI, Remarks on the Development of Theoretical Structure in Nineteenth-Century Thought XXI, 75–82

Theoretical structure cannot exist independently of content and thus cannot be developed by restricting analysis to discourse alone. Through analysis, content becomes theoretical structure and this becoming is its theoretical appearance. The need for content within theoretical structure is lost sight of in recent speculation on the history of thought by Derrida and Heidegger. Histories of nineteenth-century thought ought to make the development of theoretical structures rather than the structures themselves the object of analysis. Many nineteenth-century systems make the nature of theoretical structure identical with that of its content. This leads theoretical structure to become appearance. Many late nineteenth-century systems made becoming or force the content of a development of thought. To become theoretical structure, force would have to become something different from itself. A resulting theoretical structure can only be appearance.

SHAYE J. D. COHEN, Josephus, Jeremiah, and Polybius XXI, 366–381

Flavius Josephus was a Jewish priest who surrendered to the Romans in the first Jewish revolt and then spent the rest of the war trying to convince the Jews to surrender. After the war he wrote *Jewish War* to explain why he surrendered and why the Jews did not. Josephus explains the fall of Jerusalem by adopting and adapting a Jewish and a Greek response; the
former Jeremiahic and the latter Polybian. Josephus to some extent was a Jeremiah and to some extent a Polybius, with the Jeremiahic element preponderant. Jeremiah and other Jews opposed to revolutions believed that God will redeem the Jews in his own way at his own time; meanwhile, the Jews should support their foreign overlords and maintain the peace.

WILLEM A. DEVRIES, Meaning and Interpretation in History XXII, 253–263

The translationist theory of meaning can provide a plausible understanding of the reenactment methodology of history, although there are disanalogies. It takes as primitive our ability to recognize synonymy relations between linguistic episodes, either within the same language or other languages. In translating a complex linguistic object translators must possess an incredibly large stock of background knowledge about a culture and be sensitive and resourceful speakers of the language into which they are translating. Since there is no codified set of rules which guarantees a good translation, translators need to use creativity. Similarly, in deciding which of the possible meanings to assign to an event or document, historians can follow little better advice than to insert themselves imaginatively into the situation and let their ability to understand their contemporary events and other historical events come to bear upon the events of the past.

JOHN PATRICK DIGGINS, The Oyster and the Pearl: The Problem of Contextualism in Intellectual History XXIII, 151–169

The methodological trend of contextualism has almost come to dominate current discourse in intellectual history. But the genesis of a text may defy the immediate context of time and space. Insofar as authors of texts may reflect upon the complex act of their creation in the process of composing them, the texts' "meaning" may have as much to do with the internal demands of mind as the external pressures of the cultural or political environment. The status of ideas in history is more complex than a contextualist reduction of meaning to usage would imply, and the act of knowing on the part of a thinker is not necessarily determined by the available means of knowing, the paradigms of language and discourse. There are thinkers whose depths of knowledge surpass the ordinary range of words, in whom some truths we feel are introspectively discoverable.

KENNETH J. DOVER, Thucydides "As History" and "As Literature" XXII, 54–63

Some students of ancient history treat Thucydides as an "authority," not a "source," creating an obstinate resistance to criticism and a readiness to explain away his apparent omissions and distortions. Others, especially students of ancient literature, focus attention on "understanding Thucydides as a whole" through the internal relationships—echoes, analogies, and symmetries, as well as contradictions—which can be uncovered in his work,
rather than through its external relationships with events. The apparent
omissions, distortions, and incoherencies should remind us that
Thucydides, like all pioneers, imported irrelevant preconceptions or had
not yet formed necessary conceptions to do a truly systematic inquiry.
Criticism of Thucydides should thus be more pluralistic; the reasons why
one passage is unsatisfactory and perplexing may be different in kind from
the reasons which hold in another, and two or more reasons may account
for the difficulties in the same passage.

J. J. DRYDYK, Who Is Fooled by the “Cunning of Reason”? XXIV, 147-169

After 1807, Hegel contrasts microhistorical chaos with macrohistorical
order, the “cunning of reason.” Agents interact blindly, but reason inte-
grates all interactions, and this is the development and expression of ra-
tionality. No particular state dictates or precludes any subsequent out-
comes; to allow the cunning of reason is to deny that causal relations are
decisive for historical events. Ends are extraneous to objects, which suffer
violence in achieving them. Consequently historical progress must also
be regarded as extraneous to the objective social world, and this world
must be assumed to suffer violence as progress is achieved. If anyone was
fooled by the “cunning of reason,” it was Hegel.

MICHEL-MARIE DUFÉIL, Histoire classique, histoire critique XXI, 223-233

Classical history concentrated on finding and making critiques of written
texts. Critical history can now demonstrate the limitations of its notions
both of “text” and of “critique.” Rather than conceiving of history as
starting with the invention of writing, we must now see writing itself as
the result of a long historical process. We should treat written texts as
objects; and at the same time see all the vestiges of the human past as
texts. To decode these vestiges (including traces of the oral tradition as
well as fossils, potsherds, etc.) methods similar to those of structural lin-
guistics are required; and these show the configurations of words in a
manner quite different from the quasi-mythological constructions of the
late nineteenth century. History can now start again with written texts,
but never treating these in isolation; for at the beginning, throughout,
and to the end there are the object and the Word.

KIERAN EGAN, Accumulating History XXII, Bei. 22, 66-80

There is no logical or empirical connection between the successes of the
Schools Council Project “History 13-16” and the “forms of knowledge”
approach out of which it was composed. A sounder process whereby chil-
dren can be led to historical understanding can be sketched as a gradual
accumulation of particular skills, concepts, and knowledge, within four
distinct, relatively discontinuous paradigms. The process is designed to
capitalize on dominant interests at each stage. The ironic paradigm,
achieved last, is made up of the contributions of each of the earlier paradigms, and it provides the epistemological sophistication which controls and gives proportion to the gradually developed constituents of mature historical thinking. It combines the affective-orienting, mythic ability with the vivifying, romantic imagination with the generalizing, pattern-seeking philosophic search.

NORMAN ETHERINGTON, Reconsidering Theories of Imperialism

To test theories of economic imperialism by close historical study of colonial expansion in the late nineteenth century is a fundamental mistake. Lenin, Schumpeter, Luxemburg, Kautsky, and Hobson all argue that monopoly organization, protection, autocratic methods of government, and militarism are the inescapable companions of the use of state power to pursue economic objectives beyond the state frontier. Without this constellation of factors present, theories of imperialism do not obtain, and what is there is properly called colonialism. The unjustifiable extension of those theories—propounded between 1898 and 1919 for the specific purpose of explaining the behavior of developed nations in that era—to cover events long before and after that era has misdirected research.

JAMES FITZGERALD, History in the Curriculum: Debate on Aims and Values

Three powerful arguments have dominated discussion on the educational purposes of historical study: 1. history serves as the collective memory of mankind; 2. it enlarges our experience and extends our perspective; 3. the actual process of acquiring historical knowledge offers reward in itself. Recent debate has restated and sharpened, rejected and superseded this traditional framework. In the United States, the inquiry approach, which emphasized historians' tools, has been criticized by those who feel the new "social studies" have moved too far in the direction of the social sciences. In Britain, the "form of knowledge" approach has been highly influential. Clearly, skills cannot be divorced from content. The nature and structure of history is such that it embraces not only methodology, inquiry, and concepts, but also message and experience. It is the narrative framework of history which informs understanding. We need history as story as well as history as inquiry.

SUZANNE FLEISCHMAN, On the Representation of History and Fiction in the Middle Ages

There are six, to a degree overlapping, parameters which might be used to explore the limits of a distinction between history and fiction in the
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Middle Ages. They are authenticity, intent, reception, social function, narrative syntax, and narrator involvement. Intent and reception, specifically writers' claims of historical authenticity, and the influence of purportedly historical literature on society and on history, are the two key parameters. There was a concept of history which was distinct from fiction, but historical truth did not imply, as it does for us, authenticity of facts and events. Rather, history was what was willingly believed, historical truth anything that belonged to a widely accepted tradition.

JAN GOLDSTEIN, Foucault among the Sociologists: The "Disciplines" and the History of the Professions XXIII, 170-192

Foucault's model of the disciplines undermines the sociological model of professions. Professionalism is the quintessentially modern way of exercising power. Bourgeois liberalism is sustained by a dark and unseen underside—the mechanisms of control or discipline operated by the disciplines. The total and totally vulnerable visibility of an individual under examination implements power relations and makes possible the extraction and constitution of knowledge. Hence the scientific method of induction appears to be a chance offshoot or byproduct of the project of domination. It has been thought that a prior knowledge base legitimated a profession; in fact, political-cum-"disciplinary" considerations were anterior to demonstrably superior knowledge.

LEON J. GOLDSTEIN, Impediments to Epistemology in the Philosophy of History XXV, Bei. 25, 82-100

If history is to be taken seriously as a cognitive—not merely literary—discipline to which considerations of truth or falsity are relevant, it is because of the progress made over the course of centuries in the sharpening of the methodology of the infrastructure of history. By not attending to the way in which the historical past actually emerged in the course of work at the level of the infrastructure, philosophical writers, such as Mandelbaum, Pompa, McCullagh, and Gorman, have tended to perpetuate a myth of historians' selection. This has been the basic impediment to epistemology in philosophy of history. There is no selection from an antecedently established stock of fact-containing statements. The facts and the account are constructed in the course of the same intellectual endeavor, within the framework of an historians' tradition that is shaped by their work.

MICHAEL GORDY, Reading Althusser: Time and the Social Whole XXII, 1-21

Althusser believed the Marxist conception of history broke from all previous conceptions of the social whole. Hegel's idealism conflated the
knowledge of the object with the object itself. Within his social totality, no practice or thought can run ahead of its time. For Marx, all knowledge is the result of theoretical knowledge, not the revelation of the real. Every structure of a social whole has its own history; there is no central concept of which the various social structures are merely expressions. All of the superstructure affects, and is affected by, the economic infrastructure, although it is the economy that is the determinant in the last instance. Historical materialism seeks to delineate the structural and conjunctural articulation of the various social practices. Marxist philosophy is fully aware of its place and function within the social order, hence of the irreducibly political nature of all philosophical discourse.


Wilhelm Vischer's 1877 paper on the limits of historical knowledge expressed clearly, effectively, and with moderation what had become a minority viewpoint in his time. Vischer's deep sense and acceptance of the limits of every human enterprise was characteristic of the historical and philological culture of Basle. To the well-born, deeply conservative citizen, the notion of limits had to be fundamental: not only the property and privileges of his class, and the freedom it required in order to pursue its economic and spiritual interests, but the continued existence of his small homeland as an autonomous polity and the survival of Christian religion and morality in a scientific age depended, in his eyes, on respect for boundaries and frontiers. To the champion of the German Empire, on the other hand, limits, zones of autonomy, and particularisms of every kind were obstacles to be overcome.

GORDON GRAHAM, Can There Be History of Philosophy? XXI, 37-52

The understanding which a philosopher has, can have, or ought to have of the work of his predecessors cannot be historical in character. Collingwood is right about evidence and the nature of historical understanding. But what a philosopher wrote is not evidence of his thought, it is his thought. The ideas and doctrines of past philosophers are not themselves in the past and do not therefore belong to a special period of the past. Philosophic ideas cannot be said to be in time at all. Different interpretations of particular passages are strengthened or weakened by the citation of matters of historical fact, just as they may be by linguistic or literary knowledge. Such a clarification may enable us to resolve the question of the consistency of a passage with the rest of an author's work, but it does not destroy the philosophic character of the question.
ROBERT HARDING, Pierre Goubert's *Beauvais et le beauvaisis*: An Historian "parmi les hommes" [A Review of Reviews]  

When Goubert's *Beauvais et le beauvaisis* appeared in 1960, his exhaustive investigation of local life was seen as a model for future history. He sought to recapture the unity of the common people, the land, and the city in the light of agrarian history and economic changes over the *longue durée*. But Goubert's work was flawed in key respects. He virtually omitted *mentalité*: we see people who produce, eat, pay, and die, but not ones who play, pray, dream, and love. Extremely wary of theories and systems, Goubert avoided using concepts such as "capitalism" and "feudalism," even though the interplay of theory and historical data is fruitful when done with intelligence and caution. Studies inspired by *Beauvais* confirmed his finding and quickly reached a point of diminishing returns. Goubert was most successful in writing popular histories for ordinary people, allowing them to see through the hypocrisy and mythology of traditional history to recapture their own past.

J. N. HILGARTH, Spanish Historiography and Iberian Reality  

The quest by Spaniards for the meaning of the history of Spain and Spanish history itself has been influenced, oversimplified, and distorted by the power of certain myths. The central myth of Spanish historiography, that of "one, eternal Spain," grew out of an earlier idea that Spanish history is the history of a crusade in which the favored Catholic religion struggled with and triumphed over its rivals. Historiographers subscribing to this notion have reacted violently and even hysterically to the thought that the interaction of Christians, Muslims, and Jews is a main key to Spanish history. They have been influenced by the apparent success of Franco, who represented the centralizing tradition of Castile. Now Spain's greatest problem is the linguistic and regional separatist movements, and the failure to deal with them in time is at least in part owing to the refusal to recognize this too total concentration on Castile and its saving, "unifying" mission.

HANS JAEGER, Generations in History  

If one renounces the ambitious goal to derive a universal, historical rhythm from a biological, generational succession, an examination of limited phenomena from a generational perspective will frequently turn out to be productive. New developments in intellectual history and in the history of art will tend to be represented by new age cohorts. In political, economic, and social history, generational communities are often less easily recognizable. Pronounced generational breaks which may affect an entire society apparently occur only after decisive historical events, such as wars, revolutions, and great economic crises. Even then, a generation is most easily recognized where it is clearly (theoretically or artistically) articulated.
A polemical and reductionist critical response to Skinner and Pocock has inhibited an appreciation of the true potential of their historiographical discussions for the practice of political theories. An important step in understanding the history of political thought in its duality—as both being about acts of political discourse over time and as itself being political—is to recognize the "traditionary" nature of discursive acts. Following Pocock and Skinner, we should speak not of tradition as objects carried on, but of the nature of that carrying on, that activity of handing down through language. A traditionary act involves subscription to a fairly sophisticated account of the development of a particular form of practices through time and the identification by the actor of his act as part of that development. This subscription allows us to overcome the categorical dichotomies such as history versus philosophy, autonomy of texts versus ideas as expressions of social relations, voluntarism versus determinism, and language as either restrictive or instrumental, which underlie much of the contemporary methodological dispute.

Social science can achieve falsifiable theory, but only if dependencies of regularities upon milieu and context are explicitly considered. Achieving falsifiable, general theory depends upon finding a set of relationships which is in fact relatively independent of context, and specifying the boundary conditions or domain of applicability to models. Contemporary sociologists such as Herbert Blalock and George Homans believe theory is possible without recourse to history, but Raymond Aron and especially Max Weber suggest how and why history and theory are interdependent. Weber's image of the historical as inexhaustible concrete adds the insight that whenever theorists find a determined, lawful causal sequence, they will have to understand the situation at the start of the sequence as a set of rich, historical givens. Metatheoretical philosophy of explanation in social science best addresses the problem of infinite residue and bridges the gap between disciplines.

The Left is scientific, rational, paradigmatic; its concern is with the networks of relationships within which all things are located and through which all things have their significance. The Right is aesthetic, emotional. It attempts to understand in terms of some concrete specific, an archetype. Hybrids of these two, such as Christianity, Communism, and Fas-
cism, mix paradigm and archetype and are dangerous. With the reification of form and idolatry of image, inhuman criteria of reality are automatically set up and give license to idealists and fanatics to ignore the integrity of individual persons in the name of those theories and images. Countervailing factors (such as Christian compassion or Communist equality) can be swept away. Human events stand to one another both as parts and wholes; historians need to recognize events as simultaneously episodes and narratives. Paradigms and archetypes are half-truths only and deny the experiential openness that is history. A mysticism of persons would defuse and absorb the Left and Right while transcending them, putting to the fore instead the diversity and novelty of history.

DOMINICK LACAPRA, Is Everyone a Mentalité Case? Transference and the “Culture” Concept XXIII, 296–311

The difficulty in historical research is to develop an exchange with the “other” that is both sensitive to transferential displacement and open to the challenge of the “other’s” voice. Contemporary sociocultural history has often tended simply to reverse the assumptions of an abstracted history of ideas and replicate its documentary treatment of artifacts as symptoms of society and economy rather than of mind. Its populism replicates the scapegoating propensities of populism in society. Even the best historians, Carl Schorske and Robert Darnton, have tended to deny the contestatory dimensions of high culture and the challenge of forging new links between it and popular culture. Everyone is a mentalité case, but certain artifacts are exceptional products of cultural activity with critical power and an uncanny ability to play uncommon variations on commonplace things.

P. J. LEE, History Teaching and Philosophy of History XXII, Bei. 22, 19–49

The work of Bruner and Hirst suggested to history teachers that history might have its own structure but left open the answer as to what that structure might be. The three most popular approaches to new ways of teaching history state that teaching history: 1. is a matter of handing on substantive historical concepts; 2. must in the end come down to developing children’s understanding of structural second-order concepts; and 3. is teaching historical skills, abilities, or procedures. Much of the emphasis of the “new history” has been on giving children experience in handling evidence; not until recently has there been a corresponding interest in historical understanding, explanation, and connected notions of empathy and imagination. A discussion of empathy and imagination shows some of the ways in which assumptions about them affect arguments about history teaching. Philosophy of history is necessary in any attempt to arrive at a rational way of teaching history.
There is a bifurcation between philosophy and history, and in particular, between the interpretations in the writings of historians and in the conceptualizations of philosophers. Philosophers believe analysis to be a supremely rational activity, and they are right. But almost all interpretations are long, complex, and difficult to reduce to the manageable object of philosophical analysis, and philosophers sometimes conclude that what cannot be cut down to analytical size is not worthy of cognitive study. Historical interpretation, and therefore history itself, has suffered grievously from this inclination and from the attendant temptation to simplify at the expense of the subject.

Johann Gustav Droysen and the Development of Historical Hermeneutics

Droysen sought to exploit, for practical political effect, a vision of history as an integral, progressive, and fathomable continuum, and hence in his writings subordinated historical individuality to history's discernible teleology. Droysen's methodological opponent, Rankean historicism, was to the right of his centrist politics. Droysen insisted against Ranke that history is not something "out there" that can be dispassionately and scientifically analyzed but is man's ontological ground. He was basically a moderate Young Hegelian: historians can be scholars and yet ally with and further the rational dynamism of history's normative Ideas because those Ideas are their own as progressive human beings. This battle between Ranke and Droysen illustrates that the evolution of German historical hermeneutics at mid-nineteenth century was generated both by a deep conflict within the German historical tradition and by the confrontation of that tradition with positivism.
GEORGE MAKDISI, The Diary in Islamic Historiography

The Muslim Banna' (1005-1079) kept the world's earliest extant diary, but diary keeping was a widespread practice even in the tenth century. Hadith criticism, which was concentrated mainly on the chain of transmitters of the words and deeds of the Prophet of Islam and his followers, brought about the publication of the diary. The ta'rikh-diary in Islam was a diary kept for personal use, a dated record of notes kept by the author for use in writing other historical compositions. The substance of biographical dictionaries and annalistic histories was drawn from these diaries.

RAYMOND MARTIN, Causes, Conditions, and Causal Importance

Judgments which assign relative importance to the causes of particular results can be objective. Historians usually do and can use a factual principle of selection to distinguish between causes and conditions and between more and less important causes. The judgments which distinguish between causes and conditions and the judgments which distinguish between more and less important causes require radically different analyses. In A. M. Jones's work on the decline and fall of Rome, he argued that increased barbarian pressure on the West was the most important cause of Rome's fall. It is possible to understand this statement as an instantiation of the following: A was a more important cause of P relative to O than was B if 1) A and B were each a cause of P relative to O and 2) either A was necessary for P or B was not necessary for P and 3) had B not occurred, something would have occurred which more closely approximates P than had A not occurred.

DONALD N. MCCLOSKEY, The Problem of Audience in Historical Economics: Rhetorical Thoughts on a Text by Robert Fogel

Both history and economics have rhetorics which limit their practitioners as to what sorts of evidence and what sorts of logical appeals they can make if they wish to retain an audience. The thesis of Robert Fogel's Railroads and Economic Growth could be summed up by a three-line proof, but Fogel used courtroom procedure, scientific jargon, statistics, simulation, and the traditions of economic and historical argument to persuade an audience of both historians and economists. It was a book about rhetoric in economics and history as much as one about American railroads, and it became the archetype of cliometrics because of its powerful argumentative form and its startling, compelling conclusion. Knowledge in history or economics is a social event, often a new style of conversation, a new way of speaking; Fogel managed to create that new way of speaking.
Weber locates the differentiation between the social and natural sciences within a fundamental division between the sciences: those seeking knowledge of concrete events and those directed towards the development of causal law. The validity of a causal explanation of a concrete event depends upon the evidence available rather than upon the capacity to subsume that event under a law. The impossibility of explanation by subsumption, the role of value-relevance in conceptualizing the object domain, the use of categories of adequate causation and objective possibility in imputing causes, and the unlikelihood of demonstrating causal necessity are characteristic of any effort to gain knowledge of concrete phenomena. Weber adds a distinction between natural and sociocultural sciences based on the subject matter of the sciences. The task of the sociocultural sciences, unlike that of the natural sciences, is that of “interpreting the meaning which men give to their actions and so understanding the actions themselves.” Sociocultural explanations can and must demonstrate meaning adequacy as well as causal adequacy by making the dynamic bond between cause and effect intelligible.

Protagoras, a contemporary of Herodotus, deserves some credit for developing Greek historical consciousness. Protagoras' theory of a two-stage development of mankind does postulate a sequence of events in a linear progression from simple to more complex, higher. That Protagoras engaged in myth indicates that he hadn't the foggiest notion of how to go about an historical answer to questions of humans' origins; the methods of historical inquiry were so new in his time that there was no body of existing research upon which to base an answer. Protagoras shows us how the historical habit of mind struggled, not altogether successfully, to free itself from the antihistorical thought which was far more congenial to the Greeks.

In 1856, Mommsen responded to the increased interest in primitive German communism sparked by Marx and Engels by showing that the early Romans did not lag behind the early Germans in their collective attitudes. Fustel managed to have the property structure of the Roman gens as the archetype of primitive private property; whereas Mommsen, Maine, and Bonfante identified the gens with the primitive communist village. This was possible because we know little about the nature and function of the early Roman gens. Compared to these writers, Weber was much more interested in historical times than in the origins of private ownership in Rome. Where Mommsen saw the origins of Roman civilization in the fight of sturdy peasants to keep their own fields, Weber depicted these same Romans at
a later stage where they had degenerated into greedy landowners and were prepared to separate themselves from the cities they had created.

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, Georges Dumézil and the Trifunctional Approach to Roman Civilization

Dumézil’s idea of a trifunctional mentality and maybe even partition of all Indo-European societies between priests, warriors, and producers has not been particularly fruitful. His mature work on Roman Religion confirms that he has not been able to overcome two basic difficulties in his system: the vagueness of what is the Indo-European heritage in Rome and the lack of relation between the Indo-European element and the mass of beliefs, ceremonies, and institutions which have nothing to do with castes and three functions. There is little evidence in Rome that priests, warriors, and peasants were three different social classes and even less that they were three different mental categories. There is no region of the Indo-European-speaking world where a common mentality—trifunctional or otherwise—is visible.

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, Hermann Usener

Usener’s use of philology and more specifically of comparative philology for the transformation of the study of religion during the late nineteenth century resulted from a slow realization of certain potentialities of philology which he and others had not grasped before. When Usener aimed at a definite and systematic examination of pagan elements in Christianity, with the ultimate purpose of preparing their elimination from modern Christianity, he made the decisive move from what we would call the humanistic tradition of the textual critic and interpreter to the task of the philological—and by implication antitheological—interpreter of religion. An interpretation of Usener in terms of a modified Kantian problematic about the relation between phenomenon and noumenon would show that Usener struggled to find in human language the channel toward the Noumenon.

ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, Niebuhr and the Agrarian Problems of Rome

The sharp distinction between right of private ownership and right of occupation as formulated by Barthold Niebuhr in 1810–1811 has ever since been the center of discussion, interpretation, and doubt in any comparison between Roman property law and other legal systems. Fearful of the establishment of a modern agrarian law by contemporary radicals, he tried to prove that the Romans had never used agrarian laws to undermine the private ownership of land. Niebuhr hoped to separate what he considered the just claims of agrarian reforms from the unjust attacks against pri-
vate property. Niebuhr's acquaintance with the Indian agrarian situation enabled him to understand the real nature of the *ager publicus* in Rome. A conservative, Niebuhr hoped to save the aristocracy from itself; an outsider in aristocratic society by virtue of his peasant ancestry, he was sympathetic to the peasantry as well.

**ARNALDO MOMIGLIANO, Religious History without Frontiers:**

J. Wellhausen, U. Wilamowitz, and E. Schwartz XXI, Bei. 21, 49-64

Wellhausen, Usener, Wilamowitz, and Schwartz found common presuppositions in a philological method which relied on the instrument of text analysis and avoided any theological or dogmatic interference. Wellhausen became a hero to Wilamowitz and Schwartz because he showed them that the same method was legitimate both in sacred and profane texts. He also confirmed them in what they had already learned from Usener: that repudiation of theological presuppositions did not mean absence of religious emotions. But Wellhausen, Wilamowitz, and Schwartz had in common political emotions which were alien to the contemplative Usener.

**MURRAY G. MURPHEY, Explanation, Causes, and Covering Laws**

XXV, Bei. 25, 43-57

The real issues in the debate over whether historical explanations conform to the covering-law model concern not only history but human nature, human action, and human freedom. Modifications of the covering-law model are possible which may remove some of the objections to it. Human behavior is rule-governed. Rules are made by human agents and learned by human actors. Cultural rules alone do not explain behavior and cannot be used as "covering" generalizations. But when they are combined with appropriate deviance data to yield conformity statements, these statements can be used as explanatory generalizations — with a certain amount of leeway and the understanding that such rules can be changed or eliminated. These generalizations, such as those found in anthropology, perform the function of general laws in history.

**FREDERICK A. OLAFSON, Hermeneutics: "Analytical" and "Dialectical"**

XXV, Bei. 25, 28-42

A new hermeneutical theory is needed that will avoid both the "analytical" fixation on the epistemic functions of the historian and the "dialectical" tendency to "ontologize" interpretation to the point where questions of truth in the sense of fidelity to the past become increasingly marginal. The prospects for such a theory are not particularly good. We do not have what would be required to reconcile these ways of thinking about interpretation. That would be a new and more powerful way of conceiving the unity of theoretical and practical reason based on a much deeper understanding of what it is to be human. But the antihumanistic temper of much
contemporary thought makes a revival of constructive philosophical interest in that question unlikely.

CHRISTOPHER PARKER, English Historians and the Opposition to Positivism XXII, 120-145

Virtually all important figures in the development of historiography and of history as an academic subject from the 1850s to the end of the Victorian era were explicitly hostile to positivism and to its chief practitioners, Comte and Buckle. The positivists were looking for a system to implement their revolutionary political, social, economic, religious, and ethical intentions. The generally conservative antipositivists defended free will, individualism, and divine will against the high degree of determinism of positivism, and they were skeptical of man’s ability or desire to know himself or his future. Their strength lay in their sociopolitical and religious role in the English universities. Nineteenth-century positivism has been confused with individualism, whereas it was individualism which defeated positivism.

ANDRUS PORK, Assessing Relative Causal Importance in History XXIV, 62-69

As Raymond Martin noted, historians can make objective judgments about relative causal importance. He constructs a philosophical statement showing that counterfactuals enable us to assess relative causal importance. To justify the counterfactual statement itself, historians usually intuitively try to find for a comparison some other real situation which is in some important respect similar to the possible situation reflected in the counterfactual claim. The question then becomes, “How do we know that the actual historical situation, the counterfactual situations, and the real comparison situations are similar in relevant aspects?” As Martin did, we must look at real cases of historical thinking to make a philosophical statement, which in turn leads to a new set of questions and so on. At some stage a statement that gives substantial support to the Marxist claim that history is a scientifically analyzable, law-governed process will be reached.

FRIEDRICH RAPP, Structural Models in Historical Writing: The Determinants of Technological Development during the Industrial Revolution XXI, 327-346

The gap between the metatheoretical inquiries of the analytical philosophy of history, formulated in terms of general principle, and the actual research practices of the historical discipline needs to be bridged. This investigation of the determinants—preconditions, causes, factors, forces—of technological development during the Industrial Revolution makes explicit the range of theoretical instruments used in such studies. The
methodologically unavoidable plurality of aspects and perspectives for each concrete inquiry precludes any generally binding model for technological development. Discussion of epistemological presuppositions, by comparing various approaches, can serve to make fully conscious these presuppositions and make them accessible to analysis and criticism.

**Peter H. Reill, Narration and Structure in Late Eighteenth-Century Historical Thought**

A new scientific mentality of the late eighteenth century, dissatisfied with mechanistic and mathematical models of reasoning and demonstration, replaced static concepts with dynamic ones and defined reality in terms of complex interconnections. These thinkers believed there were basic regulative patterns common to all living entities which could be grasped only by analogical reasoning and comparison. But they also believed that the specific content, such as laws, languages, and nations, existed within a specific historic context. Historical understanding was seen as combining a sense for the formal pattern of development with an acute awareness of the specific force field of historical and environmental determinants existing at a given moment.

**Michael Roth, A Problem of Recognition: Alexandre Kojeve and the End of History**

Given the evolution of his thought, Alexandre Kojeve can be read as either the source of "engagement" and "existential Marxism" or as an early exponent of the postmodern rejection of the attempt to make meaning out of historical directionality in favor of an analysis of how history or discourse is constructed. Through the mid-1940s, Kojeve was willing to accept that historical time is in the process of stopping, making it possible to grasp retrospectively, even anachronistically, the meaning and direction of history. By the late 1940s, Kojeve had come to believe that history is definitively over, and there is no substance left to fight about. Whereas the end of history had been a goal worth struggling for, it is now simply a description of reality in which there is nothing else to do, except perhaps to remind others that there is nothing left to do.

**Jörn Rüsen, Jacob Burckhardt: Political Standpoint and Historical Insight on the Border of Post-Modernism**

Revolution and industrialization meant for the patrician Burckhardt the end of Western civilization and the dehumanization of men and women. He upholds the idea of the historical unity of European culture as the core of historical consciousness while characterizing his own time as the breakdown of historical continuity in Western civilization by "anthropologizing," "structuralizing," and "aestheticizing" history. He sur-
passes the age of revolution by having recourse to the suprahistorical nature of the human mind, using his historical topics as paradigms of transhistoric potentialities of human life. The historian sits in untimely contemplation of the creative forces of the human mind in history, recalling the importance of culture in a time of increasing loss of culture. In evaluating Burckhardt’s postmodernist, apolitical attitude, we should not forget the historical experience which Europe and especially Germany have had with antimodern thought.

KENNETH S. SACKS, The Meaning of Eunapius’ History XXV, 52–67

Eunapius, pagan historian of the fourth century, wrote a history of the contemporary Roman Empire. Scholars have understood Eunapius’ animosity toward Christianity as coloring his judgment and supplying him with a purpose for writing. Though his history did reflect contemporary religious tension, it is primarily shaped by traditional approaches to historiography. Eunapius attempts to analogize and explain human behavior in terms of the natural laws which pervade the history. His message is founded on classical values independent of current concerns; Eunapius inculpates an apparently innocent pagan to prove one point. He was not only participant in the sectarian struggle which divided the Empire; he was also part of a thousand-year-old culture that served to unify it.

ULTY SANTAMARIA AND ANNE M. BAILEY, A Note on Braudel’s Structure as Duration XXIII, 78–83

Fernand Braudel’s three time scales—the long term, the conjunctural, and that of events—do not fit together easily. Whereas the theoretical underpinnings of duration are clear, Braudel neither seeks nor finds justification in the social sciences for the short term or event. Braudel’s lack of theorization of the short term as a present moment and the relegation of its explanation to structures or conjunctures accounts for a number of failings or lacunae attributed to Annales over the past twenty years. What is absent in Braudel’s historiography is the inquiry into the effects of action on the creation of structures. In his search for the structures that envelop the products of short durations, Braudel neither seeks contradictions within either the long-term structures or the outcomes of shorter durations, nor finds contradictions within the three temporalities which he superimposes on any present moment.

ZACHARY SAYRE SCHIFFMAN, Renaissance Historicism Reconsidered XXIV, 170–182

A revisionist view incorrectly identifies a growing awareness of historical and cultural relativity by scholars of Roman law in sixteenth-century France with a modern historical consciousness. Friedrich Meinecke more cor-
rectly identified historicism as the juncture of the ideas of individuality and development. The perception by these Renaissance scholars of successive changes in language and law only constitutes an awareness of individuality, not of an idea of development. They conceived of an entity as unfolding from a germ or essence, an essential quality which defined it as an individuality. They could not conceive of an entity as developing in relation to its circumstances.

WARREN SCHMAUS, A Reappraisal of Comte’s Three-State Law

XXI, 248-266

Comte’s three-state law concerns the historical development (through the theological, metaphysical, and positive states) of our methods of cognitive inquiry. Comte believes he can defend his three-state law either by “rational proofs” based upon our knowledge of the human mind or upon “historical verifications.” Comte then uses the three-state law of scientific progress to argue for the existence of industrial and multistate political laws of progress. Here Comte strays from his positivism. He attributes a kind of causal efficacy to scientific progress which leads him to look for laws of social dynamics describing the social progress which result from the scientific. Here Comte is guilty of Popper’s “poverty of historicism” charge. Comte’s three-state law of scientific development is more easily defended than his concept of historical method.

GARY SHAPIRO, Nietzsche contra Renan

XXI, 193-222

Nietzsche’s later view of history is a critique and parody of Renan’s History of the Origins of Christianity. Nietzschean genealogy places into question both the person of the historian (and his or her readers) and the apparently innocent aestheticism of the contemplation of the past. History proceeds through the categories of shock, rupture, and scandal, not by Renan’s sentimental continuity and evolution. Beneath every asserted continuity is the workings of priestly-philosophical power structures. Nietzsche hopes to free man from individual guilt through the myth of eternal recurrence, according to which events are so intertwined that none may be uniquely designated as cause (sinner) or effect (punishment). The issue here is between Renan’s narrative view of reality and Nietzsche’s nonnarrative view. Nietzsche’s nonnarrative “life of Jesus” is really an attack on the narrative principle itself.

WILLIAM H. SHAW, Marx and Morgan

XXIII, 215-228

Marx (and Engels) found in the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan’s work a confirmation of and expansion upon his own materialist approach. Similarities he found included Morgan’s division of mankind’s early development into distinct stages, each the necessary forerunner of its successor; a theory of historical development; the impor-
tance of "productive forces"; and an awareness of the social contradic-
tions of private property. Marx knew Morgan did not share his political
sympathies, but he and Engels did not see or ignored evidence that Morgan
was not an historical materialist. Marx and Engels through their enthusiasm
for Morgan brought their materialist conception of history into contact
with the important question of the nature of kinship bonds, even if they
did not resolve it themselves.

DENIS SHEMILT, The Devil's Locomotive

XXII, Bei. 22, 1-18

That history has its characteristic logic, methods, and perspectives follows
from its being what Paul Hirst calls a "form of knowledge." The British
Schools Council Project "History 13-16" was founded on the assumption
that history should be taught to adolescents as such a form. An analysis
of "History 13-16" suggests that adolescents can address highly abstract
questions when they are appropriately presented. There are four general,
selective, simplified, and idealized models of adolescent construction of
historical narrative. At Level I historical narrative is seen as lacking inner
logic; logic enters the story as the simple linkage of events contiguous
in time. At Level II historical narrative is seen to embody a Calvinistic
logic in which everything is connected and continuous. At Level III adoles-
cents are impressed by the complexity and density of the story. At Level
IV adolescents develop an inkling of period as something more than a
chronological connection. There is a firm understanding that events cannot
be dissociated from their specific contexts. "History 13-16" students show
a more sophisticated grasp of history than do children following conven-
tional content-based courses, although only a minority construe at Level
IV. If the levels of construal can be interpreted as developmental stages,
as seems reasonable, it should be possible to "spiral" a history curriculum
around basic structural concepts. The aim of teaching history should be
the liberal one of enabling children to make sense of and to see the value
of history, not the vocational one of training historians.

LARRY SHINER, Reading Foucault: Anti-Method and the
Genealogy of Power-Knowledge

XXI, 382-398

Foucault's writing is best understood in terms of its political purpose and
of the political question it puts to philosophy, history, and the human
sciences. Foucault is not looking for a "method" which will be superior
to other methods in objectivity but is forging tools of analysis which take
their starting point in the political-intellectual conflicts of the present. His
method is really an antimethod, "genealogy," which seeks to free us from
the illusion that an apolitical method is possible. A genealogy of the human
sciences examines the intimate connection of the knowledge they repres-
ent with the relations of power which produced them. Such a genealogy
shows how the human sciences emerged from the tactics or microtechnolo-
gies of power by which various groups and individuals attempted to give
structure to the field of behavior of others, seeking to increase the eco-

 Economics utility of the body while decreasing its political danger. Genealogy
attempts to restore the “subjugated” knowledge of the patient, the prisoner, the worker.

LARRY SHINER, Writing and Political Carnival in Tocqueville’s Recollections

Unlike Tocqueville’s other writing, Recollections, which was never intended for publication, contained the internally contrary, multiple viewpoints characteristic of carnivalesque discourse. Its greater spontaneity may allow us more easily to see some of the ways in which writing can undermine the intentions of the writer. In following the Recollections’ treatment of the February revolution, the writing soberly sets out to embody the story of a deadly struggle between the bourgeoisie and the people over the issue of property but steadily veers off in the direction first of irony, then satire, and finally carnival. Tocqueville’s rhetorical ending shows him trying to turn his unruly text back into a cautionary tale of the morally ironic type. But the text keeps getting out of hand and dissolves moralism in a bath of satire and burlesque.

GABRIELLE M. SPIEGEL, Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative

Beneath the apparent narrative disarray, the paratactic disjunction of episodic units, and the seeming logical incoherence which scholars have assumed to be the necessary by-product of narrative parataxis in medieval historiography, lay a metaphor of procreative time and social affiliation which brought together into a connected historical matrix the core of the chronicler’s material. Genealogy, as a complex of metaphoric structure, narrative “grid,” and social context, represents one of many possible cases of the sensitivity of medieval historical narratives to social realities and indicates how medieval chroniclers responded to these realities as well as to the aesthetic conventions of literary tradition.

GAYATRI CHAKRABORTY SPIVAK, The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives

A “reading” of archival material on the Rani of Sirmur shows the soldiers and administrators of the East India Company constructing the object of representations that becomes the reality of India. The Rani emerges only when she is needed in the space of imperial production. Caught between the patriarchy of her husband, the Raja of Sirmur, and the imperialism of the British who deposed him, she is in an almost allegorical position. Both patriarchal subject-formation and imperialist object-constitution efface the dubious place of the free will of the sexed subject as female. In the cracks between the production of the archives and indigenous patriarchy, today distanced by the waves of hegemonic “feminism,” there is no “real Rani” to be found.
DAVID STOCKLEY, Empathetic Reconstruction in History and History Teaching XXII, Bei. 22, 50–65

As Collingwood notes, every historian has not only a personal perspective but also the constraint of operating within a public tradition of truth and acceptability. This background of knowledge, experience, emotions, and so forth may necessarily be more truncated for an adolescent than for a mature historian. Empathetic reconstruction is both an imaginative and analytic act. The process of bringing about empathetic reconstruction in the history classroom will take a long time, will need to be structured and systematic, and so will require constant striving on the part of the teacher. The essential point is that children must be encouraged to grasp the world-view and frame of reference of the historical agents and to overcome their own prejudices and misconceptions. This is best achieved through such devices as the structured dilemma.

ROBERT J. TRISTRAM, Explanation in the New Science: On Vico’s Contribution to Scientific Sociohistorical Thought XXII, 146-177

The principles Vico offers for his science indicate that his conception of his science is flawed and inconsistent. But this does not mean his conception of explanation is inadequate and inconsistent. Vico’s method of science contains three different perspectives which can be called the providential, institutional, and ideational perspectives. Vico does distinguish between description and explanation and the providential perspective involves the former. Explanations of the world of nations are made by looking at institutions and ideas. The institutional perspective aims at knowledge of what is true of things while the ideational perspective studies human thoughts. They are associated with the disciplines of philosophy and philology. These disciplines do complement each other; they are both concerned with ideas and institutions. The complementary workings of these perspectives in producing explanations can be understood in terms of a Vichian explanatory circle.


Ariès’s Centuries of Childhood initially was largely ignored by scholars and scholarly journals who could not locate the book within traditional disciplines. But the influence of the book grew steadily, and it has played a formative role in the history of the family and the histoire des mentalités. Ariès had three theses: that childhood was invented in the seventeenth century; that the invention of childhood arose from the dual impulses of parents to coddle their children and, along with schoolmasters, to pay greater attention to forming the children’s characters through education; and that the concept of childhood led to an intense and privatized mode of parent-child relations. The first thesis is the most dubious, but
in the light of new research none of them seems likely to endure. A new interpretative framework will be required. Nonetheless, Ariès's work will endure in the history of historiography because he established the history of childhood as a field.

W. PAUL VOGT, Identifying Scholarly and Intellectual Communities: A Note on French Philosophy, 1900–1939 XXI, 267–278

By investigating the major scholarly and intellectual journals of a field, it is possible to discern the leading members of scholarly and intellectual communities. A quantitative examination of the two most important philosophy journals in the French Third Republic, Revue philosophique and Revue de métaphysique et de morale, confirms the long-suspected existence of a philosophical gerontocracy but shows that the philosophical establishment was preparing for a sharp turn in French philosophy and social thought. It also reveals that the establishment was overwhelmingly male but open to foreign influence. Quantitative studies cannot replace more qualitative work but they do help identify authors whose works ought to be read, and they do so historically and systematically.

WOLFGANG VON LEYDEN, Categories of Historical Understanding XXIII, 53–77

The first category of historical understanding represents the thesis of historical realism—the existence and temporal priority of the actual past. The second constitutes the doctrine of constructionism—the logical priority of historical knowledge. The third stipulates that the difference between the real past and the historical construction of the past is one of a kind and in its turn logical. The fourth states that any given piece or whole body of historical evidence contains many potential meanings and functions. The fifth stipulates that an historian's standpoint is of utmost significance for the character and outcome of his work. The sixth category refers to the multilevel structure of the study of history—statements about the past in historical narratives occupy a level always beyond that of earlier generations and contemporaries of past events. The most significant implication of the advance of historical writing and the historian's higher-order status is that his work is circumscribed by his own time-bound perspective.


The bourgeois visual consensus has denied any substantial links between the concrete history of alienated, exploited labor and the realm of culture, for example in Velázquez's painting "Las Meninas." Literary and artistic historians hail Spain in the 1600s for its achievements while political, social, and economic historians speak of its decline. Imagine Lenin
staring at “Las Meninas.” He sees that it reflects both personal disintegration, decadence, and impotence and social, economic, and political rape. Put Lenin inside the actual picture, and he sees what everyone else has looked at but no one has seen: the abyss between culture and material conditions. Historical materialists need to bridge the gap between infra-and superstructure by developing dialectical images and a vision which puts the vanguard into the servants (las meninas) and the servants into the vanguard: Lenin in “Las Meninas.”

HAYDEN WHITE, The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory

A discipline that produces narrative accounts of its subject matter as an end in itself seems methodologically unsound. The historians of the Annales group criticized narrative history for the nonscientific character of its emphasis on political history and human agents rather than upon long-term impersonal processes. Structuralists and post-structuralists view narratives as an invented product of a culture, serving that culture’s purposes and desires, rather than as a representation of a found reality. This criticism is consistent with the objections raised by the Annales group. Both view narrative as ideological in character. Most defenders of narrative as a legitimate mode of historical representation conceive of a narrative as a message about the past containing facts and explanation. But a historical narrative cannot simply be a chronicle transmitting information. It imposes a discursive form on events by means that are poetic in nature. A historical narrative is properly assessed in terms of the truth-value of its factual statements and their logical conjunction, and the allegorical content provided by its narrative form. Most analytical philosophers ignore this literary aspect in their discussions of historical narrative. Paul Ricoeur argues that narrative is essential to the representation of historical events because this literary aspect is essential to historical understanding, which is something more than explanation. The ambiguity of “narrative” as both a mode of discourse and the product of that mode is what leads to much of the dispute about narrative in historiographical thought.

KERRY H. WHITESIDE, Perspectivism and Historical Objectivity: Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s Covert Debate with Raymond Aron

Raymond Aron’s perspectivism stressed the inherent subjectivity and historicity of any interpretation of the past or present. Merleau-Ponty develops a theory of objectivity consistent with perspectivism. Historical objectivity consists in the demonstration of thematic continuities in the superficially heterogeneous activities, beliefs, and events of an era. A society's ideologies, politics, religions, and economics all express “the same structure of being.” Instead of talking about one structure or unity, Merleau-Ponty should have stuck with thoughts that phenomena be unified in relation to their meanings; that these meanings be constituted in part
by the participant; that the historian has insight into the intentions of the people. Aron's perspectivism denied the possibility for objectivity and hence for responsible radical political action; it is not necessary to look for one grand unity to refute Aron.

ELISABETH YOUNG-BRUEHL, What Thucydides Saw

Three basic assumptions distinguish Thucydides' historical perspective from the perspective of the debate speeches in his history: he did not assume that events are continuous or repeatable, that human nature is unchangeable, and that the ultimate causes of human affairs are within human ken. In Thucydides' history, statesmen and citizens are judged by their capacities to do as Thucydides himself tried to do—judge novelty and greatness clearly. Lastingly effective good judgment unifies people because it stems from and appeals to respect for the imponderables of human affairs, the unpredictability of the future and the fragility of human nature. Those who can appreciate novelties know that the future will not be lacking in them, as those who can appreciate greatness know that its causes are ultimately beyond analysis. Like Thucydides himself, such people are storytellers rather than moralists.
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