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ARTICLES

- MADHUMALATI ADHIKARI, History and Story: Unconventional History in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and James A. Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific* 41:4, Theme Issue 41, 43-55

“Literary history” is a cross between conventional (scientific) history and pure fiction. The resulting hybrid provides access to history that the more conventional sort does not (in particular, a sense of the experiences of the historical actors, and the human meaning of historical events). This claim is demonstrated by an analysis of two novels about World War II, *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje, and *Tales of the South Pacific* by James Michener. These two very different novels in English are by writers themselves very different from each other, writers from different times, different social and political backgrounds, and different points of view. Their novels examine the effects of the Second World War and the events of 1942 on the human psyche, and suggest how human beings have always searched for the silver lining despite the devastation and devaluation of values. Both novels resist any kind of preaching, and yet the search for peace, balance, and kindness is constantly highlighted. The facts of scientific history are woven into the loom of their unconventional histories. The sense of infirmity created by the formal barriers of traditional history is eased, and new possibilities for historical understanding are unveiled.

- F. R. ANKERSMIT, Danto, History, and the Tragedy of Human Existence 42:3, 291-304

Philosophy of history is the Cinderella of contemporary philosophy. Philosophers rarely believe that the issues dealt with by philosophers of history are matters of any great theoretical interest or urgency. In their view philosophy of history rarely goes beyond the question of how results that have already been achieved elsewhere can or should be applied to the domain of historical writing. Moreover, contemporary philosophers of history have done desperately little to dispel the low opinion that their colleagues have of them. In this essay I argue that Arthur Danto is the exception confirming the rule, for Danto's philosophy of representation may help us understand how texts relate to what they are about. The main shortcoming of (twenti-

eth-century) philosophy of language undoubtedly is that it never bothered to investigate the philosophical mysteries of the text. The writing of history is a philosophical goldmine and we must praise Danto for having reminded us of this.

- F. R. ANKERSMIT, The Ethics of History: From the Double Binds of (Moral) Meaning to Experience 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 84–102

The point of departure of this essay is a paradox in traditional conceptions of historical objectivity. This paradox can best be analyzed in terms of the notion of the “double bind”: the requirement of historical objectivity is formulated in such a way that it is impossible to satisfy the requirement. The substance of this essay is an investigation of how J. M. Coetzee deals with the moral impasses of this double bind in his most recent novel, *Elizabeth Costello* (2003). In essence Coetzee forces his way through the double bind by an appeal to a direct experience of the world. The Spinozism implied by this strategy is indicated at the end of the essay. The analysis of Coetzee’s novel is preceded by a discussion of Kafka’s “Before the Law,” since the relevant part of Coetzee’s novel clearly is a paraphrase of the Kafka parable. Moreover, insight into the *textual* double binds in the Kafka parable contributes to an understanding of the *moral* double binds that are addressed in *Elizabeth Costello*.

- F. R. ANKERSMIT, Presence and Myth 45:3, 328–336

There are no dictionary meanings or authoritative discussions of “presence” that fix the significance of this word in a way that ought to be accepted by anybody using it. So we are in the welcome possession of great freedom to maneuver when using the term. In fact, the only feasible requirement for its use is that it should maximally contribute to our understanding of the humanities. When trying to satisfy this requirement I shall relate “presence” to representation. Then I focus on a variant of representation in which the past is allowed to travel to the present as a kind of “stowaway” (Runia), so that the past is literally “present” in historical representation. I appeal to Runia’s notion of so-called “parallel processes” for an analysis of this variant of historical representation.

- KRISTIN ASDAL, The Problematic Nature of Nature: The Post-constructivist Challenge to Environmental History 42:4, Theme Issue 42, 60–74

This article discusses the program of environmental history within the larger discipline of history and contrasts it with more recent contributions from post-constructivist science. It explores the ways in which post-constructivism has the potential to productively address many of the shortcomings of environmental history’s theories and models that environmental historians themselves have begun to view with a critical eye. The post-constructivist authors discussed in this article, Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour, both represent challenges to the ways in which nature and the natural sciences tend to be

conceptualized as non-problematized entities within environmental history. They also challenge the ways in which dichotomies of nature and culture tend to be reproduced within the program of environmental history. It is argued that these post-constructivist contributions represent a radical and arguably more truly historical way of introducing non-human actors into the historical narrative, and thus represent a potential reinvigoration of environmental history that would embrace a more radical historicity, greater diversity, and openness to difference.

MILAN BABÍK, Nazism as a Secular Religion

45:3, 375–396

This article examines the implications of Richard Steigmann-Gall's recent revisionist representation of Nazism as a Christian (Protestant) movement for the increasingly fashionable accounts of Nazism as a secular or political religion. Contrary to Steigmann-Gall's contention that Protestant Nazism undermines these accounts, I suggest that his portrayal of Nazism as a variant of Protestant millennialism is not necessarily inconsistent with the secular religion approach. A closer look at the so-called Löwith–Blumenberg debate on secularization indeed reveals that modern utopianisms containing elements of Protestant millennialism are the best candidates for the label of secularized eschatology. That Steigmann-Gall has reached exactly the opposite conclusion is primarily because his conceptual understanding of secular religion is uninformed by the secularization debate. Insofar as Steigmann-Gall extracts his model of secular religion from contemporary political religion historiography on Nazism, this article points to a larger problem: a disjunction between historians utilizing the concept, on the one hand, and philosophers and social theorists who have shaped it, on the other.

MARJORIE BECKER, Talking Back to Frida: Houses of Emotional *Mestizaje*

41:4, Theme Issue 41, 56–71

“Talking Back to Frida: Houses of Emotional *Mestizaje*” is, in part, a historical meditation on the silencing of three women, Frida Kahlo, Maria Enríquez, a Mexican woman who was sexually assaulted in 1924, and me. Written in an innovative historical fashion that joins techniques drawn from fiction, journalism, and history, the article attempts to understand specific assaults on women's voices by drawing readers into the historical worlds of the protagonists. “Talking Back” also seeks to respond to Hans Kellner's incisive theoretical challenge: how do historians' personal histories affect their historical choices?

The article's organization depends on my understanding of language, color, and physicality, as the emotional architecture of the Deep Southern and Mexican places tend to both enclose and partially free the protagonists. The essay begins by leading the reader into my own past in the Deep South, a past where German Jewish and Russian Jewish relatives engaged in a cultural battle over form, personal style, and will. Confronting a German Jewish world where only things—never feelings—seemed to matter, I found solace in the friendship of a black servant. That friendship, in turn, helped prompt a particularly empathic historical voice.

The southern section is followed by a journey into Frida Kahlo's Mexican world. In that world, Kahlo's severe physical pain and solitude construct inner and outer universes. The people who populate these worlds are friends, lovers, husband, and the Mexican poor. Kahlo's artistic renditions of these people reflect, the article suggests, both the depth of her love for them and a tendency to use them in response to her despair.

Finally, "Talking Back" reconstructs the world of María Enríquez, a Michoacán peasant woman assaulted in public by her former boyfriend. Abandoned by friend, sister, and Catholic women on the way to church, Enríquez develops a voice laced with generosity, cultural insight, and a rare self-possession.

CATHERINE BELL, *Paradigms Behind (and Before) the Modern*

Concept of Religion

45:4, Theme Issue 45, 27-46

This essay identifies five paradigms that are basic to understanding the historical emergence and uses of the generic idea of "religion" in the Christian cultures of Europe and America. The spread of this concept has been sufficiently thorough in recent centuries as to make religion appear to be a "social fact," to use Durkheim's phrase, rather than so many cultural expressions and different social practices. The supremacy of Euro-American culture—and an academy still saturated with Christian ideas—has enjoined other cultures and forms of religiosity to conform to this idea of religion; for these cultures contentment with the status quo can vie with the anxieties of influence, including "modernization." The key paradigms discussed are the following: Christianity as the prototype; religion as the opposite of reason; the modern formulation of "world religions"; the cultural necessity of religion; and critical analysis of the Western "construction" of religion. These paradigms demonstrate the limits on theoretical variety in the field, the difficulty in making real changes in set ways of thinking, and productive foci for interdisciplinary methods of study.

MICHAEL BENTLEY, *Herbert Butterfield and the Ethics of Historiography*

44:1, 55-71

At the center of this important writer's thought lies a paradox in his constant implicating of ethical norms in historical writing while simultaneously deriding all forms of moral judgment in history. This article investigates the relationship between Butterfield's ethics and his religion in order to suggest ways of resolving the paradox. It focuses on his unconventional style of Augustinianism and the levels of historical analysis involved in what he called "technical history," on the one hand, and his own search for a history that went beyond it, on the other, during a century that threw up particular challenges in barbarous war and genocide. The project requires some consideration of Butterfield's own substantive historical writing against the background of such events, but also silhouettes something more decisive: the degree to which he came to see the enterprise of historiographical analysis as itself ethical. What emerges from the argument is a framework within which Butterfield's search for meaning in the past (and his conception of

historiographical investigation as an eirenic practice) can be laid beside his hostility to moral judgments of past actors on the part of historians without the contradictions that are often assumed. A further implication of the study is that Butterfield was often his own worst enemy in conflating distinctions that he himself had made and blurring lines of argument that demanded sharp separation.

MICHAEL BENTLEY, Past and “Presence”: Revisiting Historical Ontology
45:3, 349-361

The last thirty years have brought about a fundamental revision of historical epistemology. So intense a concentration on the nature of history as a form of inquiry has diminished attention given to the thing that history inquires into: the nature of the past itself. Too readily, that entire domain has turned into a place for dreams, as Hayden White put it: a lost world only available now through the imagination of the author and subject to aesthetic whim. The next thirty years will, I propose, be the period in which ontology returns to the center of historical theory. And nothing short of the reconceptualization of the past—indeed of time itself—must be its objective. It must achieve that objective, moreover, in establishing arguments that are congruent with what revisions of epistemology have taught us about the limits of historical knowledge and the inevitability of textual representation.

This paper enters this field by discussing some of the issues involved in rethinking the place of time in historical constructions since Bergson. It demonstrates the confusions inherent in spatial reductions of temporality, which historians have done so much to entrench rather than eradicate, and argues that historians have yet to accommodate the fundamental conceptual shifts inaugurated by Heidegger. It then moves to propose a methodological doctrine to which I have given the name “chronism” and seeks to sketch the utility of such a doctrine for bringing one form of presence—that of *authenticity*—back into the domain of historical study. Doing so invites a number of conceptual and practical difficulties that the paper will address in its conclusions; these may disturb those who have closed their minds to anything beyond the present. Taking ontology seriously interferes both with structuralist assumptions about the nothingness of time and with some of the styles of historical representation that have become fashionable in the postmodern climate. There may be painful lessons to be learned if we are to rescue the past from its current status as a nonentity.

JOSÉ CARLOS BERMEJO BARRERA, On History Considered as Epic Poetry
44:2, 182-194

This essay defines history as an interaction of three elements: description, evocation, and expression. These three elements should interact and combine without any of them overwhelming the remaining two. In combining the three elements, history carries on from epic poetry, which was its source. Highlighting the three elements reveals the ways history synthesizes the three historical stages outlined by Comte, namely, the theological, the metaphysical, and the scientific.

MARK BEVIR, *How to Be an Intentionalist*

41:2, 209-217

The general aim of this paper is to establish the plausibility of a postfoundational intentionalism. Its specific aim is to respond to criticisms of my work made by Vivienne Brown in a paper “On Some Problems with Weak Intentionalism for Intellectual History.” Postfoundationalism is often associated with a new textualism according to which there is no outside to the text. In contrast, I suggest that postfoundationalists can legitimate our postulating intentions, actions, and other historical objects outside of the text. They can do so by reference to, first, philosophical commitments to general classes of objects, and, second, inference to the best explanation with respect to particular objects belonging to such classes. This postfoundational intentionalism sets up a suitable context within which to address Brown’s more specific questions.

GÖRAN BLIX, *Charting the “Transitional Period”: The Emergence of Modern Time in the Nineteenth Century*

45:1, 51-71

This paper seeks to chart a concept of historical experience that French Romantic writers first developed to describe their own relationship to historical time: the notion of the “transitional period.” At first, the term related strictly to the evolving periodic conception of history, one that required breaks, spaces, or zones of indeterminacy to bracket off periods imagined as organic wholes. These transitions, necessary devices in the new grammar of history, also began to attract interest on their own, conceived either as chaotic but creative times of transformation, or, more often, as slack periods of decadence that possessed no proper style but exhibited hybrid traits. Their real interest, however, lies in their reflexive application to the nineteenth century itself, by writers and historians such as Alfred de Musset, Chateaubriand, Michelet, and Renan, who in their effort to define their own period envisioned the “transitional period” as a passage between more coherent and stable historical formations. This prospective self-definition of the “age of history” from a future standpoint is very revealing; it shows not just the tension between its organic way of apprehending the past and its own self-perception, but it also opens a window on a new and paradoxical experience of time, one in which change is ceaseless and an end in itself. The paper also presents a critique of the way the term “modernity” has functioned, from Baudelaire’s initial use to the present, to occlude the experience of transition that the Romantics highlighted. By imposing on the nineteenth-century sense of the transitory a heroic period designation, the term “modernity” denies precisely the reality it describes, and sublimates a widespread temporal malaise into its contrary. The paper concludes that the peculiarly “modern” mania for naming one’s period is a function of transitional time, and that the concept coined by the Romantics still governs our contemporary experience.

DONALD BROOK, *Art History?*

43:1, 1-17

This article is presented in two parts. In part I, I call into question the viability of a currently received opinion about the foundations of the subject called

“Art History,” primarily by challenging assumptions that are implicit in conventional uses of the terms “art” and “work of art.” It is widely supposed that works of art are items of a kind, that this kind is the bearer of the name “art,” and that it has a history. In part II, I propose to correct this error by using the word “art” in a presently unconventional—although not unprecedented—way. The proposal relies upon a concept of cultural evolution running intellectually parallel to a Darwinian account of genetic evolution. The thesis has strong metaphysically realist implications, relating cultural evolution to what can be said and done and can properly be seen to have a history only in a universe to which real regularities are attributed. The recommended use of the term “art” is secured upon an estimate of the role of memetic innovation as radically pervasive, embracing all thought and action. “Art,” understood in the suggested way, becomes the name of a category, which has no history as kinds have histories.

VIVIENNE BROWN, On Some Problems with Weak Intentionalism
for Intellectual History

41:2, 198-208

This paper argues that the notion of weak intentionalism in Mark Bevir’s *The Logic of the History of Ideas* is incoherent. Bevir’s proposal for weak intentionalism as procedural individualism relies on the argument that the object of study for historians of ideas is given by the beliefs that are expressed by individuals (whether authors or readers) since these beliefs constitute the historical meaning of the work for those individuals as historical figures. Historical meanings are thus hermeneutic meanings. In the case of insincere, unconscious, and irrational beliefs, however, the beliefs expressed by individuals are not in fact their actual beliefs, and their actual beliefs are now taken to be those expressed by the works. It thus turns out that it is not the beliefs expressed by individuals that are the object of study for historians but the works themselves, since the overriding requirement for historians of ideas is to “make sense of their material” and it is this requirement that determines whether or not the beliefs are to be construed as expressed by individuals or by the works. But once it is accepted that the beliefs that are the object of study for historians are expressed by the works and not by individuals, the original argument that such beliefs are historical hermeneutic meanings for historical figures no longer applies. The argument for weak intentionalism thus turns out to be incoherent. Bevir’s argument fails to establish that the object of study for the history of ideas is external to the works, and the attempted distinction between interpreting a work and reading a text also fails.

ROBERT M. BURNS, Collingwood, Bradley, and Historical Knowledge

45:2, 178-203

The central feature of the narrative structure of Collingwood’s *The Idea of History* (IH) is the pivotal role accorded to Bradley, evident in the table of contents and in the two discussions of him. Few readers have noticed that, confusingly, the book’s first discussion of Bradley (on pages 134-141) is a *revision* of the (1935) Inaugural Lecture “The Historical Imagination,” which

constitutes the book's second discussion of Bradley (on pages 231-249). The differences between these two presentations of Bradley are significant. The 1935 account (presented in IH on pages 231-249) seeks to portray the Bradley of the *Presuppositions of Critical History* as a Copernican revolutionary in historical thought, even though the neo-Kantian transcendentalism promoted in the Lecture had been the core of Collingwood's approach to philosophy of history from the mid-1920s, many years before he encountered Bradley's essay. By 1935 this transcendentalism was in the process of self-destructing because of inner contradictions. By 1936, once Collingwood's narrative and his criticisms of Bradley left the 1935 claims unsustainable, Collingwood shifted attention to Bradley's later works, in an unsuccessful attempt to sustain the notion of his originality (presented in IH on pages 134-141).

Hitherto neglected Collingwood manuscripts held in the Bodleian prove that by 1940 Collingwood recognized this, so that the prominence Knox gave to Bradley in his editing of the IH is demonstrably not in accord with Collingwood's views and plans for *The Idea of History*. Knox's much-disputed claim that there was a radical shift to historicism in the later Collingwood is, however, confirmed, clear proof being adduced that in the later 1930s the attempt transcendently to deduce universal and necessary presuppositions of historical knowledge is abandoned for a radically historicist account, paralleled by a demotion of "critical history" as the final form of "history proper" in favor of "scientific history."

JON BUTLER, Theory and God in Gotham 45:4, Theme Issue 45, 47-61

"Theory" is all the rage among religious studies scholars generally. But with the tiniest number of exceptions, this is not true in American religious history. American history in general has not proven receptive to theoretically oriented scholarship, and American religious history may epitomize this aversion; most histories of religion in America follow the classic forms of narrative history. Yet the study of religion in modern urban America illustrates the desirability and perhaps even the inevitability of rethinking both religion and modernity. Without rethinking modernity, especially the assumption of its secularity, our histories cannot explain or even adequately describe the remarkable resilience of religion in so seemingly secular a place as Manhattan. And without rethinking religion we may not be able to comprehend its ability to thrive and to embrace uncertainty and spiritual pluralism alike.

JONATHAN A. CARTER, Telling Times: History, Emplotment, and Truth 42:1, 1-27

In *Time, Narrative, and History*, David Carr argues against the narrativist claim that our lived experience does not possess the formal attributes of a story; this conclusion can be reinforced from a semiotic perspective. Our experience is mediated through temporal signs that are used again in the construction of stories. Since signs are social entities from the start, this approach avoids a problem of individualism specific to phenomenology, one which Carr takes care to resolve. A semiotic framework is also explicit about a theme Carr handles implicitly: the status of representation. Representation

is internal to signification, mediating our experience not just retrospectively but prospectively in the planning and execution of action.

A model is presented in which the temporal organization of experience and action is formally coordinated with the temporal organization of narrative. The model is then applied to a historical event: John Batman's attempt in 1835 to purchase land from some Aboriginal tribes around what is now Melbourne. The meaning of this event is not located only in historical writing about it but in the semiotic constitution of the event itself. Changes of meaning emerge from relations between events as new events—in this case the Australian High Court's *Mabo* decision—align with old ones. Finally, a number of contrasts are indicated between this model and proposals made by Arthur C. Danto, Hayden White, F. R. Ankersmit, Fernand Braudel, and Paul Ricoeur.

LEO CATANA, The Concept “System of Philosophy”: The Case of Jacob
Brucker's Historiography of Philosophy 44:1, 72-90

In this essay I examine and discuss the concept “system of philosophy” as a methodological tool in the history of philosophy; I do so in two moves. First I analyze the historical origin of the concept in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thereafter I undertake a discussion of its methodological weaknesses—a discussion that is not only relevant to the writing of history of philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but also to the writing of history of philosophy in our times, where the concept remains an important methodological tool.

My first move is to analyze Jacob Brucker's employment of the concept in his influential history of philosophy, *Historia critica philosophiae*, dating from 1742–1744. To Brucker, a “system of philosophy” is characterized by the following four features: (a) it is autonomous in regard to other, non-philosophical disciplines; (b) all doctrines stated within the various branches of philosophy can be deduced from one principle; (c) as an autonomous system it comprises all branches of philosophy; (d) the doctrines stated within these various branches of philosophy are internally coherent. Brucker employed the concept on the entire history of philosophy, and he gave it a defining role in regard to two other methodological concepts, namely “eclecticism” and “syncretism,” which he regarded as more or less successful forms of systematic philosophy.

My second move is to point out the weakness of the concept of “system of philosophy” as a methodological tool in the history of philosophy. I argue that the interdisciplinary nature of much premodern philosophy makes Brucker's methodological concept “system of philosophy” inadequate, and that we may be better off leaving it behind in our future exploration of premodern philosophy.

MARK S. CLADIS, Modernity in Religion: A Response to Constantin Fasolt,
“History and Religion in the Modern Age” 45:4, Theme Issue 45, 93-103

Contrary to Constantin Fasolt, I argue that it is no longer useful to think of religion as an anomaly in the modern age. Here is Fasolt's main argument:

humankind suffers from a radical rift between the self and the world. The chief function of religion is to mitigate or cope with this fracture by means of dogmas and rituals that reconcile the self to the world. In the past, religion successfully fulfilled this job. But in modernity, it fails to, and it fails because religion is no longer plausible. Historical, confessional religions, then, are no longer doing what they are supposed to do; yet the need for religion is still very much with us.

Fasolt's account would be a tragic tale, if not for his claim that there is a new religion for the modern age, a religion that fulfills the true reconciling function of religion. That new religion is the reading and writing of history. Indeed, for Fasolt, reading history is religiously redemptive, and writing history is a sacred act. The historian, it turns out, is the priest in modernity.

In my response, I challenge both Fasolt's remedy (history as religiously redemptive) and its justification (the fall of historical religions). Indeed, I reject both his romantic view of past religion as the peaceful reconciler as well as his pessimistic view of present religion as the maker of "enemies" among modern people. In the end, I argue that the way Fasolt employs his categories—"alienation," "salvation," "religion," "history"—is too vague to do much useful work. They are significant categories and they deserve our attention. But in my view, the story Fasolt tells is both too grim (on human alienation) and too cheerful (on historian as modern savior).

THOMAS V. COHEN, *Reflections on Retelling a Renaissance Murder*

41:4, Theme Issue 41,7-16

This mischievously artful essay plays out on several levels; think of them as storeys of an imaginary castle much like the real, solid, central Italian one it explores and expounds. On its own ground floor, the essay recounts a gruesome murder, a noble husband's midnight revenge upon his wife and upon her bastard lover, his own half-brother, in her castle chamber, in bed. In sex. Of course. The murder itself is pure Renaissance, quintessential Boccaccio or *Bandello*, but the aftermath, in fort and village, is more singular, more ethnographically delightful, as castle and village trace a ceremonious passage from frozen limbo to fluid grief and storytelling, finally set in motion by the arrival of the dead wife's brother. Meanwhile, one flight up, the essay retells my own investigation of the real castle's geometry, as I clambered through rooms, peered out windows, prowled the roof, and scanned blueprints seeking the places of the plotters' plots. In an expository attic, I lodge reflections on my teaching stratagems, as I led a first-year seminar into detection's crafts and exposition's ploys. All the while, on its rooftop, this essay dances among fantastical chimneys and turrets of high theory and literary practice, musing on the patent irony of artful artifice, which evokes both the irony and the pathos of scholars' cool histories about hot deeds and feelings. Art suggests we authors had best hide ourselves, unlike normal essayists, so as not to spoil the show. But, I posit, our self-effacement is so conspicuous that it proclaims our presence, as in fact it should, and, by so doing, trumpets the necessary tensions of our artifice and craft. Thus artfulness itself nicely both proclaims and celebrates the bittersweet frustrations of historians' and readers' quest for knowledge and, especially, for experience of a lost past.

- STEVEN CONN, Narrative Trauma and Civil War History Painting,
or Why Are These Pictures So Terrible? 41:4, Theme Issue 41, 17-42

The Civil War generated hundreds of history paintings. Yet, as this essay argues, painters failed to create any iconic, lasting images of the Civil War using the conventions of grand manner history painting, despite the expectations of many that they would and should. This essay first examines the terms by which I am evaluating this failure, then moves on to a consideration of the American history painting tradition. I next examine several history paintings of Civil War scenes in light of this tradition and argue that their “failure” to capture the meaning and essence of the war resulted from a breakdown of the narrative conventions of history painting. Finally, I glance briefly at Winslow Homer’s Civil War scenes, arguably the only ones which have become canonical, and suggest that the success of these images comes from their abandonment of old conventions and the invention of new ones.

- JAMES CRACRAFT, A Berlin for Historians 41:3, 277-300

On his death in 1997 Isaiah Berlin was widely hailed as a leading philosopher of political liberalism. This article takes the position that Berlin’s philosophical views, particularly those on freedom and cultural pluralism, can also be construed as a valuable guide for historians working in the present, “postmodernist” climate of debate. It further argues that Berlin’s character and career, the subjects already of considerable critical inquiry, lend added authority to these views. The focus is on three lengthy essays on history written by Berlin in the 1950s, one of which was first published in the first issue of this journal. The article concludes, following Berlin, that it is the responsibility of historians, as historians, to recognize the often incommensurate plurality of ultimate values to which their fellow human beings historically have subscribed and to judge, as judge they sometimes must, with that recognition fully in mind. If the result of these as well as the other choices that they make is a plurality of histories, of contending subjects, approaches, methods, and outcomes, that is only to be expected, indeed welcomed. It is freedom in practice, and infinitely preferable as such to any known alternative.

- JAMES CRACRAFT, Implicit Morality 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 31-42

Most historians today have abandoned the aspiration to a kind of scientific objectivity in their work—*pace* their postmodernist critics. Yet we cling nonetheless, with a touch perhaps of hypocrisy, to the closely related standard of strict impartiality, or moral neutrality, in all that we do. This article argues that the latter is as obsolete, now, as the former—if only because of the distinctive though largely implicit moral character of almost all published history, all but the most technically specialized. The issue is not one of professional ethics, narrowly construed; obviously some such code must be maintained if history itself is to thrive. Rather historians are urged both to clarify the basic moral values that inevitably inform their work and to make more explicit, and thus intelligible, their ensuing moral judgments. They are also urged to discharge the task in a way that is commensurate with the

pluralist, indeed global, challenges of our time. The implicit morality of conventional historical practice, in short, is no longer good enough.

DOYNE DAWSON, *The Marriage of Marx and Darwin?* 41:1, 43-59

Recent attempts to develop scientific research strategies for cultural evolution have mostly drawn upon evolutionary biology, but within anthropology there is also an influential tradition of non-biological evolutionary thought whose basic principle is adaptation to the environment. This article is mainly concerned with the “cultural materialist” school of Marvin Harris, but also treats the recent attempt of Jared Diamond to create a more radical model of evolutionary ecology. I argue that the ecological tradition does not represent a real alternative to neo-Darwinism and is in fact a pseudo-Darwinist theory. I also suggest that the bias in favor of materialistic explanation in cultural evolution may not be justified.

ANTOON DE BAETS, *A Declaration of the Responsibilities of Present Generations toward Past Generations* 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 130-164

Historians study the living and the dead. If we can identify the rights of the living and their responsibilities to the dead, we may be able to formulate a solid ethical infrastructure for historians. A short and generally accepted answer to the question of what the rights of the living are can be found in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. The central idea of human rights is that the living possess dignity and therefore deserve respect. In addition, the living believe that the dead also have dignity and thus deserve respect too. When human beings die, I argue, some human traces survive and mark the dead with symbolic value. The dead are less than human beings, but still *reminiscent* of them, and they are more than bodies or objects. This invites us to speak about the dead in a language of posthumous dignity and respect, and about the living, therefore, as having some definable core responsibilities to the dead. I argue further that these responsibilities are universal. In a *Declaration of the Responsibilities of Present Generations toward Past Generations*, then, I attempt to cover the whole area. I identify and comment on four body- and property-related responsibilities (body, funeral, burial, and will), three personality-related responsibilities (identity, image, and speech), one general responsibility (heritage), and two consequential rights (memory and history). I then discuss modalities of non-compliance, identifying more than forty types of failures to fulfill responsibilities toward past generations. I conclude that the cardinal principle of any code of ethics for historians should be to respect the dignity of the living and the dead whom they study.

ANTOON DE BAETS, *Defamation Cases against Historians* 41:3, 346-366

Defamation is the act of damaging another’s reputation. According to recent legal research, defamation laws may be improperly used in many ways. Some of these uses profoundly affect the historian’s work: first, when defamation laws protect reputations of states or nations as such; second, when they pre-

vent legitimate criticism of officials; and, third, when they protect the reputations of deceased persons. The present essay offers two tests of these three abuses in legal cases where historians were defendants. The first test, a short worldwide survey, confirms the occurrence of all three abuses; the second test (an empirical analysis of twenty-one cases (1965–2000) from nine western European countries) the occurrence of the third abuse. Both tests touch on problems central to the historical profession: living versus deceased persons; facts versus opinions; legal versus historical truth; the relationship between human dignity, reputation, and privacy; the role of politicians, veterans, and Holocaust deniers as complainants; the problem of amnestied crimes. The second test—the results of which are based on verdicts, commentaries, and press articles, and presented in a synoptic table—looks closely into the complainants’ and defendants’ profiles, the allegedly defamatory statements themselves, and the verdicts. All statements deemed defamatory were about such contemporary events as World War II (particularly war crimes, collaboration, and resistance) and colonial wars. Both tests amount to two conclusions. The first one is about historians’ professional rights and obligations: historians should make true, but privacy-sensitive or potentially offending, statements only when the public interest is served; otherwise, they should have a right to silence. The second conclusion concerns defamation itself: defamation cases and threats to sue in defamation have a chilling effect on the historical debate; they are often but barely veiled attempts at censorship.

TIM DE MEY and ERIK WEBER, *Explanation and Thought Experiments in History* 42:1, 28-38

Although interest in them is clearly growing, most professional historians do not accept thought experiments as appropriate tools. Advocates of the deliberate use of thought experiments in history argue that without counterfactuals, causal attributions in history do not make sense. Whereas such arguments play upon the meaning of causation in history, this article focuses on the reasoning processes by which historians arrive at causal explanations. First, we discuss the roles thought experiments play in arriving at explanations of both facts and contrasts. Then, we pinpoint the functions thought experiments fulfill in arriving at weighted explanations of contrasts.

GREG DENING, *Performing on the Beaches of the Mind: An Essay* 41:1, 1-24

History—the past transformed into words or paint or dance or play—is always a performance. An everyday performance as we present our selective narratives about what has happened at the kitchen table, to the courts, to the taxman, at the graveside. A quite staged performance when we present it to our examiners, to the collegiality of our disciplines, whenever we play the role of “historian.” History is theater, a place of *thea* (in the Greek, a place of seeing). The complexities of living are seen in story. Rigidity, patter, and “spin” will always destroy the theater in our history performances. That is because we are postmodern. The novelists, the painters, the composers, the filmmakers give us the tropes of our day, alert us to the fictions in our non-fiction, and give us our freedoms.

How do I persuade anyone that the above theory is true? By *thea*, by seeing its truth. By performing. I have a true story to tell about beaches and those who cross them—Paul Gauguin, Herman Melville, and I.

EWA DOMANSKA, *The Material Presence of the Past*

45:3, 337–348

This article deals with the material presence of the past and the recent call in the human sciences for a “return to things.” This renewed interest in things signals a rejection of constructivism and textualism and the longing for what is “real,” where “regaining” the object is conceived as a means for re-establishing contact with reality. In the context of this turn, we might wish to reconsider the (ontological) status of relics of the past and their function in mediating relations among the organic and the inorganic, between people and things, and between various kinds of things themselves for reconceptualizing the study of the past. I argue that the future will depend on whether and how various scholars interested in the past manage to modify their understanding of the material remnants of the past, that is, things as well as human, animal, and plant remains. In discussing this problem I will refer to Martin Heidegger’s distinction between an object and a thing, to Bruno Latour’s idea of the agency of things and object-oriented democracy, and to Don Ihde’s material hermeneutics.

To illustrate my argument I will focus on some examples of the ambivalent status of the disappeared person (dead or alive) in Argentina, which resists the oppositional structure of present versus absent. In this context, the disappeared body is a paradigm of the past itself, which is both continuous with the present and discontinuous from it, which simultaneously is and is not. Since there are no adequate terms to analyze the “contradictory” or anomalous status of the present–absent dichotomy, I look for them outside the binary oppositions conventionally used to conceptualize the present–absent relationship in our thinking about the past. For this purpose I employ Algirdas Julien Greimas’s semiotic square.

GIUSEPPINA D’ORO, *Re-enactment and Radical Interpretation*

43:2, 198–208

This article discusses R. G. Collingwood’s account of re-enactment and Donald Davidson’s account of radical translation. Both Collingwood and Davidson are concerned with the question “how is understanding possible?” and both seek to answer the question transcendently by asking after the heuristic principles that guide the historian and the radical translator. Further, they both agree that the possibility of understanding rests on the presumption of rationality. But whereas Davidson’s principle of charity entails that truth is a presupposition or heuristic principle of understanding, for Collingwood understanding rests on a commitment to internal consistency alone. Collingwood and Davidson diverge over the scope of the principle of charity because they have radically different conceptions of meaning. Davidson endorses an extensional semantics that links meaning with truth in the attempt to extrude intensional notions from a theory of meaning. Since radical translation rests on a truth-conditional semantics, it rules out the possibility that there may be statements that are intelligible even though

based on false beliefs. Collingwood's account of re-enactment, on the other hand, disconnects meaning from truth, thereby allowing for the possibility of understanding agents who have false beliefs. The paper argues, first, that Davidson's account of radical translation rests on inappropriately naturalistic assumptions about the nature of understanding, and that Davidson commits this error because he develops his account of radical interpretation in response to an epistemological question that is motivated by a skeptical concern: "how can we know whether we have provided the correct interpretation?" Second, that in the twentieth century far too much philosophizing has been driven by epistemological concerns that have obscured attempts to provide adequate answers to the sort of conceptual question with which Collingwood is concerned, namely: "what does it mean to understand?"

THOMAS DAVID DUBOIS, *Hegemony, Imperialism, and the Construction of Religion in East and Southeast Asia* 44:4, Theme Issue 44, 113-131

Edward Said's concept of Orientalism portrays the high tide of nineteenth-century imperialism as the defining moment in the establishment of a global discursive hegemony, in which European attitudes and concepts gained a universal validity. The idea of "religion" was central to the civilizing mission of imperialism, and was shaped by the interests of a number of colonial actors in a way that remains visibly relevant today. In East and Southeast Asia, however, many of the concerns that statecraft, law, scholarship, and conversion had for religion transcended the European impact. Both before and after the period of European imperialism, states used religion to engineer social ethics and legitimate rule, scholars elaborated and enforced state theologies, and the missionary faithful voiced the need for and nature of religious conversion. The real impact of this period was to integrate pre-existing concerns into larger discourses, transforming them in the process. The ideals of national citizenship and of legal and scholarly impartiality recast the state and its institutions with a modernist sacrality, which had the effect of banishing the religious from the public space. At the same time, the missionary discourse of transformative conversion located it in the very personal realm of sincerity and belief. The evolution of colonial-era discourses of religion and society in Asia since the departure of European imperial power demonstrates both their lasting power and the degree of agency that remains implicit in the idea of hegemony.

RYAN DUNCH, *Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity* 41:3, 301-325

"Cultural imperialism" has been an influential concept in the representation of the modern Christian missionary movement. This essay calls its usefulness into question and draws on recent work on the cultural dynamics of globalization to propose alternative ways of looking at the role of missions in modern history. The first section of the essay surveys the ways in which the term "cultural imperialism" has been employed in different disciplines, and some of the criticisms made of the term within those disciplines. The second section discusses the application of the cultural imperialism framework to the

missionary enterprise, and the related term “colonization of consciousness” used by Jean and John Comaroff in their influential work on British missionaries and the Tswana of southern Africa. The third section looks at the historiography of missions in modern China, showing how deeply the teleological narratives of nationalism and development have marked that historiography. The concluding section argues that the missionary movement must be seen as one element in a globalizing modernity that has altered Western societies as well as non-Western ones in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that a comparative global approach to the missionary movement can help to illuminate the process of modern cultural globalization.

ELIZABETH DEEDS ERMARTH, *Ethics and Method* 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 61-83

Historical method rests on the common-denominator values that characterize modernity. Postmodernity challenges those values across the range of practice and with them the very foundations of historical explanation. Responding to this challenge is central to the ethics of history at the present time. An adequate response requires at least three things summarized here: a clear understanding of the cultural function of history as one of the representational methods characterizing modernity; a definition of postmodernity and its challenges that is less trivial than those currently prevailing in North America; and even some experimental effort to explore some of the positive possibilities of the postmodern challenge, including alternative uses for “the past.”

RICHARD J. EVANS, *History, Memory, and the Law: The Historian as Expert Witness* 41:3, 326-345

There has been a widespread recovery of public memory of the events of the Second World War since the end of the 1980s, with war crimes trials, restitution actions, monuments and memorials to the victims of Nazism appearing in many countries. This has inevitably involved historians being called upon to act as expert witnesses in legal actions, yet there has been little discussion of the problems that this poses for them. The French historian Henry Rousso has argued that this confuses memory with history. In the aftermath of the Second World War, judicial investigations unearthed a mass of historical documentation. Historians used this, and further researches, from the 1960s onwards to develop their own ideas and interpretations. But since the early 1990s there has been a judicialization of history, in which historians and their work have been forced into the service of moral and legal forms of judgment which are alien to the historical enterprise and do violence to the subtleties and nuances of the historian’s search for truth. This reflects Rousso’s perhaps rather simplistically scientific view of the historian’s enterprise; yet his arguments are powerful and should be taken seriously by any historian considering involvement in a law case; they also have a wider implication for the moralization of the history of the Second World War, which is now dominated by categories such as “perpetrator,” “victim,” and “bystander” that are legal rather than historical in origin. The article concludes by suggesting that while historians who testify in war crimes trials should confine

themselves to elucidating the historical context, and not become involved in judging whether an individual was guilty or otherwise of a crime, it remains legitimate to offer expert opinion, as the author of the article has done, in a legal action that turns on the research and writing of history itself.

CONSTANTIN FASOLT, *History and Religion in the Modern Age*

45:4, Theme Issue 45, 10-26

This essay seeks to clarify the relationship between history and religion in the modern age. It proceeds in three steps. First, it draws attention to the radical asymmetry between first-person and third-person statements that Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* rescued from the metaphysical exile to which it had been condemned by Descartes's definition of the self as a thing. Second, it argues that religion is designed to alleviate the peculiarly human kind of suffering arising from this asymmetry. Third, it maintains that history relies on the same means as religion in order to achieve the same results. The turn to historical evidence performed by historians and their readers is more than just a path to knowledge. It is a religious ritual designed to make participants at home in their natural and social environments. Quite like the ritual representation of the death and resurrection of Christ in the Mass, the historical representation of the past underwrites the faith in human liberty and the hope in redemption from suffering. It helps human beings to find their bearings in the modern age without having to go to pre-industrial churches and pray in old agrarian ways. History does not conflict with the historical religions merely because it reveals them to have been founded on beliefs that cannot be supported by the evidence. History conflicts with the historical religions because it is a rival religion.

BRIAN FAY, *Environmental History: Nature at Work*

(Introduction to the Theme Issue)

42:4, Theme Issue 42, 1-4

BRIAN FAY, *Historians and Ethics: A Short Introduction to the Theme Issue*

43:4, Theme Issue 43, 1-2

BRIAN FAY, *Unconventional History (Introduction to the Theme Issue)*

41:4, Theme Issue 41, 1-6

RÉAL FILLION, *Moving Beyond Biopower: Hardt and Negri's Post-Foucauldian Speculative Philosophy of History*

44:4, Theme Issue 44, 47-72

I argue in this paper that the attempt by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in *Empire* and *Multitude* to "theorize empire" should be read both against the backdrop of speculative philosophy of history and as a development of the conception of a "principle of intelligibility" as this is discussed in Michel Foucault's recently published courses at the Collège de France. I also argue

that Foucault's work in these courses (and elsewhere) can be read as implicitly providing what I call "prolegomena to any future speculative philosophy of history." I define the latter as concerned with the intelligibility of the historical process considered as a whole. I further suggest, through a brief discussion of the classical figures of Kant, Hegel, and Marx, that the basic features of speculative philosophy of history concern the articulation of both the *telos* and *dynamics* of history. My claim is that Hardt and Negri provide an account of the *telos* and *dynamics* of history that respects the strictures imposed on speculative philosophy of history by Foucault's work, and thus can be considered as providing a post-Foucauldian speculative philosophy of history. In doing so, they provide a challenge to other "theoretical" attempts to account for our changing world.

CLAUDIO FOGU, Actualism and The Fascist Historic Imaginary 42:2, 196-221

This essay argues that, just like liberalism and communism, fascist ideology was based on a specific philosophy of history articulated by Giovanni Gentile in the aftermath of World War I. Gentile's actualist notion that history "belongs to the present" articulated an immanent vision of the relationship between historical agency, representation, and consciousness against all transcendental conceptions of history. I define this vision as historic (as opposed to "historical") because it translated the popular notion of historic eventfulness into the idea of the reciprocal immanence of the historical and the historiographical act. I further show that the actualist philosophy of history was historically resonant with the Italian experience of the Great War and was culturally modernist. I insist, however, that the actualist catastrophe of the histori(ographi)cal act was also genealogically connected to the Latin-Catholic rhetorical signification of "presence" that had sustained the development of Italian visual culture for centuries. Accordingly, I argue that the fascist translation of actualism into a historic imaginary was at the root of Italian fascism's appeal to both masses and intellectuals. Fascism presented itself as a historic agent that not only "made history," but also made it present to mass consciousness. In fact, I conclude by suggesting that the fascist success in institutionalizing a proper mode of historic representation in the 1920s, and a full-blown historic culture in the 1930s, may have also constituted a fundamental laboratory for the formation of posthistoric(al) imaginaries.

TOR EGIL FØRLAND, The Ideal Explanatory Text in History: A Plea for Ecumenism 43:3, 321-340

This article presents Peter Railton's analysis of scientific explanation and discusses its application in historiography. Although Railton thinks covering laws are basic in explanation, his account is far removed from Hempel. The main feature of Railton's account is its ecumenism. The "ideal explanatory text," a central concept in Railton's analysis, has room for not only causal and intentional, but also structural and functional explanations. The essay shows this by analyzing a number of explanations in history. In Railton's terminology all information that reduces our insecurity as to what the explanandum is due is explanatory. In the "encyclopedic ideal explanatory text," different

kinds of explanation converge in the explanandum from different starting points. By incorporating pragmatic aspects, Railton's account is well suited to show how explanations in historiography can be explanatory despite their lack of covering laws or tendency statements. Railton's account is also dynamic, showing how the explanatory quest is a never-ending search for better illumination of the ideal explanatory text. Railton's analysis is briefly compared to, and found compatible with, views on explanation presented by David Lewis, C. Behan McCullagh, and R. G. Collingwood. Confronted with Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics and Donald Davidson's insistence on the indeterminacy of interpretation, the essay suggests that the objectivity of the ideal explanatory text should be regarded as local, limited to the description under which the action is seen.

JOSEPH FRACCHIA and R. C. LEWONTIN, *The Price of Metaphor* 44:1, 14-29

In his critical response to our skeptical inquiry, "Does Culture Evolve?" (*History and Theory, Theme Issue* 38 [December 1999], 52-78), W. G. Runciman affirms that "Culture Does Evolve." However, we find nothing in his essay that convinces us to alter our initial position. And we must confess that in composing an answer to Runciman, our first temptation was simply to urge those interested to read our original article—both as a basis for evaluating Runciman's attempted refutation of it and as a framework for reading this essay, which addresses in greater detail issues we have already raised.

Runciman views the "selectionist paradigm" as a "scientific" "puzzle-solving device" now validated by an "expanding literature" that has successfully modeled social and cultural change as "evolutionary." All paradigms, however, including scientific ones, give rise to self-validating "normal science." The real issue, accordingly, is not whether explanations can be successfully manufactured on the basis of paradigmatic assumptions, but whether the paradigmatic assumptions are appropriate to the object of analysis. The selectionist paradigm requires the reduction of society and culture to inheritance systems that consist of randomly varying, individual units, some of which are selected, and some not; and with society and culture thus reduced to inheritance systems, history can be reduced to "evolution." But these reductions, which are required by the selectionist paradigm, exclude much that is essential to a satisfactory historical explanation—particularly the systemic properties of society and culture and the combination of systemic logic and contingency. Now as before, therefore, we conclude that while historical phenomena can always be modeled selectionistically, selectionist explanations do no work, nor do they contribute anything new except a misleading vocabulary that anesthetizes history.

JONATHAN GORMAN, *Historians and Their Duties* 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 103-117

We need to specify what ethical responsibility historians, as historians, owe, and to whom. We should distinguish between natural duties and (non-natural) obligations, and recognize that historians' ethical responsibility is of the latter kind. We can discover this responsibility by using the concept of "accountability". Historical knowledge is central. Historians' central ethical responsibility is that they ought to tell the objective truth. This is not a duty

shared with everybody, for the right to truth varies with the audience. Being a historian is essentially a matter of searching for historical knowledge as part of an obligation voluntarily undertaken to give truth to those who have a right to it. On a democratic understanding, people need and are entitled to an objective understanding of the historical processes in which they live. Factual knowledge and judgments of value are both required, whatever philosophical view we might have of the possibility of a principled distinction between them. Historians owe historical truth not only to the living but to the dead. Historians should judge when that is called for, but they should not distort historical facts. The rejection of postmodernism's moralism does not free historians from moral duties. Historians and moral philosophers alike are able to make dispassionate moral judgments, but those who feel untrained should be educated in moral understanding. We must ensure the moral and social responsibility of historical knowledge. As philosophers of history, we need a rational reconstruction of moral judgments in history to help with this.

LIONEL GOSSMAN, *Anecdote and History*

42:2, 143-168

Although the term “anecdote” entered the modern European languages fairly recently and remains to this day ill-defined, the short, freestanding accounts of particular events, true or invented, that are usually referred to as anecdotes have been around from time immemorial. They have also always stood in a close relation to the longer, more elaborate narratives of history, sometimes in a supportive role, as examples and illustrations, sometimes in a challenging role, as the repressed of history—“la petite histoire.” Historians' relation to them, in turn, varied from appreciative to dismissive in accordance with their own objectives in writing history. It appears that highly structured anecdotes of the kind that are remembered and find their way into anecdote collections depend on and tend to confirm established views of history, the world, and human nature. In contrast, loosely structured anecdotes akin to the modern *fait divers* have usually worked to undermine established views and stimulate new ones, either by presenting material known to few and excluded from officially authorized histories, or by reporting “odd” occurrences for which the established views of history, the world, and human nature do not easily account.

BRAD S. GREGORY, *The Other Confessional History: On Secular Bias
in the Study of Religion*

45:4, Theme Issue 45, 132-149

The rejection of confessional commitments in the study of religion in favor of social-scientific or humanistic theories of religion has produced not unbiased accounts, but reductionist explanations of religious belief and practice with embedded secular biases that preclude the understanding of religious believer-practitioners. These biases derive from assumptions of undemonstrable, dogmatic, metaphysical naturalism or its functional equivalent, an epistemological skepticism about all truth claims of revealed religions. Because such assumptions are so widespread among scholars today, they are not often explicitly articulated. They were overtly asserted by Emile Durkheim in his *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), however, and are implicit in the claims of two other thinkers influential in the study of

early modern Christianity in recent years, namely Clifford Geertz and Michel Foucault. The use of such theories in the history of religion yields secular confessional history, parallel to traditional religious confessional history only with different embedded metaphysical beliefs. If scholars want to understand religious persons such that the latter would recognize themselves in what is said about them, rather than impose their own metaphysical convictions on them, then they should reject metaphysically biased reductionist theories of religion no less than confessional religious assumptions in the practice of their scholarship. Instead, a study of religion guided not by theories but by the question, “What did it mean to them?” and which is particularized in metaphysically neutral ways offers a third alternative that avoids confessional history, whether religious or secular. When carried out consistently for multiple traditions, such an approach can reconstruct disagreements that point beyond description to historical explanation of change over time.

HANS ULRICH GUMBRECHT, *Presence Achieved in Language (With Special Attention Given to the Presence of the Past)* 45:3, 317-327

The aim of this essay is to show how what it calls the “presence” of things, including things of the past, can be rendered in language, including the language of historians. In Part I the essay adumbrates what it means by presence (the spatio-temporally located existence of physical objects and events). It also proposes two ideal types: meaning-cultures (in which the interpretation of meaning is of paramount concern, so much so that the thinghood of things is often obscured), and presence-cultures (in which capturing the tangibility of things is of utmost importance). In the modern period, linguistic utterance has typically come to be used for, and to be interpreted as, the way by which meaning rather than presence is expressed, thereby creating a gap between language and presence. Thus, in Part II the essay explores ways that this gap might be bridged, examining seven instances in which presence can be “amalgamated” with language. These range from instances in which the physical dimensions of language itself are made manifest, to those through which the physicality of the things to which language refers is made evident. Of particular note for theorists of history are those instances in which things can be made present by employing the deictic, poetic, and incantatory potential of linguistic expression. The essay concludes in Part III with a reflection on Heidegger’s idea that language is the “house of Being,” now interpreted as the idea that language can be the medium through which the separation of humans and the (physical) things of their environment can be overcome. The promise of achieving presence in language is no less than a reconciliation of humans with their world, including—and of most interest to historians—the things and events of their past.

ABDELMAJID HANNOUM, *Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldûn Orientalist* 42:1, 61-81

Despite the increasing interest in translation in the last two decades, there has been no investigation of the translation of historiography and its transformation from one language to another. This article takes as a case study the translation

into French of Ibn Khaldûn, the fourteenth-century North African historian. It considers specifically the translation done by William de Slane in the context of the colonization of Algeria. The *Histoire des Berbères*, the French narrative of Ibn Khaldûn that relates to the history of Arabs and Berbers in the Maghreb, has become since then the source of French knowledge of North Africa. It is upon that French narrative that colonial and post-colonial historians have constructed their knowledge of North Africa, of Arabs, and of Berbers. The article shows how a portion of the writing of Ibn Khaldûn was translated and transformed in the process in such a way as to become a French narrative with colonial categories specific to the nineteenth century. Using a semi-otic approach and analyzing both the French text and its original, the article shows how colonialism introduced what Castoriadis calls an “imaginary” by transforming local knowledge and converting it into colonial knowledge. In showing this the essay reveals that not only is translation not the transmission of a message from one language to another, it is indeed the production of a new text. For translation is itself the product of an imaginary, a creation—in Ricoeur’s words, a “restructuring of semantic fields.”

PETER HEEHS, *Shades of Orientalism: Paradoxes and Problems in Indian
Historiography*

42:2, 169-195

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said attempts to show that all European discourse about the Orient is the same, and all European scholars of the Orient complicit in the aims of European imperialism. There may be “manifest” differences in discourse, but the underlying “latent” orientalism is “more or less constant.” This does not do justice to the marked differences in approach, attitude, presentation, and conclusions found in the works of various orientalists. I distinguish six different styles of colonial and postcolonial discourse about India (heuristic categories, not essential types), and note the existence of numerous precolonial discourses. I then examine the multiple ways exponents of these styles interact with one another by focusing on the early-twentieth-century nationalist orientalist, Sri Aurobindo. Aurobindo’s thought took form in a colonial framework and has been used in various ways by postcolonial writers. An anti-British nationalist, he was by no means complicit in British imperialism. Neither can it be said, as some Saidians do, that the nationalist style of orientalism was just an imitative indigenous reversal of European discourse, using terms like “Hinduism” that had been invented by Europeans. Five problems that Aurobindo dealt with are still of interest to historians: the significance of the Vedas, the date of the vedic texts, the Aryan invasion theory, the Aryan-Dravidian distinction, and the idea that spirituality is the essence of India. His views on these topics have been criticized by Leftist and Saidian orientalists, and appropriated by reactionary “Hindutva” writers. Such critics concentrate on that portion of Aurobindo’s work which stands in opposition to or supports their own views. A more balanced approach to the nationalist orientalism of Aurobindo and others would take account of their religious and political assumptions, but view their project as an attempt to create an alternative language of discourse. Although in need of criticism in the light of modern scholarship, their work offers a way to recognize cultural particularity while keeping the channels of intercultural dialogue open.

RICHARD HELLIE, *The Structure of Russian Imperial History*
44:4, Theme Issue 44, 88-112

Path dependency is a most valuable tool for understanding Russian history since 1480, which coincides with the ending of the “Mongol yoke,” Moscow’s annexation of northwest Russia, formerly controlled by Novgorod, and the introduction of a new method for financing the cavalry—the core of a new service class. The cavalry had to hold off formidable adversaries (first Lithuania, then the Crimean Tatars, then the Livonians, the Poles, the Swedes, and the Ottomans) for Muscovy to retain its independence. Russia in 1480 was a poor country lacking subsurface mineral resources and with a very poor climate and soil for the support of agriculture. These basic problems inspired autocratic power and by 1515 an ideology was in place justifying it. Religion, literature, and law were employed to support the autocracy. A variant of a caste society was created to support the army. This made up the substance of the first service-class revolution in which all resources (human and intellectual) were mobilized to support a garrison state. After 1667 the external threats to Muscovy diminished, but the service class kept its privileges, especially the land fund and the peasant-serfs.

Russia faced major foreign threats again in 1700 and in the 1920s and 1930s. Those threats precipitated the second and third service-class revolutions. The second and third service-class revolutions broadly paralleled the first. Reinvigorated service classes were created with state institutions to support them. As society became more complex, so did the service classes and their privileges. Ideologies (Russian Orthodoxy and then Marxism-Leninism) were converted into devices to support the infallible autocratic ruler and his elites. Almost the entire population was bound to state service, either directly, working to support the service state, or paying taxes. The church and clergy were harnessed first by Peter’s Holy Synod and then Stalin’s Department 5 of the Secret Police after he revived the church during World War II. Writers and artists were also put into uniform, until they finally rebelled—but the arts retained their civic functions, first supporting the regime, and then criticizing it. Finally, law retained its traditional programmatic functions in regimes themselves beholden to no law. As the foreign threats diminished, the service classes lost their function, but the elite servicemen kept their privileges as the service states disintegrated and the service classes lost their collective élan. Both the Russian Empire (in 1917) and then the Soviet Empire (in 1991) collapsed almost without a whimper.

DOUGLAS HOWLAND, *The Predicament of Ideas in Culture:*
Translation and Historiography 42:1, 45-60

Rather than a simple transfer of words or texts from one language to another, on the model of the bilingual dictionary, translation has become understood as a translingual act of transcoding cultural material—a complex act of communication. Much recent work on translation in history grows out of interest in the effects of European colonialism, especially within Asian studies, where interest has been driven by the contrast between the experiences of China and Japan, which were never formally colonized, and the alternative examples of peoples without strong, centralized states—those of the Indian subcontinent and the Tagalog in the Philippines—who were colonized by European pow-

ers. This essay reviews several books published in recent years, one group of which share the general interpretation that colonial powers forced their subjects to “translate” their local language, sociality, or culture into the terms of the dominant colonial power: because the colonial power controls representation and forces its subjects to use the colonial language, it is in a position to construct the forms of indigenous and subject identity. The other books under review here are less concerned with power in colonial situations than with the fact of different languages, cultures, or practices and the work of “translating” between the two—particularly the efforts of indigenous agents to introduce European ideas and institutions to their respective peoples.

KEITH JENKINS, Ethical Responsibility and the Historian: On the Possible
End of a History “of a Certain Kind” 43:4, Theme Issue 43, 43–60

In this article I try to answer the question posed by *History and Theory*’s “call for papers”; namely, “do historians as historians have an ethical responsibility, and if so to whom and to what?” To do this I draw mainly (but not exclusively and somewhat unevenly) on three texts: Alain Badiou’s *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, J. F. Lyotard’s *The Differend*, and Edward Said’s *Representations of the Intellectual*; Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty have a presence too, albeit a largely absent one. Together, I argue that these theorists (intellectuals) enable me to draw a portrait of an ethically responsible intellectual. I then consider whether historians *qua* historians have some kind of ethical responsibility—to somebody or to something—over and above that of the intellectual *qua* intellectual; I reply negatively. And this negative reply has implications for historians. For *if* historians are to be intellectuals of the type I outline here, then they must end their present practices insofar as they do not fulfill the criteria for the type of ethical responsibility I have argued for. Consequently, to be “ethical” in the way suggested perhaps signals—as the subtitle of my paper suggests—the possible end of a history “of a certain kind” and, as the inevitable corollary, the end of a historian “of a certain kind” too.

WULF KANSTEINER, Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological
Critique of Collective Memory Studies 41:2, 179–197

The memory wave in the humanities has contributed to the impressive revival of cultural history, but the success of memory studies has not been accompanied by significant conceptual and methodological advances in the research of collective memory processes. Most studies on memory focus on the representation of specific events within particular chronological, geographical, and media settings without reflecting on the audiences of the representations in question. As a result, the wealth of new insights into past and present historical cultures cannot be linked conclusively to specific social collectives and their historical consciousness. This methodological problem is even enhanced by the metaphorical use of psychological and neurological terminology, which misrepresents the social dynamics of collective memory as an effect and extension of individual, autobiographical memory. Some of these shortcomings can be addressed through the extensive contextualization of specific strategies of representation, which links facts of representation with

facts of reception. As a result, the history of collective memory would be recast as a complex process of cultural production and consumption that acknowledges the persistence of cultural traditions as well as the ingenuity of memory makers and the subversive interests of memory consumers. The negotiations among these three different historical agents create the rules of engagement in the competitive arena of memory politics, and the reconstruction of these negotiations helps us distinguish among the abundance of failed collective memory initiatives on the one hand and the few cases of successful collective memory construction on the other. For this purpose, collective memory studies should adopt the methods of communication and media studies, especially with regard to media reception, and continue to use a wide range of interpretive tools from traditional historiography to poststructural approaches. From the perspective of collective memory studies, these two traditions are closely related and mutually beneficial, rather than mutually exclusive, ways of analyzing historical cultures.

JAMES E. KETELAAR, *The Non-Modern Confronts the Modern:*

Dating the Buddha in Japan 45:4, Theme Issue 45, 62-79

This paper examines the emergence of a distinctly “modern” style of history and some of its uses as applied to Buddhism by Buddhist scholars within the early Meiji Period (late nineteenth century) in Japan. After a discussion of the importance of “area studies” in the formation of conceptions germane to history as practiced in Japan, the paper proposes a new category of the “non-modern” as a means to counter the historiographical dominance of modern categories in the formation of the historical discipline, especially as formulated in Japanese studies.

As a case study, the emergence of the discourse dealing with the quest for the historical Buddha is examined. By showing the methods and accomplishments of modernist historians, and the concomitant slippage of non-modern categories in their work, this paper sketches a method of analysis particularly applicable to the intersection of religion and history.

MATTHEW W. KLINGLE, *Spaces of Consumption in Environmental History*

42:4, Theme Issue 42, 94-110

Consumption has emerged as an important historical subject, with most scholars explaining it as a vehicle for therapeutic regeneration, community formation, or economic policy. This work all but ignores how consumption begins with changes to the material world, to physical nature. While environmental historians have something important, even unique, to say about consumption, the split between materialist and cultural analyses within the field has dulled its ability to study consumption as a process and phenomenon that unfolds over space and time. By borrowing techniques from geography and ecology, environmental historians can analyze how space is socially produced through time, an insight that can help to connect material and cultural change in a sustained manner. Spatial histories can also unmask the relationships between production and consumption, and nature and culture, and thereby transcend and subvert seemingly fixed boundaries, from the local to the global. They can also further propel environmental historians

into new realms of inquiry, such as international trade and the human body. Historicizing the spaces of consumption may also help to foster a more radical and democratic environmentalism, especially in developed nations, by compelling environmentalists to reassess the distancing effects of consumption upon their politics and attitudes toward those who produce commodities and consumer goods.

JÜRGEN KOCKA, Comparison and Beyond

42:1, 39–44

The merits of the comparative approach to history are undeniable. Comparison helps to identify questions, and to clarify profiles of single cases. It is indispensable for causal explanations and their criticism. Comparison helps to make the “climate” of historical research less provincial. Still, comparative historians remain in a minority. Many cherished principles of the historical discipline—proximity to the sources, context, and continuity—are sometimes in tension with the comparative approach. More recently, new transnational approaches—entangled histories, *histoire croisée*—challenge comparative historians in a new and interesting way. But *histoire comparée* and *histoire croisée* can be compatible and need each other.

R. C. LEWONTIN (see JOSEPH FRACCHIA and R. C. LEWONTIN)

C. BEHAN MCCULLAGH, What Do Historians Argue About?

43:1, 18–38

Those who think that general historical interpretations do no more than express a personal point of view deny that arguments over their credibility can have any point. They commonly believe that historians decide upon particular facts about the past in the context of a general interpretation of those facts. Consequently they deny that there is any independent basis for judging the credibility of general interpretations of the past, and conclude that each coherent account is as good as every other.

Similarly, those who think causal explanations are arbitrary can make no sense of arguments about their adequacy. They assume that historians simply pick out causes that interest them, and that there is no objective basis for judging the adequacy of the explanations they provide.

This essay defends the credibility of interpretations against the skeptics, and the adequacy of causal explanations too. It shows that historians do discover a mass of particular facts independently of the general interpretations they finally provide, facts that provide a basis for assessing the credibility and fairness of those interpretations. It will also show that there is an objective basis for judging the adequacy of causal explanations, as some causes of an event are far more influential in bringing it about than others.

A much more difficult problem concerns the need for historical interpretations to provide not just a credible account of the past, but also one that is fair, balanced, not misleading. Historians frequently argue about the fairness of general interpretations. Does this mean that fairness is always required? Quite often historians produce partial interpretations, in both senses, with no apology. It would be wrong to call such interpretations “biased” because they

do not pretend to be comprehensive. So long as they are credible, they are acceptable. On the other hand, many interpretations are intended to present a fair, comprehensive account of their subject. When judging the adequacy of interpretations, it is necessary to know whether they are meant to be fair or not.

- C. T. MCINTIRE, Transcending Dichotomies in History and Religion
45:4, Theme Issue 45, 80-92

At first glance, to speak of “history and religion” presents no problem. We merely identify two items to discuss in the same study. We quickly discover, however, that since at least the twentieth century the pair “history and religion” has tended to operate as a dichotomy. Within the dominant traditions of discourse originating in Europe, over many centuries, the verbal pair “history and religion” became a dichotomy encoded as the dichotomy “secular and religious,” signifying the opposition “not religious and religious.” This dichotomy does not usually appear alone, but commonly comes associated with other dichotomies whose terms align with either history or religion. The short list of associated dichotomies includes: temporal and spiritual, natural and supernatural, reason and faith, public and private, social and personal, scientific and theological, objective and subjective, rational and emotional, and modern and medieval. The opposing parts come gendered as masculine and feminine. Usage of the dichotomies creates tensions with practitioners of virtually all religions in all regions of the world. Rigorous and consistent users of the dichotomies misunderstand the character of religions as ways of life, fail to account for the persistence and revival of religion in the twenty-first century, and overlook the intrinsic manner in which history manifests religion and religion manifests history. The defective outcomes prompt a number of constructive suggestions for transcending dichotomies in history and religion. These reflections on dichotomies refer to several varieties of Christianity, the emergence of the secular option, and the imagined triumph of Hindu *dharma*.

- J. R. MCNEILL, Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental
History 42:4, Theme Issue 42, 5-43

This article aims to consider the robust field of environmental history as a whole, as it stands and as it has developed over the past twenty-five years around the world. It necessarily adopts a selective approach but still offers more breadth than depth. It treats the links between environmental history and other fields within history, and with other related disciplines such as geography. It considers the precursors of environmental history, its emergence since the 1970s, its condition in several settings and historiographies.

Finally it touches on environmental history's relationship to social theory and to the natural sciences as they have evolved in recent decades. It concludes that while there remains plenty of interesting work yet to do, environmental history has successfully established itself as a legitimate field within the historical profession, and has a bright future, if perhaps for discouraging reasons.

- A. DIRK MOSES, Hayden White, Traumatic Nationalism, and the Public
Role of History 44:3, 311-332

This article argues that Hayden White's vision of historiography can be appropriated for the "public use of history" in many ethnic and nationalist conflicts today. That is, it can be used to provide the theoretical arguments that justify the instrumentalization of historical memory by nationalist elites in their sometimes genocidal struggles with their opponents. Historians so far have not adequately understood the implications or possible uses of White's historiography, and therefore to that extent his case remains unrefuted. In the event, White has anticipated and held his ground against possible counter-arguments. The only way to answer him is to ask the question that he poses of historians: what is the purpose of history for "life"? The essay argues that Max Weber's advice to scholars to pose difficult questions and demand clarity about the implications and consequences of specific commitments is morally more responsible than White's in the current climate of ethnic and national conflict. The historical is not opposed to the ethical, as White maintains; the historical *is* the ethical. Historians should engage in "strong evaluations" (Richard T. Vann) in the construction of "bridging" narratives between historical communities, rather than redemptive narratives of liberation that often entail zero-sum claims to contested land.

- A. DIRK MOSES, The Public Relevance of Historical Studies: A Rejoinder
to Hayden White 44:3, 339-347

Hayden White wants history to serve life by having it inspire an ethical consciousness, by which he means that in facing the existential questions of life, death, trauma, and suffering posed by human history, people are moved to formulate answers to them rather than to feel that they have no power to choose how they live. The ethical historian should craft narratives that inspire people to live meaningfully rather than try to provide explanations or reconstructions of past events that make them feel as if they cannot control their destiny. This Nietzschean-inspired vision of history is inadequate because it cannot gainsay that a genocidal vision of history is immoral. White may be right that cultural relativism results in cultural pluralism and toleration, but what if most people are not cultural relativists, and believe fervently in their right to specific lands at the expense of other peoples? White does not think historiography or perhaps any moral system can provide an answer. Is he right? This rejoinder argues that the communicative rationality implicit in the human sciences does provide norms about the moral use of history because it institutionalizes an intersubjectivity in which the use of the past is governed by norms of impartiality and fair-mindedness, and protocols

of evidence based on honest research. Max Weber, equally influenced by Nietzsche, developed an alternative vision of teaching and research that is still relevant today.

- ZENONAS NORKUS, Mechanisms as Miracle Makers? The Rise and Inconsistencies of the “Mechanismic Approach” in Social Science and History 44:3, 348–372

In the increasing body of metatheoretical literature on “causal mechanisms,” definitions of “mechanism” proliferate, and these increasingly divergent definitions reproduce older theoretical and methodological oppositions. The reason for this proliferation is the incompatibility of the various metatheoretical expectations directed to them: (1) to serve as an alternative to the scientific theory of individual behavior (for some social theorists, most notably Jon Elster); (2) to provide solutions for causal inference problems in the quantitative social sciences, in social history, and in the (3) qualitative research context; and (4) to serve as an alternative for narratives (Charles Tilly). Mechanisms can do (1) only as under-specified law-like regularities, deliver (2) as robust generative processes represented by models, and accomplish (3) as fragile generative processes (stories), but these are not all compatible. In particular, the mechanisms promoted by Tilly are bare mechanism-sketches, and their elaboration transforms them into the description of fragile generative processes; as such, they cannot accomplish (4). The extension of the concept of mechanisms to cover stories neglects the unique function of narrative to represent fragile contingent processes, and obscures the peculiarities of human action as the rock-bottom constituent of social and historical reality.

- LUKE O’SULLIVAN, Leon Goldstein and the Epistemology of Historical Knowing 45:2, 204–228

Leon Goldstein’s critical philosophy of history has suffered a relative lack of attention, but it is the outcome of an unusual story. He reached conclusions about the autonomy of the discipline of history similar to those of R. G. Collingwood and Michael Oakeshott, but he did so from within the Anglo-American analytic style of philosophy that had little tradition of discussing such matters. Initially, Goldstein attempted to apply a positivistic epistemology derived from Hempel’s philosophy of natural science to historical knowledge, but gradually (and partly thanks to his interest in Collingwood) formulated an anti-realistic epistemology that firmly distinguished historical knowledge of the past not only from the scientific perspective but also from fictional and common-sense attitudes to the past. Among his achievements were theories of the distinctive nature of historical evidence and historical propositions, of the constructed character of historical events, and of the relationship between historical research and contemporary culture. Taken together, his ideas merit inclusion among the most important twentieth-century contributions to the problem of historical knowledge.

ANTHONY PAGDEN, *Fellow Citizens and Imperial Subjects: Conquest and Sovereignty in Europe's Overseas Empires*

44:4, Theme Issue 44, 28-46

This article traces the association between the European overseas empires and the concept of sovereignty, arguing that, ever since the days of Cicero—if not earlier—Europeans had clung to the idea that there was a close association between a people and the territory it happened to occupy. This made it necessary to think of an “empire” as a unity—an “immense body,” to use Tacitus’s phrase—that would embrace all its subjects under a single sovereign. By the end of the eighteenth century it had become possible, in this way, to speak of “empires of liberty” that would operate for the ultimate benefit of all their “citizens,” freeing them from previous tyrannical rulers and bringing them under the protection of more benign regimes. In such empires sovereignty could only ever be, as it had become in Europe, undivided. The collapse of Europe’s “first” empires in the Americas, however, was followed rapidly by Napoleon’s attempt to create a new kind of Empire *in Europe*. The ultimate, and costly, failure of this project led many, Benjamin Constant among them, to believe that the age of empires was now over and had been replaced by the age of commerce. But what in fact succeeded Napoleon was the modern European state system, which attempted not to replace empire by trade, as Constant had hoped, but to create a new kind of empire, one that sought to minimize domination and settlement, and to make a sharp distinction between imperial ruler and imperial subject. In this kind of empire, sovereignty could only be “divided.” Various kinds of divided rule were thus devised in the nineteenth century. Far, however, from being an improvement on the past, this ultimately resulted in—or at least contributed greatly to—the emergence of the largely fictional and inevitably unstable societies that after the final collapse of the European empires became the new states of the “developing world.”

ELÍAS PALTÍ, *The “Return of the Subject” as a Historico-Intellectual Problem*

43:1, 57-82

Recently, a call for the “return of the subject” has gained increasing influence. The power of this call is intimately linked to the assumption that there is a necessary connection between “the subject” and politics (and ultimately, history). Without a subject, it is alleged, there can be no agency, and therefore no emancipatory projects—and, thus, no history. This paper discusses the precise epistemological foundations for this claim. It shows that the idea of a necessary link between “the subject” and agency, and therefore between the subject and politics (and history) is only one among many different ones that appeared in the course of the four centuries that modernity spans. It has precise historico-intellectual premises, ones that cannot be traced back in time before the end of the nineteenth century. Failing to observe the historicity of the notion of the subject, and projecting it as a kind of universal category, results, as we shall see, in serious incongruence and anachronisms. The essay outlines a definite view of intellectual history aimed at recovering the radically contingent nature of conceptual formations, which, it alleges, is the still-valid core of Foucault’s archeological project. Regardless of the incon-

sistencies in his own archeological endeavors, his archeological approach intended to establish in intellectual history a principle of temporal irreversibility immanent in it. Following his lead, the essay attempts to discern the different meanings the category of the subject has historically acquired, referring them back to the broader epistemic reconfigurations that have occurred in Western thought. This reveals a richness of meanings in this category that are obliterated under the general label of the “modern subject”; at the same time, it illuminates some of the methodological problems that mar current debates on the topic.

RIK PETERS, *Actes de présence: Presence in Fascist Political Culture*

45:3, 362–374

In order to discuss the notion of presence, I explore Fascist Italy as an example of a presence-based culture. In the first part of this paper, I focus on the doctrines of “the philosopher of Fascism,” Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944), in order to show that his programme of cultural awakening revolves around the notion of the “presentification of the past.” This notion formed the basis of Gentile’s dialectic of the act of thought, which is the kernel of his actual idealism, or actualism. I argue that actualism should primarily be interpreted as an ontology of a historical reality; it expresses the view that reality is history. In his 1914 inaugural “L’esperienza pura e la realtà storica” (Pure Experience and Historical Reality), Gentile drew this view to its ultimate consequence by developing a view of experience that has some striking parallels with the contemporary views of presence as expounded by Gumbrecht, Runia, and Ankermit. In the second part of my paper, I discuss how Gentile and his collaborators put presence into practice in school reforms, the *Enciclopedia italiana*, and in hundreds of monuments, memorials, and exhibitions. Finally, I discuss the 1932 *Mostra della rivoluzione fascista*, which was not only the apex of Fascist culture politics, but also of the practice of presence. In this context, I argue that this practice should not be seen as a politics of historical interpretation, as Hayden White once held, but as a politics of sublime historical experience, or presence. The presence of presence in Fascist political culture raises some difficult questions for all who embrace the new paradigm, questions that can only be answered if the notion of presence is somehow balanced by the critical historical method, which is the basis for a true dialogue with the past.

PHILIP POMPER, *The History and Theory of Empires* 44:4, Theme Issue 44, 1–27

Contemporary histories and theories of empire generally remain within boundaries inspired by varieties of liberalism, and by Marxian theory and its hybrids, in which changing modes of production determine the forms of power, including empire. Liberal theorists and historians of empire generally trace a complex process in which expanding imperial power systems led ultimately to nation-states, democracy, and market economies. For Marxists and postmodern theorists, the formal aspects of empire remain unimportant compared to the broader workings of modes of production and particularly, the global power of capitalism. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri use the

word “empire” to describe the workings of contemporary capitalism and its myriad forms of power.

Whether they rely upon the formal definitions of empire or the Marxian-postmodern one, theories of empire often descend from modern utopian visions: perhaps the Kantian variety emphasizing a peaceful union of states and collective learning, or the Marxian one, although now taking into account changes in the mode of production and victims unattended to by Marx and Engels. New technologies and communications networks impress all contemporary theorists. Some proclaim the end of modern power systems and empire; others find empire in a new, postmodern form. Nonetheless, there are stubborn continuities with the modern in the very persistence of modern utopias, the dominance of nation-states, the pursuit of democracy, and the durability of capitalism. Theorists of power and empire have to explain these and other continuities, alongside the disappearance of the more than 400-year-old balance-of-power system in which imperial powers in the European core finally delivered vast power to the United States and the Soviet Union, and created new technologies that strengthen human connection as well as threaten vast destruction. The question of the power of the United States and its imperial status commands the center of attention.

FRITZ RINGER, Max Weber on Causal Analysis, Interpretation,
and Comparison 41:2, 163-178

Max Weber’s methodological writings offered a model of singular causal analysis that anticipated key elements of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy of the social and cultural sciences. The model accurately portrayed crucial steps and dimensions of causal reasoning in these disciplines, outlining a dynamic and probabilistic conception of historical processes, counterfactual reasoning, and comparison as a substitute for counterfactual argument. Above all, Weber recognized the interpretation of human actions as a subcategory of causal analysis, in which the agents’ visions of desired outcomes, together with their beliefs about how to bring them about, cause them to act as they do.

JAMES N. ROSENAU, Illusions of Power and Empire 44:4, Theme Issue 44, 73-87

Subsequent to the end of the Cold War, analysts groped for an understanding of the overall structures of world politics that marked the emergence of a new epoch. As a result, the concept of empire became a major preoccupation, with the economic and military power of the United States considered sufficient for regarding it as an empire. Due to the proliferation of new microelectronic technologies and for a variety of other specified reasons, however, the constraints inherent in the new epoch make it seem highly unlikely that the U.S. or any other country can ever achieve the status of an empire. In effect, the substantial shrinkage of time and distance in the current period has led to the replacement of the age of the nation-state that originated with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 with the age of the networked individual. It is an age that has developed on a global scale and that has brought an end to the history of empires.

- GAVRIEL ROSENFELD, Why Do We Ask “What If?” Reflections on the
Function of Alternate History 41:4, Theme Issue 41, 90-103

The new prominence of alternate history in Western popular culture has increasingly prompted scholars to historicize it as a broader phenomenon. What has largely escaped notice until now, however, has been the question of the underlying function of alternate history as a genre of speculative narrative representation. In this essay, I argue that writers and scholars have long produced “allohistorical narratives” out of fundamentally presentist motives. Allohistorical tales have assumed different typological forms depending upon how their authors have viewed the present. Nightmare scenarios, for example, have depicted the alternate past as worse than the real historical record in order to vindicate the present, while fantasy scenarios have portrayed the alternate past as superior to the real historical record in order to express dissatisfaction with the present. The presentist character of alternate histories allows them to shed light upon the evolving place of various historical events in the collective memory of a given society. In this essay, I examine American alternate histories of three popular themes—the Nazis winning World War II, the South winning the Civil War, and the American Revolution failing to occur—in order to show how present-day concerns have influenced how these events have been remembered. In the process, I hope to demonstrate that alternate histories lend themselves quite well to being studied as documents of memory. By examining accounts of what never happened, we can better understand the memory of what did.

- W. G. RUNCIMAN, Culture Does Evolve 44:1, 1-13

Neo-Darwinian theories of cultural evolution are apt to be criticized on the grounds that they merely borrow from the theory of natural selection concepts that are then metaphorically applied to conventional historical narratives to which they add no more, if anything, than an implicit presupposition of progress from one predetermined stage to the next. Such criticisms, of which a particularly forceful example is a recent article in this journal by Fracchia and Lewontin, can however be shown to be seriously misconceived. The fundamental process of heritable variation and competitive selection of information affecting phenotype underlies both biological and cultural evolution despite the obvious differences between the mechanisms of information transfer by genetic inheritance and by exosomatic imitation and learning. Information transfer is in neither case a metaphor standing for any other thing, and in neither case does change over time proceed in accordance with developmental laws from which the future evolution of either species or cultures could be predicted in advance. For all the unresolved questions that remain, neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory has demonstrated the mutual compatibility of idiographic and nomothetic explanation in the study of species and of cultures alike.

- W. G. RUNCIMAN, Rejoinder to Fracchia and Lewontin 44:1, 30-42

In their response to my article, Fracchia and Lewontin have not refuted any of my three principal objections to theirs; they have ignored altogether my

suggestion that evolutionary game theory illustrates particularly clearly the benefits that neo-Darwinian concepts and methods can bring to the human behavioral sciences; and they have attributed to me a version of “methodological individualism” to which I do not subscribe. It is, as is usual at this stage of a Kuhnian paradigm shift, too soon to say how much selectionist theory can contribute to the human behavioral sciences in general and comparative sociology in particular. But selectionism’s critics achieve nothing by alleging that its proponents are committed to propositions to which they do not in fact assent and deny propositions with which they in fact agree.

EELCO RUNIA, “Forget About It”: “Parallel Processing” in the Srebrenica Report

43:3, 295-320

Dominick LaCapra has remarked that “when you study something, you always have a tendency to repeat the problems you are studying.” In psychoanalytic supervision this phenomenon is called “parallel processing.” Parallel processes are subconscious re-enactments of past events: when you are caught up in a parallel process, your behavior repeats key aspects of what there is to know about what you’re studying—in a way, however, that you yourself don’t understand. This article analyzes the extent to which the “NIOD Report,” the official Dutch report on the massacre in Srebrenica (1995), “parallels” the events it describes. It introduces the phenomenon, examines the way the NIOD researchers unwittingly replicated several key aspects of the events they studied, and discusses some instances in which paralleling highlights precisely those features of the events under consideration that are hard to come to terms with.

EELCO RUNIA, Presence

45:1, 1-29

For more than thirty years now, thinking about the way we, humans, account for our past has taken place under the aegis of representationalism. In its first two decades, representationalism, inaugurated by Hayden White’s *Metahistory* of 1973, has been remarkably successful, but by now it has lost much of its vigor and it lacks explanatory power when faced with recent phenomena such as memory, *lieux de mémoire*, remembrance, and trauma. It might be argued that many of the shortcomings of representationalism spring from the fact that it is exclusively geared to “transfer of meaning.” This essay posits that what may be called “presence” (“the unrepresented way the past is present in the present”) is at least as important as “meaning.” “Presence” can be dealt with by employing a “topical” view of history (in the manner of, for example, Vico) in which the whole of history is stored in “places” (that is, “institutions”) that can be “visited” on the plane of the present. Presence can be said to be stored in *metonymy*. Whereas metaphor is instrumental in the “transfer of meaning,” metonymy brings about a “transfer of presence.” A metonymy is a “presence in absence” not just in the sense that it presents something that isn’t there, but also in the sense that in the absence (or at least the radical inconspicuousness) that *is* there, the thing that isn’t there is still present. The presence of the past thus does not reside primarily in the intended story or the manifest metaphorical content of the text, but in what

story and text contain *in spite of* the intentions of the historian. One might say that historical reality travels with historiography not as a paying passenger but as a *stowaway*. As a stowaway, as what is absently and unintentionally present on the plane of time, metonymy is a metaphor for discontinuity, or, rather, for the entwinement of continuity and discontinuity.

EELCO RUNIA, Spots of Time

45:3, 305-316

How can the subliminal, mysterious, but uncommonly powerful living-on, the *presence*, of the past be envisaged? In this essay I argue that presence is not brought about by *stories*—by, that is, the “storiness” of stories. Presence rather shows itself in how the past can force us—and enable us—to *rewrite* our stories about ourselves. The question then is how we acquire the experiences that can eventually force us to do so. How, and with what kind of things, does the *mémoire involontaire*—from which presence wells up—get filled? In order to answer this question one might turn it around to the question how we can fill the *mémoire involontaire* of *others*. A consideration of the “art of slandering” shows that the *mémoire involontaire* tends to get filled with things (1) that we believe are “common knowledge,” that (2) are “obliquely” communicated, and that (3) are cast in metonymies. Metonymy offers a much better road to the *mémoire involontaire* than metaphor because metonymy is better at suggesting that what it conveys *is* “common knowledge.” Therefore, I propose that presence resides in the metonymical region of language. Instead of being contained in the meaningful content (the “storiness”) of stories, presence resides in what a story inadvertently has to be—in, that is, the things a story has to present in order to present a story. My conclusion is that as presence the past is the exact opposite of what historians think it is. It is indestructible, uncannily close, and—despite its closeness and its durability—utterly impossible to conserve in “representations” that can be taken along in the hand luggage with which we traverse time.

JÖRN RÜSEN, How to Overcome Ethnocentrism: Approaches to
a Culture of Recognition by History in the Twenty-first Century

43:4, Theme Issue 43, 118-129

Much international and intercultural discourse about historiography is influenced by a way of historical thinking deeply rooted in human historical consciousness and that works throughout all cultures and in all times: ethnocentrism. Ethnocentric history conceives of identity in terms of “master-narratives” that define togetherness and difference as essential for identity in a way that causes tension and struggle. These narratives conceive of history in terms of “clashes of civilizations,” and they reinforce the idea that international and intercultural relations are merely struggles for power.

The main elements of ethnocentrism are: asymmetrical evaluation, teleological continuity, and centralized perspective. This essay articulates possibilities for overcoming these three elements by replacing asymmetrical evaluation with normative equality; teleological continuity with reconstructive concepts of development that emphasize contingency and discontinuity; and centralized perspectives with multi-perspectivity and polycentric approaches

to historical experience. Adopting these possibilities would lead to a new mode of universal history rooted in a concept of humankind that can help solve the problem of ethnocentrism. This idea of humankind conceptualizes the unity of the human species as being manifest in a variety of cultures and historical developments. This is in fact the traditional concept of historicism, which can be further developed towards a historiography that responds to the challenges of globalization and cultural differences.

The essay outlines theoretical and methodological means in historical studies that bring this idea of humankind into the work of historians, thus enabling them to contribute to a new culture of recognition. The article is based on the assumption that the creation of such a culture is the most important task of scholarly work in the humanities in general, and historical studies in particular, at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

AARON SACHS, The Ultimate “Other”: Post-Colonialism and Alexander von Humboldt’s Ecological Relationship with Nature

42:4, Theme Issue 42, 111-135

This article is a meditation on the overlaps between environmentalism, post-colonial theory, and the practice of history. It takes as a case study the writings of the explorer-scientist-abolitionist Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), the founder of a humane, socially conscious ecology. The post-colonial critique has provided a necessary corrective to the global environmental movement, by focusing it on enduring colonialist power dynamics, but at the same time it has crippled the field of environmental history, by dooming us to a model of the past in which all Euro-American elites, devoid of personal agency, are always already in an exploitative relationship with the people and natural resources of the developing world. A close reading of Humboldt’s work, however, suggests that it could provide the basis for a healthy post-colonial environmentalism, if only post-colonial critics were willing to see beyond Humboldt’s complicity in colonial structures. In particular, this article attempts to rehabilitate Humboldt’s reputation in the face of Mary Louise Pratt’s canonical post-colonial study, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. Humboldt’s efforts to inspire communion with Nature while simultaneously recognizing Nature’s “otherness” can be seen as radical both in his day and in ours. In addition his analysis of the link between the exploitation of natural resources and the exploitation of certain social groups anticipates the global environmental justice movement.

THEODORE R. SCHATZKI, Nature and Technology in History

42:4, Theme Issue 42, 82-93

This essay sketches an expanded theoretical conception of the roles of nature and technology in history, one that is based on a social ontology that does not separate nature and society.

History has long been viewed as the realm of past human action. On this conception, nature is treated largely as an Other of history, and technology is construed chiefly as a means for human fulfillment. There is no history

of nature, and the history of technology becomes the history of useful products.

The essay discusses the changes wrought in these understandings by a social ontology that depicts social existence as inherently transpiring in nexuses of practices and material arrangements. The first implication is that the domain of history should be expanded from the realm and course of past human activity to the realm and course of past practice–arrangement nexuses. In turn, this wider conception transforms the significance of nature and technology in history.

Until recently, most accounts of the relationship between society/history and nature have presumed that society and history are separate from nature. On my account, by contrast, nature is part of society: a component of the practice–arrangement nexuses through which social life progresses. Human history, consequently, is a social–natural history that encompasses the varying presence and roles of nature in human coexistence. Technology, meanwhile, is not just useful products, and not just a mediator of society/history and nature. It also is (1) something through which humans manage social life and the nature that is part of it, largely by drawing nature into this site and thereby conjointly transforming society, technology, and nature in history; and (2) something that, over time, plays an increasingly central role in the nexuses where social life transpires. Through technology, in short, social–natural history takes form and advances.

ANDERS SCHINKEL, *History and Historiography in Process* 43:1, 39-56

Although in philosophical dictionaries and the like, Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) is often praised as one of the most original thinkers of the twentieth century, his work has been virtually ignored. The articles and books that are concerned with Whitehead’s philosophy, with the exception of the work of Dale H. Porter, hardly ever mention the relevance that it has for the philosophy of history and for historiography. I intend to demonstrate this relevance in this article. For this purpose, I will explore three themes: 1) the self-evidence of certain kinds of forgetting by historians; 2) the fallacy of the view that the occurrence of these kinds of forgetting in historiography must necessarily lead to truth-relativism; and 3) continuity in history, which persists even when certain ruptures occur. My treatment of these themes will in part be a response to Frank Ankersmit, who took up some of them from a different perspective in the October issue of *History and Theory* in 2001.

ANDERS SCHINKEL, *Imagination as a Category of History: An Essay concerning Koselleck’s concepts of *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont** 44:1, 42-54

Reinhart Koselleck is an important thinker in part for his attempt to interpret the cultural changes resulting in our modern cultural outlook in terms of the (meta)historical categories of experience and expectation. In so doing he tried to pay equal attention to the static and the changing in history. This article argues that Koselleck’s use of “experience” and “expectation” confuses their metahistorical and historical meaning, with the result that his account

fails to do justice to the static, to continuity in history, and mischaracterizes what is distinctive of the modern era. As well as reconfiguring the categories of experience and expectation, this essay also introduces a third category, namely, imagination, in between experience and expectation. This is done to render intelligible what is obscure in Koselleck's account, and as a stimulus to a study of history that divides its attention equally between the static and the changing. In fact, it is argued that the category of imagination is pre-eminently *the* category of history, on the concrete historical as well as the metahistorical level.

DAVID GARY SHAW, *Modernity between Us and Them:*

The Place of Religion within History (Introduction to the Theme Issue)

45:4, Theme Issue 45, 1-9

LAURENCE SHORE, *The Enduring Power of Racism: A Reconsideration of*

Winthrop Jordan's *White over Black*

44:2, 195-226

As a history of the origins and development of American racism, *White over Black* received great acclaim upon its publication in 1968. Deeply researched and covering some 650 pages, it eschewed professional jargon and offered a deft prose style and close attention to matters of sexuality in revealing the origins and lasting influence of racist attitudes arising from Englishmen's impressions of blacks before they became, pre-eminently, slaves in North America. Jordan's careful weighing of evidence and causation made readers appreciate what he believed his evidence repeatedly demonstrated about white Americans' attitudes toward African-Americans: "the power of irrationality in men." Despite the initial acclaim and scholarly achievement, *White over Black* soon lost pace with the curve of politics and academic fashion. By the mid-1970s, the post-World War II liberal consensus on racial issues had disintegrated, and professional historians were writing principally for other professional historians. Within a decade after its publication, *White over Black* was relegated to the wasteland of the "suggested supplemental reading list." However, the book's grasp of the fundamental historical issues requiring explanation has received recent affirmation from influential scholarly and political quarters. A dispassionate review of the literature leading up to and following *White over Black*'s publication indicates that Jordan's emphasis on the causal contribution of racist attitudes to the rise of African slavery in British North America was on target. Moreover, Jordan's appreciation that academic historians should write for non-professionals is now widely held inside the academy. The historical accuracy and cogency of expression of Jordan's perspective on race and slavery make *White over Black* worth re-examining.

OLENA V. SMYNTYNA, *The Environmental Approach to Prehistoric*

Studies: Concepts and Theories

42:4, Theme Issue 42, 44-59

This article examines the main approaches to prehistoric environmental studies. The history of theories and concepts used in contemporary prehistory,

archaeology, cultural and social anthropology, ecology, sociology, psychology, and demography is discussed. The author concludes with a plea for the concept of “living space” as a way to address certain problems in interdisciplinary studies of prehistoric societies.

GABRIELLE M. SPIEGEL, *Memory and History: Liturgical Time and Historical Time*

41:2, 149-162

This article investigates the differential structure and representation of time in memory and history. It examines two moments in Jewish historical thought—in the Middle Ages, and in works written within and after the Holocaust—and demonstrates the fundamentally liturgical nature of Jewish historical memory in selected texts from these two periods. Following the groundbreaking work of Yerushalmi, it seeks to demonstrate that for Jews, historical experience is incorporated into the cyclical reenactment of paradigmatic events in Jewish sacred ritual. Recent or contemporary experiences acquire meaning only insofar as they can be subsumed within Biblical categories of events and their interpretation bequeathed to the community through the medium of Scripture, that is to say, only insofar as they can be transfigured, ritually and liturgically, into repetitions and reenactments of ancient happening. In such liturgical commemoration, the past exists only by means of recitation; the fundamental goal of such recitation is to make it live again in the present, to fuse past and present, chanter and hearer, into a single collective entity. History, in the sense that we understand it to consist of unique events unfolding within irreversible linear time, is absorbed into cyclical, liturgical memory.

This article argues that the question of Jewish history—both medieval and post-Holocaust—poses in a compelling fashion the question of the relationship between memory and history more generally, and serves to contest the current tendency in academic historiography to collapse history into memory. It claims that to the extent that memory “resurrects,” “re-cycles,” and makes the past “reappear” and live again in the present, it cannot perform historically, since it refuses to keep the past in the past, to draw the line, as it were, that is constitutive of the modern enterprise of historiography.

DAVID J. STALEY, *A History of the Future*

41:4, Theme Issue 41, 72-89

Does history have to be only about the past? “History” refers to both a subject matter and a thought process. That thought process involves raising questions, marshalling evidence, discerning patterns in the evidence, writing narratives, and critiquing the narratives written by others. Whatever subject matter they study, all historians employ the thought process of historical thinking.

What if historians were to extend the process of historical thinking into the subject matter domain of the future? Historians would breach one of our profession’s most rigid disciplinary barriers. Very few historians venture predictions about the future, and those who do are viewed with skepticism by the profession at large. On methodological grounds, most historians reject as either impractical, quixotic, hubristic, or dangerous any effort to examine the past as a way to make predictions about the future.

However, where at one time thinking about the future did mean making a scientifically-based prediction, futurists today are just as likely to think in terms of scenarios. Where a prediction is a definitive statement about what will be, scenarios are heuristic narratives that explore alternative plausibilities of what might be. Scenario writers, like historians, understand that surprise, contingency, and deviations from the trend line are the rule, not the exception; among scenario writers, context matters. The thought process of the scenario method shares many features with historical thinking. With only minimal intellectual adjustment, then, most professionally trained historians possess the necessary skills to write methodologically rigorous “histories of the future.”

ELLEN STROUD, *Does Nature Always Matter? Following Dirt through History* 42:4, Theme Issue 42, 75-81

Despite several decades of impressive scholarship in environmental history, the field remains largely marginal to the discipline as a whole. Environmental stories are still more likely to turn up in introductions, sidebars, and footnotes to political, social, and economic histories than they are to be incorporated into those narratives in a transformative way, though we as environmental historians know that potential is there. As we struggle to identify what precisely it is that we want other historians to do with our work, we run up against questions of definition and mission: What is environmental history? What do we do that is unique? What do we want other historians to learn from what we do? Some scholars in our field have suggested that we can answer these questions by framing “environment” as a category of analysis parallel to race, class, and gender, arguing that careful attention to the environment offers as rich a way of uncovering power relationships in societies as attention to these other categories does. While it is true that power can be read in the environment, and is frequently expressed through it, I argue that “environment” as both concept and fact is so fundamentally different from class, race, and gender that the analogy does not work, and distracts us from another, more fruitful strategy for articulating the broader relevance of our scholarship: demonstrating the significance of material nature for histories beyond the environmental realm. If other historians would join us in our attention to the physical, biological, and ecological nature of dirt, water, air, trees, and animals (including humans), they would find themselves led to new questions and new answers about the past.

KARSTEN R. STUEBER, *The Psychological Basis of Historical Explanation: Reenactment, Simulation, and the Fusion of Horizons* 41:1, 25-42

In this article I will challenge a received orthodoxy in the philosophy of social science by showing that Collingwood was right in insisting that reenactment is epistemically central for historical explanations of individual agency. Situating Collingwood within the context of the debate between simulation theory and what has come to be called “theory theory” in contemporary philosophy of mind and psychology, I will develop two systematic arguments that attempt to show the essential importance of reenactment for our understanding of

rational agency. I will furthermore show that Gadamer's influential critique of the reenactment model distinguishes insufficiently between the interpretation of certain types of texts and the explanation of individual actions. In providing an account of individual agency, we are committed to a realistic understanding of our ordinary scheme of action-explanations and have thus to recognize the centrality of reenactment. Nevertheless, Collingwood's emphasis on reenactment is certainly one-sided. I will demonstrate its limitations even for accounting for individual agency, and show how it has to be supplemented by various theoretical considerations, by analyzing the different explanatory strategies that Christopher Browning and Daniel Goldhagen use to explain the behavior of the ordinary men in Reserve Battalion 101 during World War II.

ROLF TORSTENDAHL, *Fact, Truth, and Text: The Quest for a Firm Basis for Historical Knowledge around 1900* 42:3, 305-331

The object of this essay is to discuss two problems and to present solutions to them, which do not quite agree with what is generally said of them. The first problem concerns the history of methods for reaching firm historical knowledge. In three methodological manuals for historians, written by J. G. Droysen, E. Bernheim, and C.-V. Langlois and C. Seignobos and first published in the late nineteenth century, the task of the historian was said to be how to obtain firm knowledge about history. The question is how this message should be understood. The second problem concerns the differences between the three manuals. If their common goal is firm historical knowledge, are there any major differences of opinion? The answer given in this article is yes, and the ground is sought in their theories of truth.

AMRAM TROPPER, *The Fate of Jewish Historiography after the Bible: A New Interpretation* 43:2, 179-197

What caused the eventual decline in later Jewish history of the vibrant historiographical tradition of the biblical period? In contrast to the plethora of historical writings composed during the biblical period, the rabbis of the early common era apparently were not interested in writing history, and when they did relate to historical events they often introduced mythical and unrealistic elements into their writings. Scholars have offered various explanations for this phenomenon; a central goal of this article is to locate these explanations within both the immediate historical setting of Roman Palestine and the overarching cultural atmosphere of the Greco-Roman Near East. In particular, I suggest that the largely ahistorical approach of the rabbis functioned as a local Jewish counterpart to the widespread classicizing tendencies of a contemporary Greek intellectual movement, the Second Sophistic. In both cases, eastern communities, whose political aspirations were stifled under Roman rule, sought to express their cognitive and spiritual identities by focusing on a glorious and idealized past rather than on contemporary history.

Interestingly, the apparent lack of rabbinic interest in historiography is not limited to the early rabbinic period. Throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, Jews essentially did not write their political, diplomatic, or

military history. Instead, Jews composed “traditional historiography” which included various types of literary genres among which the rabbinic “chain of transmission” was the most important. The chain of transmission reconstructs (or fabricates) the links that connect later rabbinic sages with their predecessors. Robert Bonfil has noted the similarity between this rabbinic project and contemporary church histories. Adding a diachronic dimension to Bonfil’s comparison, I suggest that rabbinic chains of transmission and church histories are not similar though entirely independent phenomena, but rather their shared project actually derives from a common origin, the Hellenistic succession list. The succession list literary genre, which sketches the history of an intellectual discipline, apparently thrived during the Second Sophistic and diffused then into both rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity. Thus, even though historiography was not terribly important to the early rabbis or to most Second Sophistic intellectuals, the succession list schematic, or the history of an intellectual discipline, was evaluated differently. Rabbis and early Christians absorbed the succession list from Second Sophistic culture and then continued to employ this historiographical genre for many centuries to come.

AVIEZER TUCKER, Miracles, Historical Testimonies, and Probabilities

44:3, 373-390

The topic and methods of David Hume’s “Of Miracles” resemble his historiographical more than his philosophical works. Unfortunately, Hume and his critics and apologists have shared the pre-scientific, indeed ahistorical, limitations of Hume’s original historical investigations. I demonstrate the advantages of the critical methodological approach to testimonies, developed initially by German biblical critics in the late eighteenth century, to a priori discussions of miracles. Any future discussion of miracles and Hume must use the critical method to improve the quality and relevance of the debate.

Hume’s definition of miracles as breaking the laws of nature is anachronistic. The concept of immutable laws of nature was introduced only in the seventeenth century, thousands of years after the Hebrews had introduced the concept of miracles. Holder and Earman distinguish the posterior probability of the occurrence of a *particular miracle* from that of the occurrence of *some* miracle. I argue that though this distinction is significant, their formulae for evaluating the respective probabilities are not useful. Even if miracle hypotheses have low probabilities, it may still be rational to accept and use them if there is no better explanation for the evidence of miracles. Biblical critics and historians do not examine the probabilities of miracle hypotheses, or any other hypotheses about the past, in isolation, but in comparison with competing hypotheses that attempt to better explain, increase the likelihood of a broader scope of evidence, as well as be more fruitful. The fruitful and simple theories of Hume’s later and better contemporaries, the founders of biblical criticism, offer the best explanation of the broadest scope of evidence of miracles. Moreover, they do so by being linguistically sensitive to the ways “miracle” was actually used by those who claimed to have observed them.

The lessons of this analysis for historians and philosophers of history—that the acceptance of historical hypotheses is a comparative endeavor, and that the claims of those in the past must be assessed in their own terms—ought to be clear.

RICHARD T. VANN, *Historians and Moral Evaluations*

43:4, Theme Issue 43, 3-30

The reappearance of the question of moral judgments by historians makes a reappraisal of the issues timely. Almost all that has been written on the subject addresses only the propriety of moral judgments (or morally charged language) in the written texts historians produce. However, historians have to make moral choices when selecting a subject upon which to write; and they make a tacit moral commitment to write and teach honestly.

Historians usually dislike making explicit moral evaluations, and have little or no training in how to do so. They can argue it's not their job; they are only finders of fact. Historians holding a determinist view of actions do not think it appropriate to blame people for doing what they couldn't help doing; for those believing there is an overall pattern to history, individual morality is beside the point. Finally, since earlier cultures had values different from ours, it seems unjust to hold them to contemporary standards.

This essay modifies or rejects these arguments. Some historians have manifested ambivalence, acknowledging it is difficult or impossible to avoid making moral evaluations (and sometimes appropriate to make them). Ordinary-language philosophers, noting that historiography has no specialized vocabulary, see it as saturated by the values inherent in everyday speech and thought.

I argue that the historicist argument about the inevitably time-bound limitation of all values is exaggerated. Historians who believe in the religious grounding of values (like Lord Acton) obviously disagree with it; but even on a secular level, morals are often confused with mores. If historians inevitably make moral evaluations, they should examine what philosophical ethicists—virtue ethicists, deontologists, and consequentialists—have said about how to make them; and even if they find no satisfactory grounding for their own moral attitudes, it is a brute fact that they have them.

I end with an argument for “strong evaluations”—neither treating them as a troublesome residue in historiography nor, having despaired of finding a solid philosophical ground for moral evaluations, concluding that they are merely matters of taste. I believe historians should embrace the role of moral commentators, but that they should be aware that their evaluations are, like all historical judgments, subject to the criticisms of their colleagues and readers. Historians run little risk of being censorious and self-righteous; the far greater danger is acquiescing in or contributing to moral confusion and timidity.

ERIK WEBER; see TIM DE MEY and ERIK WEBER

MICHAEL WERNER and BÉNÉDICTE ZIMMERMANN, *Beyond Comparison:*

Histoire croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity 45:1, 30-50

This article presents, in a programmatic way, the *histoire croisée* approach, its methodological implications and its empirical developments. *Histoire croisée*

draws on the debates about comparative history, transfer studies, and connected or shared history that have been carried out in the social sciences in recent years. It invites us to reconsider the interactions between different societies or cultures, erudite disciplines or traditions (more generally, between social and cultural productions). *Histoire croisée* focuses on empirical intercrossings consubstantial with the object of study, as well as on the operations by which researchers themselves cross scales, categories, and viewpoints. The article first shows how this approach differs from purely comparative or transfer studies. It then develops the principles of pragmatic and reflexive induction as a major methodological principle of *histoire croisée*. While underlining the need and the methods of a historicization of both the objects and categories of analysis, it calls for a reconsideration of the way history can combine empirical and reflexive concerns into a dynamic and flexible approach.

WIM WEYMANS, Michel de Certeau and the Limits of
Historical Representation

43:2, 161-178

The polymath Michel de Certeau is traditionally seen as one of a group of French poststructuralist thinkers who reject constructs in the social sciences in favor of the diversity of the everyday or the past. However, in this paper I will show that, as a historian, Certeau did not discard these constructs, but rather valued them as a means of doing justice to the “strangeness” of the past. The position that Certeau adopts can be seen most clearly from his theoretical debate with Paul Veyne, which is the starting point of this article. I then show how Certeau’s first major historical work, *The Possession at Loudun*, exemplifies his theoretical position. An analysis of this work demonstrates how the historian’s active reconstruction of interactions between exorcists, medical doctors, state officers, and possessed nuns helps us to perceive the complexity of the past in a way that can be seen as a microhistory *avant la lettre*. I will suggest that during his writing of the history of Loudun, Certeau implicitly raises more theoretical and epistemological problems, and in so doing he “practices” a theory of history. The most elusive aspect of the story at Loudun turns out to be the drama around the priest Grandier. This article demonstrates how Certeau pays tribute to Grandier by using “scientific” methods, thus showing the “limits of representation” through disciplinary means. Finally, the article explores the implications of Certeau’s theory and practice of the writing of history for understanding historiography at large. The historian not only appears as a tramp who looks for remains that are forever lost to us, but is also a “scientist” who uses both models and concepts in order to put them to the test.

DAVID GORDON WHITE, Digging Wells While Houses Burn? Writing Histories of
Hinduism in a Time of Identity Politics

45:4, Theme Issue 45, 104-131

Over the past fifty years, a number of approaches to the recovery of the multiple pasts of Hinduism have held the field. These include that of the discipline of History of Religions as it is constituted in North America as well as those of the Hindu nationalists, the colonial and post-colonial historians, and the Subaltern Studies School. None of these approaches have proven satisfactory

because, for methodological or ideological reasons, none have adequately addressed human agency or historical change in their accounts of the pasts out of which modern-day Hinduism has emerged. The Hindu nationalist historians hark back to an extended Vedic golden age in which religious practice remained unchanged until the corruptions spawned by the Turkish invasions of the eleventh century. Many Western indologists and historians of religion specializing in Hinduism never leave the unalterable ideal worlds of the scriptures they interpret to investigate the changing real-world contexts out of which those texts emerged. The colonial and postcolonial historians focus on the past two hundred years as the period in which all of the categories through which India continues to interpret itself—including Hinduism—were imposed upon it from without. Adducing examples of Hindu practitioners and thinkers from the colonial period, subaltern theorists and others argue that historical thought is itself alien to the authentic Indian mind. This article suggests a number of interpretive strategies for retrieving the multiple Hinduisms of the past and of the medieval period in particular as that time out of which most modern-day practices of Hinduism emerged. These include an increased emphasis on non-scriptural sources and a focus on regional traditions.

HAYDEN WHITE, *The Public Relevance of Historical Studies: A Reply to Dirk Moses* 44:3, 333-338

I am grateful to Dirk Moses for taking the time to study my work so assiduously and to comment on it so perspicuously. His essay is eminently well-informed and even-handed, and I have little to add to or correct of his characterization of my many, long on-going, and admittedly flawed attempts to deconstruct *modern* historical discourse. He understands me well enough and I think that I understand his objections to my position(s). We do not disagree on matters of fact, I think, but we have different notions about the nature of historical discourse and the uses to which historical knowledge can properly be put.

WILLIAM WHYTE, *How Do Buildings Mean? Some Issues of Interpretation in the History of Architecture* 45:2, 153-177

Despite growing interest from historians in the built environment, the use of architecture as evidence remains remarkably under-theorized. Where this issue has been discussed, the interpretation of buildings has often been likened to the process of reading, in which architecture can be understood by analogy to language: either as a code capable of use in communicating the architect's intentions or more literally as a spoken or written language in its own right. After a historiographical survey, this essay, by contrast, proposes that the appropriate metaphor is one of translation. More particularly, it draws on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin to suggest that architecture—and the interpretation of architecture—comprises a series of transpositions. As a building is planned, built, inhabited, and interpreted, so its meaning changes. The underlying logic of each medium shapes the way in which its message is created and understood. This suggests that the proper role of the historian is to trace these transpositions. Buildings, then, can be used as

a historical source, but only if the historian takes account of the particular problems that they present. In short, architecture should not be studied for its meaning, but for its meanings. As historians we are always translating architecture: not reading its message, but exploring its multiple transpositions.

- GERALD ZAHAVI, The “Trial” of Lee Benson: Communism, White Chauvinism, and the Foundations of the “New Political History” in the United States 42:3, 332-362

Lee Benson was one of the first American political historians to suggest a “systematic” revision of traditional political history with its emphasis on narrow economic class analysis, narrative arguments, and over-reliance on qualitative research methodologies. This essay presents Benson’s contributions to the “new political history”—an attempt to apply social-science methods, concepts, and theories to American political history—as a social, cultural, and political narrative of Cold War-era American history. Benson belonged to a generation of ex-Communist American historians and political scientists whose scholarship and intellectual projects flowed—in part—out of Marxist social and political debates, agendas, and paradigmatic frameworks, even as they rejected and revised them. The main focus of the essay is the genesis of Benson’s pioneering study of nineteenth-century New York state political culture, *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy*, with its emphasis on intra-class versus inter-class conflict, sensitivity to ethnocultural determinants of political and social behavior, and reliance on explicit social-science theory and methodology. In what follows, I argue that *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy* has its roots in Benson’s Popular Front Marxist beliefs, and his decade-long engagement and subsequent disenchantment with American left-wing politics. Benson’s growing alienation from Progressive historical paradigms and traditional Marxist analysis, and his attempts to formulate a neo-Marxism attentive to unique American class and political realities, are linked to his involvement with 1940s radical factional politics and his disturbing encounter with internal Communist party racial and ideological tensions in the late 1940s at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

- JOHN ZAMMITO, Ankersmit and Historical Representation 44:2, 155-181

In *Historical Representation* Frank Ankersmit seeks a *juste milieu* between postmodern theory and historical practice. But he still insists that the meaning of a historical representation “is not *found*, but *made* in and by [the] text.” Thus “there will be nothing, outside the text itself, that can govern or check [the conceptualization].” Accordingly, “a (historical) representation itself cannot be interpreted as one large (true or false) description. I would not hesitate to say that this—and nothing else—is the central problem in the philosophy of history.” On the other hand, he affirms that “a historical representation ‘is about’ a certain part of the past,” that historical debate is a “semantic quarrel not about the exact meaning of words, but about the past.” Everything hinges on how to grasp this idea of “aboutness.”

I propose an alternative reading of post-positivist philosophy of science in hopes of reaching the *juste milieu*. The issue is whether colligatory concepts in history have a more radically constructed character than theoretical terms

in natural-scientific theory, and whether, as with the latter, they can make *intersubjective* claims to warrant. My view is that colligatory concepts in historical representations can be conceived to refer in roughly the same way that theoretical terms do in natural-scientific theories.

All the problems I find in Ankersmit's approach come to the fore in his fruitful analogy to portrait painting. First, the personality the portrait evokes is not restricted to the representation, but is *of* the sitter. We are offered insight not (merely) into painting but into an actual character. That is, there is a *cognitive*, not simply an aesthetic, dimension to representation. Historical terms pick out something intersubjectively affirmable in reality, and discrimination is possible among rival versions. The question is how to regard—to explain and to evaluate—these underdetermined objects of consideration, not to preclude them by stipulation.

BÉNÉDICTE ZIMMERMANN (see MICHAEL WERENER and BÉNÉDICTE ZIMMERMANN)

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