

The History of Ideas: Precept and Practice, 1950-2000 and Beyond

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*The History of Ideas: Precept and Practice,  
1950–2000 and Beyond*

Anthony Grafton

In the middle years of the twentieth century, the history of ideas rose like a new sign of the zodiac over large areas of American culture and education. In those happy days, Dwight Robbins, the president of a fashionable progressive college, kept “copies of *Town and Country*, the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, and a small magazine—a little magazine—that had no name” on the table in his waiting room. True, Robbins did not exist: he was the fictional president of Randall Jarrell’s equally fictional Benton, a liberal arts dystopia where “[h]alf of the college was designed by Bottom the Weaver, half by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.”<sup>1</sup> But Jarrell’s notation of the *Journal*’s status was accurate nonetheless.<sup>2</sup>

The *Journal*, in the twenty years or so after its foundation, attracted attention from many quarters, some of them unexpected. And it occupied a unique position, between the technical journals of history and philology,

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<sup>1</sup> Randall Jarrell, *Pictures from an Institution: A Comedy* (New York: Knopf, 1954), 1. In what follows, citations are only exemplary: to be exhaustive would be impossible.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the autobiographical account of Henry May, *Coming to Terms: A Study in Memory and History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1987), 307: “When I came to Berkeley [in 1950] intellectual history was a satisfyingly radical cause. The wise old men of the historical profession, at Berkeley and elsewhere, tended to dismiss it as impossibly vague and subjective. During the fifties, however, the vogue changed, and my kind of history became, for a short and heady few years, the rising fashion. To my surprise and slight discomfort, during my first decade at Berkeley I found myself, in writing, teaching, and university affairs, increasingly a part of the winning side.”

each firmly identified with a discipline, in which professional humanists normally published their results, and the quarterlies, often based not in disciplines but in liberal arts colleges and universities, which cultivated a mixed readership to which they offered fiction and poetry as well as essays. By contrast with both, the *JHI* fifty years ago ran on a rich mix of technical articles and wide-ranging essays that could easily have attracted the attention of a sophisticated administrator—or at least made a good impression on his coffee table. Bliss was it to be a subscriber in that happy day when the *JHI* glowed with something of the luster that haloed *Representations* in the 1980s and *Critical Inquiry* more recently.<sup>3</sup>

The main reason for the *Journal's* prominence was that it represented a new field, appealingly located between disciplines as the *Journal* was between other sorts of periodical. In its postwar heyday, the history of ideas was not a dim subdivision of history, itself a discipline whose luster has worn off with time, but an intellectual seismic zone where the tectonic plates of disciplines converged and rubbed against one another, producing noises of all sorts. In recent years, it has sometimes seemed impossible, even to the best informed observers, that intellectual history, or the history of ideas, ever enjoyed this sort of prestige. A quarter century ago, Robert Darnton surveyed the state of intellectual and cultural history in the United States in an informative and influential essay. Using a language more resonant of the historical President Carter than the fictional President Robbins, Darnton detected “malaise” everywhere he looked. In the fifties, he noted, intellectual historians had seen “their discipline as the queen of the historical sciences. Today she seems humbled.” True, desperate cries for help were not yet called for. Historians continued to write histories of ideas, and even to cast them in the technical languages of A.O. Lovejoy or Perry Miller: “one still finds ‘unit-ideas’ and ‘mind’ among the trendier terms.” The just-published *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, moreover, offered a vast selection of Lovejoyan formal analyses, systematically organized, to the reading public.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In those halcyon days George Boas could publish his *The History of Ideas: An Introduction* (New York: Scribner, 1969), with Scribner's, a trade press. Remarkably, a spectacularly self-aware academic comedy with a serious purpose, Robert Merton's *On the Shoulders of Giants: A Shandean Postscript* (New York: Scribner, 1965), was dedicated to the field. This book first appeared with a foreword by the best-selling historian Catherine Drinker Bowen. It was reprinted in 1985 with an afterword by Denis Donoghue, and again in 1993 with a foreword by Umberto Eco and a preface and postface by the author.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Darnton, “Intellectual and Cultural History,” *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 327–28.

But for the last ten years, Darnton argued, younger scholars, especially graduate students, had been scrambling over the gunwales of the good ship *History of Ideas*, abandoning the effort to converse abstractly with the mighty dead, and clambering in hordes over the side of a newer vessel, *Social History*, which boasted a Hogarthian passenger list of heretics, misfits, and military women. At the level of the dissertations written in history departments, social history was outpacing intellectual, by a proportion of three to one. At the level of the scholarly journal, too, social history had forged ahead, though by a smaller margin. In the murkier, but no less significant, world of opinion, finally, the decline of intellectual history appeared clearest. *History of ideas* no longer occupied the cutting edge in young scholars' mental vision of their discipline.

Social history, after all, had captured the minds of a generation—or a large percentage of it—in the 1960s, thanks both to the power of its own new method and vision and to the political conditions that inspired so many historians to dedicate themselves to recovering the experience of those who had not had power, voice or privilege in the past. From the 1960s on, the study of core texts and writers would undergo siege after siege, from the era when “irrelevance” formed the central charge against it to the later age of the culture wars, when tragedy repeated itself as farce. Even more important, intellectual history had genuinely lost its edge and coherence in the same period. The collapse of liberalism in the 1960s undermined the Americanist pursuit of a unified “national mind,” leaving the field open for social historians who emphasized the varied experiences of those groups that the older picture had omitted. Europeanists too found it impossible, by the 1960s, to draw the unified pictures of intellectual traditions and cultural periods that had occupied A.O. Lovejoy and Carl Becker. Instead they traced what amounted to intellectual biographies of individuals or groups—studies that were often erudite and insightful, but not methodologically distinct from the work of cultural historians or historians of science.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Darnton had in mind work like that of Frank Manuel, whose Newtonian scholarship moved in the 1960s from a style of biography based on textual analysis—a form of scholarship to be discussed below—to one that applied a more controversial psychoanalytic approach: cf. *Isaac Newton, Historian* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963) with *A Portrait of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968; repr. Washington, D.C., 1979). In later studies like *The Changing of the Gods* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1983) and *The Broken Staff: Judaism Through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), Manuel returned to the history of ideas in a more traditional vein, as he did in his study of *The Religion of Isaac Newton* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1974).

Darnton noted continued signs of life amid the ruins. Some practitioners—like Carl Schorske and Dominick LaCapra—were determined to emphasize direct reading of texts, works of art, even pieces of music. Though the two of them used very different methods, they agreed that intellectual historians must confront the genres, styles and local details of the works of art and literature that they analyzed, rather than reducing them to instances of larger concepts. Others—above all historians of political thought like Bernard Bailyn and Quentin Skinner—had set out to erect a new discipline in which context—the local matrices within which texts were forged and read—and language—the language of humble pamphlets and bold speeches, as well as that of canonical texts—took center stage. Political thought mattered, Bailyn argued, when it became part of a larger discussion carried on in newspapers and argued through in taverns, as had happened in eighteenth-century America. Political thought changed, Skinner claimed, when someone dared to use key terms, with malice aforethought, in senses clearly different than their normal ones. If Bailyn provided a new way to follow ideas into action, Skinner offered a new version of intellectual history itself—one that traced its roots to Peter Laslett’s brilliant edition of Locke’s *Second Treatise* and that challenged all traditional ways of doing intellectual history. Skinner himself argued, in a very influential article, that no historian could write meaningfully of intellectual traditions, interpret older texts as speaking to a modern context, or usefully construct an intellectual biography. Some older scholars experienced this sharp framed critical exercise, directed at the removal of dead wood, as a form of clear-cutting which left few trees where once forests had loomed. Over time, as we will see, Skinner’s method both yielded remarkable results and underwent major modifications, but neither could easily have been predicted in the 1970s.

Other fields within the larger territory of intellectual history revealed on closer inspection that sharp debates, always a preeminent sign of life, were still being waged. History of science, for example, remained, as it had long been, a battlefield. Where Marxists had once struggled with sociologists by night, learned armies of internalists and externalists now fought one another by day. The tension between them, Darnton thought, “will continue to be creative . . . and even the most recondite scientific activity will be interpreted within a cultural context”—especially since this tension appeared within the work of particularly eminent and original scholars like Thomas Kuhn, as well as in the territory that seemed to be opening up

between warring schools.<sup>6</sup> A number of shared themes, moreover, connected the projects that looked most promising: for example, the effort to locate even the most seemingly abstract of enterprises, from Harvard philosophy to Weimar physics, in institutional, social, and discursive contexts.

For all his appreciation for these writers and others, however, Darnton saw the scene as fragmented and rather depressing. Massive studies of intellectual traditions continued to appear, some of them masterly: for example, Frank Manuel and Fritzie Manuel's 1979 survey of *Utopian Thought in the Western World*. But few enterprises in intellectual history had the innovative character and compulsively readable quality of the work being done by the new cultural historians, with their passionate if still inchoate concern "for the study of symbolic behavior among the 'inarticulate.'"<sup>7</sup> Many of the liveliest and most accomplished intellectual historians, moreover, bent over their spades and hoes not in the long-cultivated gardens and borders of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment and the nineteenth-century age of evolutionary schemes, but in distant, gravel-strewn border zones where the history of ideas touched—or even passed over into—other forms of history. For Darnton, in the end, intellectual history could survive only if it became a basically social and cultural history of ideas and their bearers.

Darnton's observations were characteristically trenchant and mostly just. A striking number of the younger scholars in whom he saw special promise in the early stages of their careers have more than borne out his predictions, producing long series of influential books and articles. Many of the most original and influential intellectual histories of the 1960s and 1970s—for example, H. Stuart Hughes's *Consciousness and Society* (1958), Fritz Stern's *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (1961), Fritz Ringer's *The Decline of the German Mandarins* (1969) and Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination* (1973)—offered new models for setting the life of ideas into institutional, social, and cultural contexts. The new cultural history that he saw aborning in the late 1970s did come to occupy a special place in historical research and teaching, just as he predicted, in the 1980s and 1990s—the period when Darnton's own *Great Cat Massacre*, Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*, Natalie Zemon Davis's *The Return of Martin Guerre*, and Jonathan Spence's *Death of Woman Wang* and *Memory House of Matteo Ricci* captured a vast reading public and transformed the teaching of history across the country. This form of scholarship, which

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 338–39.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 346.

grasped, often successfully, for previously unrecorded and unplumbed worlds of experience, defined a growth sector of intellectual and cultural historiography for the decades ahead. Perhaps those historians of ideas who felt and showed malaise in the 1970s were right.<sup>8</sup>

As a new group of editors takes over the *Journal*, it seems right to have another broad look at the way that our field has developed. After all, we can now look back, and forward, with another twenty-five years' experience to guide us, and with all the charity and clarity that hindsight affords. If we do so—and especially if we survey the same scene not, as Darnton was asked to, from within the discipline of history, but from the interdisciplinary space that the *Journal of the History of Ideas* has always occupied—we may see that matters were not so bleak as they seemed in the late 1970s. The humanistic disciplines were moving, in their glacial, irresistible way. And though it seemed, around 1980, that they were pulling apart, in fact they were meeting at new points and transforming one another in the process. The tremors they created would soon reorient intellectual history. And the residual strength that the field and the *Journal* displayed in the 1990s and after had everything to do with the roots from which it sprang.

To begin with the beginning: the *Journal* and the enterprise it represented were never meant to be wholly, or even partly, owned subsidiaries of the discipline of history. Scholars who mention the name of A.O. Lovejoy these days often do so in order to lampoon his methods. Arnaldo Momigliano spoke for many before and after him when he compared Lovejoy and his vision of “unit-ideas” to the Oxford scholar Margoliouth, who believed that there were thirty Indo-European Urjokes from which all the rest were derived. “Lovejoy,” he quipped, “did not believe that the number of Ur-ideas was much greater.”<sup>9</sup> In fact, however, Lovejoy took as passionate an interest in institutions and their flesh and blood inhabitants as in abstract ideas—he was, after all, one of the creators of the AAUP.<sup>10</sup> He deliberately designed the history of ideas, as he explained in the first issue of the *Journal*, as a field that had to be interdisciplinary if it was to exist at all. And his program for the external organization of the field derived from his vision of its content and method.

Capsule summaries of Lovejoy's work usually portray him—and some-

<sup>8</sup> Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Oxford: Polity, 2004), chaps. 3–4.

<sup>9</sup> Arnaldo Momigliano, “A Piedmontese View of the History of Ideas,” *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 6.

<sup>10</sup> Daniel J. Wilson, *Arthur O. Lovejoy and the Quest for Intelligibility* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), chap. 5.

times dismiss him—as one who wanted to reduce all works of literature and art to illustrations of particular philosophical doctrines. Lovejoy did set out to map the “unit-ideas” that, he believed, had originally framed, and must now be invoked to explicate, all great works of literature and art, as well as science and philosophy, in the western tradition. It is not surprising that Lovejoy saw formal systems of ideas as the core object of his studies. He was a philosopher by training. So was Philip Weiner, for forty-five years executive editor of the *Journal*, and their joint vision helped to shape the journal and the field over time. But though both men cherished a personal preference for studies of formal ideas, both also agreed that ideas had to be studied as expressed in the whole field of culture. Lovejoy, moreover, made clear that in his view, “in the history of philosophy is to be found the common seed-plot, the *locus* of initial manifestation in writing, of the greater number of the more fundamental and pervasive ideas.” But he also held that these ideas manifested themselves in multiple and varied ways: to survey the life of any single idea, such as “evolution,” would require expert knowledge of fields from geology to aesthetics, as well as a firm ability to distinguish the various meanings of particular words and phrases in the texts of a given period. The same held, even more strongly, for the study of larger and more confused categories like “Romanticism,” to which Lovejoy devoted pages that have been as controversial, since they were published, as they have been influential.<sup>11</sup> In order to carry out this immense task, Lovejoy argued from the start, scrupulous scholars from every humanistic discipline would have to collaborate, since no individual with one scholar’s normal, limited training could hope to exhaust the story of a single true unit-idea—much less complete the analysis of any one of the massive works that embodied these abstract but powerful entities—on his own. Humanists, in fact, should emulate the sciences and work in collaboration. By doing so they could, Lovejoy suggested not without irony, create a commentary on Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, at a level of precision and completeness that no individual, however learned and energetic, could hope to reach.<sup>12</sup> For decades it has been normal to criticize Lovejoy on the grounds that he

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<sup>11</sup> Arthur Lovejoy, “On the Discrimination of Romanticisms,” *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 39 (1924): 229–53, reprinted in his *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948), 228–53. Here Lovejoy makes clear how attention to what he saw as “simpler, diversely combinable, intellectual and emotional components” (253) of a sweeping term for a period style in thought and art like Romanticism could lead to great gains in conceptual clarity.

<sup>12</sup> Arthur Lovejoy, “The Historiography of Ideas,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 78 (1928), reprinted in his *Essays*, 1–13.



wanted to reduce art and literature to the expression of formal ideas. The critique has its merits—though it ignores his emphasis on the emotional power with which intellectuals charged an idea like that of the great chain of being. But Lovejoy regularly invited representatives of the other humanistic disciplines to collaborate in the plotting of the larger story—even though he must have suspected that they would bring their own priorities and practices with them, and find his wanting in certain respects at least.

From the start, in other words, Lovejoy envisioned the history of ideas as a field in which scholars with varied disciplinary trainings and loyalties would meet. The *Journal* was to play a social as well as an intellectual role. This is exactly how the history of ideas had functioned at Lovejoy's own university, Johns Hopkins, for decades before the *Journal* came into existence. Not a charismatic teacher, Lovejoy attracted few graduate students to the Philosophy Department of which he and George Boas were the only members. But the History of Ideas Club that he and Boas founded in 1923 became an extraordinarily successful, if sometimes "zoo-like," interdisciplinary enterprise—a regular meeting place where members of the erudite, articulate Hopkins humanities faculty could offer papers and dispute with one another at a very high level.<sup>13</sup> No prophet in his own country, Lovejoy found one of his sharpest critics at home, in the person of Leo Spitzer, who joined the Hopkins faculty as an exile in the 1940s and who argued, against Lovejoy, that only a combination of philological precision in the analysis of language and evocative *Geistesgeschichte* for the recreation of contexts could provide a method adequate to the new discipline's needs. As to Lovejoy's method, it represented a slip backwards from the Romantic method—on which, Spitzer thought, Lovejoy largely blamed the rise of the Nazis—to the superficial analysis of the Enlightenment: "it seems to me tragic that in inorganically detaching certain features from the whole of Romanticism in order to draw lines of continuity with our times, the historian of ideas has discarded the very method, discovered by the Romantics, which is indispensable for the understanding of the alternation of historical or cultural climates."<sup>14</sup> Lovejoy disagreed, with spirit and some asperity.<sup>15</sup> But since he treated the history of ideas not as a set doctrine, but as a center for fruitful and passionate debate, the *Journal* printed Spitzer's critique as well as Lovejoy's reply. In a sense, Lovejoy's mixed reception at Harvard, where the

<sup>13</sup> Wilson, 187–89.

<sup>14</sup> Leo Spitzer, "Geistesgeschichte vs. History of Ideas as Applied to Hitlerism," *JHI* 5 (1944): 191–203 at 203.

<sup>15</sup> Arthur Lovejoy, "Reply to Professor Spitzer," *ibid.*, 204–19.

philosophers stopped coming to the lectures that became *The Great Chain of Being* while the literary scholars remained, only confirms the larger point. In the pre-war American university system, in which faculty taught many hours per week, took many years to complete their doctorates and struggled even longer to reach the bottom rung of the tenure track, a system that boasted few of the lecture series, workshops, and post-doctoral fellowships that now bring young scholars from multiple disciplines into productive contact, the history of ideas served as one of the few virtual salons that encouraged conversations of the right sort. In the *Journal* and the fields it covered, disciplines that usually had little traffic with one another—English literature and history, for example—could meet and discuss texts of common interest in productive ways. So could the émigré scholars and their American colleagues and pupils who made the *Journal* one of the most cosmopolitan of scholarly periodicals.

By the 1950s, as the successive issues of the *Journal* established the interest and legitimacy of the field and graduate education in humanities expanded, the discipline showed its interdisciplinary appeal at a number of institutions. At Columbia University, for example, Rosalie Colie and Samuel Mintz—formally a literary scholar and a philosopher—founded in 1954 a *Newsletter* for the history of ideas. This lively, even frenetic publication gave graduate students and young scholars a venue where they could publish short primary sources, review books, and float their own ideas about the past and the discipline of intellectual history. It attracted lively participation and provoked widespread interest. When Colie herself ventured to argue that the best way to teach the history of science was as social history, she received sharp, critical responses from distinguished historians and literary scholars around the country, including such eminences as Crane Brinton and Harcourt Brown—a historian and a literary scholar respectively. Though Colie pronounced herself “well and truly drubbed” by their replies, she rebutted them with characteristic vigor and confidence.<sup>16</sup> In the age of the web site and the blog, it is salutary to be reminded that the US Mail and the mimeograph machine could sustain a national, interdisciplinary network of this quality. Columbia would continue to be a great center for intellectual history for decades to come. Evidently, then, the history of

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<sup>16</sup> Rosalie Colie, “‘Method’ and the History of Scientific Ideas,” *History of Ideas Newsletter* 4 (1958): 75–79; Crane Brinton, Harcourt Brown, Francis Johnson, F.E.L. Priestley, Victor Harris, and David Hawkins, “‘Method and the History of Scientific Ideas’: Comment and Discussion,” *ibid.*, 5 (1959): 27–36; “The Editor’s Column: Miss Colie Replies,” *ibid.*, 5 (1959): 50, 67–68.

ideas, and the *Journal*, flourished in part because they provided something of what campus humanities centers do now—spaces between disciplines, where scholars can come together, master one another's tools, and apply them to their own objects.

In its first heyday, moreover, the history of ideas flourished in many contexts, and for many reasons. It rested, in large part, on pedagogical foundations that had been reared quite independently of Lovejoy and the *Journal*. In the aftermath of World War I, urban universities like Columbia and Chicago created introductory courses on western civilization. Administrators and professors saw these surveys as a vital way to impart a common background, or at least apply a shared veneer, to their ethnically varied and culturally unpolished students. After World War II, broad-gauged courses of this kind took on a new function, as they provided veterans who studied on the GI bill with not only the elements of a humanistic education, but also some acquaintance with texts that they could use to work through what they had experienced on Pacific islands and in the bomber stream over Berlin.<sup>17</sup>

These courses attracted faculty from a variety of disciplines. They were often, perhaps usually, team taught. And they were enriched by formal presentations in which a member of the course staff presented particular texts or problems to his or her colleagues. Western Civilization—or as Columbia called it, Contemporary Civilization—became something like a way of life. It also served, at Columbia, as the foundation for the Humanities Colloquium—an intensive, two-year study of great books, in which a staff that included Jacques Barzun and Lionel Trilling debated, before their students, the virtues of historical and non-historical approaches to texts. Crane Brinton's legendary course on Men and Ideas at Harvard pushed large numbers of students in another direction, towards the question of how ideas generated action. The existence of these courses meant that students from many, though hardly all, of the better colleges and universities were prepared, even conditioned, to see intellectual history as a vital field—one which they found it easy to enter, and whose practices came to them with a feeling of naturalness. Historians whose own careers took radically different directions in the 1950s and 1960s have paid eloquent tribute, in recent years, to the interdisciplinary surveys of western civilization that set them on the path to scholarship.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Gilbert Allardyce, "The Rise and Fall of the Western Civilization Course," *American Historical Review* 87 (1982): 695–725.

<sup>18</sup> For some very different cases in point, see the comments of Carl Schorske in *Thinking with History: Explorations in the Passage to Modernism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 20; Richard McCormick in Michael Birkner, *McCormick of Rutgers: Schol-*

The history of ideas, moreover, was an established field of scholarly inquiry long before Lovejoy published his first articles on evolution in *Popular Science Monthly*, or the first new historians began setting up their courses in the field. Donald Kelley has traced, in a powerful and erudite book, the ancestry of the history of ideas—a chain of scholars, philosophers, scientists, and social reformers that leads all the way back from the new research universities of the nineteenth century to classical antiquity. Greek philosophers drew up doxographical histories of philosophy, painted polemical portraits of their predecessors and occasionally pursued systematic inquiries into the growth of astronomy or anatomy. Medieval scholars drew up genealogies and—in the remarkable case of Roger Bacon—mounted formal inquiries into the reasons why certain older thinkers had produced solid and useful results. Renaissance humanists compiled what they called “literary histories”—rich, complex, and sometimes perversely polemical inquiries into the history of disciplines from history itself to astronomy and mathematics. Francis Bacon found this form of humanistic scholarship so stimulating that he urged his readers to compile, working century by century, histories of the different arts and disciplines and the conditions that had made them flourish or decline. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, finally, histories of philosophy, science, literature, and social thought became a central occupation of thinkers as influential as Victor Cousin and Hippolyte Taine, and the writing of proper histories often came to be seen as a prerequisite for the larger reform of intellectual life.<sup>19</sup>

These enterprises varied radically in character and method. Even in nineteenth-century Germany, perhaps the west’s *locus classicus* for the development of historical approaches to all forms of knowledge, the formal history of philosophy took root only gradually, as university teaching began to adopt the seminar method of close collective reading of older texts, and flourished in a wild variety of forms, many of them devoid of the Hegelian inspiration once thought to have made philosophy historical. Much work in this field went on in lecture-rooms rather than studies, moreover, as philosophers offered formal courses on the history of their subject, which have only begun to be studied.<sup>20</sup> The same is true for any number of other disci-

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*ar, Teacher, Public Historian* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 47; and William McNeil in *The Pursuit of Truth: A Historian’s Memoir* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2005).

<sup>19</sup> Donald R. Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: The History of Intellectual History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

<sup>20</sup> Ulrich Schneider, “Teaching the History of Philosophy in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Germany,” *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Princeton: Center for Human Values, Princeton University, 2004), 275–95.

plines that became articulately self-conscious, in the nineteenth century, from philology to physics, and whose disciplinary histories in many cases have not yet attracted their historians. Nonetheless it is striking to see how widely the history of ideas was written and taught, long before anyone thought of including it in the discipline of history.

In the last sunny decades of nineteenth-century liberal culture, histories of ideas—as well as histories of philosophy—flourished widely, especially in the English-speaking world. John Draper and Andrew Dickson White used history to examine the millennial conflict between science and religion, in massive books that retain a certain relevance now. As the liberal consensus neared its strange death, the history of ideas became a central concern of British intellectuals like the Carlyles, Leslie Stephen, and J.B. Bury, whose books had no rivals on the Continent. In the years when modernity seemed to have created a civilization and technology that would carry all before it, the history of the ideas that underpinned the modern world came to seem as urgent as the history of battles and constitutions—perhaps more so, for a wide, non-scholarly readership. Momigliano, writing in the 1970s, recalled that as a student in the 1920s, he had regarded the history of ideas as a British specialty. He found it puzzling, accordingly, that when he reached Oxford in 1939, “It was enough to mention the word ‘idea’ to be given the address of the Warburg Institute.”<sup>21</sup> By the outbreak of World War II, intellectual historians like Herbert Butterfield were isolated, at least among the British professionals. A generation before the intellectual map had looked quite different. When reforming American advocates of a “new history” like Charles Beard began their campaign against the political narratives of an older, positivist historiography, after the First World War, they imported these excellent foreign products—as Beard did when he reprinted Bury’s history of the idea of progress with a long, admiring introduction.<sup>22</sup>

The sense that the history of ideas formed part of a progressive approach to history and society—and the effort to use the method to work out not only, as Lovejoy did, the development of metaphysics and aesthetics, but also the paths by which ideas had shaped, and could reshape, the political and social order—did not dissipate with the reform currents of the early 1920s. Writers like Vernon Parrington and, later on, the brilliant outsider Richard Hofstadter, used the history of ideas to understand where

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<sup>21</sup> Momigliano, 1.

<sup>22</sup> J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth* (New York: Macmillan, 1932).

America's energies came from—and to trace the fault lines within the world of the American intellect. As late as the 1960s, courses on intellectual history at major American universities—for example, the famous survey courses offered by George Mosse at the University of Wisconsin—still served as primary rallying points for hundreds of students critical of the existing order in society and the state—even when, as in Mosse's case, the content of the course remained solidly in the realm of ideas, and the instructor resolutely intent on revealing to his students the flaws and contradictions that made their own programs useless. To that extent, the relation between intellectual history and social protest was not simple, or unidirectional, even in the heyday of social history.

Three more existing streams of thought and practice flowed into the history of ideas and helped to fertilize the soil its practitioners cultivated. One was decidedly foreign. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, German scholars had experimented with a range of new models for the study of cultures. Jacob Burckhardt and his many disciples and critics devised new ways to portray past cultures as wholes, offering new contexts for the study of past ideas and thinkers. Aby Warburg and his followers created equally novel ways to trace traditions over the centuries of western history, following the disappearances and reappearances of symbols and explicating their transformations, and their larger meanings, in a richly interdisciplinary way. In the same period, a range of medievalists in and outside Germany turned Burckhardt's weapons against him, creating histories of the medieval centuries that, like Burckhardt's history of the Renaissance, emphasized the realm of culture and ideas even as they argued that medieval men and women had been far more realistic, less shackled to authority, than Burckhardt realized.

These debates moved to North America and settled comfortably there even before the nineteenth century ended. Pioneering medievalists like Charles Homer Haskins and Lynn Thorndike attacked the same questions, wielding vast reserves of new material drawn from European libraries and archives. The *Journal of the History of Ideas* provided, among other things, a platform for the debate and pursuit of these already existing issues—one that soon came to be so crowded as to resemble *The Raft of the Medusa* rather than a peaceful *School of Athens*. Of all American enterprises in the history of ideas, Thorndike's *History of Magic and Experimental Science* proved perhaps the largest in scale. It drew its intellectual inspiration directly from the European debate about the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The stream of new methods and materials from abroad continued to

grow, moreover, during the early decades of Lovejoy's career, as European scholarship moved in new directions and then, more rapidly, as European scholars began to make their forced *translatio studii* to the United States. Friedrich Meinecke offered new models for understanding the history of major intellectual formations like historicism. Werner Jaeger showed how to write the biography of a great thinker, Aristotle, who had left no letters and the development of whose mind could be established only by internal analysis of his texts. In the 1950s and 1960s, younger members of these foreign schools, uprooted from their German homes by Hitler, transformed the humanities in America as they themselves were transplanted into them—or at least came to write in English. Erwin Panofsky made a version of Warburg's method elegantly accessible to generations of young scholars, by no means all of them in art history. His former colleagues at the Warburg Institute, now reestablished in London, developed their method in a whole series of different ways, not without engaging in polemics. Meanwhile Felix Gilbert and other German émigrés offered a sharper, more archival form of Meinecke's method to students of both European and American ideas, and Hans Baron brilliantly deployed the methods of the Leipzig school of cultural history to transform the study of Renaissance humanism. Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach imparted different versions of German philology and hermeneutics to American graduate students. Jaeger's severely analytical method of intellectual biography, with its fierce concentration on finding the inconsistencies and fissures in apparently finished, coherent works, gave Gilbert, Baron, Hexter, and many others a new way to study Machiavelli, whose work became a seedbed for new methods. These scholars saw the redating and decomposition of classic and apparently coherent texts like *The Prince* and *The Discourses* as a way to transform what seemed to be fissures and contradictions—like the intense, brain-exploding contrast between the pragmatic absolutism and immoralism of the *Prince* and the republicanism of the *Discourses*—into the evidence for intellectual development, usually in response to particular outside circumstances, biographical and political. Hexter famously applied the same method to Thomas More, and gradually the intellectual biography—an approach that fused a concentration on context and development with close attention to the texts that had formed the center of past intellectuals' lives—established itself as a standard approach, distinct from the straight biography of an intellectual and rooted in the study of texts.<sup>23</sup> The stream of models and stimuli from

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<sup>23</sup> See esp. Hans Baron's studies, collected in *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought*, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J.:

abroad never dried up. Even Great Britain—which no longer saw itself, in the 1950s, as friendly to the history of ideas—harbored the brilliant Isaiah Berlin, who had more pupils and disciples in the United States than at home, as well as younger scholars like John Burrow, whose 1966 *Evolution and Society: A Study in Victorian Social Theory* became a model for American historians of social thought.

In the same years, the massive programs of translation and paperback publication supported by the Bollingen Foundation and the new publishers of upscale paperbacks, above all Harper, made the work of these scholars, and some of their teachers, accessible to a broad American public. Momigliano recalled that he realized, soon after arriving at University College London, that the most distinguished and penetrating intellectual historians within the institution were the historians of science, scholars like Michael Polanyi whose insights did not derive from formal training as historians and who did not teach in the department of history. Disciplinary boundaries were lower in the United States than in Great Britain—low enough that students, as well as faculty members, could often see over them. No one could begin the study of European intellectual history in America in the 1950s or 1960s without realizing that some of the most distinctive and powerful minds in the field were art historians—above all perhaps, Panofsky, whose modified version of Burckhardt continued to provide an intellectual agenda for Renaissance scholarship long after his death. But Panofsky was flanked, on his appearance in the American marketplace of ideas, by such powerful exponents of different approaches to the same problems as Ernst Robert Curtius, Jean Seznec, and Edgar Wind.<sup>24</sup>

A second stream flowed from decidedly native springs. Nowadays, it is customary to look back with anger—or sometimes with pity—at the rise of American Studies. Scholars nourished on Said, Foucault, and Bourdieu can all too easily detect the blindness that always accompanied insight, and sometimes overcame it, in founding historians of American thought like Perry Miller and F.O. Matthiessen. These men all too often took the text as a key to the whole society—and a few texts, chosen sometimes in advance of large-scale research, as keys to the whole universes. Their passion for

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Princeton University Press, 1988), and cf. *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflection*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>24</sup> See for part of this story William McGuire, *Bollingen: An Adventure in Collecting the Past* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982). Harper Torchbooks provided inexpensive editions of Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being* and vital works on the history of ideas by Cassirer, Curtius, Garin, Rossi, and others. Beacon did the same for the works of Perry Miller.



finding *the* structure, *the* metaphor, or *the* trope that governed and expressed American culture as a whole seems naive in retrospect.

And yet, the pioneers of American studies were moved by a profound excitement that is hard to recapture in a time when no one doubts that American writers and philosophers deserve serious scholarly attention. In the early decades of the century, it took courage for a professor to declare his respect for Walt Whitman or Theodore Dreiser; more courage still for one to dedicate himself to the study of American literature or intellectual history. Students of American thought, moreover, soon began to reveal to astonished Europeanists the significance of texts and developments that the Europeanists themselves had neglected. Perry Miller and Samuel Eliot Morison, for example, first announced the vital importance that many Puritans ascribed to the reforms of dialectic and rhetoric demanded by the French humanist Petrus Ramus—at the time, a figure largely neglected in scholarship on British and European intellectual history.<sup>25</sup> Subsequent studies have taught us that Puritan Harvard also retained a very substantial interest, which Miller and Morison did not fully detect, in the traditions of scholastic philosophy, and to that extent have modified the structures reared by those toiling giants.<sup>26</sup> But the Americanists' rediscovery of Ramus has propelled important changes in the intellectual history of early modern Europe. So has Lewis Hanke's rediscovery of the use of Aristotle in early modern times to justify the imposition of slavery on the inhabitants of the New World. The opening up of American intellectual history, in a sense, created the possibility of studying the reception of texts, methods, and ideas—and did so long before the term “reception” had received anything like its common meaning.

The history of science, finally, intersected with that of ideas, in the early years of both fields, in ways that have become difficult to recapture. History of science, like the history of ideas, came clothed with the appeal of a new

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<sup>25</sup> See esp. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1939); Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Founding of Harvard College* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935); *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936); *The Puritan Pronaos: Studies in the Intellectual Life of New England in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1936). The great work that Miller and Morison inspired was of course Walter Ong, SJ, *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958). On Miller's practice see David Hollinger, “Perry Miller and Philosophical History,” *In the American Province: Essays in the History and Historiography of Ideas* (Bloomington, Ind., 1985), 152–66.

<sup>26</sup> See Norman Fiering, *Moral Philosophy at Seventeenth-Century Harvard: A Discipline in Transition* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1981).

subject—and one concerned, like the history of ideas, with the origins of modernity itself. The most influential historians of science in the English-speaking world chiefly concerned themselves, moreover, with great episodes in the early modern history of science: the rise of a mechanical world picture, the downfall of Aristotelianism, the rise of new scientific methods and the theory of evolution and its sources. All of these subjects were intimately connected with the classic problems of the history of science, as Bury and Lovejoy, for all their differences of method and emphasis, had defined them: how the stable, timeless universe of the Great Chain of Being and the stable, repetitive history of the classical and medieval tradition turned into the changeable, infinite universe of modern science and the faith in infinite progress shared by capitalists and Marxists.<sup>27</sup>

History of science, accordingly, became a major—perhaps *the* major—subdivision of intellectual history in the period from the 1930s to the 1960s. Many scholars trained in history or literary history made the development of science and its impact their central concern. The *Journal* published endless inquiries, not only into such obviously central intellectual questions as the origins of heliocentrism or evolution, but also into wider realms, with a social and institutional flavor to them: for example, the culture of the *virtuosi* who, in the seventeenth century, built the new academies and societies that first gave inquiry into nature a unique institutional base. Historians of ideas saw their work as central to understanding the old picture of the world that modern science had destroyed and replaced, the intellectual roots of modern scientific practice and ideology, and the transformation of imaginative literature under the impact of new scientific discoveries—a field in which Marjorie Nicolson and Rosalie Colie, among others, did work that remains standard to this day. No wonder, then, that intellectual history seemed in good health as the 1960s dawned.

Why then did Darnton—and many other observers—feel that they were witnessing a precipitous decline, only ten or fifteen years after all these streams merged in the challenging new wave of 1960? Darnton himself identified some of the central factors—especially the rise of a challenging new social and cultural history—that operated within history departments. But other developments also mattered at least as much, and possibly more. The *Journal*, as we have seen, was unusual partly because of its uninhibited call for collaboration between disciplines. Through the 1950s—partly as a result of the common undergraduate training shared by so many profes-

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Wilson.

sors—a historical approach continued to form part of the normal method of most of the humanistic disciplines. But challenges were emerging. Many of the literary quarterlies which in the 1940s had encouraged Panofsky, Edmund Wilson, and others to pursue largely historical approaches to art and literature, now allied themselves with the New Critics. Once radical outsiders, they rapidly came to dominate some of the most influential departments of literature, and they demanded that courses on literature and the arts divest themselves of the old-fashioned apparatus of erudition in favor of direct, formal confrontation with the literary text or the work of art.<sup>28</sup> The literary historians, the old-fashioned “scholar-adventurers” who had once made English departments into hives of historical inquiry into the conditions of stagecraft in London, the minutiae of textual variation in manuscript and print, and the intellectual history of England and the United States found themselves more and more on the outside, dismissed as pedants. So, often, did iconologist art historians, whose work looked naïve at a time when both social history and formalist analysis seemed to give deeper insights into the visual field. Though the history of ideas continued to have practitioners and allies in the world of literary scholarship, few of them played the dominant role of a Marjorie Nicolson in the years around 1950.

Even more serious, perhaps, was the attack on history and tradition that swept almost everything before it in philosophy. Before World War II, many American philosophy departments had been eclectic even if few could rival the pure erudition of the Hopkins dioscuri, Boas and Lovejoy. In the 1960s and after, however, new philosophies spread from Vienna, Cambridge, and Oxford into the American university. Far more varied than their hostile observers claimed, the new approaches shared an intense hostility to many philosophical traditions. Moral philosophy and metaphysics were often dismissed as fruitless efforts to wrestle with questions that could never be answered. So was the study of most texts written before Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*—except for a few saving examples of early work technical enough to be interesting or silly enough to be fun to refute. “Just Say No to the History of Ideas”—a now famous banner with a strange device, first sighted on a door in Princeton’s long-dominant Department of Philosophy—epitomized an attitude that marginalized both the method, and most of the objects, of the history of ideas. Lovejoy’s *Great Chain of Being*, in particular, exemplified the sort of study that most practicing philosophers

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. the discussion in Schorske, *Thinking with History*, 228.

wanted to abandon, in every way from its passion for untimely issues to the brevity with which it treated individual texts and thinkers.<sup>29</sup>

These structural changes in the humanistic disciplines called the whole notion of interdisciplinary work into question. Critics and philosophers who accepted the more radical versions of the New Critical or Wittgensteinian program could not, in principle, accept that efforts to engage in discussion with historians or historically minded humanists promised much enlightenment—much less commit themselves to cooperate with them in teaching what necessarily looked like intellectually mushy courses, that gave short shrift to the most vital principles and tools of the new humanities. Some fields—classical scholarship, for example—seemed more reluctant to adopt an unhistorical approach. But they too were expanding, and their literature was becoming an independent body of scholarship—one that historians of other fields found increasingly dense and impenetrable.

Even the history of science—once the surest support of history of ideas—separated itself from the mother ship in the 1960s. Historians of science now underwent a separate form of graduate training, wrote for the increasing number of specialized history of science journals, and turned in their research to the later periods of modern science—periods in which the work done was so technical that ordinary historians could not follow close reading of texts, much less precise reconstruction of experiments, observations, and computations. If malaise haunted many historians of ideas in the 1970s—and the present writer remembers that it did—it surely derived in large part from the feeling that what had seemed a solid intellectual continent, one in which the humanistic disciplines intersected, had turned out to be a shrinking polar ice cap, and the onetime inhabitants of thriving settlements in trading zones found themselves marooned on melting floes. The history of ideas—as embodied by the *Journal* and as practiced by a larger community of humanists—suffered genuine structural problems. Combined with the larger woes of the academy at a time of rapid downsizing—and the attendant fear that a wrong choice of dissertation topic or method could condemn one to a lifetime selling second-hand books or driving a taxi—these conditions did as much as the rise of social history to make the intellectual historians feel insecure and out of sorts, and to discourage students

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<sup>29</sup> For a useful contemporary account of the transformation of academic philosophy in Britain and its impact on America, see Ved Mehta, *Fly and the Fly-Bottle* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962). The fullest account is now Scott Soames, *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century*, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

who reasonably valued the information offered by the market from pursuing the field's traditional forms of inquiry.

And yet, in exactly this period—the late 1970s and early 1980s—a series of changes took place, all of them related but not at the same level, which enabled the field not only to survive, but also to adopt new methods and attack new issues. Within the discipline of history, in the first place, scholars made what looks, in retrospect, like an almost concerted turn towards tracing detailed internalist histories of the fields and disciplines that they had once treated, deliberately, as outsiders and in more general terms. In the history of philosophy, for example, Darnton noted Bruce Kuklick's dazzling recent book on Harvard.<sup>30</sup> But other historians by trade also published, in the same years, on philosophers, some of them—like Morris Raphael Cohen and the followers of Hegel—long known to be unsparingly professional and technical, while others—like Lorenzo Valla and Francis Bacon—were rediscovered as laborers in technical vineyards.<sup>31</sup> Charismatic teachers like Charles Schmitt, Amos Funkenstein, and Martin Jay found many students who wanted to teach and write history, but whose interests lay in what would until recently have seemed a border zone between history and philosophy.

What looks in retrospect like a technical turn in intellectual history, moreover, attracted scholars whose interests were not primarily, or at least not only, philosophical. Historians of humanism in early modern Europe turned away from the general rediscovery of ancient eloquence that had occupied many of them in the 1950s and 1960s. They began to reconstruct, in minute and unsparing detail, the ways in which scholars centuries before their time had sorted and analyzed works of literature, translated (and distorted) philosophical texts, revived and reconfigured the ancient disciplines of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, and reconstructed and dated ancient objects.<sup>32</sup> In the 1970s, as Darnton rightly notes, a few pioneering histori-

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<sup>30</sup> Bruce Kuklick, *The Rise of American Philosophy: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1860–1930* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>31</sup> See esp. the pioneering works of David Hollinger, *Morris R. Cohen and the Scientific Ideal* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975) and John Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), and the *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles Schmitt, Eckhart Kessler, and Quentin Skinner, with Jill Krayer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>32</sup> See e.g. John Monfasani, *George of Trebizond: A Biography and a Study of his Rhetoric and Logic* (Leiden: Brill, 1976); James Hankins, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1990); Christopher Celenza, *The Lost Italian Renaissance: Humanists, Historians, and Latin's Legacy* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

ans devoted themselves to the history of other fields in the humanities and social sciences. But those who did so—like George Stocking, whose pioneering investigations into the history of anthropology eventually led him to make a personal *translatio studii* and identify himself as an anthropologist—went as single spies. Now historians seemed to be deserting—or at least trying to gain technical mastery of other disciplines—in battalions.

If historians suddenly showed a new willingness to address past ideas in a newly rigorous way, some of the other humanists with whom they had been unable to find common ground began to find rapprochements with them. In particular, philosophers began to develop a new culture of erudition, which developed in a variety of ways. Paul Kristeller, of course, had trained students who worked systematically on Renaissance philosophy, and Richard Popkin memorably opened up the history of skepticism to philosophers and historians. Yet for all their learning and their profound impact on individuals, they remained somewhat isolated in the philosophical world of the 1950s and early 1960s. By the 1970s, however, philosophy itself was moving in new directions. Students of ancient Greek and Roman thought like Geoffrey Lloyd began to turn the study of ancient philosophy into a more historical field, one concerned with the conditions of inquiry, social and political as well as intellectual, that had underpinned the rise of philosophy in Greece.<sup>33</sup> Similar questions arose in the study of early modern, and finally even in that of modern thought. Classicists began to enlarge the canon of serious ancient thinkers, as they realized that Stoics, Epicureans, and others deserved to be taken seriously as systematic thinkers. Students of medieval philosophy, realizing with fascination just how deft their scholastic predecessors had been at the kinds of linguistic and logical analysis that interested them most, began to master Latin and paleography.<sup>34</sup> More important still, students of both the ancient world and the early modern period in philosophy departments began to insist on widening the canon of texts deserving close study.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. Geoffrey Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); *Science, Folklore, and Ideology: Studies in the Life Sciences in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); *The Revolutions of Wisdom: Studies in the Claims and Practice of Ancient Greek Science* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

<sup>34</sup> See the studies collected in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, A.J.P. Kenny, Jan Pinborg, with Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

<sup>35</sup> See e.g. Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Michael Frede, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1987);

Disagreement on fundamental principles persisted, and persists. Some philosophers saw the history of philosophy as an exercise in enlarging the canon, to include doctrines and thinkers that their predecessors had dismissed. Others argued that one could not even understand the master thinkers in the canon unless one took into account everything that a given period had considered philosophy. Still others debated such difficult but unavoidable issues as why the western canon of philosophers was exclusively male. The rapprochement between historians and philosophers—symbolized in both its powerful results and its continued propensity to cause polemics by the *Cambridge History of Early Modern Philosophy*—has restored to one form of intellectual history the interdisciplinary quality that Lovejoy sought—even if debate continues on fundamental problems of method and content.<sup>36</sup>

As history and philosophy began to interact again, a second intellectual transformation was also taking place—the one variously labeled “Theory” or “Postmodernism,” which shook the pillars of the American house of intellect in the 1980s and 1990s, and eventually helped give rise to the culture wars whose embers are still occasionally blown into flame by desperate politicians. This movement was often represented, and sometimes represented itself, as a challenge to all traditional forms of humanistic inquiry. In fact, however, as Donald Kelley pointed out when he took the reins of the *Journal*, Theory was one in a long series of efforts to transform the enterprise of interpretation, and its presence on the intellectual scene proved helpful, not harmful, to historians of ideas. It made them, in the first place, take serious account of the problems and traditions of hermeneutics—the theory of interpretation itself, which had represented a major enterprise in European thought since antiquity, and to which historians of ideas had paid far too little attention, either in their capacity as historians trying to do justice to the range of western thought or in their practice as readers of texts. In the age of theory, historians of ideas had to join their colleagues in social and cultural history and try to come to terms with the limits and problems of their disciplines. It also inspired them to tackle problems with a new kind of intellectual ambition. Michel Foucault’s varied visions of history, inconsistent in themselves and faulty in application to

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John Cooper, *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999); *The Cambridge History of Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Daniel Garber, Michael Ayers, with the assistance of Roger Ariew and Alan Gabbey, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>36</sup> See the essays collected in *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*.

actual sources, nonetheless inspired some of the most radical and successful efforts to reread texts that had already been interpreted many times before. The powerful, Piranesiesque vision of classificatory systems and their power that Foucault elaborated in his early works rested in part on pilfered references, and his generalizations were sometimes more distinguished by oracular force than archival foundations.<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, his books again and again stimulated critical readers to see texts from new angles and to situate them in new contexts. Jan Goldstein and Stuart Clark, for example, proved in *Console and Classify* and *Thinking with Demons* that critical applications of Foucault could make endlessly studied subjects take on radically new shapes.<sup>38</sup> Ever the shape changer, Foucault approached ancient texts just as arbitrarily as modern ones in the *History of Sexuality* that occupied his later years, and in doing so helped inspire Peter Brown, Caroline Bynum, Thomas Laqueur, and others to interpret historical visions of the body and practices for its care in radically new ways.<sup>39</sup>

In a sense, however, the deepest impact of Theory probably lay—as that of Western Civ once did—at the level of undergraduate and graduate education. In the nineteen-eighties and after, every student in the humanities encountered courses—in language departments, in history departments, in Cultural Studies—that emphasized the power of institutions and the

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<sup>37</sup> George Huppert, “*Divinatio et Eruditio*: Thoughts on Foucault,” *History and Theory* 13 (1974): 191–207; Ian Maclean, “Foucault’s Renaissance Episteme Reassessed: An Aristotelian Counterblast,” *JHI* 59 (1998): 149–66. For a particularly lucid effort to clarify relations between Foucault’s work and more conventional intellectual histories see David Hollinger, “Historians and the Discourse of Intellectuals,” *In the American Province*, 130–51.

<sup>38</sup> Jan Goldstein, *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; repr. with a new afterword, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Stuart Clark, *Thinking With Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Caroline Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991); Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (New York: Zone Books, 2003); as well as Maud Gleason, *Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); Bernadette Brooten, *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Elizabeth Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), and many more.



practices they accepted and propagated to shape habits of mind, forms of speech and writing, and responses to other individuals and civilizations. Though honeycombed with lacunae, Edward Said's brilliant, controversial study of Orientalism inspired generations of students to deconstruct past descriptions of other societies, looking for the assumptions and practices which, far more than observed facts, gave them coherence and power—a critical enterprise that has now begun to be turned, paradoxically but fruitfully, on Islamic as well as western intellectuals.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu's studies of high culture and the patterns of its inheritance in France led younger historians to examine the life and work of past intellectuals from radically new points of view.<sup>41</sup> Profoundly unhistorical itself, theory underpinned new ways of doing history just as Western Civ had buttressed and nourished older ones. Younger historians of ideas, whatever their divergent objects of study, converge in their fascination with the varieties of scholarly practice.<sup>42</sup> Like the new cultural historians—whose own practice, as William Bouwsma rightly foresaw in 1980, both incorporated elements of intellectual history and helped to expand its compass from the study of texts to the wider one of how humans make meaning in their environment—the heroes of Theory ended up not overthrowing, but renewing, the practices of historians of ideas.<sup>43</sup> Thus the older history of historiography, long dominated by an implicit teleology, was renewed when scholars connected it to a newer history of the cultural practices of memory.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). Cf. now Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition Through Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) and Eve Troutt Powell, *A Different Shade of Colonialism: Egypt, Great Britain and the Mastery of the Sudan* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2003). Cf. also François Hartog's *Le miroir d'Hérodote* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980).

<sup>41</sup> For some striking cases in point see Gadi Algazi, "Food for Thought: Hieronymus Wolf grapples with the Scholarly Habitus," *Egodocuments in History: Autobiographical Writing in its Social Context since the Middle Ages*, ed. Rudolf Dekker (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 21–44; "Scholars In Households: Refiguring The Learned Habitus, 1480–1550," *Science in Context* 16 (2003): 9–42.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. e.g. Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature; Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), and Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780–1910* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> William Bouwsma, "From History of Ideas to History of Meaning," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 12 (1981): 279–91, reprinted in Bouwsma, *A Usable Past: Essays in European Cultural History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990), 336–47.

<sup>44</sup> See e.g. Josef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982) and Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993).

In the same years, the new history of political thought pioneered by Pocock and Skinner, the power and originality of which Darnton noted, metamorphosized from a modest artisanal enterprise which occupied a small number of specialists into a vast and varied network of factories in which intellectual historians of very different kinds worked at high speed. Pocock's effort to identify a coherent tradition of civic humanism that spanned the centuries and the continents found both adherents and critics, as his work reshaped the study of both British and American political thought.<sup>45</sup> Skinner's concentration on the language of politics attracted a vast range of students and colleagues, who restored forgotten masters like Justus Lipsius and Hugo Grotius to the center of attention and forged new ways to interpret such well-known texts and issues as the early modern debates over the humanity of Native Americans and the early development of Hegel's thought.<sup>46</sup> Cambridge University and Cambridge University Press became effective forcing houses for talented young students in the field, who produced a stately series of innovative books and articles, many in the Cambridge series that carried its central message in its title: *Ideas in Context*.<sup>47</sup> Though independent of other branches of Theory in their origins and inspiration, Pocock's and Skinner's methods attacked many similar problems—as Skinner recognized when he organized a series of lectures and articles on *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*.<sup>48</sup> Criticism attended many of these efforts, of course, and continues to do so.<sup>49</sup> More important, Pocock and Skinner have never ceased to refine and renew their own scholarly practices. Skinner's massive, erudite, and provocative study

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<sup>45</sup> J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975; repr. with a new afterword, Princeton 2003). See also *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>46</sup> See e.g. Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origin of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); *The Languages of Political Theory in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Laurence Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics and the Politics of Spirit, 1770–1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>47</sup> See most recently Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>48</sup> *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*, ed. Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> See *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*, ed. James Tully (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

of Thomas Hobbes's place in the rhetorical tradition offers a bravura introduction to pedagogical practices and other bearers of intellectual tradition—matters for which his early work did not make much room.<sup>50</sup> The cumulative impact of these studies on the larger shape of intellectual history has been immense. All historians of ideas now carry, along with the other implements in their toolboxes, the methods for formal analysis of language and tradition and the intersection of linguistic fields, larger contexts, and particular individual intentions that Pocock and Skinner placed at the core of their work.

Many other developments have helped to reinvigorate the history of ideas in the last twenty years. None of them, perhaps, has had wider effects than the so-called “material turn” of the last ten years—the rise of efforts to write history centered less on the reading of texts than on that of things—objects charged with cultural significance. The origins of this enterprise lie many years back, in the cultural histories of crops pioneered by the young William McNeil and Carl Ortwin Sauer and dramatized by younger scholars like Alfred Crosby and Donald Worster. But it really began to have an impact on intellectual history in the 1970s, when pioneering scholars began to pose the question why, at particular times, individuals decided to live in radically different ways, and to connect the new built environments of the Renaissance palazzo and villa and the nineteenth-century apartment house with new ways of thinking about the city and its inhabitants.<sup>51</sup> A wave of new studies of museums revealed that the Baroque antiquaries who had assembled fossils, skis, and narwhal horns in their mysterious Kunst- und Wunderkammer and the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century curators who had swept art, national antiquities, and natural history into their magnificent public museums had transformed western ways of thinking about and experiencing the past.<sup>52</sup> A new form of history of science grew up, one that

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<sup>50</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> See the pioneering article by Richard Goldthwaite, “The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture,” *American Historical Review* 77 (1972): 977–1012, and Carl Schorske's influential *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

<sup>52</sup> See e.g. *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, ed. Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985; repr. London, 2001); Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1994); Suzanne Marchand, *Down From Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750–1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876–1926* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

embedded scientific instruments in a broad context and showed that even the most objective-seeming of them had in fact served purposes that had been forgotten by present-minded historians.<sup>53</sup> And a new cultural history of death and mourning transformed monuments into unexpectedly revealing texts.<sup>54</sup> Five hundred years ago, Machiavelli conjured up the spirits of the mighty dead and interrogated them about their actions. Nowadays, dead objects as well as dead writers have begun to speak. Their voices—almost always preserved in and mediated by texts—have been heard in the pages of the *Journal*, and will be heard there more often.

During the 1990s, moreover, intellectual history took its own material turn. In the 1980s Darnton and other scholars, above all Roger Chartier and Carlo Ginzburg, had created a new history of books and readers—one that used a vast range of evidence to reconstruct the ways in which the great books of a given period had actually been shaped, printed, and marketed, and in which much less great books had actually been sold and read. Early historians of the book tended to argue, against the traditions of intellectual history, that numerical evidence counted for more than textual, and that the experience of large numbers of readers, to be reconstructed from the records of publishers, could shed a bright light on such endlessly debated problems as the origins of the French and English revolutions. Yet Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*, a pioneering study, applied a very different model, one inspired by the traditional, slow food methods of Italian philology and intellectual history, to interpreting the experiences of a single reader as his imagination fused disparate books and stories into a new vision of the world.<sup>55</sup> In the course of the 1990s, intellectual historians

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<sup>53</sup> See the pioneering work of Steven Shapin and Simon Shaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985); Peter Dear, *Discipline & Experience: The Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and the studies collected in *Biographies of Scientific Objects*, ed. Lorraine Daston (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), and *Things that Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science*, ed. Lorraine Daston (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004).

<sup>54</sup> See e.g. James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); J.M. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Daniel Sherman, *The Construction of Memory in Interwar France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

<sup>55</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, tr. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); see now Andrea Del Col, *Domenico Scandella Known as Menocchio: His Trials Before the Inquisition (1583–1599)*, tr. John and Anne Tedeschi (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1996).

began to investigate systematically how the texts they studied were produced and consumed. Some of them shed new light on canonical thinkers by tracing the ways in which their texts reached the public—as scribbled clandestine manuscripts or handsomely printed books; as pamphlets or as periodical articles. The interpretation of texts now goes hand in hand with the reconstruction of intellectual and publishing communities.<sup>56</sup> Others have begun to ask how these canonical thinkers had read the books in their own libraries, and how their printed works in turn were read by others. Many of these were preserved, their margins strewn with the annotations that had fallen like autumn leaves in Vallombrosa in the days when readers habitually worked pen in hand, and how their printed works in turn were read by others.<sup>57</sup> A historian of ideas working on a sixteenth- or a nineteenth-century thinker is likely to start, now, by asking how many books survive from the individual's library and investigating notebooks to see how he or she processed what she read. A few professional readers have even come to light, intellectuals who read exhaustively but wrote little, and still flourished, and a number of historians have argued that such readings should play a substantial part of their own in reconstructions of early modern and modern culture.<sup>58</sup>

Interest in these new methods, moreover, has spread not only among historians, but also among literary scholars working on every field from the classics to Modernism, and to philosophers as well.<sup>59</sup> One reason that the history of ideas no longer seems so marginal is precisely that scholars from so many different disciplines have found that they can meet and argue pro-

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<sup>56</sup> See e.g. three recent and influential approaches to the European Republic of Letters in the decades leading up to and just after 1700: Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

<sup>57</sup> See the provocative presentation by Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), and more generally H.J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001).

<sup>58</sup> See the important works of Daniel Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture, 1500–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and for more recent periods Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996) and Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001).

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Shane Butler, *The Hand of Cicero* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Lawrence Rainey, *The Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998).

ductively in the margins of manuscripts and printed books, where the practices of intellectuals of all sorts have left rich deposits. The intellectual history of the 2000s has not only a newly technical character, but also a new material base, which serve to distinguish it—and many of the articles that have recently appeared in the *Journal*—from earlier forms of the same pursuit. The present essay, with its emphasis on practices and material texts, clearly exemplifies these larger tendencies.

In one final respect, moreover, intellectual history has expanded in the last two decades far beyond the expectations that anyone nourished in the 1970s. It has become, increasingly, a global enterprise. Over the last three decades, fields that were once taught and investigated in only a handful of universities have become standard fare across the English-speaking world. And a number of these have already had a tremendous impact, and will have more, on the practice of intellectual history. To give only two examples of many: every serious university in the United States supports specialists in Jewish and Chinese history. Both of these enterprises work on long cultural traditions, traditions in which the transmission and interpretation of texts has been a formative enterprise. Already in the 1960s, intellectual historians of China like Joseph Levenson, Fritz Mote, and Benjamin Schwartz attracted the attention of a few scholars outside their special areas, while Joseph Needham and Donald Lach conducted vast collaborative inquiries into the relations between the Chinese and the western intellectual traditions. Two generations later, Chinese history has established itself as one of the most profound and original fields of historical scholarship in the west. Chinese historiography offers powerful models, rigorous and elegant, for the study of ideas in their political, social, and religious contexts, as well as for the interpretation of complex, difficult texts.

In the 1960s, Jewish history was, as it had been for many years, largely in a state of primitive accumulation, as pioneering scholars continued to fix the basic outlines of the textual tradition and its larger context. Two generations later, Jewish history has provided western scholars with some of the most powerful tools in their kits for modeling the history of traditions and grasping the impact of modernity—not to mention grappling with that ancient question, one of the central ones in the classic years of nineteenth-century intellectual history—the relations between religion and natural philosophy or science. In other fields as well—for example, the increasingly subtle and complex field of scholarship that deals with western understandings of pre-Columbian civilization—western scholars are showing students of the West to think in radically new ways about their own pasts.

As historians celebrate a partial but powerful convergence with philo-

ophers and other humanists, as intellectual history expands to confront new objects of study, both literally and metaphorically, and as new textures and styles of scholarship appear in the *Journal* and elsewhere, it has become clear that Lovejoy built extremely well—better, possibly, than he knew. The crossroads he laid out and paved remains a central and attractive meeting point for many disciplines. And the history of ideas—in the general sense of a study of texts, images, and theories that seeks to balance responsibility and precision in the formal treatment and analysis of its objects with an equally measured effort to connect them to a particular historical world—has proved resilient, even expansive, through multiple transformations of the disciplinary fields at whose borders it resides.

At least some of the structures on which Lovejoy built survive as well, suitably modified to function in a changed world. Survey courses on Western Civilization that still flourish at many colleges and universities, either as formal requirements for all students (as at Columbia University and Reed College) or as popular electives (as at Harvard University and the University of Chicago). Undergraduate programs in intellectual history attract many students at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Washington and many points between. The old Western Civ and the old history of ideas cannot to be restored in their pure forms. But newer versions, which combine the rigorous analysis of texts and the discriminating assay of their contents with close attention to their literary and material forms, their cultural and intellectual contexts, and their assumptions about race and gender, have proved capable of inspiring the same sorts of excitement. If the older surveys of western or American thought lost coherence as enterprises in the 1970s, newer ones are being attempted, some of which make room for revisionist perspectives of many kinds.<sup>60</sup>

What, then, does the new *Journal* stand for? If it succeeds, it will stand for and support all of these new developments—as well as others that we cannot now suspect. It will welcome investigations of texts and ideas—especially when these are located in time and space and explicated, in part, in terms of a wider historical context. But it will also be open to the investigation of books and other material objects, so long as these have a direct relation to larger questions in intellectual history, and to the practices of

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<sup>60</sup> See e.g. Marcia Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); William Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance, ca. 1550–1640* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000); John Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848–1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); and see above all the *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. Maryanne Cline Horowitz, 6 vols. (New York: Scribner's, 2005).

intellectual life in all periods. It will not take positions, or invite others to debate, on questions of Theory per se, or on the much-debated status of Theory and its practitioners in literature departments. But it will continue to publish historically informed studies of the development of hermeneutics, the work of influential theorists, and any and all other topics in the capacious realms of Theory's Empire.<sup>61</sup>

The *Journal* will not be bound to swear by the methods of any master. But it will welcome Theoretically inspired studies of past texts and ideas, as well as those that reflect other kinds of theory. It will not publish work so densely technical that only specialists in a particular humanistic discipline can follow or verify their arguments: that is the proper task of other periodicals. But it will encourage practitioners of closely related fields like the history of philosophy and the history of science, which were closely bound for decades with the *Journal*, to publish their work here, and it will encourage precise, detailed studies so long as they are formally accessible to the *Journal's* common reader. The present number puts this policy into practice, by printing four connected studies by junior historians of science, and their counterparts from philosophy and other fields are warmly invited to follow their example.

The *Journal* will take no position on the best or the proper method to be used in the history of ideas. But its editors encourage scholars to submit articles that explicitly raise questions of method. Fundamental, frequently used concepts like "context"—a term, in the end, for information somehow distilled from the same sorts of text that it is usually invoked to explicate—require far more formal analysis than they have had. Accounts of motivation—a special problem for historians of ideas, as Skinner recognized when he offered the notion of "intention in utterance" as a partial solution to it—remain multiple and continue to provoke considerable debate. This seems only reasonable, when one considers the anfractuositities involved in treating as forms of action complex works elaborated over decades, withheld for years from distribution, and finally made public in conditions that their author could never have envisioned when starting work—a set of conditions that applies to Newton, Coleridge, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein, among many others. Lovejoy himself, well aware of these problems, suggested that one reason to follow the fates of connected sets of ideas was precisely that they often appeared, in the works of a given author, combined with others that contradicted them. The seemingly impersonal and abstract

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Theory's Empire: an Anthology of Dissent*, ed. Daphne Patai and Will H. Corral (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).



paper chase for sources and unit ideas could thus shed light on the fissures and inconsistencies in a very human individual's mind. Certainly the difficulties of arriving at plausible accounts of these and other key terms and methods should not deter authors from making the attempt. A series of review articles devoted to especially substantial books or bodies of scholarship that assess such efforts, and occasional translations of will afford a second forum for such discussions.

It seems certain that the history of ideas and this *Journal* will never again be tied to a particular political program—either the progressive ones that naturalized the field in America in the 1920s or the conservative ones with which it is sometimes bafflingly identified nowadays. But it will certainly commit itself to one current policy: globalization. In the past, a few scholars trained in traditions very distant from European and American norms have managed to enter and alter the course of debates in the English-speaking world.<sup>62</sup> All members of the new editorial group hope to make our journal, and our field, more cosmopolitan. We hope to attract articles on all of the various traditions, Asian, European, and American, Jewish, and Muslim, in which intellectual history of high quality is being done. More important, we hope to draw these studies from as many countries and traditions as possible, and to enrich the methods commonly used in the English-speaking world by those that have developed elsewhere. A substantial article by Reinhart Koselleck which will shortly appear marks a beginning, and will offer one of the first full presentations in English of a form of intellectual history that has inspired many scholars and yielded rich results, especially in Germany. But that is only a start, and one oriented to a European scholarly tradition of the recent past. We also hope to present current work from other historical cultures as often as possible. In this, as in much else, we hope to be in the real tradition of Lovejoy: pursuing a lively and expansive field and making our periodical serve not only as a platform for research, but also as a place where many forms and traditions of scholarship can converge.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> E.g. Andrzej Walicki, *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), and Leszek Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans église: la conscience religieuse et le lien confessionnel au XVIIIe siècle*, tr. Anna Posner (Paris, 1969).

<sup>63</sup> Warm thanks to Warren Breckman and Suzanne Marchand for comments on earlier drafts.