

Tamás Miklós

History – What is It?

On the Philosophy of History Issue of *Kellék*

Although in public, especially political discourse, *history* is a constantly used term, we think of it the way how Augustine refers to time – when not inquired, we seem to know what it is, but when we are asked about it, we are in trouble. However, almost in trouble, since for two hundred years, it was not self-obvious how we meant this term even when we tried to formulate it for ourselves. The philosophy of history is born when the history of mankind as a whole emerges as an issue, as a matter to be explained – that is, already in its modern meaning, when the thought of controlling Faith or Providence cannot claim a general consensus anymore. Since then, this term is to be regarded as a dense shrub of questions sprouted alongside its examination.

Keywords: philosophy of history, history

Mária Ludassy

The Trap of Being Outside History, or Voluntary Slavery
from the *Leviathan* to the Tyranny of the Masses

The theory of the social contract – taking into account its medieval preliminaries as well – is usually considered as the most revolutionary outcome of modern social philosophy. According to this theory, any law is legitimate only because *we* created it – in its more radical versions by Hobbes and Rousseau, independently from any historical antecedents, norms of natural law, or divine command. Contemporary opponents of Hobbes, Cambridge Platonists like Cudworth and Cumberland already pointed out the perils ensuing from this euphoric experience of freedom.

Keywords: social contract, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, social philosophy

Sándor Radnóti
Pastoral and Idyll: Against History

Beside Paul Alpers' essential anthropological and Wolfgang Iser's art-theoretical insights, it should be pointed out that a fundamental characteristic of the pastoral, the Georgics and the idyll that emerges from them is the exclusion of history from their world. In the beginning, shepherds and peasants live *below* history, whose noise filters into their world only from a distance. When history comes closer to them, as with the Augustan redistribution of the land in Virgil's Eclogue I, it is perceived as a natural disaster. Later, as historical consciousness grows, types emerge which position the idyll *above* or *alongside* history. Still, it can be argued that just as there is no idyllic history, there is no historical idyll.

Keywords: idyll, pastoral, Georgic, Virgil, Salomon Gessner, Herder, Schiller, Kant, Hegel

Tamás Miklós
The Emergence of the Aesthetic View of History
in Schiller's Writing *On the Sublime*

The writing of Schiller entitled *On the Sublime* not only represents a radical shift compared to *his own previous view* on history (1), but in general it adds an entirely new thought to *the literature on the sublime* (2), and to *the philosophy of history* (3). I can but only refer briefly to the novelty represented by these three aspects of the writing, putting in focus the third aspect, the emergence of the aesthetic view of history. Seen retrospectively, perhaps this writing of Schiller represents the common starting point of the discourses of the 19th and 20th century, revealing an aesthetic approach to history, and entailing very divergent motivations and conclusions.

Keywords: Friedrich Schiller, history, sublime, aesthetics, history of philosophy

Eszter Kovács
Empires and Ruins.

Diderot's Thoughts on Historical Greatness and Decline

The article examines Diderot's reflections on history, focusing on his concepts of greatness and decline. Though Diderot did not write a systematic work in the philosophy of history, his thoughts on the subject appear across various writings. The article considers his ideas occasioned by the ruins on Hubert Robert's paintings, wherein ruins appear as a metaphor for historical impermanence. The article also focuses on Diderot's perspective on colonialism, and his style in discussing historical themes. It highlights Diderot's view of history as constant change and impermanence, embodied in his frequent use of the term "vicissitude". The author explores how Diderot alternates between detached observation and empathetic engagement when discussing historical events.

Keywords: Diderot, philosophy of history, paintings of ancient ruins, colonialism

Ferenc Takó
Elective Affinity.

On Fukuzawa Yukichi's Interpretation of Civilization

An important consequence of the late-19th-century "opening" of Japan was the encounter with Western social and political thought and interpretations of the state, the nation and history. Amongst the thinkers of the age, a central figure was Fukuzawa Yukichi 福沢諭吉 (1835–1901), whose works became programmatic texts for the transition of Japan. At several points in Fukuzawa's writings, we are able to trace a characteristic paradox of Meiji-period Japanese thought. The paradox lay in the fact that while Japan intended to follow Western schemes in order to put an end to a past labelled as "stagnant", it was precisely these Western schemes that made Japan recognise that the present can only be shaped on the foundations of a past. In the present paper, I will elaborate on such dilemmas of the age through the analysis of Fukuzawa's *Bunmeiron no gairyaku* 文明論之概略 (*An Outline of Theories of Civilization*, 1875). First, I will provide an overview of European interpretations of the East and the changes in Japan's self-interpretation during the 19th century. Then, I will examine

Fukuzawa's text focusing on aspects of the philosophy of history. At certain points of this analysis, I will compare Fukuzawa's description of Japan with the depictions of the East of 18th and 19th century Western philosophers of history.

Keywords: Fukuzawa Yukichi, theory of civilization, Japanese philosophy, Meiji period, *Bunmeiron no gairyaku*

Bence Péter Marosán

The Direction and Sense of History in the Philosophy of Edmund Husserl

Contrary to a certain popular belief, Husserl's intensive investigation of the problem of historicity goes back *before* his deeper acquaintance with Heidegger's *Being and Time*, and more specifically before the 1930s. This problem was already central in the 1920s. For example, in a manuscript written between 1921 and 1924, in an appendix to the texts of a university course entitled *First Philosophy* (winter semester 1923/24), he writes that "history is the great fact of Absolute Being". But his questioning goes back to the middle of the first decade of the 1900s, when he also began to deal more intensively with the phenomenon of *intersubjectivity*. For Husserl, history has a definite direction; it is directed towards the *realization of universal rationality*. Husserl connects the question of the direction of history with the question of *authentic and inauthentic being*, which for him practically corresponds to *rational or irrational individual and communal action*. Husserl argues that humanity will eventually be forced through various crises to behave rationally in community, so that eventually, albeit through detours, we will arrive, slowly, but surely, *at the universally rational human condition*.

Keywords: Edmund Husserl, phenomenology, phenomenology of history, teleology, authentic and inauthentic community

Ádám Smrcz

**E Pluribus Unum – the Diversity of Sciences and the
Unifying Role of the Philosophy of History
at R. G. Collingwood**

Throughout his career, R. G. Collingwood held numerous and even contradictory positions regarding the nature and methodology of human sciences (Geisteswissenschaften). Sometimes he even made baffling remarks on his main fields of research: history and philosophy. Paradoxically, he intended to outline the above subject in a work (*The Idea of History*) which remained unfinished, hence, we still lack a coherent explanation of his ideas on these matters. This paper gives a broad overview of Collingwood's system of human sciences and attempts to adumbrate first of all what philosophy of history was supposed to be based on the author's scattered remarks.

Keywords: R. G. Collingwood, philosophy of history, re-enactment, hermeneutics, historical epistemology

Ábel Csigó

Louis Althusser's Theory of History in His Late Texts

In my paper I analyze and interpret Louis Althusser's two main texts written in the 1980's, the last period of his philosophical activity: *The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter* and *Philosophy and Marxism*. Contrary to previous interpretations of these texts, I do not consider them as either primarily ontologically or politically motivated, but as writings inquiring about the role of contingency in history, and thus as a reflection on the possibility of a theory of history which can account for this. In order to argue for the coherence of such a theory, I differentiate between the concepts of contingency and of the aleatory, which are not always clearly contrasted by Althusser. After first analyzing his view on the role of philosophy and the concepts of his "aleatory materialism", I examine his substantive statements about the characteristics of history, the way his theory reflects on the possible interpretations of history and finally the role of human agency within this theory.

Keywords: aleatory materialism, conjuncture, contingency, materialism of the encounter, theory of history, Louis Althusser

Rita Szántó

Enlightened Polymythicism and Conflicting Interpretations

In my essay I examine two conflicting views. One is the polymythicism associated with Marquard. It sees the possibility of preserving freedom in the diversity of our narratives and stories. The other position is closer to Benjamin. It claims that if we do not confront the history of the struggle against oppression with the dominant, oppressive narrative, we endanger our freedom. I sense a dilemma emerging, as both positions are framed in defence of freedom, and are attractive positions in that respect, but they contradict with each other. In my text, after presenting these views and their focus, I will emphasize that the dilemma cannot be resolved at the theoretical level, because there are conflicting hopes, between which it is impossible to do justice. However, I find Benjamin's position more fruitful, because it can provide answers at a practical level to problems that Marquard's theory leaves unresolved.

Keywords: polymythicism, Odo Marquard, Walter Benjamin, narratives

Fanni Dimény-Varga

The Voice of the Small.

Microhistory as a Method of Historiography

The 20th century was also the century of searching for new paths in historiography. The most important step was breaking the exclusivity of historicism, which was not fully achieved everywhere, since event history and macrohistory were no longer the only accepted approaches of historical research. Today, history can be divided into a number of subfields, such as mental history, economic history or social history. A new trend, microhistory has emerged in the subfield of social history, which, although it began in the mid-20th century, became widespread and popular in the 1990s, with perhaps the most influential works in the genre, such as Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*. Among their main efforts, we can mention the rejection of the macro-social approach, the focus on the history of small groups, the role of the narrative, and acknowledging the impact of anthropology in historiography. Although microhistory is generally seen in a positive light as a new approach, there are now sceptics and legitimate critics of the genre, who point out some of its shortcomings

and limitations. Microhistory will probably never become the leading discipline in the study of history, but it has certainly produced valuable and innovative works.

Keywords: microhistory, historiography, macrosociology, anthropology, social history, Annales school, Carlo Ginzburg, Natalie Zemon Davis, Giovanni Levi