

# Metahistory The Historical Imagination In Nineteenth Century Europe Hayden White

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## The Houses of History

An authoritative history of art history from its medieval origins to its modern predicaments In this authoritative book, the first of its kind in English, Christopher S. Wood tracks the evolution of the historical study of art from the late middle ages through the rise of the modern scholarly discipline of art history. Synthesizing and assessing a vast array of writings, episodes, and personalities, this original and accessible account of the development of art-historical thinking will appeal to readers both inside and outside the discipline. Combining erudition with clarity, this book makes a landmark contribution to the understanding of art history.

## Coffee

The 19th century laid the foundations of history, both professional and popular. The authors of this collection compare Britain, the Netherlands, and Belgium, unearthing the ways in which history was conceived and then utilized, usually for nationalistic purposes.

## That Noble Dream

Since its initial publication in 1973, Hayden White's Metahistory has remained an essential book for understanding the nature of historical writing. In this classic work, White argues that a deep structural content lies beyond the surface level of historical texts. This latent poetic and linguistic content—which White dubs the "metahistorical element"—essentially serves as a paradigm for what an "appropriate" historical explanation should be. To support his thesis, White analyzes the complex writing styles of historians like Michelet, Ranke, Tocqueville, and Burckhardt, and philosophers of history such as Marx, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Croce. The first work in the history of historiography to concentrate on historical

writing as writing, Metahistory sets out to deprive history of its status as a bedrock of factual truth, to redeem narrative as the substance of historicity, and to identify the extent to which any distinction between history and ideology on the basis of the presumed scientificity of the former is spurious. This fortieth-anniversary edition includes a new preface in which White explains his motivation for writing Metahistory and discusses how reactions to the book informed his later writing. In a new foreword, Michael S. Roth, a former student of White's and the current president of Wesleyan University, reflects on the significance of the book across a broad range of fields, including history, literary theory, and philosophy. This book will be of interest to anyone—in any discipline—who takes the past as a serious object of study.

## **The Matter of History**

### **Ethnography And The Historical Imagination**

Winner of the 1974 National Book Award "A screaming comes across the sky. . ." A few months after the Germans' secret V-2 rocket bombs begin falling on London, British Intelligence discovers that a map of the city pinpointing the sexual conquests of one Lieutenant Tyrone Slothrop, U.S. Army, corresponds identically to a map showing the V-2 impact sites. The implications of this discovery will launch Slothrop on an amazing journey across war-torn Europe, fleeing an international cabal of military-industrial superpowers, in search of the mysterious Rocket 00000, through a wildly comic extravaganza that has been hailed in *The New Republic* as "the most profound and accomplished American novel since the end of World War II."

### **On Humanistic Education**

Vico's earliest extant scholarly works, the six first statement of ideas that Vico would continue to refine throughout his life. Delivered between 1699 and 1707 to usher in the new academic year at the University of Naples, the orations are brought together here for the first time in English in an authoritative translation based on Gian Galeazzo Visconti's 1982 Latin/Italian edition. In the lectures, Vico draws liberally on the classical philosophical and legal traditions as he explores the relationship between the Greek dictum "Know thyself" and liberal education. As he sets forth the values and goals of a humanist curriculum, Vico reveals the beginnings of the anti-Cartesian position he will pursue in *On the Study Methods of Our Time* (1709). Also found in the orations are glimpses of Vico's later views on the theory of interpretation and on the nature of language, imagination, and human creativity, along with many themes that were to be fully developed in his magnum opus, *The New Science* (1744). *On Humanistic Education* will be welcomed by Vichians and their students, intellectual historians, and others in the fields of philosophy, literary theory, history and methods of education, classics, and rhetoric.

### **Society and Sentiment**

The SAGE Handbook of Historical Theory introduces the foundations of modern historical theory and the applications of theory to a full range of sub-fields of historical research, bringing the reader as up to date as possible with continuing debates and current developments. The book is divided into three key parts, covering: - Part I. Foundations: The Theoretical Grounds for Knowledge of the Past - Part II. Applications: Theory-Intensive Areas in History - Part III. Coda. Post-Postmodernism: Directions and Interrogations. This important handbook brings together, in one volume, discussions of modernity, empiricism, deconstruction, narrative and postmodernity in the continuing evolution of the historical discipline into our post-postmodern era. Chapters are written by leading academics from around the world and cover a wide array of specialized areas of the discipline, including social history, intellectual history, gender, memory, psychoanalysis and cultural history. The influence of major thinkers such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Hayden White is fully examined. This handbook is an essential resource for practising historians, and students of history, and will appeal to scholars in related disciplines in the social sciences and humanities who seek a closer understanding of the theoretical foundations of history.

## **Probing the Limits of Representation**

History and Film: A Tale of Two Disciplines addresses the representation of history in cinema, a much-argued debate on the need to understand cinematic history in its own terms and develop a certain vocabulary for discussing historical films, their relation to public history, and their impact on public historical consciousness. Eleftheria Thanouli does this by changing the agenda altogether - combining a macro-level perspective with a micro-level one in order to argue that cinematic history is the dominant form of historiography in the 20th century, as it succeeded in remediating and repurposing the key formal, rhetorical, and ideological practices of 19th-century professional historiography. With case studies ranging from *The Thin Red Line* and *Life is Beautiful*, to *The Fog of War* and *The Last Bolshevik*, Thanouli bridges the gap between history and film studies and lays the foundations for a new visual historiography.

## **Headless History**

On its publication in 1957, *The Poverty of Historicism* was hailed by Arthur Koestler as 'probably the only book published this year which will outlive the century.' A devastating criticism of fixed and predictable laws in history, Popper dedicated the book to all those 'who fell victim to the fascist and communist belief in Inexorable Laws of Historical Destiny.' Short and beautifully written, it has inspired generations of readers, intellectuals and policy makers. One of the most important books on the social sciences since the Second World War, it is a searing insight into the ideas of this great thinker.

## **A History of Art History**

"For description and defense of the narrative configurations of everyday life, and of the practical and social character of those narratives, there is no better treatment than *Time, Narrative, and History*. a clear, judicious, and truthful account,

provocative from beginning to end." -- Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology " a superior work of philosophy that tells a unique and insightful story about narrative." -- Quarterly Journal of Speech

## **Regimes of Historicity**

A collection of engaging essays that look specifically at the effect of culturalism on history and sociology and propose new directions in the theory and practice of research.

## **Historical Theory**

"Brings together the disciplines of art, music, and history to explore the importance of the past to conceptions of the present in the central Middle Ages"--Provided by publisher.

## **The Practical Past**

## **Representing History, 900-1300**

François Hartog explores crucial moments of change in society's regimes of historicity or its way of relating to the past, present, and future. Inspired by Arendt, Koselleck, and Ricoeur, Hartog analyzes a broad range of texts, positioning the *The Odyssey* as a work on the threshold of a historical consciousness and then contrasting it against an investigation of the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins's concept of "heroic history." He tracks changing perspectives on time in Chateaubriand's *Historical Essay and Travels in America*, and sets them alongside other writings from the French Revolution. He revisits the insight of the French Annals School and situates Pierre Nora's *Realms of Memory* within a history of heritage and our contemporary presentism. Our presentist present is by no means uniform or clear-cut, and it is experienced very differently depending on one's position in society. There are flows and acceleration, but also what the sociologist Robert Castel calls the "status of casual workers," whose present is languishing before their very eyes and who have no past except in a complicated way (especially in the case of immigrants, exiles, and migrants) and no real future (since the temporality of plans and projects is denied them). Presentism is therefore experienced as either emancipation or enclosure, in some cases with ever greater speed and mobility and in others by living from hand to mouth in a stagnating present. Hartog also accounts for the fact that the future is perceived as a threat and not a promise. We live in a time of catastrophe, one he feels we have brought upon ourselves.

## **The Fiction of Narrative**

"[White] has clearly made significant advances in laying a foundation for a better understanding of the intricate interaction between narrative representation and what it purports to represent in both history and literature." -- American Historical Review.

## Thinking History Globally

Hayden White borrows the title for *The Practical Past* from philosopher Michael Oakeshott, who used the term to describe the accessible material and literary-artistic artifacts that individuals and institutions draw on for guidance in quotidian affairs. *The Practical Past*, then, forms both a summa of White's work to be drawn upon and a new direction in his thinking about the writing of history. White's monumental *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973) challenged many of the commonplaces of professional historical writing and wider assumptions about the ontology of history itself. It formed the basis of his argument that we can never recover "what actually happened" in the past and cannot really access even material culture in context. Forty years on, White sees "professional history" as falling prey to narrow specialization, and he calls upon historians to take seriously the practical past of explicitly "artistic" works, such as novels and dramas, and literary theorists likewise to engage historians.

## Tropics of Discourse

This unique and detailed analysis provides the first accessible and comprehensive introduction to the origins, development, methodology of microhistory – one of the most significant innovations in historical scholarship to have emerged in the last few decades. The introduction guides the reader through the best-known example of microstoria, *The Cheese and the Worms* by Carlo Ginzburg, and explains the benefits of studying an event, place or person in microscopic detail. In Part I, István M. Szijártó examines the historiography of microhistory in the Italian, French, Germanic and the Anglo-Saxon traditions, shedding light on the roots of microhistory and asking where it is headed. In Part II, Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon uses a carefully selected case study to show the important difference between the disciplines of macro- and microhistory and to offer practical instructions for those historians wishing to undertake micro-level analysis. These parts are tied together by a Postscript in which the status of microhistory within contemporary historiography is examined and its possibilities for the future evaluated. *What is Microhistory?* surveys the significant characteristics shared by large groups of microhistorians, and how these have now established an acknowledged place within any general discussion of the theory and methodology of history as an academic discipline.

## The Uses of History

This book offers an understanding and analysis of the aesthetics of historicizing through the specific concepts and process of the fabricated, factitious, factional, factious, factitive, factive, factualist, fictitious, fictive and the figurative. These concepts create the(ir) connection(s) between "the past" and "history" hitherto rethink the nature of "the historical past." There are many different available 'forms' of histories that shape the minds of historians when they deploy their historical imaginations through "the past(s) via their preferred history creations." For every historian and every history reader, there is a different experience of "the history past aesthetic."

## **Gravity's Rainbow**

The aspiration to relate the past 'as it really happened' has been the central goal of American professional historians since the late nineteenth century. In this remarkable history of the profession, Peter Novick shows how the idea and ideal of objectivity were elaborated, challenged, modified, and defended over the last century. Drawing on the unpublished correspondence as well as the published writings of hundreds of American historians from J. Franklin Jameson and Charles Beard to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Eugene Genovese, *That Noble Dream* is a richly textured account of what American historians have thought they were doing, or ought to be doing, when they wrote history - how their principles influenced their practice and practical exigencies influenced their principles.

## **Metahistory**

*Object Lessons* is a series of short, beautifully designed books about the hidden lives of ordinary things. Coffee--it's the thing that gets us through, and over, and around. The thing--the beverage, the break, the ritual--we choose to slow ourselves down or speed ourselves up. The excuse to pause; the reason to meet; the charge we who drink it allow ourselves in lieu of something stronger or scarier. Coffee goes to lifestyle, and character, and sensibility: where do we buy it, how do we brew it, how strong can we take it, how often, how hot, how cold? How does coffee remind us, stir us, comfort us? But *Coffee* is about more than coffee: it's a personal history and a promise to self; in her confrontation with the hours (with time--big picture, little picture), Dinah Lenney faces head-on the challenges of growing older and carrying on. *Object Lessons* is published in partnership with an essay series in *The Atlantic*.

## **History, Theory, Text**

In *The Philosophical Structure of Historical Explanation*, Paul A. Roth resolves disputes persisting since the nineteenth century about the scientific status of history. He does this by showing why historical explanations must take the form of a narrative, making their logic explicit, and revealing how the rational evaluation of narrative explanation becomes possible. Roth situates narrative explanations within a naturalistic framework and develops a nonrealist (irrealist) metaphysics and epistemology of history—arguing that there exists no one fixed past, but many pasts. The book includes a novel reading of Thomas S. Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, showing how it offers a narrative explanation of theory change in science. This book will be of interest to researchers in historiography, philosophy of history, philosophy of science, philosophy of social science, and epistemology.

## **Time, Narrative, and History**

This anthology of new essays by an international group of preeminent scholars explores the ground-breaking work of Hayden White, whose thought, beginning with his seminal *Metahistory* (1973), has revolutionized the way we think about the philosophy of history, historiography, narrative, and the relation between history

and literature. Representing a variety of disciplines and approaches, the contributions to this volume testify to the far-reaching effects and significance of White's philosophy of history. Individual essays relate White's ideas to contemporary art, cognitive studies, Heideggerian hermeneutics, experimental history, Kant's transcendental philosophy, analytic philosophy of history, Marxist cultural theory, the Kantian sublime, and American academic historiography. A substantial introduction by the editor traces the genesis of White's philosophy of history, situating it with respect to both the Anglo-American and Continental traditions. The volume also features a previously unpublished essay by White, which offers a concise overview of his later thought, and a "Comment" written specifically for this volume, in which White revisits the question of the philosophy of history.

## **Philosophy in History**

Practising historians claim that their accounts of the past are something other than fiction, myth or propaganda. Yet there are significant challenges to this view, most notably from postmodernism. In *Historical Theory*, a prominent historian develops a highly original argument that evaluates the diversity of approaches to history and points to a constructive way forward. Mary Fulbrook argues that all historians face key theoretical questions, and that an emphasis on the facts alone is not enough. Against postmodernism, she argues that historical narratives are not simply inventions imposed on the past, and that some answers to historical questions are more plausible or adequate than others. Illustrated with numerous substantive examples and its focus is always on the most central theoretical issues and on real strategies for bridging the gap between the traces of the past and the interpretations of the present. *Historical Theory* is essential and enlightening reading for all historians and their students.

## **Metahistory**

While social scientists and historians have been exchanging ideas for a long time, they have never developed a proper dialogue about social theory. William H. Sewell Jr. observes that on questions of theory the communication has been mostly one way: from social science to history. *Logics of History* argues that both history and the social sciences have something crucial to offer each other. While historians do not think of themselves as theorists, they know something social scientists do not: how to think about the temporalities of social life. On the other hand, while social scientists' treatments of temporality are usually clumsy, their theoretical sophistication and penchant for structural accounts of social life could offer much to historians. Renowned for his work at the crossroads of history, sociology, political science, and anthropology, Sewell argues that only by combining a more sophisticated understanding of historical time with a concern for larger theoretical questions can a satisfying social theory emerge. In *Logics of History*, he reveals the shape such an engagement could take, some of the topics it could illuminate, and how it might affect both sides of the disciplinary divide.

## **History and Film**

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Over the years John and Jean Comaroff have broadened the study of culture and society with their reflections on power and meaning. In their work on Africa and colonialism they have explored some of the fundamental questions of social science, delving into the nature of history and human agency, culture and consciousness, ritual and representation. How are human differences constructed and institutionalized, transformed and (sometimes) effaced, empowered and (sometimes) resisted? How do local cultures articulate with global forms? How is the power of some people over others built, sustained, eroded, and negated? How does the social imagination take shape in novel yet collectively meaningful ways? Addressing these questions, the essays in this volume—several never before published—work toward an "imaginative sociology," demonstrating the techniques by which social science may capture the contexts that human beings construct and inhabit. In the introduction, the authors offer their most complete statement to date on the nature of historical anthropology. Standing apart from the traditional disciplines of social history and modernist social science, their work is dedicated to discovering how human worlds are made and signified, forgotten and remade.

### **The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Low Countries**

The book brings together many recent trends in writing history under a common framework: thinking history globally. By thinking history globally, the book explains, applies, and exemplifies the four basic strategies of analysis, the big C's: comparing, connecting, conceptualizing, and contextualizing, using twelve different branches of history.

### **The Films of the Nineties**

For students and scholars of historiography, the theory of history, and literary studies, Robert Doran (French and comparative literature, U. of Rochester) gathers together 23 previously uncollected essays written by theorist and historian Hayden White (comparative literature, Stanford U.) from 1957 to 2007, on his theories of historical writing and narrative. Essays are organized chronologically and reveal the evolution of White's thought and its relationship to theories of the time, as well as the impact on the way scholars think about historical representation, the discipline of history, and how historiography intersects with other areas, especially literary studies. They specifically address theory of tropes, theory of narrative, and figuralism.

### **Logics of History**

### **The Content of the Form**

A deepening interest in both social and interior experience was a distinguishing feature of the cultural life of eighteenth-century Britain, influencing writers in all genres from fiction to philosophy. Focusing on this interplay of ideas and genres, Mark Phillips explores the ways in which writers and readers of history, memoir, biography and related literatures responded to the social and sentimental concerns

of a modern, commercial society. He shows that the writing of history, which once concentrated exclusively on political events, widened its horizons in ways that often paralleled better-known developments in the contemporary novel. Ultimately, Phillips proposes a new model for the study of historiographical narrative. Countering tropological readings identified with Hayden White, he offers a more historically nuanced approach that stresses questions of genre and reception as a guide to understanding how narratives were reshaped by new audiences and new social needs. Drawing inspiration from both the social analysis of the Scottish Enlightenment and the sentimental aesthetics of the contemporary novel, historical writing began to explore the areas of social experience and private life for which there was no place in classical historiography. The consequence, Phillips argues, was a significant reframing of historical thought that expressed itself through new themes, including the histories of commerce, manners, literature, and women, and through some lively experiments in narrative form. This book offers a rich picture of historiography that will interest students of history and fiction alike.

## **Meaning, Truth, and Reference in Historical Representation**

In this work of sweeping erudition, one of our foremost historians of early Christianity considers a variety of theoretical critiques to examine the problems and opportunities posed by the ways in which history is written. Elizabeth Clark argues forcefully for a renewal of the study of premodern Western history through engagement with the kinds of critical methods that have transformed other humanities disciplines in recent decades. *History, Theory, Text* provides a user-friendly survey of crucial developments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century debates surrounding history, philosophy, and critical theory. Beginning with the noble dream of history as it really was in the works of Leopold von Ranke, Clark goes on to review Anglo-American philosophies of history, schools of twentieth-century historiography, structuralism, the debate over narrative history, the changing fate of the history of ideas, and the impact of interpretive anthropology and literary theory on current historical scholarship. In a concluding chapter she offers some practical case studies to illustrate how attending to theoretical considerations can illuminate the study of premodernity. Written with energy and clarity, *History, Theory, Text* is a clarion call to historians for richer and more imaginative use of contemporary theory.

## **Beyond the Cultural Turn**

The only history and theory textbook to include accessible extracts from a wide range of historical writing. Provides a comprehensive introduction to the theorists who have most influenced twentieth-century historians. Chapters follow a consistent structure, putting difficult ideas into an accessible context. This is the only critical reader aimed at the undergraduate market.

## **The Poverty of Historicism**

In this book, the noted intellectual historian Frank Ankersmit provides a systematic account of the problems of reference, truth, and meaning in historical writing. He

works from the conviction that the historicist account of historical writing, associated primarily with Leopold von Ranke and Wilhelm von Humboldt, is essentially correct but that its original idealist and romanticist idiom needs to be translated into more modern terms. Rehabilitating historicism for the contemporary philosophy of history, he argues, "reveals the basic truths about the nature of the past itself, how we relate to it, and how we make sense of the past in historical writing." At the heart of Ankersmit's project is a sharp distinction between interpretation and representation. The historical text, he holds, is first and foremost a representation of some part of the past, not an interpretation. The book's central chapters address the concept of historical representation from the perspectives of reference, truth, and meaning. Ankersmit then goes on to discuss the possible role of experience in the history writing, which leads directly to a consideration of subjectivity and ethics in the historian's practice. Ankersmit concludes with a chapter on political history, which he maintains is the "basis and condition of all other variants of historical writing." Ankersmit's rehabilitation of historicism is a powerfully original and provocative contribution to the debate about the nature of historical writing.

## **What is Microhistory?**

New insights into the microbiome, epigenetics, and cognition are radically challenging our very idea of what it means to be 'human', while an explosion of neo-materialist thinking in the humanities has fostered a renewed appreciation of the formative powers of a dynamic material environment. The Matter of History brings these scientific and humanistic ideas together to develop a bold, new post-anthropocentric understanding of the past, one that reveals how powerful organisms and things help to create humans in all their dimensions, biological, social, and cultural. Timothy J. LeCain combines cutting-edge theory and detailed empirical analysis to explain the extraordinary late-nineteenth century convergence between the United States and Japan at the pivotal moment when both were emerging as global superpowers. Illustrating the power of a deeply material social and cultural history, The Matter of History argues that three powerful things - cattle, silkworms, and copper - helped to drive these previously diverse nations towards a global 'Great Convergence'.

## **The Aesthetics of History**

### **Hayden White**

By breaking down classic films from the nineteen-nineties such as Forest Gump and Titanic, this book offers a reel-to-reel cultural analysis, chronicling the concept of 'spin' as a major sociopolitical persuasion strategy.

## **The SAGE Handbook of Historical Theory**

Questioning the resistance to change of the West in constant crisis, and framed by early writings of Max Horkheimer and others, John E. O'Brien's historical-materialist method explores the contested perspectives of Voltaire, Schiller, Baudrillard,

Foucault, Eagleton and Hayden White.

## **The Philosophical Structure of Historical Explanation**

Hayden White probes the notion of authority in art and literature and examines the problems of meaning - its production, distribution, and consumption - in different historical epochs. In the end, he suggests, the only meaning that history can have is the kind that a narrative imagination gives to it. The secret of the process by which consciousness invests history with meaning resides in the content of the form, in the way our narrative capacities transforms the present into a fulfillment of a past from which we would wish to have descended.

## **Philosophy of History After Hayden White**

This new book offers a clear and accessible exposition of Hayden White's thought. In an engaging and wide-ranging analysis, Herman Paul discusses White's core ideas and traces the development of these ideas from the mid-1950s to the present. Starting with White's medievalist research and youthful fascination for French existentialism, Paul shows how White became increasingly convinced that historical writing is a moral activity. He goes on to argue that the critical concepts that have secured White's fame - trope, plot, discourse, figural realism - all stem from his desire to explicate the moral claims and perceptions underlying historical writing. White emerges as a passionate thinker, a restless rebel against scientism, and a defender of existentialist humanist values. This innovative introduction will appeal to students and scholars across the humanities, and help develop a critical understanding of an increasingly important thinker.

## **The Content of the Form**

German memory, judicial interrogation, and historical reconstruction : writing perpetrator history from postwar testimony / Christopher R. Browning -- Historical emplotment and the problem of truth / Hayden White -- On emplotment : two kinds of ruin / Perry Anderson -- History, counterhistory, and narrative / Amos Funkenstein -- Just one witness / Carlo Ginzburg -- Of plots, witnesses, and judgments / Martin Jay -- Representing the Holocaust : reflections on the historians' debate / Dominick LaCapra -- Historical understanding and counterrationality : the Judenrat as epistemological vantage / Dan Diner -- History beyond the pleasure principle : some thoughts on the representation of trauma / Eric L. Santner -- Habermas, enlightenment, and antisemitism / Vincent P. Pecora -- Between image and phrase : progressive history and the "final solution" as dispossession / Sande Cohen.; Science, modernity, and the "final solution" / Mario Biagioli -- Holocaust and the end of history : postmodern historiography in cinema / Anton Kaes -- Whose story is it, anyway? : ideology and psychology in the representation of the Shoah in Israeli literature / Yael S. Feldman -- Translating Paul Celan's "Todesfuge" : rhythm and repetition as metaphor / John Felstiner -- "The grave in the air" : unbound metaphors in post-Holocaust poetry / Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi -- The dialectics of unspeakability : language, silence, and the narratives of desubjectification / Peter Haidu -- The representation of limits / Berel Lang -- The book of the destruction / Geoffrey H. Hartman.

## **Critical Practice from Voltaire to Foucault, Eagleton and Beyond**

Lectures delivered as a series at Johns Hopkins University during 1982-83.

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