

Georg G. Iggers

The Uses and Misuses of History. On the Historian's Responsibility in the Past and Now

The instances of misusing history raise the issue of the historian's responsibility for the misuse. Iggers assumes that an honest approach to history is possible but he claims that the relation between using and misusing history is very complicated. The notion of misuse implies that the past can be treated instrumentally and can be disfigured for practical purposes. It also implies that at bottom there is some real past which is vulnerable to misuse. Iggers traces the development of history as an academic discipline (*Wissenschaft*) which came into being at the Berlin University after 1825. The professionalisation of the discipline should have ensured its reliability and immunity from ideological manipulation but Iggers's examples demonstrate that professional historians have also been part of institutional/political structures and have participated in the distribution of power. Ultimately, Iggers believes that there are certain rational standards of practising historiography; he advises historians to be critical of their own premises and capable of realising the subjective limitations of their own point of view.

Frank Ankersmit

In Praise of Subjectivity

Frank Ankersmit argues that even in ancient times the historian's moral and political convictions affected the shape of his account of history. But other factors may also contribute to what we often describe as the historian's 'subjectivity' – his favourite field of research, characteristic mannerisms of style, a particular way of conducting an argument and finally his own intellectual capacities and limitations. In his essay, Ankersmit invokes the traditional views of subjectivity and objectivity, and argues that they miss an essential point about the source of the actual problem with subjectivity, which lies in the logical proximity of (historical) truth and value. Ultimately, he claims that the interrelationship between the two (truth and value) is so intimate that in historical research they define each other. Thus value emerges as a useful and not infrequently indispensable guide to historical truth.

Ewa Domańska

Towards an Archeontology of the Dead body (A Contemplative Approach to the Past)

Ewa Domańska distinguishes a distinct contemplative approach to the past which – unlike documentary, commemorative or 'oral evidence' approaches – undertakes, among other things, reflection on various aspects of the dead body's existence and functioning. She traces the facets of 'endism' in historical reflection, which is increasingly skeptical of the prospects of historiography characterised by anthropocentrism, ethnocentrism, eurocentrism and phallogentrism. Thus many scholars think that present-day historiography should first of all study historians – their motivations, sponsors and backgrounds. Those who want the Third Millennium to be a new beginning for historiography postulate that scholars should give more thought to death, the deceased and their corpses. Domańska's claim is that in future-oriented human sciences questions concerning the past cannot be answered until we refer to ontology, to those thinkers who – like Martin Heidegger – study existence, death and the issue of being.

Fernando Sánchez-Marcos

The Historian as Translator

This essay focuses on the possibilities faced by the historian as well as the limitations and requirements that he must face in his capacity as a translator of one culture into another. Fernando Sánchez-Marcos's project takes its inspiration from dialogical hermeneutics as presented in the works of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur. At the same time Fernando Sánchez-Marcos incorporates into his discussion our contemporary experience of technology and economic globalisation. Those aspects of the world in which the historian lives make it necessary for him to sustain and cultivate the dialogue between cultures. Fernando Sánchez-Marcos postulates that historians should erect bridges of understanding between various groups of people and various temporal perspectives. Thus historians could help their contemporaries get used to a peaceful coexistence in a multicultural society. In Fernando Sánchez-Marcos's view, the historian's responsibility is so much the greater that the future of all humanity, not only the Western civilisation, is at stake here.

Aleksander Wilkoń

Primary and Secondary Genres in Two Perspectives: an Historical One and a Contemporary One

Aleksander Wilkoń's essay challenges some of Mikhail Bakhtin's conceptions which have been taken for granted in textual linguistics and genology. Wilkoń is particularly critical of those generalisations which ignore the categories of the individual, the non-systemic and the inimitable. Regardless of their inspirations, the generalisations have tended to lead to simplifications and schematism. In the second section of his essay Wilkoń questions Bakhtin's division into primary and secondary genres, which comes down to a distinction between utilitarian genres (both spoken and written) and their literary transformations and mutations. Wilkoń argues that Bakhtin's overlooks the influence of secondary genres on those genres which function as primary ones and at the same time derive from literary forms. In the final section of the essay its author identifies secondary genres within spoken forms of language, which include magic speech, the speech of play and customs and folk art speech.

Maria Solarska

Foucault, First of All, Serves the Making of War

Maria Solarska undertakes an examination of selected aspects of Foucault's vision of history. First of all, she observes that Foucault's writing is characterised by spatial metaphors. His historiography is a description of certain spatial configurations and thus can be inscribed within the contemporary tendencies in historiography which replace the linear notion of time with multiplied duration (*durée*). Foucault's project requires that he should use geographical terms of description, spatial tropes and architectural figures. Those include his notions of *utopia* and *heterotopia*, which Solarska discusses at length in the latter part of her essay pointing to the belligerent overtones of Foucault's statements.

