Historicism and the Human Sciences in Victorian Britain

_Historicism and the Human Sciences in Victorian Britain_ explores the rise and nature of historicist thinking about such varied topics as life, race, character, literature, language, economics, empire and law. The contributors show that the Victorians typically understood life and society as developing historically in a way that made history central to their intellectual inquiries and their public culture. Although their historicist ideas drew on some Enlightenment themes, they drew at least as much on organic ideas and metaphors in ways that lent them a developmental character. This developmental historicism flourished alongside evolutionary motifs and romantic ideas of the self. The human sciences were approached through narratives, and often narratives of reason and progress. Life, individuals, society, government and literature all unfolded gradually in accord with underlying principles, such as those of rationality, nationhood and liberty. This book will appeal to those interested in Victorian Britain, historiography and intellectual history.


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Historicism and the Human Sciences in Victorian Britain

Edited by
Mark Bevir

University of California, Berkeley
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List of Contributors

DUNCAN BELL, Reader in Political Thought and International Relations and Fellow of Christ’s College, University of Cambridge, UK.

MARK BEVIR, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for British Studies, University of California, Berkeley, USA.

IAN DUNCAN, Florence Green Bixby Professor of English, University of California, Berkeley, USA.

LAUREN M. E. GOODLAD, Kathryn Paul Professorial Scholar and Professor of English and Criticism & Interpretive Theory, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA.

FREDRIK ALBRITTON JONSSON, Associate Professor of History, University of Chicago, USA.

BERNARD LIGHTMAN, Professor of Humanities and Science and Technology Studies, York University, Toronto, Canada.

JENNIFER PITS, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago, USA.

EFRAM SERA-SHRIAR, Lecturer in Modern History, Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, Leeds Trinity University, UK.

MARCUS TOMALIN, Lecturer in English and Fellow of Downing College, University of Cambridge, UK.

BRIAN YOUNG, University Lecturer and Student and Tutor of Christ Church, University of Oxford, UK.