

## HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY IN CLASSICAL UTILITARIANISM, 1800–1865

This first comprehensive account of the utilitarians' historical thought intellectually resituates their conceptions of philosophy and politics, at a time when the past acquired new significances as both a means and object of study. Drawing on published and unpublished writings – and set against the intellectual backdrops of Scottish philosophical history, German and French historicism, Romanticism, positivism, and the rise of social science and scientific history – Callum Barrell recovers the depth with which Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, George Grote, and John Stuart Mill thought about history as a site of philosophy and politics. He argues that the utilitarians, contrary to their reputations as ahistorical and even antihistorical thinkers, developed complex frameworks in which to learn from and negotiate the past, inviting us to rethink the foundations of their ideas, as well as their place in – and relationship to – nineteenth-century philosophy and political thought.

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CALLUM BARRELL

*New College of the Humanities*

*at Northeastern University*



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For Loy

There are only two ways of acquiring knowledge about human affairs – through the perception of the particular, or through abstraction; the latter is the method of philosophy, the former of history.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leopold von Ranke, 'A fragment from the 1830s' in F. Stern (ed.), *The varieties of history: from Voltaire to the present* (New York: Meridian, 1956), pp. 58–59.

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## Conventions

### Footnote Abbreviations

- CW*: J. S. Mill (eds. J. M. Robson and others), *The collected works of John Stuart Mill* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963–1991), 33 vols.
- CPB*: J. Mill (ed. R. A. Fenn), *James Mill's commonplace books* (2010), 5 vols., [www.intellectualhistory.net/mill](http://www.intellectualhistory.net/mill), last accessed on 23 May 2017.
- HBI*: J. Mill, *The history of British India* [1817] (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1826), 6 vols.
- HG*: G. Grote, *History of Greece; from the earliest period to the close of the generation contemporary with Alexander the Great* [1846–1856] (Boston: J. P. Jewett & Co, 1851–1857), 12 vols.
- Works*: J. Bentham (ed. J. Bowring), *The works of Jeremy Bentham* (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1838–1843), 11 vols.
- MMO*: J. S. Mill (eds. E. D. Pionke and E. A. Wilson), *Mill's marginalia online* (2016), 151 vols., [www.millmarginalia.org](http://www.millmarginalia.org), last accessed on 1 June 2018.

### Transcriptions

I have standardised spelling where possible, except in titles of works where the original is given. Square brackets have been employed to expand on otherwise unclear prose.

### Translations

Translations are my own unless otherwise stated. I have allowed my sources to speak in their original language where possible.