

## 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.

MARK BEVIR is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for British Studies, University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of various books, including *A Theory of Governance* (2013), *Governance: A Very Short Introduction* (2012), *The Making of British Socialism* (2011), *Democratic Governance* (2010) and *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (1999). *Historicism and the Human Sciences in Victorian Britain* is a product of a Mellon project on Britain's Modernity. Cambridge University Press is also publishing the companion volume on *Modernism and the Social Sciences*.

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Edited by Mark Bevir

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*Edited by*

**Mark Bevir**

*University of California, Berkeley*



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