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a range of approaches to texts,⁵ which intellectual historians analyse with all possible techniques and asking all possible questions. I would suggest that typical of the intellectual historian is keeping in mind two points, which distinguish the approach in terms of intellectual history from other perfectly legitimate approaches. The first point is the texts' nature as historical artefacts, produced in time, before and after other texts, while the second point is the texts' relevance to a historical problem, whose analysis requires the assumption of a non-textual reality, which the historian projects from his present into the past. Intellectual history is therefore a common ground, strongly interdisciplinary but clearly staked out, for historians of various origins (the historical interest is crucial).

In 1938 Lovejoy listed twelve points forming a rubric for the history of ideas to come. Kelley has aptly commented on the changes that took place ever since. In fact priorities have varied in the last fifty years even more than Kelley is ready to assume.⁶ I plead for the extension of the rubric to include topics whose relevance has dramatically increased for intellectual historians. The history of historiography is prominent among them. There are quite a few reasons why history of historiography belongs to 'intellectual history'. It seems to me that what Lovejoy called *Wissensoziologie* and Kelley sees as entering eclipse,⁷ has been integrated in the last decades into an enlarged vision of the history of historiography that borders on and shares perspectives and problems with the history of science and the analysis of collective imagination. History of historiography has ceased to be the learned description of the straightforward progress to the historical truth. Direct and immediate contact with the past has been acknowledged to be a chimera. If experience of the past is possible at all, it must be either the aesthetic grasping of surviving fragments or the analysis of texts of whatever nature in order to assess

⁵ Ibid., 19 (46).

⁶ Ibid., 13-17 (42-5).

⁷ Ibid., 17 (45).

their meaning in our cultural context. A specialized discipline dealing critically with the attempt to make sense of history is relevant to all branches of history, and especially so to intellectual historians, who are in the first place interested in the relationship between texts and worlds of experience. Besides, it is worth noting that as history of historiography is potentially a pervasive approach, it would greatly profit from a constant interaction with the challenges coming from the wider, interdisciplinary field of 'intellectual history'.

Intellectual History in Political Theory

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An International Society for Intellectual History might make a breakthrough possible for the intellectual history of political theory.

By far the better part of political theory is carried out in historical terms. That is, if we want to think about any question or dilemma in political theory, we begin with a survey of what previous thinkers have said and build upon that basis. This way of thinking is frustrating to some, because it means that reading Habermas, for example, requires familiarity with Durkheim, Weber, Mead, and a host of other figures. The answer to those who question the necessity for this is that this just is the way most great figures think. Those who are not willing to think through the work of the previous thinkers just will not understand Habermas.

There are at least two ways of thinking through the meaning of the previous writers in order to understand Habermas. One is to read their work as a series of analytical points, with no understanding of their contexts, problems, etc. This may be the more common way, but it can lead to unsatisfactory results, missing their points and Habermas's point in citing them. Political theorists of the analytical stripe who talk only with other analytical theorists will never come to appreciate what they are missing. Hence the potential value of talking to other intellectual historians. If political theorists could be persuaded to participate in a Society for Intellectual History, their attention might be

drawn to the alternative way of reading, which is understanding those previous thinkers in their contexts.

One problem is that many political theorists enter the field because they have been impressed by the writings of one or a few famous thinkers. When they come to the professional study of these famous thinkers, they tend to learn about them in an ahistorical way. A 'canon' that jumps from Hobbes to Locke to Rousseau to Mill has long dominated the anglophone academic world. When people read these figures in isolation they are engaged in what I think of as an eerie conversation across the centuries and linguistic boundaries. They neglect the minor figures, who might have been more on the mind of a major figure than a distant 'great'. A Society for Intellectual History might draw their attention to these minor figures.

Many political theorists do look at context, but only at the narrowest of contexts. Besides missing 'minor' figures, anglophone theorists also miss 'great' figures from other languages, such as Pufendorf, who has been the subject of a revival only recently. Another service a Society for Intellectual History could perform would be to help American political theorists see outside of their narrow anglophone world. For example, recent work by an outstanding scholar, Richard Ashcraft, reads Locke only in an English context. It is a rather remarkable truth that no treatment of Locke's *Letter on Toleration*, written in Latin after several years of contact with Dutch scholars such as Limborch and Van Paets, reads Locke's work in its Dutch context. Raymond Klibansky's edition of the letter drew

the Dutch context to our attention, but he did not hazard an interpretation of its influence on Locke's meaning.

Yet another problem in political theory is that even if 'minor' and 'great' figures from several countries are surveyed, theorists may miss the importance of other fields. Few great political thinkers saw themselves as simply political thinkers. Most were involved in a variety of fields from natural science to *belles-lettres* to art. Sometimes their work in one field gave them ideas for their work in political theory. Yet another service that a Society could perform would be to help political theorists understand the history of ideas from other fields. Interchanges with historians of ideas in those fields can help the political theorists explore such possibilities. To take only one example, one of the major neglected fields among political theorists is theology, so much a part of the earlier intellectual world, and so absent in much of the American intellectual scene today. Political theorists may not even recognize a theological argument that is staring them in the face.

The upshot is that the major service of a Society for Intellectual History would be the opportunity to observe and interact with colleagues in other disciplines and from other countries. I know from my own experience that I have learned much more from interchanges with historians and philosophers than from other political theorists. I find most discussions of political theory at major national conventions rather sterile. I would prefer to have my work critiqued by people from other disciplines.

VIEWS OF INTELLECTUAL HISTORY FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC, SWEDEN, AND ISRAEL

Comenius Studies and Intellectual History in the Czech Republic

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brief statement. First I will try to show some problems of Intellectual History as a field of study we are grappling with in the Czech Republic. In the second part, then, I will acquaint you with the projects of my department and with the review *Acta Comeniana*. My statement will be mostly limited to the period of seventeenth-century history, which is my own field of interest.

I should like to mention two subjects in my

Unfortunately there is no institution in the