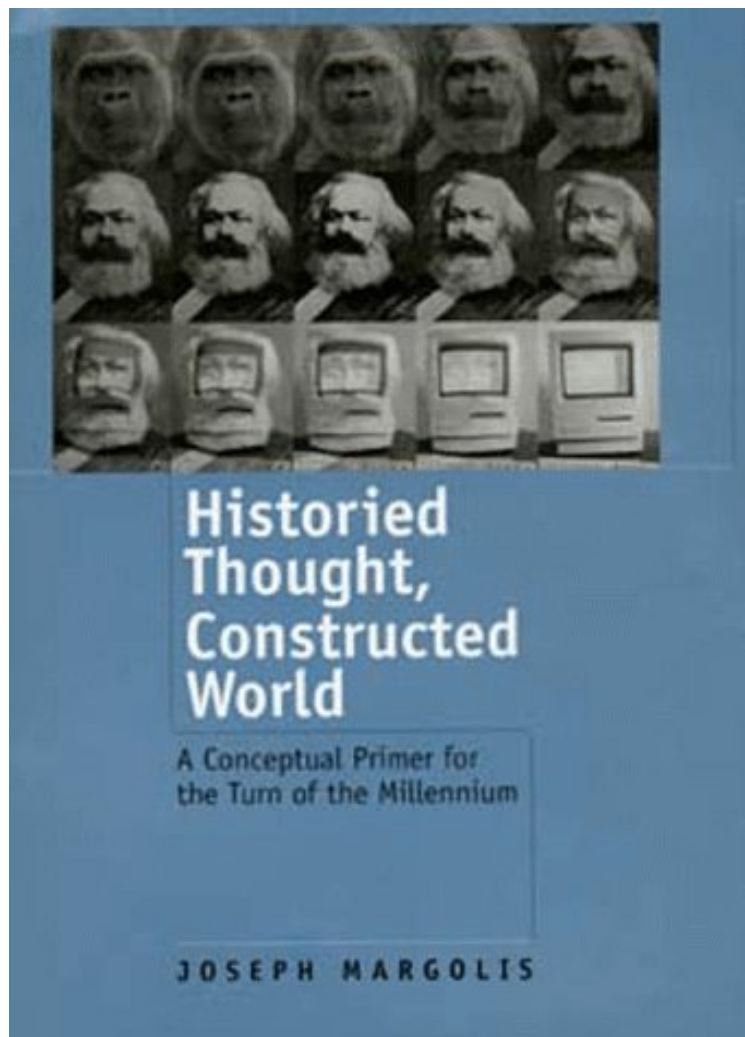


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Historied Thought, Constructed World: A Conceptual Primer for the Turn of the Millennium

Joseph Margolis

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0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. thinking is historyBy William S JamisonI say we find ourselves puzzled in our philosophies. Fixity is suspect, and flux is unconsoling. P. 3Theme: thinking is history. It is an analogue of what might be called hyperfiction. That is, it is a template for possible future narratives philosophy might take. First

order, second order discourse, legitimation.

Historied Thought, Constructed World offers a fresh vision: one that engages the reigning philosophies of the West, endorses the radical possibilities of historicity and flux, and reconciles the best themes of Anglo-American and continental European philosophy. Margolis sketches a program for the philosophy of the future, addressing topics such as the historical character of thinking, the intelligible world as artifact, the inseparability of theory and practice, and the reliability of a world without assured changeless structures. Through the use of numbered theorems that construct an interlocking argument, Margolis carefully articulates his distinctive ideas in the context of work by Quine, Davidson, Putnam, Rorty, Derrida, Habermas, and Foucault. The discussion includes all the central topics of the philosophical tradition: from science to morality, from language to world, from persons to objects, from nature to culture, from causality to purpose, from change to history. What emerges is an argument against essentialism, one that champions the historicity of thought and cultural constructionism.

From Library Journal Margolis (*The Flux of History and the Flux of Science*, Univ. of California Pr., 1993) is dissatisfied with contemporary analytic philosophy. In his view, philosophers ignore the radical implications of historicity. Our concepts are not immutable, and the search for foundations for knowledge must be abandoned. Margolis advances his claims for relativism and flux in the form of numbered propositions, e.g., "(10.48) objectivity cannot but be consensual," on which he then comments. The author's criticism rests on a remarkably wide knowledge of the literature. By far the best feature of the book is the elaborate notes, in which he has perceptive things to say about scores of philosophical controversies. Still, his contention that modern analytic philosophy cannot solve its own problems seems unproved. Recommended for academic libraries. ?David Gordon, Bowling Green State Univ., Ohio Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Inside Flap "A major work, provocative, rich in detailed arguments, and striking in the development of its theme of the historicity of thought. A sustained and perspicuous presentation of the ideas of a leading American philosopher." Marx Wartofsky, editor of *Philosophical Forum*