The Politics of Historical Thinking

Historical thinking has a politics that shapes its ends. While at least two generations of scholars have been guided into their working lives with this axiom as central to their profession, it is somewhat of a paradox that historiography is so often nowadays seen as a matter of intellectual choices operating outside the imperatives of quotidian politics, even if the higher realms of ideological inclinations or historiographical traditions can be seen to have played a role. The politics of historical thinking, if acknowledged at all, is seen to belong to the realms of nonprofessional ways of the instrumentalisation of the past.

This series seeks to centre the politics inherent in historical thinking, professional and non-professional, promoted by states, political organisations, 'nationalities' or interest groups, and to explore the links between political (re-)education, historiography and mobilisation or (sectarian?) identity formation. We hope to bring into focus the politics inherent in historical thinking, professional, public or amateur, across the world today.

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