

FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE THROUGH THE PRESENT

Conversations with Historians

at the

Institute for Advanced Study



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INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY
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PREFACE

The "conversations" which are enclosed took place over the weekend of January 10-11, 1992, and represent the contributions of members of the School of Historical Studies to a gathering of Trustees, Friends of the Institute and invited guests. No particular format had been imposed; each speaker chose his own manner of presentation. Nor are all professors represented: the talk given by Giles Constable was not written down and is consequently missing here.

The talks of Friday evening, January 10, those of Oleg Grabar, Phillip Griffiths and George Kennan were given before and after dinner. The Saturday morning talks on January 11, those of Christian Habicht, Glen Bowersock, Oleg Grabar, Irving Lavin, and Peter Paret, were delivered around a large table to an informal group.

We are reproducing them here because they gave, to those who attended, an unusual insight into the framework within which history is pursued and practised at the Institute, an insight whose value was considered worth sharing with a larger audience.

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I. FRIDAY EVENING

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS TO TRUSTEES AND GUESTS

OLEG GRABAR

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my privilege to be the first one to address you during this dialogue--encounter, because I am, this year, the Executive Officer of the School of Historical Studies, that is to say the general factotum, or, in Rossini's terms, un barbiere, hopefully di qualità.

We are gathered for what is, I am told, a new venture for the Institute, which is for its permanent Faculty to share with the Trustees and their guests something of the activities and concerns which occupy their professional life and which delineate the particular quality of this School of six individuals. Our purpose is not going to be to describe what we have done or what we are doing. Much of that should be apparent from the packet sent to you. What we would like to share with you is not as simple as the variety of scholarly activities which engage us, although some of them will certainly be mentioned by several among us. Nor do we wish to indulge in apologias for our own fields or for the dozen of historical fields which are not represented in our midst. What we propose to do instead is to meditate with you, in front of you, on the kinds of intellectual, ethical, and aesthetic issues which the practice of our crafts and the exhibition of our competencies appear to formulate. For it is only by sharing a knowledge of what we were, an awareness of what we are, and a vision of what we may become that the Faculty of the School and the Trustees can, together propose and map out a future.

We have put our various statements under the general title of "From the Past to the Future Through the Present." Tomorrow we shall talk about our various senses of what we do, of how the traditions of the Institute have shaped our work, and of the kinds of policy needs which should be elaborated. This evening the tone for the twenty-four hours to come will be provided by our Director, Dr. Phillip Griffiths, a Daniel thrown into a den of twenty-one lions or a Moses that can lead them out of the wilderness. His mathematical talents probably allow him to save us all by transforming us into equations or should it be theorems? Or perhaps conjectures?

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

PHILLIP A. GRIFFITHS

Let me begin by welcoming each of you this evening to the second of what is planned as a series of informal weekends when Trustees and others interested in the Institute for Advanced Study will have an opportunity to explore the work done here through our individual schools and enlarge our understanding of the contemporary status of the fields of study represented here. The Institute's School of Historical Studies will be our focus this weekend. History was one of the areas of scholarship first established here by the Institute's intellectual founder, Abraham Flexner, and has been one of the Institute's richest and most productive endeavors for more than half a century.

We have purposefully tried not to impose undue structure on the weekend gatherings so as to allow discussion to range as freely as possible. If I can, let me suggest to you a way we can proceed and also sketch out some of the questions and issues we may encounter tonight and tomorrow morning.

In this evening's and tomorrow's discussions we will survey the very broad continuum of man's past which is the focus of the permanent and visiting members of the School of Historical Studies, and we will also consider the continuing influence of the School on historical scholarship. This evening, following dinner, we will hear from Professor Emeritus George Kennan whose association with the Institute stretches back almost forty years. He and other School faculty you will hear from tomorrow will give us a first-hand sense of how historical scholarship is carried on here, how it has developed over time, and its place in the spectrum of human endeavor. Throughout, I hope you will enter into discussions, ask questions, and offer observations. The most valuable part of our time together for all of us will be the interaction that will thereby take place.

As the Institute's new Director I especially look forward to hearing your thoughts on what we do here. In order to be free to accomplish its most fundamental purpose, the discovery of new knowledge and the achievement of deeper understanding, the Institute necessarily must set its own course. But the scholarship done here should ultimately have meaning for the human condition. There is much to learn from how others perceive us, just as there is much we can do to broaden understanding of the process of creating new knowledge. This process, after all, is at the heart of the Institute's reason for being, and it should

constantly undergo re-examination and renewal to insure that we are fulfilling our founding mission.

The first of these weekend gatherings, held last month, focused on the Institute's School of Mathematics. As a mathematician I felt very comfortable speaking to the evolution of mathematics during this century and the direction new mathematical thought is taking. I would not presume to attempt a similar overview of historical scholarship; my colleagues from the School of Historical Studies will do so much better than I could. But I would like to share with you a couple of personal observations and very general thoughts drawn from what I have learned about the School's work and also from my experience as Provost at Duke. The first concerns a trend in the humanities and social sciences and the Institute's response to that trend. The second is an observation about the evolution of the School of Historical Studies and its place at the Institute.

Early in November I attended a meeting in the Netherlands of the directors of six centers dedicated to advanced scholarship, three from the U.S. and three from Western Europe. At most of the six centers, in varying configurations, the humanities and social sciences are a major focus, and at some, like the Institute, the sciences and mathematics as well. The directors had gathered to look at the interfaces between the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences and the role of centers such as the Institute in nurturing them. All of us agreed that much needs to be done to resolve tensions and improve understanding between natural scientists and those in the humanities and social sciences, the problem classically defined by C.P. Snow in his book The Two Cultures. We agreed too that all three areas and the intellectual disciplines each comprehends are in need of ongoing rethinking. Most important for our purposes, we agreed that in the humanities and social sciences some of the most creative and energized intellectual efforts are to be found at the interfaces between major areas of thought. But traditional settings within universities do not encourage dialogue and exchange across broad areas, perhaps because discipline lines usually follow administrative department structures or because the scale of operations is simply too large. There is also a healthy skepticism in academe about the cult of "interconnectedness" which seeks to force cross-disciplinary exchange at the sacrifice of substance. In any case, my fellow directors and I agreed that the spontaneous, unmanaged interactions that give rise to genuinely creative exchanges have a much better chance of occurring in settings like the Institute. As directors, we believe one of our principal tasks is to discover where in our communities the appetite for such exchanges may be found, to identify the best people, and to give them full voice and encouragement.

At the Institute for Advanced Study and in the School of Historical Studies there is an environment and an intellectual heritage which I believe places us at a particular advantage in addressing these concerns. The Institute covers a much broader intellectual terrain than many of its counterparts, and does so with an almost unique structure involving permanent faculty who provide intellectual continuity and direction, and visiting members. The faculty here bring to their task an extraordinary breadth of scholarship. The School of Historical Studies is an especially good example of both strengths. In its earliest form, in the 1930's, it was organized as the School of Humanistic Studies and embraced classical history and archeology and art history. The contributions to scholarship during those first decades from Benjamin Meritt, Erwin Panofsky, and their colleagues were of legendary proportions, and the Institute has continued down to the present as a center for these fields.

Over time, and especially after combining with the School of Economics and Politics in 1949, the School developed additional strengths in medieval, Renaissance, and modern history, and in intellectual, cultural and diplomatic history. And it has reached beyond the traditional confines of Western history to include Near Eastern history and culture. In addition, there have been important concentrations of research activity at various times, among both the School's faculty and visitors, which have centered on such diverse areas as archeology and the history of philosophy and science. These, along with the history of music and literature, are within the purview of the School of Historical Studies but not currently represented by the permanent faculty. This remarkable evolution of interconnected and complimentary scholarship, truly a shared enterprise, has taken a measured and deliberate course, defending the high ground between narrowly specialized studies that can too easily lapse into antiquarianism and the rarified theoretical approaches to history that have become especially fashionable in recent decades. One of the legacies the Institute's historians can rightly claim, I suggest, is that of the great European historians of the last century who established a timeless standard against which the best historical scholarship continues to be measured.

Also remarkable, I believe, is the fact that from its beginnings the faculty drawn to the School have been of such breadth and competence that each could have found a comfortable home in any of several university departments. Thus, when one thinks of the School of Historical Studies, it would be entirely wrong to compare it to typical departments of history, most of which today include scores of faculty, each with a relatively narrowly defined area of expertise which is only infrequently breached. The School's historians are, by contrast, scholars who range across several academic disciplines and who refuse to confine themselves to a time-specific or subject-specific niche. They are people who talk to each other--and to non-historians-- and learn from each other. They venture beyond traditional lines and methodologies. But they have not taken the bait of pursuing what is fashionable

at the moment, nor have they allowed their thinking to be cramped by narrow specialization.

An informed understanding of man's past is an ongoing process of discovery, integration and evaluation in which the values of the historian are critical. Central to writing the best history is the exercise of the historian's judgement about what man has done or created, why he did so, and the consequences of his actions. I believe the work of the Institute's historians has been singularly consistent over time in maintaining a fine balance between theories which would reduce human behavior to a rigid determinism and methodologies which focus so narrowly on the particular as to leave no room for the universal judgements that give meaning to historical scholarship.

I mentioned earlier the broad range of historical work done at the Institute and the purposeful way this has evolved. In part the strength of the Institute's program has been drawn from the extraordinary group of visiting members who have come here over the years and the influence they have had on scholarship. The School's visiting members and former members, our "alumni," comprise one of the largest such groups at the Institute. Interestingly, the visiting members in history are also one of the most diverse groups at the Institute. This year, for example, 26 of the 53 Historical Studies members are from abroad, representing eleven foreign countries. Their areas of study include Islamic architecture, Italian social and economic history, Biblical iconography, ancient religions, classical languages and philology, the histories of art, science, medicine, law, warfare, and ideas, to name but a few.

I hope you will come away from this weekend with an expanded appreciation of the value of historical scholarship, of what it is like to do historical research in the unique setting of the Institute, and why the work being done here is central to the field as a whole and to all the areas it touches. I believe there is no place today making more enduring contributions to the advancement of historical knowledge and the preparation of those who will be the lead scholars of tomorrow and the next century.

REMARKS

GEORGE F. KENNAN

The question of what I should speak about on this occasion was left for me to decide. I can imagine that there are some things, particularly in view of the present situation in Russia, which some of you would prefer to have me talk about, rather than the subject I am choosing. But what has brought us together here tonight is, as I understand it, a desire to have a closer look at this Institute, and particularly that part of it that is called the School of Historical Studies. So I am afraid that you are going to have to listen to some of my views on just those subjects. My hosts have invited them, and you will all have to endure them.

I suspect that the reasons why the organizers of this occasion asked me to speak about it tonight had to do with the length of time that I have been around the place. It was forty-two years ago last summer when I came to this institution; and my memories and impressions of it go back farther, I suspect, than those of anyone else around the place except Homer Thompson.

Actually, of course, long acquaintance with an academic scene is not, God knows, any guaranty of high value in the judgement of it. Some might argue that first impressions are apt to be more insightful and revealing. But the long view also has a few merits; and I give you this one without apology, asking you to bear in mind my age, my general old-fashioned-ness as a person, and the fact that eighteen years have now elapsed since I was retired as an active member of the faculty.

This Institute had its origins, as I understand it, in the recognition by Abraham Flexner and people around him that a great deal of what had proved valuable in science had its origins not in thinking provoked by the effort to solve any specific problem, but simply by people becoming intrigued with some of the great riddles and challenges of the world around us and pondering them simply for their own sakes; by pure science, in other words, rather than in applied science; and, recognizing this, Flexner and the others thought that there ought to be an institution where pure science could be cultivated and developed.

Now, the question must have arisen in these people's minds as to whether history had any proper place in an institution so conceived. And the question must have been answered in the affirmative, for history was being pursued here when I came, and has been so pursued ever since. There can be no question, in my mind, but that the decision to include it was the right one. If you were going to regard the nature and development of the human species as one of the objects to which pure science and uninhibited thought could be devoted, then this was an object that

could be studied and understood only in a historical dimension, and in the dynamic dimension rather than the static one. Man was an evolving creature, not a finished product; and he was in large part what history had made of him, and could be understood only in that context. Once you recognized this, you had to accept history as a part of science; and without it an institution such as the one Flexner conceived would not have been complete.

But here, there was a complication. Historical knowledge was not like knowledge in the exact sciences, nor could it be pursued in the same manner. One could give it a great deal of quiet thought, but never in the abstract. It offered no great moments of discovery -- no dramatic and sudden break-throughs of understanding. What was involved was the scrutiny of what was evident or ascertainable about man's past. This was capable of yielding valuable insights. But these were never abstract. They seldom burst upon you with the force of revelations. They had to be linked to specific observations of the subject matter. They could be derived, and explained to others, only from patient, exhaustive but imaginative study of the past of the human species.

I apologize for giving you this theoretical disquisition (and especially after so good a dinner) but I know of no other way of making it clear that if the study of history was to play any useful part at an institution so conceived as this one, it would have to consist primarily of the solid, serious and detailed study, what you might call "nose to the grindstone study," of specific historical phenomena; and this not necessarily for the solution of any specific questions, but only with the reasonable expectation that work of this sort would, in the law of averages, eventually produce its insights in its own way and time. None could predict when or where these insights might come. They did not even need to be those of the working drone who elicited the fact. They come from the person who read what he had written. But they would eventually be there.

So all this, evidently, was accepted. And year after year, ever since I came to this place we have been permitting and encouraging historical scholars -- not just any such scholars, but only mature, accomplished, and experienced ones -- ones whose apprenticeship had been completed and who had proven their ability to work usefully and creatively in their respective fields -- we have been, as I say, permitting and encouraging such people to come here to stay here for a time, and to do at least a portion of the work they had in hand.

Now you may ask: Why here? Why not, if we had money to spend for their support, support it in the place where they were normally residing? There are several reasons.

First, there is the curious but simple fact that any serious scholar in the humanities who has particularly important and challenging work to do, can usually do it better,

at least for a short time, in almost any place other than the one in which he normally resides and has his professional seat. This is because when one lives for any length of time in any one place, one normally grows up around one's self a crust of personal involvements, social and professional -- interactions with friends, neighbors, and colleagues, properties, finances, phone calls, even habits -- a crust which is all very pleasant but does interfere with concentrated work. Of such impediments the scholar is at least partially relieved when he goes somewhere else, at least for a limited time.

As a haven for people in that position the Institute is of course not unique. But in other respects I think it is. First of all, it selects its visitors with great care. This is of course the traditional task of the permanent faculty; and I doubt that there is any institution in the country where the process is, or could be, better done. Great care is taken to examine the past records and achievements of the candidates and to assure that their commitment is such that, given the freedom they would have here, they would not waste it. Care is taken to be sure that they have a specific scholarly task they would like to pursue here, that this task is one of more than casual importance, and that the Institute is the best place for its pursuit. A membership here is, after all, not just a vacation or an opportunity for idle browsing. But once these people are accepted and come here, their work, precisely because the faculty hosts are themselves scholars and workers in the same vineyard, is surrounded by a degree of sympathy and consideration which they could, I think, have found in few other places.

There is understanding here for the fact that history is normally lonely and time-consuming work. It has to be. It calls for frequent seclusion and self-segregation, for long periods of patient probing and reading in libraries and dusty archives, and, if one is writing up the results of it, for long hours at the word processor or whatever else you use to put words on paper. This is not exactly a gregarious occupation. The Institute understands all this. It does not breathe down their necks or put ulterior demands on them. On the contrary, it goes out of its way to avoid encumbering these visiting members with new involvement and distractions that might interfere with their work. Oppenheimer once observed to me that our greatest duty to these visiting scholars lay, as he put it, in depriving them of any excuse for doing anything other than that which they came here to do.

All of these were good principles; and they have not been without their effects. I think that during the period of my association with this place something over a thousand of these visitors must have come here, done what work they could here, and returned to their normal life. It is difficult to measure the contribution to the study and the written record of history that all this has signified. We have no proper record of the research that was done and of the works that were produced either, in toto or in substantial part, by these people. It is my estimate that the hardcover books that would respond to that description must have run into the

hundreds. We have at the present time no unified collection of these works; and I have been toying with the idea that we might try to assemble one. I have no doubt that, once collected, it would be a very impressive sight. One must bear in mind that this -- the work performed here by the visiting members -- has constituted the central and most significant part of all the work done here in the *historical field*. *And such, from what I have been able to see of it, has been its value that I have no hesitation in suggesting that there has been no other place in the world from which, scholar for scholar and square foot for square foot, more and finer history has emerged over these past 40 years than from these surrounding walls.*

Now please don't think that, in saying these things, I mean to idealize the Institute. It is a human institution. As such, it is liable to all the usual human failings. It has had its successful undertakings and its less successful ones; and what institution has not? It has made its mistakes; and what institution, or what person for that matter, has not done the same? It still has unsolved problems; and who is without them?

Among these last there is, as the Director just said, the matter of communication within the Institute -- communication sometimes even among the members of individual schools, but particularly communication between the members of different schools. This is an old problem. It has racked the institution ever since the days of its founding. Robert Oppenheimer had particularly strong feelings about it. As one who was himself in part a scientist and in part a humanist, he had a deep belief in the unity of all knowledge and of all scholarly inquiry. He thought that the quest for knowledge through the scholarly process, which had brought us all together at the Institute, should have engendered in us all a special sense of fraternity and comradeship. And it was, I suspect, one of the deepest disappointments of his life that he was never able to gain full understanding for this view among the people who came here and that some of them could never be brought to relate to one another, and to talk with one another, in the way for which he had hoped.

Oppenheimer often talked to me with eloquence and enthusiasm of what he called the elegance, and even beauty, of some of the solutions at which our mathematical colleagues were arriving. He was a great admirer of Niels Bohr, and was anxious that we two should get together and understand each other. He once invited us both to dinner, alone, at his house; and after dinner Bohr paced up and down in the living room with his pipe in his mouth, and mumbled things in his heavy Danish accent, and I, to tell the truth, couldn't understand a damn thing of what he was saying. But some days later, when he held a physics seminar in the small class room on the ground floor of Fuld Hall, I, for some reason, went to hear him; and while this time there was even less reason for me to understand what he was talking about, because it was highly scientific, and all over my head, I came away nevertheless, deeply impressed, because I had sensed from this presentation

something of the enormous scrupulousness and meticulousness and responsibility of his thinking. I saw how he took his own thoughts to pieces, as he went along, how he questioned every one of his own conclusions, as he talked. I was brought to recognize what great scientific discipline, and what great integrity, lay behind this exposition. The impression never left me, and I offer this as an example of the fact that communication from discipline to discipline can sometimes take place, and that it can be enriching.

But the problem remains; and the Director was right to mention it. It is not an easy one to solve. When we humanists try to talk to the scientists about their interests, we stand before them like seventh-grade school children; and they cannot be expected to take upon themselves at that moment the beginnings of the long and arduous scientific education we would have to have before we could understand what they are doing. And conversely, when we talk with them about our concerns, it is hard for them to be told that the object of our study has no hard edges, no clear divisions, not even any exact measurements in time: that the things we purport to study are always in motion, with no ascertainable beginnings or endings, and with no clear shapes to them; and that there can be no complete objectivity in these matters, because what we are studying is really a part of ourselves. They, the scientists, cannot be blamed if they sometimes question whether our wanderings-about in this world of uncertainties really warrants the name of scholarship.

But in the last analysis, I am sure Oppenheimer was right. There must be, in the various forms of the quest for knowledge that are practiced within these walls, some sort of unity that unites them all. It is up to us to find it and to cultivate it. And here, we have much farther to go.

While we are talking about the limitations on the Institute, there is the fact that it has its existence in this present epoch and has no choice but to adjust to the customs, the outlooks, and the expectations of the society that surrounds it. This has necessitated compromises and concessions at many points, very often at the expense of the concepts and ideals that inspired its initial establishment. But the Institute has, I believe, done surprisingly well in defending the essential in its commitment by sacrificing, whenever it had to, the unessential. It has held, throughout, to the highest standards of scholarship. And if I were to be asked to express in a few words my impression of it, at the end of these forty years as an institution of this time and place -- my impression of it as the institution it is and with the commitment it has inherited, I could best reply perhaps by recalling what the historian Gibbon said of the great Byzantine military figure, Belisarius, who for a time ruled most of Italy. "His imperfections," Gibbon said, "flowed from the contagion of the times; his virtues were his own." The same, I think, might justly be said about the Institute for Advanced Study. Its imperfections, too, flow from

the contagion of the times, to which it is not and will never be wholly immune; but its virtues too, like those of Belisarius, are very distinctly its own.

II. SATURDAY MORNING

CHRISTIAN HABICHT

My colleagues have chosen me to speak first because my field (Ancient Greece) is the one remotest in time. While they will talk about the past and the future of the School, I am taking the liberty of addressing the present and of discussing what I am doing here.

For some time now, my main field of research has been the history of the city of Athens in the Hellenistic period, or the three hundred years between Alexander the Great and Augustus. This activity continues and amplifies a long-standing tradition at the Institute: it continues the work on Athens done by scholars such as Homer Thompson, Ben Meritt, and Harold Cherniss; but it also expands this tradition beyond the Classical period, the 5th and 4th centuries, into postclassical times. These have received much less attention, not only at the Institute, but everywhere, not because they are less interesting or less stimulating but because they seem so inaccessible.

Classical Athens is accessible, beyond the rank of scholars, to a wider public, through the translated works of the great poets (from Solon to the dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes), philosophers (Plato and Aristotle), historians (Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon), or orators (Lysias, Demosthenes, Aeschines, and others). Nothing of the sort is preserved from the Hellenistic period, because a narrow prejudice of later times condemned, for purely stylistic reasons, everything not written in pure classical Attic. It is for the outstanding quality of the quoted authors, but also for their accessibility, that the history of Classical Athens is studied and taught throughout the world; on the contrary, the history of Hellenistic Athens is ignored. The last comprehensive study dates from 1911, William Scott Ferguson's Hellenistic Athens, brilliant for its time but now long outdated.

The reason for the neglect of postclassical Athens, therefore, is not that the city, after losing its political dominance to the new monarchies, and later to Rome, had become insignificant, but precisely that easily accessible sources are lacking. It may not be common knowledge that Athens remained a highly significant, extremely attractive center of the world, but it is nevertheless true. The city remained, among other things, the "intellectual Mecca" of the world. The cradle of democracy had once stood there, and democracy continued to be cultivated and refined at Athens. Incidentally, a major step in that development was taken exactly 2,500 years ago, in 508 B.C. by Kleisthenes.

Now, while, except for scraps, the contemporary authors are all lost, everywhere where people spoke Greek, inscriptions multiply and become our main source of information. Most important for Athens are some two thousand decrees of the assembly (we sometimes have several from a single day) and many thousands of other public and private documents. Inscriptions, if properly assessed, illuminate historical events, constitutional facts and changes, social life, religion and superstition, law, and every aspect of daily life. They often shed light on matters never touched upon by the authors. The difficulty, however, is that they cannot simply be read in order to be understood (the way a speech of Demosthenes is read and understood). They have to be placed into the proper context of date and circumstances. The difficulties are compounded whenever an inscription is only partially preserved. Special qualifications are required if one wants to deal properly with epigraphical evidence and to extract from it the maximum of relevant information.

I acquired some of these qualifications -- long before I ever saw a Greek inscription -- through my dissertation on the worship of the Hellenistic kings, since published inscriptions from all parts of the Greek world provided much of the evidence. Then I myself published a large number of recently discovered inscriptions from the German excavations at Olympia, Samos, Athens, Thessaly, and Pergamon, so that I am sometimes regarded as an epigraphist rather than as the historian I really am. However, it is this training that will perhaps allow me to publish one day a new history of Hellenistic Athens that even a lay person may be tempted to read. Nowhere else than at the Institute could a scholar pursue a topic such as mine, outside the mainstream of the curriculum, with as much freedom and support, both material and intellectual, the latter mainly provided by the annual members. And this is why I left Heidelberg, where nothing drove me away, and accepted the Institute's offer -- I would not have been tempted to join any American university.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that whatever my own fields of research may be (and these are not restricted to Athens nor to the Hellenistic period), I try, in collaboration with my colleague Glen Bowersock, to cultivate the whole area of Ancient History, Greek and Roman, and as much as possible of Classical Studies in general. In my nineteen years at the Institute, I have sponsored 99 members coming from 20 different countries, mostly European and North American. Exactly one third, 33, were US citizens. Their subjects have ranged widely, as it has always been the policy of the School (and my own) in choosing members to select the very best, not those closest to one's own field of expertise. I shall not deny that, fortunately, the two criteria sometimes coincide.

GLEN W. BOWERSOCK

In 1955, for the first time, Rome -- its republic and its empire -- joined the historical fields represented at the Institute for Advanced Study. The new professor Andr as Alföldi approached ancient history as if it were a vast and rich area-studies program. His historical mastery encompassed more than a thousand years of history from the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus to the erection of the great church of Agia Sophia in Constantinople. It surveyed the course of republic and empire throughout the whole Mediterranean world with a sharp eye for art, religion, philosophy, economics, politics, constitutional changes, and social upheaval. Alföldi controlled the most diverse forms of historical documentation, including inscriptions, papyri, coins, mosaics, sculpture, architecture, dress, and humble graffiti. He addressed with equal zest the majestic issue of the rise and fall of states and the intricate details of the machinery that made them work.

For Alföldi the ancient Roman past was as much a part of this world as the two great wars through which he had personally suffered. The emergence of Rome at the Institute in 1955, a decade after the end of World War II, was as much a signal of the course of events as the installation of Greek history here had been at the foundation of the Institute in the early thirties. The magic of classical Greece, the *Greece of Pericles and Plato*, had been a holdover from the nineteenth century.

Not long ago the Yale historian, Frank Turner, wrote an article entitled "Why the Greeks and Not the Romans in Victorian Britain?" The question was a good one. It raised important problems about the nineteenth century not only in Britain, but in Europe as well. The Germans were, if anything, even more enthusiastic about the Greeks than the Victorian English. As Turner put it, "the Roman Empire in its power was not the empire that mid-Victorians wished to establish. The Roman Empire in its decline was not a spectacle that the British intellectual nation wished to contemplate."

Let us look backward for a moment. The situation of the nineteenth century could hardly have been more different from the century before. Ancient Rome had obsessed many of the most important eighteenth-century writers, such as Thomas Middleton, Adam Ferguson, and obviously Edward Gibbon. In France Montesquieu's influential work on the grandeur and decadence of the Romans continued to dominate thinking about classical antiquity, and in Germany the pioneering studies of ancient Rome by Barthold Georg Niebuhr in the early nineteenth century were built upon generations of pedagogical tradition in that country. Cicero and Tacitus were admired all over Europe. The biographies of Plutarch containing parallel lives of the great Greeks and Romans were principally

read for what they told of the great Roman heroes such as Coriolanus, the Gracchi, and Antony. The works of Tacitus were widely studied and, to some extent, imitated, even in an age that in England is often described as Augustan. In the New World the ideals of republican Rome and the warnings from the empire that succeeded it served as models for the founding fathers of the new American nation.

Then came romanticism, fueled in Europe by the writings of Winckelmann and Goethe, harbingers of storm and stress, passion and anguish. From Goethe's Prometheus to Nietzsche's Dionysus there is a direct line. Byron and Shelley led the way in England. By the end of the century the intoxicating aesthetic of Wagner and Ruskin held sway in the popular as well as academic imagination. Yet in the twentieth century all this changed. The truly evil empires of Germany and Italy, raised up by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, were both profoundly and self-consciously indebted to the model of the empire of Rome. That model had been clearly stated by Hitler himself in Mein Kampf, when he wrote that Roman history was "the best teacher not only for today, but probably for all times." The Roman antecedents of Fascist architecture and the Roman parallels with Fascist ceremonials have long since been noticed. In his memoirs Albert Speer referred explicitly to the Nazi objective of constructing buildings that "would more or less resemble Roman models," even after hundreds (or thousands) of years in a state of decay.

But it was not simply Rome that was the predominant ancient model in the twentieth century: it was imperial Rome. For the eighteenth century the republic was the great model, and the empire represented a decline that had to be explained in some way. That is why the Rome of the twentieth century is so palpably different from the Rome of the eighteenth century. What we have witnessed in the century now drawing to a close is nothing less than a resurrection of the Roman empire as a historical model, simultaneously reflecting and influencing the course of history. In addition to the practicality and pragmatism that characterized the Roman state, we find a new emphasis on authoritarianism, state ceremonial, imperial architecture, bureaucracy, hierarchy, and the exercise of power by brute force.

The inclusion of Rome in the program of historical studies at the Institute reflected this development. Since 1955 the Roman model has remained fruitful and timely. Late twentieth-century Roman history has moved on in newer directions, looking more and more to the provinces, to the subject peoples, and to the frontiers. It now explores the intermingling of languages and cultures, myth and the remaking of myth. It has opened up the history of post-classical Greece -- Greece under the shadow of Rome. It ponders the great problems of freedom and tyranny, of collaboration and resistance, of assimilation and national identity.

As the Middle East continues to seethe, as the Soviet Union disintegrates before our eyes, the fate of the multicultural and multinational empire of Rome still stands as the greatest of all precedents and parallels. Every year, with the important discoveries of archaeology, we have masses of new evidence to sift and to interpret. So, even as our perspective changes, our material increases, and this often compels us to change perspective again. The present shapes our view of the past. But our understanding of the past shapes, for good or ill, the future. We have no other guide to the future than the past. That is the mission, the tragedy, and sometimes the triumph of history.

OLEG GRABAR

Ernst Herzfeld was a Professor in the School of Historical Studies for about ten years until shortly before his death in 1948. He was trained as an architect, then acquired a doctorate in Assyriology. He became fluent in Arabic and Persian, Greek and Latin, most western Semitic languages, and, I believe but am not sure, Turkish; he knew all European languages and spent some thirty years of his life between the ages of 24 and 53 excavating and traveling all over western Asia at the expense of wealthy patrons (individuals or the German government), taking his own measurements (later to be drawn by him) and his own photographs. When he came home to Berlin, he would write, and a long series of publications came out between roughly 1910 and 1930; some are still the only publications of major monuments, others are brilliant interpretations, and a few have not stood the test of time.

To do his work, Herzfeld became a philologist, an epigraphist in at least three languages, a numismatist, a geographer, a historian, an explorer, in some ways an adventurer; he sold rugs at times and was accused of having stolen antiquities from Iran; some of his American assistants became the backbone of the OSS during World War II. He had, to my knowledge, no family except a sister in Switzerland, and he spent his years at the Institute writing three sets of seminal studies on the art and culture of early medieval Islam, on the history of pre-Islamic Iran, and, a less successful work, on Zoroaster. He never got around to finishing a large book on Persepolis, which is probably a good thing, because he refused even to look at the stunning discoveries made by Erich Schmidt, his compatriot and colleague in Chicago.

Most of his work, written in German, English, or French, is still used by scholars in a dozen fields and, even when new information is available, his categories of thought are still often, and not always rightly so, the ones used first.

The key feature about his accomplishments was that they all began with new discoveries of physical things (huge sculptures, inscriptions, or carefully drawn plans of buildings) which, in turn, led him to a fascinating elaboration of explanations or theories on just about everything. His was a lonely personal exploration of new worlds which he knew how to make fascinating to those who shared his knowledge and parts of his experience. He considered that books had to be read in their entirety and, for one of his last works, asked that there be no index, so that no one could cheat and only read excerpts. The result is that a particularly brilliant book is almost never read.

Forgetting personal idiosyncrasies, what can be imagined as the future of the vast spread of knowledge represented by Herzfeld?

First, the versatility of his technical knowledge will never be reproduced, as Semitic philologists are no longer epigraphists of Iranian languages or Arabists, not to speak of archaeologists or numismatists. Each one of these fields has become a professional entity of its own, and a choice has to be made between a dozen specializations which do occasionally lead beyond their limitations (I am thinking for instance of George Miles, the great American numismatist of the Islamic world who had been for several years Herzfeld's assistant at the Institute and who knew how to move toward cultural, art, and political history from the contemplation of his beloved coins) or else between generalists who have learned to read secondary literature in many languages (René Grousset was a major example of this form of haute vulgarization in Herzfeld's area and the history of Asia in general). The latter may appear, but it is easier to argue that lab-like teams, however organized (and here there are several models), loom in the future of at least this branch of historical studies. Altogether, these are the epistemological issues of the future, issues dealing with categories of knowledge.

Second, while trained initially with the appropriate classical apparatus, Herzfeld went into an exotic branch of classical studies identified with all sorts of complex intellectual currents of the nineteenth century in Europe ranging from orientalism to biblical roots. Physical access to the areas needed was, after World War I, almost entirely under European jurisdiction; there were only four independent countries where there are now 44 and seven or eight new ones from the breakup of the Soviet Union, eventually at least one more whenever China does its ethnic revolution. There were maybe ten western centers with appropriate colleagues and one collective gathering every three or four years; there were, furthermore, well-organized institutes abroad that catered to the intellectual and physical or social needs of scholars, especially of young ones. Today there are probably 100 centers and a colloquium a week. What this means is that access to information and to operational ideas is no longer possible or else restricted to nation-states, each of which insists on writing only in its own language. Two solutions exist. One is to wait for some messianic intellectual salvation, but we know where the Toynbees of this world lead. The other solution is to utilize the information processing technologies developed over the past decade to deal with masses of information and this puts, for a while, the burden of scholarly efforts into servicing a profession through the revolution taking place in libraries and other audio-visual ways. We are dealing with what I would call a technological issue, but it is such an important one that it should not be left to technologists.

Third, it never occurred to Herzfeld that he was also dealing with living worlds possessing aspirations and expectations. It is no longer possible to ignore the relationship to the past, whether the past of events or that of things and works of

art, of societies in turmoil. Similarly, it is not possible to forget that practically all that was done in the United States and in most European countries for the maintenance of appropriate knowledge in non-western areas was done in the name of national defense. In short, there is a moral dimension to dealing with the world of others. On the one hand, one is intruding in a culture to which one does not belong and, on the other hand, one is criticized for callousness if one ignores such other cultures. Even the notion of a universal and culture-free quality of knowledge is questioned in many places as a form of imperialist westernization. The future will simply have to come to grips with the morality of humanistic knowledge in the ways in which physicists and biologists have to grapple with moral issues. There is, therefore, in this realm an ethical issue.

Fourth, the world in which a Herzfeld operated was one in which there was a milieu, the "orientalist" milieu of western or westernized predominantly male scholars, which shared culture and questions. There was no expectation that the rest of the world would be interested in or capable of sharing anything beyond what has been called the "exoticism quotient." The future is likely to be dominated by disciplinary questions, whereby historians of art or of science will expect disciplinary answers from whatever knowledge any one historian possesses. Capable of answering the questions which arise from their own midst, those who deal with others are not always able to explain themselves to the mainstream of their own academic or national culture and they, in turn, often feel that they are still relegated to the satisfaction of exotic and not of intellectual needs. The future here lies in discovering the kind of scholarly as well as generalized discourse, in words or images, perhaps in sounds as well, that would make apparent the appropriate equilibrium between three categories of thought and of knowledge: the endless specifics of any one space in time; the potential for understanding man and man's creation that is assumed by humanism to exist everywhere and in all people; and the very special intellectual scientism developed in the west since the eighteenth century. This I see to be the intellectual issue for the future.

I tried to imagine what Herzfeld, whom I never knew, would have thought of my four categories of issues. He would have understood immediately the technological ones, because they fit within his vision of novelty and progress. He would have disapproved of the epistemological specializations and of their consequences. I don't think that he would have worried about or even understood moral issues about knowledge or about a responsibility toward the ways in which one's own culture transmits cultural knowledge.

IRVING LAVIN

This gathering is, it seems, the first of its kind in the history of the Institute, and to celebrate the occasion the faculty of the School of Historical Studies agreed to offer some account of the past, present and future of our disciplines at the Institute. I have decided to respond to this mandate indirectly--perhaps allegorically would be a better word--by presenting a little celebration of my own. It happens that 1992 is the centennial of the birth of the art historian Erwin Panofsky, one of the major intellects of the twentieth century, who was professor at the Institute from 1935 until his death in 1968. When you think about it, it is really quite remarkable that art history should be the one branch of cultural history represented at the Institute for Advanced Study. After all, the visual arts had since antiquity been low man (or low woman, since the arts are always represented as women) on the totem pole of human creativity, far behind literature, music and history, for example. Painting, sculpture and the like were classed as mechanical arts, rather than liberal arts, since they were considered the products of manual, rather than intellectual labor.

To appreciate how an art historian came to be a charter member of the Institute faculty one must know something of the nature of Panofsky's singular achievement. A fundamental common denominator underlies all his vast outpouring of articles and books on an immense variety of subjects, from his astonishing dissertation on Albrecht Dürer's theories about art (published in 1914 when Panofsky was 22, it brought him instant notoriety as a kind of child prodigy) to his last major work, published posthumously in 1969, a volume on Titian which he produced only at the urging of friends because, as he said, he felt inadequate to write about his favorite artist.¹ The study of Dürer's aesthetics revolutionized our understanding of the position in European history of Germany's great national painter, who had previously been treated as the epitome, the very incarnation of the pure, mystical German national spirit. Panofsky showed, to the dismay of many, that Dürer was in fact the principal channel through which the classical tradition of rational humanism, reborn in Italy in the Renaissance, was transmitted to Germany, transforming its culture forever. At the end of his career Panofsky revolutionized our understanding of Italy's most beloved painter of the Renaissance by showing, again to the dismay of many, that Titian was not just the painter's painter par excellence, the pure colorist, the virtuoso of the brush, the unrestrained sensualist of form and light. On the contrary, Titian was also a great thinker who suffused

¹ Die theoretische Kunstlehre Albrecht Dürers (Dürers Aesthetik), Berlin, 1914; Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconographic, New York, 1969

his brilliant displays of chiaroscuro with layers and layers of wide learning and profound meaning, like the many layers of oil glazes that lend to his canvases their luminosity and depth. Ironically, and most appropriately, one of the prime instances of this transformed understanding of Titian--and how one understands Titian is how one understands the nature of painting itself, indeed of visual expression generally--was his analysis of one of Titian's seminal works, commonly known by the rather common title of Sacred and Profane Love. Panofsky showed that the picture, which includes two females, one scrumptiously dressed, the other divinely nude, in fact belonged in a long tradition of intellectual allegories; it can only have been providential, I might add, that the same tradition ultimately produced the Institute for Advanced Study's own official seal contrasting an adorned figure of Beauty with a naked figure of Truth.

Thus, Panofsky did not come to the Institute merely through the coincidence that, owing to Hitler, one of the world's leading art historians happened to be available at the moment when what was to become one of the world's leading institutions of higher learning was being established. He deserved his place at the Institute because of the way he did art history. He was the first to hear clearly, take seriously and apply systematically to all art, what artists since the Renaissance--Leonardo, Raphael, Dürer, Michelangelo, Titian and the rest--were saying, sometimes desperately: that art is also a function of the brain, that man can speak his mind with his hands. Whereas his predecessors were concerned mainly with the classification of artists, styles and periods, or with the social, religious and political contexts in which art was produced; or with the psychological and formal principles that *determine its various forms*, Panofsky was concerned first, last and foremost with meaning. The artist had something special to say and found special ways to say it. (Panofsky wrote a miraculous essay on precisely this subject with respect to what would now be called "filmic" technique.²) It was this insistence upon and search for meaning--especially meaning in places where no one suspected there was any--that led Panofsky to understand art, as no previous historian had, as an intellectual endeavor on a par with the traditional liberal arts like literature and music; and in so doing he made art history into something it had never been before, a humanistic discipline. It was this elevating, intellectual approach--not to mention, of course, the brilliance, perspicuity and charm with which he pursued it--that put Panofsky justly in the company of Einstein, Gödel and those other miracle workers who performed their tricks in the citadel of higher intellect and imagination that this strange new institution was intended to provide. And that is how art history at the Institute was born.

² "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures," first published in 1934 and often reprinted, most recently in G. Mast and M. Cohen, Film theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings, New York and Oxford, 1979, 243-263. Reprinting the essay in 1947, the editors of "Critique" A Review of Contemporary Art referred to it as "one of the most significant introductions to the aesthetics of the motion picture yet to be written."

I will conclude my little allegory by reading three brief paragraphs from a famous volume of essays Panofsky published in 1955 under the title, the significance of which I hope my remarks so far have helped to make clear, Meaning in the Visual Arts. The passages give at least a soupçon of the quality of Panofsky's intelligence, humanity and wit; and, not incidentally, his uncanny command of the English language, which he learned to speak and write fluently only after he moved here at age 41. But mainly I intend the readings to provide, at least in allegorical form, some idea of the past, present and future of art history at the Institute as I see it.

In the first passage Panofsky speaks of his transferral from Hamburg to New York and the Institute:

And when the Nazis ousted all Jewish officials in the spring of 1933, I happened to be in New York while my family were still at home. I fondly remember the receipt of a long cable in German, informing me of my dismissal but sealed with a strip of green paper which bore the inscription: "Cordial Easter Greetings, Western Union."

These greetings proved to be a good omen. I returned to Hamburg only in order to wind up my private affairs and to attend to the Ph.D. examinations of a few loyal students (which, curiously enough, was possible in the initial stages of the Nazi regime); and thanks to the selfless efforts of my American friends and colleagues, unforgettable and unforbidden, we could establish ourselves at Princeton as early as 1934. For one year I held concurrent lectureships at New York and Princeton universities, and in 1935 I was invited to join the newly constituted humanistic faculty of the Institute for Advanced Study, which owes its reputation to the fact that its members do their research work openly and their teaching surreptitiously, whereas the opposite is true of so many other institutions of learning. (Meaning, 321-2)

In the second passage Panofsky describes the difference between European and American scholarship, and what the latter meant to him as an immigrant intellectual:

But what made the greatest impression on the stranger when first becoming aware of what was happening in America was this: where the European art historians were conditioned to think in terms of

national and regional boundaries, no such limitations existed for the Americans.

The European scholars either unconsciously yielded to, or consciously struggled against, deep-rooted emotions which were traditionally attached to such questions as whether the cubiform capital was invented in Germany, France, or Italy, whether Roger van der Weyden was a Fleming or a Walloon, or whether the first rib-vaults were built in Milan, Morienval, Caën, or Durham; and the discussion of such questions tended to be confined to areas and periods on which attention had been focused for generations or at least decades. Seen from the other side of the Atlantic, the whole of Europe from Spain to the Eastern Mediterranean merged into one panorama the planes of which appeared at proper intervals and in equally sharp focus.

And as the American art historians were able to see the past in a perspective picture undistorted by national and regional bias, so were they able to see the present in a perspective picture undistorted by personal or institutional parti pris. (Meaning, 328)

In the third passage, which comes from an essay called "The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline," Panofsky is discussing what he says the ancients called the vita contemplativa as opposed to the vita activa, and the relations between them--which is also, I think, the theme of our present meeting:

The man who takes a paper dollar in exchange for twenty-five apples commits an act of faith, and subjects himself to a theoretical doctrine, as did the mediaeval man who paid for indulgence. The man who is run over by an automobile is run over by mathematics, physics and chemistry. For he who leads the contemplative life cannot help influencing the active, just as he cannot prevent the active life from influencing his thought. Philosophical and psychological theories, historical doctrines and all sorts of speculations and discoveries, have changed, and keep changing, the lives of countless millions. Even he who merely transmits knowledge or learning participates, in his modest way, in the process of shaping reality--of which fact the enemies of humanism are perhaps more keenly aware than its friends.* It is impossible to conceive of our world in terms of action alone. Only in God is there a "Coincidence of Act and Thought" as the scholastics put it. Our reality can only be understood as an interpretation of these two. (Meaning, 23)

After the word "friends" at the end of the fourth to last sentence of this passage Panofsky added a footnote that must have had deep personal and intellectual meaning for him, since in it he recalls a letter-to-the-editor published in a popular British magazine of current affairs nearly twenty years before, not long after he settled in America:

In a letter to the New Statesman and Nation, XIII, 1937, June 19, a Mr. Pat Sloan defends the dismissal of professors and teachers in Soviet Russia by stating that "a professor who advocates an antiquated pre-scientific philosophy as against a scientific one may be as powerful a reactionary force as a soldier in an army of intervention." And it turns out that by "advocating" he means also the mere transmission of what he calls "pre-scientific" philosophy, for he continues as follows: "How many minds in Britain today are being kept from ever establishing contact with Marxism by the simple process of loading them to capacity with the works of Plato and other philosophers? These works play not a neutral, but an anti-Marxist role in such circumstances, and Marxists recognize this fact." Needless to say, the works of "Plato and other philosophers" also play an anti-Fascist role "in such circumstances," and Fascists, too, "recognize this fact."

With the change of disquietingly few words the same letter might have been written by some of the advocates of academic Political Correctness today.

PETER PARET

Yesterday evening we heard George Kennan evoke what might almost be called the spiritual history of our School, and this morning my colleagues discussed their areas of research in connection with the School of Historical Studies.

To conclude, let me add a few comments on the School and modern European history. From the beginning, the School's work in this area has followed two different tendencies. One is the direction taken by such scholars as Felix Gilbert, who joined the faculty in 1961 and died last year. Gilbert was a historian of great sophistication and unusually broad interests. He wrote on the Italian Renaissance, on political and diplomatic history from the 18th to the 20th century, on the history of ideas, and on theory and methodology. At times, he addressed a broader audience, but in general he was a scholar who wrote for other scholars. We might say that he stands for the tradition of pure research, which, of course, has always been very strong--even dominant--at the Institute.

The second tendency you may find surprising. It is represented by such scholars as Edward Mead Earle, who was on the faculty in the 1930s and '40s. Earle was a shrewd and energetic historian. No one would claim that he matched Gilbert's sophistication and originality; but if he was not especially profound, he thought clearly, he had a fine sense of ebb and flow of research issues that might interest not merely historians, but segments of society beyond them, and he knew how to engage these issues. In 1941, for example, he organized an interdisciplinary seminar, made up of some of our faculty and members, as well as of scholars from other universities. The outcome of this seminar was a collection of essays that traced the history of strategic thought from the Renaissance to the Second World War: Makers of Modern Strategy, one of the most influential books on the history of war ever published in this country. It remained in print for 45 years and played a part in the education of many thousands of college students. It is an example of the second tradition of modern history at the School. I like to think of it as the tradition of applied or practical research, which has always played a role in our work here, not only in our publications but also in our selection of members, for instance, in our recent program of inviting a few academics at the beginning of their careers to spend two years of uninterrupted research here, a policy, very unusual in the Humanities, which is already making something of an impact on the field in general.

Gilbert, incidentally, was a member of Earle's seminar and eventually served as assistant editor of Makers of Modern Strategy. In other words, the research scholar

was happy to make his and his colleagues' work more broadly accessible. Gilbert and Earle had something else in common: neither was a narrow specialist. They thought in broad, interdisciplinary and comparative terms, and that, too, has characterized many faculty members of the School over the years, and certainly does so today.

Now what is the current relationship between modern history and the School, and how might it evolve in coming years? I'd like to expand my comments to take in other research areas because I believe that in some respects various fields in the humanities now find themselves in a similar situation. As you know, for the last two decades or more deep conceptual differences have divided the discipline of history, as they have such other fields as art history and literary studies. Today, a good deal of disagreement exists on what subjects and what approaches are important. Putting it perhaps too simply, these disagreements have two basic causes: one is the whole cluster of ideas and attitudes that have led to the emergence of the so-called new social history, which emphasizes the history of groups heretofore marginalized or ignored in the literature--women, workers, slaves, prisoners. Undoubtedly, this has been an important corrective; where some of us part company with the new social history is in its tendency to dismiss elites or so-called history from above as not deserving of intensive study, and in its frequent emphasis on the prevalence of various forms of oppression and resistance in all past societies. The other cause is disagreement on the authority of the historical evidence and even on the nature of historical truth.

A by-product of this intellectual fragmentation is the increasing difficulty of agreeing on the value of the scholarship of any particular historian. Even the work of someone like Felix Gilbert, whom many of us regard as a major figure, is dismissed as inconsequential by followers of certain new tendencies. It is perhaps only natural that some historians who now question the absolute authority of the evidence and instead elevate the authority of the interpreter or of certain ideological values, are highly dogmatic and show little tolerance for opposing views.

One option the School does not have in the present situation is to represent each of the currently fashionable directions. Even history departments, which tend to be many times as large as we are, find it difficult to do so. A group as small as the School of Historical Studies simply cannot be all things to all scholars.

It seems that we have two alternatives. We can champion one or two of the currently fashionable trends, among which we would hope to choose those that promise to be of long-term value. Because of the dogmatic tendencies often attached to these directions, adopting them would also necessitate the rejection of other approaches and would almost certainly encourage a more programmatic outlook, for instance, in the selection of annual members. Our other choice is to continue the balanced, unideological policies that we have been practicing, which

allow us to learn from new approaches without becoming totally committed to them.

I believe we have been right in choosing the second option. It certainly exploits one of the strengths of this faculty, which consists of people who have interdisciplinary interests--that is, who like to work with scholars in other fields, and for whom ideological and methodological purity are not essentials. Last year, Glen Bowersock and Christian Habicht conducted a very successful seminar on methodology, which brought together scholars in many different fields and with many different approaches. What they did not do was to impose a single direction. The same attitude is reflected in our selection of members. Every year, we choose some members whose interests and approaches are unlike those of the faculty. Of the six members in early modern and modern history at the School this year, one is an economic historian, another studies Venetian dockworkers from the perspective of the new social history, and a third is one of the most important younger theorists of the new cultural history. We hope to learn from them, and perhaps they will gain something from us.

It would be wrong to deny that we pay a price for approaching the fashions of the day with some skepticism. Occasionally, the School is criticized for being old-fashioned, elitist, narrow, uninterested in new questions and in new ways of answering them. The first two criticisms are so broad--may mean almost anything, and often have a political subtext--that there really isn't much point in responding. The other two are more specific and are easily answered. In the last hour you will have gathered that whatever else may be said about this faculty, it isn't narrow in its concerns, both in pure and in applied research. And if there are terms that constantly reappear in reviews of our recent publications they are "innovative," "path-breaking," "different"--which need not always be said in praise.

Perhaps because at the Institute we are removed from many of the pressures of teaching and graduate training, it is easier for us than it is for many of our colleagues at universities to maintain a balance between pronounced specialization and a flexible, interdisciplinary approach, unburdened by the ideological baggage that distorts so much intellectual work today. In the past, maintaining this balance has paid off in research and analysis that many of our colleagues have found interesting and useful, and there seems to be good reason to expect that it will stand us in good stead in the coming years.