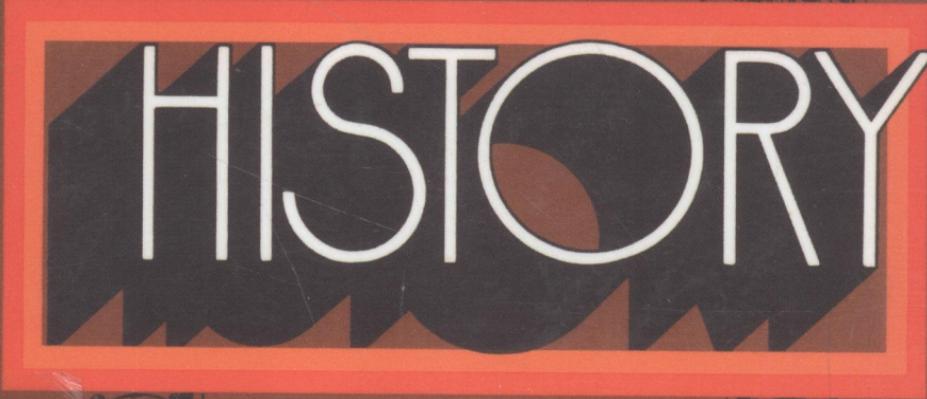



THE
VARIETIES OF



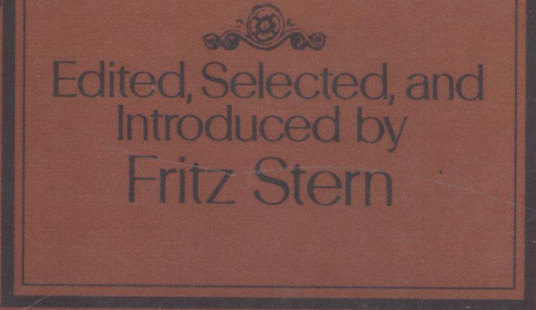
HISTORY



*from Voltaire
to the Present*



Edited, Selected, and
Introduced by
Fritz Stern



THE VARIETIES OF HISTORY

From Voltaire to the Present

Edited, Selected, and Introduced
by FRITZ STERN



Vintage Books
A Division of Random House
New York

华东政法大学图书馆



04047612

To

HENRY L. ROBERTS

in friendship

VINTAGE BOOKS EDITION, September 1973

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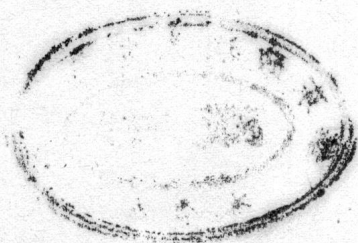
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A NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Times have changed since *The Varieties of History* was first published, and so has the place of history in our intellectual world. The study of the past as a uniquely important humanistic inquiry no longer commands the kind of automatic acceptance it once did. Other disciplines have come to the fore and other interests prevail. Though their recent achievements have been extraordinary, historians in the last few years have become uncertain about the premises and functions of their work. This anthology was intended principally as an introduction to the study of history. By illustrating the different visions of history that inspired its practitioners, by demonstrating that history is an ever-changing, self-renewing discipline, this book may help to formulate new answers to the old question, "What is History?" It also suggests the recurrent need to redefine history in a broader context, responsive to the intellectual currents and political concerns of a particular age.

Is history in crisis again? The answer seems to be yes, and the crisis comes from within and without the historical discipline. To some extent, the sense of crisis within the profession indicates concerns that have often assailed the modern historian: the fragmentation of the field, the disparateness of the new knowledge, the fading of the great syntheses, the identity of history in relation to the social sciences. Historians are aware as well of a growing public indifference to history, born perhaps of a sense that the present is so radically different from the past that the reconstruction of that past seems only of antiquarian interest. It may be part of our professional and social predicament that at the very time when historical knowledge is of critical importance it is in fact neglected.

For this new edition I have selected essays by Fernand Braudel, Harold Perkin, Robert Fogel, and C. Vann Woodward. These essays, I think, properly exemplify the remarkable vitality and range of recent historiography; for it is paradoxical that the present discontent with history coincides with a remarkable surge of historical work, measured both in quantity and quality.

I chose Braudel and Perkin because both have been close to schools in France and England that have promoted new and important types of historical study. Each in his own way defines his vision of a new broad history, and each in his own work embodies this ideal. In selecting recent American essays I sought for statements that would illuminate both the promise and the predicament of history today. Robert Fogel demonstrates the extraordinary impact of other disciplines on history and acknowledges that the related changes in method pose new difficulties for the discipline. C. Vann Woodward's essay analyzes how a particular crisis in the society at large—the racial conflict in contemporary America—impinges on historians.

Historians respond to the several crises in their profession and their society in different fashions. Some reaffirm and redefine the old faith, as did Marc Bloch before being shot by the Germans in the Second World War. Others bear out the truth of C. Vann Woodward's contention that "The demagoguery, the cant, and the charlatanry of historians in the service of a fashionable cause can at times rival that of politicians." To know the persistent problems that historians have confronted in the past may help to put the present in a different perspective.

For the rest, I have left the text unchanged. If I were to write the Introduction today, it would probably turn out differently. But it would still affirm Maitland's contention that "orthodox history seems to me a contradiction in terms," that the study of the past needs to be free and objective, and that this study is likely to prove instructive, pleasurable, sobering, and liberating, and is more needed than ever in an age that takes none of the virtues of historical study for granted.