

Part XIV

WHAT HAS THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE TO SAY TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE?

This symposium is a special case of a more general one. It is a special case of the general one that has been the subject of the first three volumes of this series, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, and *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*. It is a special case of the general one that has been the subject of the first three volumes of this series, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, and *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*.

The first three volumes of this series have been published in the United States by Cambridge University Press, and in the United Kingdom by Cambridge University Press. The first volume, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, was published in 1974. The second volume, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, was published in 1975. The third volume, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, was published in 1976.

It is in this issue, believing that there is a need of a new approach to the study of science, that the first volume is published. It is a special case of the general one that has been the subject of the first three volumes of this series, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*, and *The Philosophy of Science: A Central Issue*.

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Do the History of Science and the Philosophy of Science Have Anything to Say to Each Other?

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This symposium was sparked by a rather sad editorial by Larry Laudan in the twenty-year issue of *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*. Laudan, one of the founders of that journal, was weeping at the decline of the wonderful post-Kuhnian Spring of the late 1960s into the arid "social constructivist" autumn of the late 1980s. When once it had seemed that philosophers and historians of science would walk forward together, sweeping aside the ahistoricism of neo-positivists and the whiggishness of traditional history of science (generally written by retired scientists), now philosophers go alone while historians have been seduced by the fruity charms of the relativists and sociologists.

The intellectual battle that [Gerd Buchdahl] and I, along with a handful of better-known folks (Kuhn, Hanson, Lakatos and Feyerabend come quickly to mind), were waging in the late 1960s and early 1970s has been exactly 50 percent won. Contemporary philosophers of science, whatever their persuasion, are now prepared to grant that historically-based philosophy of science is not only a viable but a valuable venture. By contrast, many (perhaps most) professional historians of science have refused to see the point. Indeed, the distance between the mainstream history of science and the philosophy of science is probably greater now than it has ever been, notwithstanding that many historians of science still take philosophical issues seriously (Laudan, 1989, p. 9).

It is to this issue, believing that there is much of value to be gained by a joint approach to science, that this symposium is addressed—by four participants, each one of whom has made a contribution to both sides. Ours is not the final word. We must now get our critics back to the table. Even more, we must get to the table those who are indifferent to our concerns. And we must recognize that those who do not share our position may well have arguments of value. Above all else, we must not let history and philosophy of science drift apart through apathy, or through hurt feelings that our ecumenical efforts have been spurned.

Reference

- Laudan, L. (1989), "Thoughts on HPS: 20 years later", *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 20: 9-13.