

# DOWNLOAD PDF HERBERT BUTTERFIELD AND THE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

## Chapter 1 : Project MUSE - The "Herbert Butterfield Problem" and its Resolution

*Sir Herbert Butterfield FBA (7 October - 20 July ) was Regius Professor of History and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. As a British historian and philosopher of history, he is remembered chiefly for a short volume early in his career entitled *The Whig Interpretation of History* () and for his *Origins of Modern Science* ().*

It takes its name from the British Whigs , advocates of the power of Parliament , who opposed the Tories , advocates of the power of the king. The term has been applied widely in historical disciplines outside of British history the history of science , for example to criticize any teleological or goal-directed , hero-based and transhistorical narrative: Whig history has no direct relation to either the British Whig or American Whig parties and should not be confused with " Whiggism ", which is a political ideology. The term " Whiggery " is ambiguous in contemporary usage: Fisher in gave a Raleigh lecture on The Whig Historians, from Sir James Mackintosh to Sir George Trevelyan , he implied that "Whig historian" was adequately taken as a political rather than a progressive or teleological label and this put the concept into play. Blaas, author of the book *Continuity and Anachronism*, has argued that Whig history itself had lost all vitality by Intellectuals no longer believed the world was automatically getting better and better. Subsequent generations of academic historians have similarly rejected Whig history because of its presentist and teleological assumption that history is driving toward some sort of goal. It is part and parcel of the whig interpretation of history that it studies the past with reference to the present. Viewing the British parliamentary , constitutional monarchy as the apex of human political development; Assuming that the constitutional monarchy was in fact an ideal held throughout all ages of the past, despite the observed facts of British history and the several power struggles between monarchs and parliaments; Assuming that political figures in the past held current political beliefs anachronism ; Assuming that British history was a march of progress whose inevitable outcome was the constitutional monarchy; and Presenting political figures of the past as heroes who advanced the cause of this political progress, or villains who sought to hinder its inevitable triumph. The emphasis on the inevitability of progress leads to the mistaken belief that the progressive sequence of events becomes "a line of causation ", tempting the historian to go no further to investigate the causes of historical change. In every Englishman there is hidden something of a whig that seems to tug at the heart-strings". Lecky , Lord Acton , J. Bury that in fact excludes few except Thomas Carlyle. The theory identifies the common factors and Bentley comments: Carlyle apart, the so-called Whigs were predominantly Christian , predominantly Anglican , thinkers for whom the Reformation supplied the critical theatre of enquiry when considering the origins of modern England. When they wrote about the history of the English constitution , as so many of them did, they approached their story from the standpoint of having Good News to relate. Roger Scruton , in his *A Dictionary of Political Thought* , takes the theory underlying "Whig history" to be centrally concerned with social progress and reaction , with the progressives shown as victors and benefactors. Of the English tradition, Cannadine wrote: And it did so on the basis of the marked preference for liberal and progressive causes, rather than conservative and reactionary ones. David Hume[ edit ] In *The History of England* , Hume challenged Whig views of the past and the Whig historians in turn attacked Hume; but they could not dent his history. These historians were members of the New Whigs around Charles James Fox and Lord Holland in opposition until and so "needed a new historical philosophy". A fragment was published in James Mackintosh then sought to write a Whig history of the Glorious Revolution, published in as the *History of the Revolution in England* in According to Arthur Marwick , Hallam was the first Whig historian. According to Ernst Breisach, "his style captivated the public as did his good sense of the past and firm Whiggish convictions". William Stubbs[ edit ] William Stubbs , the constitutional historian and influential teacher of a generation of historians, became a crucial figure in the later survival and respectability of Whig history. According to Reba Soffer: Robert Hebert Quick and G. Lowndes were the leaders of the Whig school of the history of education. The interpretive schemes that dominated Canadian historical writing through the middle decades of

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the twentieth century were built on the assumption that history had a discernible direction and flow. Canada was moving towards a goal in the nineteenth century; whether this endpoint was the construction of a transcontinental, commercial, and political union, the development of parliamentary government, or the preservation and resurrection of French Canada, it was certainly a Good Thing. Thus the rebels of were quite literally on the wrong track. They lost because they had to lose; they were not simply overwhelmed by superior force, they were justly chastised by the God of History. This kind of evaluation ignores historical background and the evidence that was available at a particular time: The writing of Whig history of science is especially found in the writings of scientists [26] and general historians, [27] while this whiggish tendency is commonly opposed by professional historians of science. Nicholas Jardine describes the changing attitude to whiggishness this way: At one level there is, indeed, an obvious parallel with the attacks on Whig constitutional history in the opening decades of the century. Blaas has shown, those earlier attacks were part and parcel of a more general onslaught in the name of an autonomous, professional and scientific history, on popular, partisan and moralising historiography. For post-WWII champions of the newly professionalized history of science the targets were quite different. Above all, they were out to establish a critical distance between the history of science and the teaching and promotion of the sciences. In particular, they were suspicious of the grand celebratory and didactic narratives of scientific discovery and progress that had proliferated in the inter-war years. More recently, some scholars have argued that Whig history is essential to the history of science. For example chemistry is inextricably mixed up with alchemy. Barrow and Frank J. Tipler identify Whiggishness Whiggery with a teleological principle of convergence in history to liberal democracy. This persistence reflects the power of dramatic narratives that detail epic struggles for enlightened ideals. Aspects of the Whig interpretation are apparent in films, television, political rhetoric and even history textbooks: See for example the celebrated scientific illustration, *The March of Progress* Most portrayals and fictionalized adaptations of the Scopes Trial , such as in *Inherit the Wind* , subscribe to a Whig view of the trial and its aftermath. This was challenged by historian Edward J. Larson in his book *Summer for the Gods*: Both argue that the modern world is much more moral. *Evolution, Culture and Wisdom*.

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## Chapter 2 : Herbert Butterfield - Wikiquote

*"The Whig Interpretation of History" is superb meditation on the craft of history and how it can be distorted by "whig history." This was how Herbert Butterfield described historians who project modern attitudes on to the past, pass moral judgments on historical figures, and regard history as significant only to the extent that it labored to.*

Brothers Judd Top of the 20th Century: On the larger issues of the Reformation and history in general though, Mr. It is part and parcel of the whig interpretation of history that it studies the past with reference to the present; and though there may be a sense in which this is unobjectionable if its implications are carefully considered, and there may be a sense in which it is inescapable, it has often been an obstruction to historical understanding because it has been taken to mean the study of the past with direct and perpetual reference to the present. Through this system of immediate reference to the present day, historical personages can easily and irresistibly be classed into the men who furthered progress and the men who tried to hinder it; so that a handy rule of thumb exists by which the historian can select and reject, and can make his points of emphasis. The great danger in this is that we tend to warp the past so that it will fit our preconceived notions, rather than studying evidence impartially to see where it leads. It also lends itself to unfair judgments of our ancestors, who we rip out of the context of their time and require to meet the standards of our own. In place of this, Mr. Butterfield offers a different way of studying history: There is an alternative line of assumption upon which the historian can base himself when he comes to his study of the past; and it is the one upon which he does seem more or less consciously to act and to direct his mind when he is engaged upon a piece of research. On this view he comes to his labours conscious of the fact that he is trying to understand the past for the sake of the past, and though it is true that he can never entirely abstract himself from his own age, it is none the less certain that this consciousness of his purpose is very different one from that of the whig historian, who tells himself that he is studying the past for the sake of the present. Real historical understanding is not achieved by the subordination of the past to the present, but rather by our making the past our present and attempting to see life with the eyes of another century than our own. So, we must be dubious of Mr. The value of history lies in the richness of its recovery of the concrete life of the past. We seem unlikely to recover more than bits and pieces of the past, giving us gravel rather than concrete, but still the effort to take the past on its own terms is entirely worthwhile. And, as important, is to acknowledge the biases and prejudices that each of us bring to our study of the past: Our assumptions do not matter if we are conscious that they are assumptions, but the most fallacious thing in the world is to organize our historical knowledge upon an assumption without realizing what we are doing, and then to make inferences from that organization and claim that these are the voice of history. It is at this point that we tend to fall into what I have nicknamed the whig fallacy. But the point still obtains: Historians need first to be honest with themselves and then with their readers about the assumptions that underlie their writing. It is not sin in a historian to introduce a personal bias that can be recognized and discounted. The sin in historical composition is the organization of the story in such a way that bias cannot be recognized, and the reader is locked along with the writer in what is really a treacherous argument in a circle. Of course the most spectacular recent demonstration of this unfortunate sin came in Arming America by Michael Bellesiles, in which the author began by shading research to fit his argument that guns were a relatively unimportant part of early American life and appears to have ended by simply inventing evidence to "prove" his dubious point. But the battle over the Second Amendment is so openly partisan that one was well prepared for bias from the first word of that text. The more dangerous case is that where an unsuspecting reader may be unaware that the historian has an ideological axe to grind and so may not realize that the facts presented in a book are so chosen and so organized that they may serve only to support a political brief rather than to even try and recover the "concrete life of the past". So long as the temptation persists, to shape the past to fit a theory, historians will sin. And because it seems likely to persist forever, we will always do well to keep Mr.

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## Chapter 3 : Review of Herbert Butterfield's The Whig Interpretation of History - calendrierdelascience.com

*Sir Herbert Butterfield was Regius Professor of History and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.[2] As a British historian and philosopher of history, he is remembered chiefly for two books, a short volume early in his career entitled *The Whig Interpretation of History* () and his *Origins of Modern Science* ().*

Biography[ edit ] Butterfield was born in Oxenhope in Yorkshire and was raised a devout Methodist , which he remained for life. Despite his humble origins, receiving his education at the Trade and Grammar School in Keighley , in he won a scholarship to study at Peterhouse, Cambridge , graduating with a BA in , followed by an MA four years later. Butterfield was a fellow at Cambridge from 1919 and in the 1920s, he was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Butterfield served as editor of the Cambridge Historical Journal from 1927 to 1931 and was knighted in 1931. As a deeply religious Protestant, Butterfield was highly concerned with religious issues, but he did not believe that historians could uncover the hand of God in history. At the height of the Cold War , he warned that conflicts between self-righteous value systems could be catastrophic: The greatest menace to our civilization is the conflict between giant organized systems of self-righteousness - each only too delighted to find that the other is wicked - each only too glad that the sins of the other give it pretext for still deeper hatred. The Whig interpretation of history is now a general label applied to various historical interpretations. Butterfield found the Whig interpretation of history objectionable, because it warps the past to see it in terms of the issues of the present and attempts to squeeze the contending forces of the past into a form that reminds us of ourselves. Butterfield argued that the historian must seek the ability to see events as they were perceived by those who lived through them. Butterfield wrote that "Whiggishness" is too handy a "rule of thumb History is not the study of origins; rather it is the analysis of all the mediations by which the past was turned into our present". Those who, perhaps in the misguided austerity of youth, wish to drive out that whig interpretation, that particular thesis which controls our abridgment of English history, are sweeping a room which humanly speaking cannot long remain empty. They are opening the door for seven devils which, precisely because they are newcomers, are bound to be worse than the first. We, on the other hand, will not dream of wishing it away, but will rejoice in an interpretation of the past which has grown up with us, has grown up with the history itself, and has helped to make the history The whig interpretation came at exactly the crucial moment and, whatever it may have done to our history, it had a wonderful effect on English politics There are times when we can never meet the future with sufficient elasticity of mind, especially if we are locked in the contemporary systems of thought. We can do worse than remember a principle which both gives us a firm Rock and leaves us the maximum elasticity for our minds: Hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted. Vickers considers the book a late example of the earliest stage of modern analysis of the history of Renaissance magic in relation to the development of science, when magic was largely dismissed as being "entertaining but irrelevant". At the same time, he was given the Seeley Medal.

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## Chapter 4 : The Whig Interpretation of History - Herbert Butterfield - Google Books

*Eighty years have passed since a young Cambridge don named Herbert Butterfield published in a slender volume entitled *The Whig Interpretation of History*. The phrase meant was not immediately clear, since it had never before appeared in print.*

Carr might say, surely this is an attempt to study the part without reference to the whole. In his biography of G. Born in , Butterfield went up to Cambridge in . After a false start, he eventually came under the tutelage of Harold Temperley, about whom Bentley is scathing. Nevertheless, Butterfield achieved a vaunted double first, and won the Le Bas prize, the winner of which saw their essay published by the Cambridge University Press. The work, *The Historical Novel*, has not aged well. At the time however, its merits were enough to convince the Master of Peterhouse to elect Butterfield to a History Fellowship alongside Temperley and Paul Vellacott. In he was elected to the chair of Modern History, and from 1927 he was master of Peterhouse, as well as holding the vice-chancellorship of the university between 1928 and 1930. He was knighted in 1931. His inveterate smoking and unhealthy lifestyle saw the last 20 years of his life plagued by health problems. Upon his death doctors found that he possessed only one functioning kidney; the other having been shrivelled since birth. In he was hospitalised with pneumonia, and suffered a mild stroke in 1934. A further stroke in 1935 made him virtually housebound, and he died on 20 July 1935. His most widely known work is still *The Whig Interpretation of History*. Less a book than a lengthy essay, *The Whig Interpretation of History* is a curious affair. Clearly one of the targets was Acton; to him Bentley feels we must add R. Tawney and Harold Temperley. *The Whig Interpretation* did not refer to Whig politicians, but to the 19th-century interpretation of history as one long triumphant march of progress. Furthermore, in constructing this interpretation historians usually committed anachronisms by seeing the past entirely in terms of the present. Any account of the Whig Interpretation must invariably mention a book that has come to be seen as its sequel – *The Englishman and his History*. The origins of this book were hardly disinterested academic ones – during the academic session of 1923–4 an unfreezing of positions presented an opportunity for Butterfield to occupy the Chair of Modern History and become Professor Butterfield. He needed a new publication, and quickly. Having dished the Whig interpretation less than 15 years earlier, Butterfield now seemed to have performed a volte-face. His first, *The Peace Tactics of Napoleon*, was published in 1925, at the end of a fairly turbulent period for Butterfield. Diplomatic history was traditionally a fairly dry subject, often consisting of what one clerk said to another. Butterfield wanted his history to be evocative, the story of how people wrestled with moral dilemmas in order to reach and carry their decisions. It weighs in at 300 pages, however, Butterfield claimed that this constituted less than half of his original manuscript. Lord Acton exhorted historians to study problems, not periods; but Butterfield seemed to have done the reverse, and the book lacked a problematic. It was a rushed work, and contained at least one error of fact that Butterfield had to publicly apologise for. But the history of science was not one triumphant march towards greater knowledge of nature, a fact both Butterfield and Kuhn recognised. A series of lectures given at the behest of the religious faculty at Cambridge was published in 1927 as *Christianity and History*, a book which went on to sell 30,000 copies in four years. After Butterfield increasingly turned to the study of historiography. Two articles – one on the origins of the Seven Years War and one on Lord Acton and the Massacre of Bartholomew – acted as a prelude to his Wiles lectures, published in 1931 as *Man on his Past*. In some sense the choice of topic was a surprise; many had expected something on Fox; or perhaps the Whig interpretation of history. After the war the emphasis reversed: His Wiles lectures, after a stuttering start, quickly got into their stride. In *The Whig Interpretation* Butterfield had noted with satisfaction that historians had little reflected on the nature of their subject, and in *Man on his Past* he reassured readers that his enquiry was not about theory. Of course Butterfield would not be the first practising historian to struggle with the world of conceptualising historical practise. One of his most perceptive statements on historiography came in response to some of the jabs aimed at him by E. Carr in *What is History?* The lectures themselves were a

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disappointment – audience turnout was small and Butterfield himself was underprepared. The then-Regius professor sent Butterfield the Fox papers which had been in his care suggesting that Butterfield might like to write a biography of him – not the sort of invitation one declined. Butterfield, though, was never one for archival work at the best of times. Many reasons have been put forward as to why he did not finish the Fox biography. Ultimately the only man who can answer this question is the subject of this book; and for the foreseeable future he will remain silent. Bentley goes to great lengths to exonerate Butterfield from the charge of being a fellow-traveller – more than is necessary I suspect. Undoubtedly Butterfield said some stupid things about the political situation in the 1930s and made some misjudgements – but he was hardly alone in this, and, if one wants an example of a card-carrying Nazi sympathiser, one need look no further than Arthur Bryant. However, as Butterfield himself might say, these things have to be looked at in context. It is right that knowledge of this relationship should be included in a biography, but aside from telling us the fact that Peace Tactics of Napoleon was completed seven years before it was published, it does not really tell us anything new about Butterfield the historian. Perhaps one is being too hard on Bentley here; given that this is to all intents and purposes an official biography, one suspects he is trying to straddle two horses at the same time when he writes about this relationship. Perhaps Bentley felt that after nearly 300 pages such a tail-end was unnecessary. Back to 2 David Cannadine, *G. Trevelyan*, London, 1998, p. 10. Back to 4 J. Kenyon, *The History Men* 2nd ed. Back to 5 E. Carr, *What is History* London, 1961, p. 10. Back to 6 Thus, the arch-Tory Bishop Stubbs is seen as one of the great Whig historians on this interpretation. Back to 7 J. Back to 11 According to J. Back to 16 See also Sewell, pp. 10–11. Back to 20 See Kenyon, p. 10. Back to 22 September

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## Chapter 5 : Herbert Butterfield - Wikipedia

*Sir Herbert Butterfield was a British historian and philosopher of history who is remembered chiefly for two books—a short volume early in his career entitled *The Whig Interpretation of History* () and his *Origins of Modern Science* ().*

Butterfield was a devout Christian and reflected at length on Christian influences in historical perspectives. Butterfield thought that individual personalities were more important than great systems of government or economics in historical study. His Christian beliefs in personal sin, salvation, and providence heavily influenced his writings, a fact he freely admitted. Despite a low-class upbringing, receiving his education at the Trade and Grammar School in Keighley, in 1911, he won a scholarship to study at Peterhouse, Cambridge, graduating with a BA in 1914, followed by an MA four years later. Butterfield was a fellow at Cambridge in 1917, and in the 1920s, he was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Butterfield served as editor of the *Cambridge Historical Journal* from 1927 to 1931. He was knighted in 1931. As a deeply religious Protestant, Butterfield was highly concerned with religious issues, but he did not believe that historians could uncover the hand of God in history. At the height of the Cold War, he warned that conflicts between self-righteous value systems could be catastrophic: The greatest menace to our civilization is the conflict between giant organized systems of self-righteousness - each only too delighted to find that the other is wicked - each only too glad that the sins of the other give it pretext for still deeper hatred. A given "Whig interpretation of history" is now a general label applied to various historical interpretations. He found Whiggish history objectionable because it warps the past to see it in terms of the issues of the present to squeeze the contending forces of, say, the mid-nineteenth century into those that remind us of ourselves most and least, or to imagine them as struggling to produce our wonderful selves. They were of course struggling, but not for that. Butterfield argued that the historian must seek the ability to see events as they were perceived by those who lived through them. Butterfield wrote that "Whiggishness" is too handy a "rule of thumb. History is not the study of origins; rather it is the analysis of all the mediations by which the past was turned into our present. We are all of us exultant and unrepentant whigs. Those who, perhaps in the misguided austerity of youth, wish to drive out that whig interpretation, that particular thesis which controls our abridgment of English history, are sweeping a room which humanly speaking cannot long remain empty. They are opening the door for seven devils which, precisely because they are newcomers, are bound to be worse than the first. We, on the other hand, will not dream of wishing it away, but will rejoice in an interpretation of the past which has grown up with us, has grown up with the history itself, and has helped to make the history. The whig interpretation came at exactly the crucial moment and, whatever it may have done to our history, it had a wonderful effect on English politics. There are times when we can never meet the future with sufficient elasticity of mind, especially if we are locked in the contemporary systems of thought. We can do worse than remember a principle which both gives us a firm Rock and leaves us the maximum elasticity for our minds: Hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted. At the same time, he was given the Seeley Medal. *The Origins of Modern Science*, 1931, *The Study of the History of Historical Scholarship*, 1931, *The Origins of History* edited by A. His final thoughts on history, emphasizing the role of religion.

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## Chapter 6 : Butterfield, Herbert - Historian Profiles - Making History

*The Whig Interpretation of History made Butterfield's reputation as a controversialist, but it was a suggestive, allusive, and provocative essay rather than a considered philosophical tract.*

The Scientific Revolution, Why then do we hesitate to grant [the Earth] the motion which accords naturally with its form, rather than attribute a movement to the entire universe whose limit we do not and cannot know? And why should we not admit, with regard to the daily rotation, that the appearance belongs to the heavens, but the reality is in the Earth? The Scientific Revolution was nothing less than a revolution in the way the individual perceives the world. It was an intellectual revolution -- a revolution in human knowledge. Even more than Renaissance scholars who discovered man and Nature see Lecture 1 , the scientific revolutionaries attempted to understand and explain man and the natural world. And by authority I am not referring specifically to that of the Church -- the demise of its authority was already well under way even before the Lutheran Reformation had begun. The authority I am speaking of is intellectual in nature and consisted of the triad of Aristotle , Ptolemy c. The revolutionaries of the new science had to escape their intellectual heritage. With this in mind, the revolution in science which emerged in the 16th and 17th centuries has appeared as a watershed in world history. The long term effects of both the Scientific Revolution and the modern acceptance and dependence upon science can be felt today in our daily lives. And notwithstanding some major calamity -- science and the scientific spirit will be around for centuries to come. In , the British historian Herbert Butterfield prepared a series of lectures to be delivered at the History of Science Committee at Cambridge. These lectures became the foundation for his book, *The Origins of Modern Science*. In the Preface to this work, Butterfield wrote that: The Revolution in science overturned the authority in not only of the middle ages but of the ancient world -- it ended not only in the eclipse of scholastic philosophy but in the destruction of Aristotelian physics. The key word here, I suppose, is authority. The Renaissance and Reformation also attacked the stranglehold of medieval authority but with quite a different purpose and with decidedly different results. The Scientific Revolution outshines everything since the rise of Christianity and reduces the Renaissance and Reformation to the rank of mere episodes, mere internal displacements within the system of medieval Christianity. Consider the period in which Butterfield makes this statement. This is what science has given us. And although I doubt whether Butterfield, civilized Englishman that he was, would have gloated over this fact of neat and efficient killing, the fact remains that this was science in action. There are numerous questions we could ask ourselves about the Scientific Revolution: But to my mind, before we can even begin to cope with these questions we must ask a much more basic question: Science is no doubt with us today -- it surrounds our daily lives to such an extent that we now take it as a given. We expect science to be, to exist. Its effects and products touch the statesman and the soldier, the house husband and the grocer. Science has given us nylon, fluoride, latex paint as well as s, ever-faster microchips and PEZ. But science has also given us fluorocarbons, heroin, nuclear waste, dioxin, sarin gas and the atomic bomb. Science can be a mixed blessing -- with much that is good comes much that is clearly bad. But, what do we mean by science? We are certainly not all scientists. Perhaps scientists can improve our situation here on earth, just as the Gospels perhaps did almost two millennia ago. A scientist is an expert and for some reason we have grown to trust experts. The scientists, the technicians, the experts -- they must know the answers to our questions. We are surrounded by science whether we recognize it or not. Just about everything we see, touch, smell and hear, is a product of science. Furthermore, science has a language all its own, a language which uses expressions like: What I would like to suggest is that for the non-scientist, science is an idea. And this idea -- science -- gives us ways in which to think about and explain our world and ourselves. Science provides a world view, a way of making sense out of the apparently random and meaningless experience of our lives. The origins of this world view emerged full blown in the Scientific Revolution of the late 16th and 17th centuries. The Revolution itself was European -- it was cosmopolitan. Its short term effects were felt throughout the Continent and in England. And

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today, barely three or four centuries after the fact, there are few areas on the globe that remain untouched by modern science, whether for good or bad. In the 16th and 17th centuries, scientists, theologians, philosophers and mathematicians were engaged in a vigorous debate over the natural world. Not so much man, but Nature. After all, the Renaissance had refined the dignity of man as perhaps distinct from the human depravity that the Church had preached. Nature -- the new focus was Nature. But why was this a subject for examination? Why had Nature become the new object of study? The reasons for this are complicated but for now I will suggest that answer lay with the Christian matrix. More specifically, the new focus on Nature was a direct result of the collapse of the Christian matrix, and this was the result of a combination of forces which produced intellectual change. To be brief, these forces were the Renaissance, Reformation see Lecture 3 , the Age of Exploration see Lecture 2 and the spirit of capitalism. The major obstacle faced by the scientific revolutionaries was one of knowledge -- it was a specifically epistemological question. If an older world view was to break down, then something would have to take its place. A new human identity was required -- it was essential to the changes in the intellectual climate. How could the world be known? Another way of putting this is to say that if the Renaissance had discovered man and Nature, then it was up to the scientific revolutionaries to verify their knowledge of man and Nature. What did science mean to the scientific revolutionaries? One of the problems inherent in this question is that the revolutionaries rarely used the word science. Instead, they talked and wrote about natural philosophy or the philosophy of nature. Nature, to them, meant the natural world, that is, what was natural, what was not made by human hands. I would suggest that using the expression the philosophy of nature was really a hangover from the medieval world. In other words, questions of science were subsumed under the study of philosophy, and since medieval man called the phenomenal world Nature, then it was quite logical to refer to the study of Nature as the philosophy of Nature. Above all, science meant astronomy and mathematics. These seemed to be the only two fields of study that embraced both laws and the explanation of those laws. Astronomy and mathematics have their own symbols -- they have their own language. This language, though difficult, is stronger than any other language because of its power to be understood by people who speak different languages. In other words, the language of science is universal. Whereas Charlemagne had created a scholarly language -- we call it, medieval Latin -- the scientific revolutionaries created a language of science, and we call this language, mathematics. The legacy of all this to the modern world -- to our world -- was the scientific way of thinking -- it is a process of thought which is technical, mathematical, logical and precise. But perhaps not that difficult. Consider the following definition of man given by R. Buckminster Fuller , the father of the geodesic dome: Man is a self-balancing, jointed adapter-base biped, and electro-chemical reduction plant, integral with the segregated stowages of special energy extracts in storage batteries, for subsequent activation of thousands of hydraulic and pneumatic pumps, with motors attached; 62, miles of capillaries, millions of warning signal, railroad and conveyor systems, crushers and cranes, and a universally distributed telephone system needing no service for seventy years if well managed, the whole extraordinary complex mechanism guided with exquisite precision from a turret in which are located telescopic and microscopic self-registering and recording range-finders, a spectroscope, etc. This is science gone absolutely crazy. Of course, such a definition of man ignores his nature -- his emotions, dreams, joy, sadness, successes and failures. In fact, Fuller seemed to ignore everything that made the individual fully human. It is a mechanical explanation of man -- man as machine. It is also an explanation of man that would not have been possible had it not been for an intellectual development we call the Scientific Revolution. The irony, however, is that if somehow we could have gotten Galileo and Fuller together over lunch, Galileo would have perhaps found Fuller positively mad then again, Fuller would have not been the type of person he was without Galileo as a predecessor. Before we talk about the scientific revolutionaries, the implications of their work and their world view, it is necessary to examine the medieval world view. It was, after all, the world view of medieval man that the scientific revolutionaries made the deliberate attempt to overthrow. The medieval world view -- the linchpin of the Christian matrix -- was fashioned from the ideas of four men. Two of them were from the ancient world -- Aristotle and Ptolemy. And the other two were of the medieval world

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-- St. According to the medieval world view, Nature was conceived to be kept going from moment to moment by a miracle which was always new and forever renewed. It was God who ordered the universe through these miracles. If God pronounced it to be so, then it must be so. Knowing that the cosmos was of divine origin and moved according to the will of God, some men embraced that Faustian spirit that wanted to know more. It was not enough to simply accept the existence of miracles -- the miracles now had to be explained. These men wanted to know what order, to what hierarchy the miracle conformed. And this brings us to the medieval view of cosmological order. According to the intellectual tradition stretching from Aristotle to Dante, all things in nature -- all phenomena -- are composed of four fundamental elements. These elements were air, fire, earth and water. These elements were believed to follow certain laws -- they were to follow their ideal nature. So, since they are heavy and coarse, water and earth move downward. Likewise, since they are light and airy, air and fire move upward. Each of the four elements is constantly striving to reach its natural center.

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### Chapter 8 : Eliots - Butterfield - The Whig Interpretation of History - Contents

*Although two substantial works devoted to Butterfield have appeared in recent years - Keith Sewell's Herbert Butterfield and the Interpretation of History and C. T. McIntire's Herbert Butterfield, Historian as Dissenter - both of these works concentrated solely upon his writings as opposed to the man himself.*

### Chapter 9 : The Life and Thought of Herbert Butterfield | Reviews in History

*Little did most of the accusers know that they were calling on the rhetorical power of Herbert Butterfield (). Butterfield's Whig Interpretation of History made his name as a historian.*