Global Intellectual History

“Where do ideas fit into historical accounts that take an expansive, global view of human movements and events? Teaching scholars of intellectual history to incorporate transnational perspectives into their work, while also recommending how to confront the challenges and controversies that may arise, this original resource explains the concepts, concerns, practice, and promise of “global intellectual history,” featuring essays by leading scholars on various approaches that are taking shape across the discipline.

The contributors to Global Intellectual History explore the different ways in which one can think about the production, dissemination, and circulation of “global” ideas and ask whether global intellectual history can indeed produce legitimate narratives. They discuss how intellectuals and ideas fit within current conceptions of global frames and processes of globalization and proto-globalization, and they distinguish between ideas of the global and those of the transnational, identifying what each contributes to intellectual history. A crucial guide, this collection sets conceptual coordinates for readers eager to map an emerging area of study.”

Samuel Moyn is a professor in the Department of History at Columbia University. He is the editor of Pierre Rosanvallon’s Democracy Past and Future and the author of The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History.

Andrew Sartori is associate professor of history at New York University. He is the author of Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital and the co-editor of From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition.

Praise for Global Intellectual History

“An intellectual history takes a global turn, the field urgently needs inspiring examples and salutary skepticism. Global Intellectual History provides both in equal measure through multiple models drawn from exceptionally broad expanses of both time and space. The result is a milestone, a collection of the first importance for global historians and intellectual historians alike.”
—David Armitage, Harvard University, author of Foundations of Modern International Thought

“Conceptually and substantively sophisticated, this volume of essays will be widely welcomed by a variety of historians. The field is a burgeoning one, but there is little to shape it collectively at present. This volume is among the first to focus on the comparative merits of global intellectual history.”
—Duncan Kelly, University of Cambridge, author of The Property of Liberty: Persons, Passions, and Judgement in Modern Political Thought


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Global Intellectual History
The idea of “globalization” has become a commonplace, but we lack good histories that can explain the transnational and global processes that have shaped the contemporary world. Columbia Studies in International and Global History will encourage serious scholarship on international and global history with an eye to explaining the origins of the contemporary era. Grounded in empirical research, the titles in the series will also transcend the usual area boundaries and will address questions of how history can help us understand contemporary problems, including poverty, inequality, power, political violence, and accountability beyond the nation-state.

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Contents

Preface vii

Part I. A Framework for Debate

1. Approaches to Global Intellectual History 3
   SAMUEL MOYN AND ANDREW SARTORI

Part II. Alternative Options

2. Common Humanity and Cultural Difference on the Sedentary-Nomadic Frontier: Herodotus, Sima Qian, and Ibn Khaldun 33
   SIEP STUURMAN

3. Cosmopolitanism, Vernacularism, and Premodernity 59
   SHELDON POLLOCK

4. Joseph Banks’s Intermediaries: Rethinking Global Cultural Exchange 81
   VANESSA SMITH

5. Global Intellectual History and the History of Political Economy 110
   ANDREW SARTORI
6. Conceptual Universalization in the Transnational Nineteenth Century 134  
CHRISTOPHER L. HILL  

7. Globalizing the Intellectual History of the Idea of the “Muslim World” 159  
CEMIL AYDIN  

8. On the Nonglobalization of Ideas 187  
SAMUEL MOYN  

9. “Casting the Badge of Inferiority Beneath Black Peoples’ Feet”: Archiving and Reading the African Past, Present, and Future in World History 205  
MAMADOU DIOUF AND JINNY PRAIS  

10. Putting Global Intellectual History in Its Place 228  
JANAKI BAKHLE  

11. Making and Taking Worlds 254  
DUNCAN BELL  

Part III. Concluding Reflections  

12. How Global Do We Want Our Intellectual History to Be? 283  
FREDERICK COOPER  

SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ  

Contributors 321  
Index 325