

Philosophy, Literature, and the Arts

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Traditional narratives of European intellectual history see the period 1650-1800, some or all of which is generally named "the Enlightenment", as one of dramatic intellectual change: the collapse of previous orthodoxies, the growth of skepticism, and the birth of "modernity", however defined.¹ Readers expecting to find reflections of this tumult in the histories of philosophy, literature, and the arts written during that century and a half will be sorely disappointed. Instead, we are presented with a scene of stability and continuity which links the culture of Humanism on the one hand with that of the nineteenth century on the other. Rather than dramatic shifts and breaks in the European intellectual tradition, we see a gradual evolution, most noticeable in increasingly national frames of reference as the Republic of Letters split into the essentialised nation-states of the Romantic period.²

Such a provocative claim demands explanation. The present chapter provides this in the form of an overview of some of the key works of philosophical, literary, and artistic history published across Europe during this period, together with a preliminary attempt to draw from them a meta-narrative of intellectual contexts and development. It is necessarily preliminary insofar as no such analysis has been previously attempted. Individual studies, such as Lawrence Lipking's seminal *Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England* (1970) and Dmitri Levitin's *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science: Histories of Philosophy in England, c.1640-1700* (2015) illuminate important aspects of the field, but overviews of the area are lacking. Accordingly, this chapter both provides an introduction to students and scholars unfamiliar with the cultural histories of early modernity and a series of guide posts for the future research required to establish it on a firmer footing.

In beginning to explore this field, it is useful to commence with basic questions of genre and form. Most of the key works discussed here define themselves as "histories", but such a definition is not as straightforward as it might initially seem. Writing in 1655, the historian of philosophy Thomas Stanley clarified the term when he observed that

[T]here are two kinds of History; One represents generall affairs of State; The other gives account of particular persons, whose lives have rendred them eminent . . . this personall history bee twofold likewise, describing either the actions of such persons as are wholly interested in affairs of state . . . Or the lives of such as have been excellent in some kind of learning (Stanley 1655 i. sig. ar).

This quasi-Ramist set of distinctions bores down to the fundamental genre which informs almost all cultural histories written in early modern Europe: "the lives of such as have been excellent in some kind of learning". Collective intellectual biography - to give this an anachronistic, but not unhelpful name - had its origins in the classical world, in products of late antiquity such as the

¹ Without delving into the extensive critical literature, one can see this orthodoxy repeated in one of its more recent incarnations in Israel 2001, 2006, and 2011.

² The classic case-study of this shift is Eskildsen 2004.

third-century AD *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius and the fourth-century AD *De viris illustribus* (*On Famous Men*) by St. Jerome. These compendia, containing lives and accounts of the writings or teachings of famous gentile and Christian thinkers, offered models for all subsequent collections well into the period under discussion here.³ In the Renaissance, this ancient genre was revived in new keys. By the middle of the fifteenth century, both Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini and Bartolomeo Facio had both written works with the same title as Jerome's, but addressing the *virii illustri* of humanism rather than the church (Baker 2012: 189-198). Within a few generations, however, this tradition had evolved into two distinct forms: *historia literaria* and the work of the polyhistor.

Historia literaria, the history of letters or learning, stuck closely to the *virii illustri* model, containing biographical accounts of scholars and greater or lesser bibliographical detail on the works they wrote. The *Liber de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* of Johannes Trithemius, first published in 1494, established a model which was expanded upon with little revision well into the seventeenth century: a short biography of each author followed by a list of their works.⁴ Such a model could be alphabetical or chronological (Trithemius followed the latter approach) with later chronological *historiae* such as the Englishman Thomas Pope Blount's *Censura celebriorum authorum* (1690) most clearly gesturing towards subsequent histories of the arts with its concern to trace the "flowing to and fro of learning" (Blount 1690: sig. av).⁵ In their capacious, pre-modern definition of "literature" as all humane learning they remained, however, determinedly generalist even an era of increasing specialisation.⁶ Nonetheless, the model they provided was quickly appropriated by other realms of human knowledge beyond that of the written word as is discussed below.

Parallel with, and often bleeding into, the genre of *historia literaria*, was the work of the polyhistor. Polyhistor, as memorably sketched by Anthony Grafton, attempted the systematisation and distillation of all - or certainly most - human knowledge into more or less orderly handbooks, dictionaries, and surveys. At their worst, these were fatuous collections of recycled knowledge, but at their best they were powerful maps of learning which surveyed a dizzying range of human achievement both thematically and chronologically. Preeminent amongst them, in his own time and later, was the German Daniel Georg Morhof whose *Polyhistor, sive de auctorum notitia et rerum commentarii* (1688) offers a snapshot of this genre at its height. Morhof's eighteenth chapter contained a self-reflexive discussion "Of Catalogues of Writers" which discussed the classical origins of the form before treating its evolution in the early modern period, highlighting key milestones written by Philippe Labbé and Conrad Gesner, and following the fortunes of the genre at a national level, praising the French for their rich scholarship in the field while castigating the Italians, Dutch, and English for not following suit (Morhof 1688: i. 198ff.).

Morhof's work, much like that of Trithemius two centuries before, was equal parts *censura* (literally an assessment, but in this context a value judgment of authors and their works) and

³ The English patristic scholar William Cave (1637-1713), for example, explicitly modeled his *Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum historia literaria* (London, 1688) on Jerome's *De viris illustribus* rather than on any more proximate work (cf. ODNB, s.n.). For Jerome's work as a response to an existing Graeco-Latin tradition of collective biography see SanPietro 2017.

⁴ As Blum (1991: 1) notes, Trithemius occupies a pivotal position in the development of cultural history, but remains critically understudied; the essential study is still Brann 1981.

⁵ For Blount see Jackson Williams 2014a.

⁶ For the shifting definitions of literature in the eighteenth century see Ross 1996.

bibliography, advising wouldbe students which were the best texts and giving enough detail that they could, hopefully, obtain them. This cicerone-like element was a crucial part of all histories of learning in early modernity and in the process of valuing and cataloguing texts a history of the discipline discussed almost inevitably emerged. To list relevant authors and to praise one over another required an explanation of historical change and development which would come to underpin the histories of literature and the arts which were written in the Enlightenment.

Such a project, already ambitious in Morhof's time, reached its pinnacle and its logical conclusion a century later in the work of Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827), the German theologian and polymath.⁷ What Eichhorn achieved, dozens of volumes on topics ranging from the ancient East Indian trade to the French Revolution, was impressive enough, what he conceived was mind-boggling. He dreamt of organising

a team of scholars to write exhaustive histories of their disciplines since the Renaissance in a projected ninety-two volumes. Not limited to scholarship but presenting scholarship in the context of European culture as it had developed over the previous three hundred years . . . Eichhorn's historian was to write total history (Carhart 2007: 194).

Unsurprisingly, his dream proved to be only that, but the ambition which drove it was, as Michael Carhart has observed, the natural culmination of the polyhistoric tradition.

Both *historia literaria* and polyhistory likewise intersected with antiquarianism and Peter Miller has astutely noted that cultural history itself is a kind of antiquarianism, albeit divorced from its origins.⁸ As such, we can read these works as guides but also as performing antiquarian acts of recovery; to produce a map of learning or some part thereof it was necessary to explore and recover an only partially known literary past. This element, particularly notable in the works of scholars operating at a national level, such as the Englishman John Bale or the Scot Thomas Dempster, would go on to achieve a position of methodological preeminence in later histories of the arts.⁹

While the genres discussed here were inherently universal, from the beginning they spawned more specialised texts, whether organised geographically, disciplinarily or chronologically. It is these texts which are the subject of the present chapter. Its second section will explore the key histories of philosophy, literature, art, and music produced during the Enlightenment - texts which are, essentially, specialised manifestations of the universal genres whose history has been traced above.

Before considering these histories individually, however, it is necessary once again to step back and consider the larger intellectual framework within which they were written. In 1951 Paul Oskar Kristeller wrote his seminal essay on "The Modern System of the Arts" in which he interrogated the assumption, common to the past several hundred years, that the principal "fine arts" were painting, sculpture, architecture, music and poetry (Kristeller 1951: 497). "[T]his system of the five major arts," Kristeller wrote, "which underlies all modern aesthetics and is so familiar to us all, is of comparatively recent origin and did not assume definite shape before the eighteenth century" (Kristeller 1951: 498). While he happily admitted that the "affinity" between

⁷ Eichhorn's Biblical studies have attracted more attention than his literary histories, but see D'Alessandro 2000.

⁸ Miller 2007 and cf. Jackson Williams 2017.

⁹ For examples of their practice see Warner 2013 for Bale and Jackson Williams 2020: 246-50 for Dempster.

the effects of painting, music, and poetry upon the human mind had been recognised long before, Kristeller demonstrated that even at the time of the Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns, i.e., the turn of the eighteenth century, they were still intimately and habitually connected with the sciences, whether in *historiae literariae* or common opinion (Kristeller 1951: 517, 526-27). Instead, the distinction of the "fine" arts from their more mechanical brethren only emerged over the course of the eighteenth century, crystallising in the generation of the *Encyclopédie* (Kristeller 1951: 21).

As such, we should be wary of essentialising the categories which editorial necessity has brought to this chapter. To think in terms of distinct histories or disciplinary categories of philosophy, literature, art, and music is to apply modern disciplinary understandings to a far more fluid early modern knowledge system. Nor should we assume that they offer, even on their own terms, a necessarily consistent or coherent world view. Lawrence Lipking summarised the problem presented to any wouldbe scholar of the subject in the introduction to his own work on the topic, writing that

The works that ordered the arts, works themselves so uncertain in method, raise problems of method to an acute degree. They do not offer complete structures of thought so much as a vast indeterminate conversation, and their opinions, often provoked by enemies or borrowed from friends, resist systematic formulation (Lipking 1970: 5).

With these caveats in mind, we may cautiously proceed to map the uncertain terrain of these histories.

General Histories of Learning

The foundations laid by the polyhistorians of the seventeenth century were rapidly built on by the great general histories of human learning which bulk so large in narratives of the Enlightenment. While these multiplied with dizzying rapidity, three stand out as milestones in the development of Enlightenment thought: Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, Nikolaus Hieronymus Gundling's *Vollständige Historie der Gelahrbeit*, and the great *Encyclopédie*. Paradoxically, a reading of these texts in the context established here reveals that their debt to the older humanist tradition was at least as significant as their seemingly "new", "Enlightened" aspects.

The Huguenot Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) is frequently and justly seen as one of the founding figures of the early Enlightenment (Bost 2006; Mori 1999). Central to that narrative is his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam, 1697) whose two volumes were largely biographical, with a few entries on more abstract ideas and concepts. Bayle's pyrrhonist skepticism is evident in famous articles such as "Pyrrho" and "Spinoza" and, seen in the abstract, these suggest that the *Dictionnaire* was something quite new from the *historia literaria* of previous centuries. A reading of the work as a whole, however, belies this. The vast majority of Bayle's entries on this or that learned man derive from and fall squarely within the *historia literaria* tradition and differ little in tone and noen in essential content from Trithemius, two hundred years earlier. It is all the more notable, then, that the *Dictionnaire* was rapidly reprinted and expanded with subsequent editions appearing in 1702, 1715, 1720, 1730, 1734, 1738, 1740, and 1741, not counting translations into other languages (see Rétat 1971). Bayle, janus-faced, looks

forward to the *philosophes* of the high Enlightenment and backward to the *érudits* of late Humanism in equal measure.

By contrast, Gundling's five-volume *Vollständige Historie der Gelahrheit* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1734-36) was much more clearly a direct descendant of Morhof and the other polyhistorians. Organised by subject, it was first and foremost a comprehensive bibliography but its individual entries, organised within subject semi-chronologically by author, are closer to Bayle's style than might appear with the same, by now expected, blend of biography and bibliography. While a *Fortgesetzte* to the work was issued in 1746, Gundling did not enjoy the same long afterlife as Bayle; already the scope of general histories of learning was changing beyond recognition (cf. van Miert 2017).

The *Encyclopédie* was conceived almost simultaneously with the 1741 edition of Bayle's *Dictionnaire* and the continuation of Gundling's *Historie*, with its first volume being published in 1751.¹⁰ Its history is too well-known to require repetition here, but for our purposes what is most striking is its almost complete abandonment of the older humanist tradition of organising learning by author. Instead, subject is the organisational principal of the *Encyclopédie* and individual scholars are accordingly relegated to the status of quotations or citations rather than taking centre stage as in earlier texts. While earlier works had been organised by subject, the biographical element had remained centre stage. The *Encyclopédie*, by contrast, stands out as a noticeable change in histories of learning, one which inaugurated a thematic rather than biographical tradition which has continued into the present.

Philosophy

More than most, the history of the history of philosophy has received extensive treatment by modern scholars. The monumental *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia* edited and partially written by Giovanni Santinello and Gregorio Piaia (Santinello and Piaia 1981), subsequently translated and adapted as *Models of the History of Philosophy* (Piaia and Santinello 1993) offers a tempting narrative erected on the assumption of the Enlightenment as an axial period of intellectual change. The move from pre-Enlightened to Enlightened philosophical historiography is located by them in the middle of the eighteenth century and in the figure of Johann Jakob Brucker (for whom see below). By contrast, Dmitri Levitin, in his more specialised *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science*, has argued against the epochal model of Santinello and Piaia in favour of one of gradual evolution like that articulated here.

Seen in the context of other cultural histories from the same period, Levitin's model is the more convincing and a natural starting point is his principal case study, Thomas Stanley's three-volume *History of Philosophy* (London, 1655-1660). Stanley, heavily influenced by his distant predecessor Diogenes Laertius, composed his series of biographies of philosophers in broadly chronological order, treating their lives and ideas in much the same fashion as a *historia literaria* would the lives and works of any other scholar.

In France, André-François Boureau-Deslandes (1689-1757) published his *Histoire critique de la philosophie* in 1737. While Piaia sees Deslandes as representing a significant break from the tradition of humanist erudition in favour of Enlightenment thought - conditioned in part by Deslandes' own claims to novelty - even he admits that "the model adopted by Deslandes . . .

¹⁰ For introductions to the voluminous literature surrounding the *Encyclopédie* see Haechler 1998 and Groult 2003.

presents no innovations": life, *censurae*, and bibliography follow the same predictable model seen in earlier texts (Piaia and Santinello 1993: ii. 205). Rather, we can see here the same continuation of humanist models but with those models being applied to rigorously skeptical and Enlightened purposes, just as Bayle's *Dictionnaire* was both novel in its attitudes and traditional in its content. In turn, Deslandes was plagiarised by the *encyclopédistes* in a number of their philosophical articles as well as being attacked by Brucker, unsurprisingly giving the direct competition which Deslande's *Histoire* presented (Piaia and Santinello 1993: ii. 205-206; cf. Geissler 1967: 48-59 for the reception of the *Histoire*).

Brucker himself was the author of the five-volume *Historia critica philosophiae* (Leipzig, 1742-44), which Piaia, Santinello, and their authors saw as a turning point in the history of the history of philosophy, a moment of change from "pre-enlightened" to "critical" or "enlightened" scholarship.¹¹ Levitin has gone some way towards demolishing this imagined dichotomy, locating Brucker in the ongoing humanist tradition (Levitin 2015: 5, 7), but the point is worth reiterating. Brucker certainly subscribed to Enlightenment ideals of progress and developed Enlightenment models of system (Piaia and Santinello 1993: 477-577), but the essential fabric of his work remains firmly placed in the larger framework discussed here.

Literature

Histories of literature evolved naturally from their more universal predecessors; crucial to their evolution during the period under discussion were the works of the German polymath Johann Albert Fabricius (1668-1736).¹² Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Latina* (1697) and its companion *Bibliotheca Graeca* (1705) were landmark histories of classical literature. The *Latina* attempted to give a largely personal and bibliographical history of the evolution of Latin letters, dividing it into the early writers prior to Tiberius, the Golden Age from Tiberius to the Antonines, and the subsequent late and decadent authors (he published a rather more telegraphic dictionary of medieval writers in Latin some decades later: Fabricius 1734). Similarly, the *Graeca* also put periods to Greek literature, with Homer, Plato, Jesus, and Constantine dividing up the classical era and a long tail thereafter leading to the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

The importance of Fabricius's work lay not so much in its coverage - the works he discussed had been written on by generations of scholars before him - as for his influential systematisation of classical literature into eras and his ability to digest that systematisation into a history-cum-guidebook which promised to quickly orient its readers amongst the ever-growing quantity of scholarship and editorial work on the classical heritage. Evidence of his works' durability can be seen in their frequent reprintings and expansions with the *Latina* subsequently being edited in three volumes by Johann August Ernesti (Fabricius 1773) while Gottlieb Christoph Harless prepared a twelve-volume revised edition of the *Graeca* between 1790 and 1809 (Fabricius 1790). These were among the foundational texts of nineteenth-century classical scholarship.

But, as Kevin Pask has noted, literary history in the eighteenth century was fundamentally a pursuit of the Moderns, not the Ancients, and it is to histories of national

¹¹ Schmidt-Biggemann and Stammen 1998 offers a starting point in Brucker scholarship. For an insightful critique of Brucker's concept of "system" see Catana 2005.

¹² For Fabricius see Petersen 1998.

literatures that we must turn for the intellectual core of the genre (Pask 2012: 506). An essential corollary to the Modern belief that the living vernaculars of Europe could match or excel Latin and Greek in literary excellence was the study of those vernaculars in their own right and their historicisation on the same level as the classical languages. An early and clear example of this is Charles Sorel's 1664 *Bibliothèque française*.

Building on the late sixteenth-century *Bibliothèques* of La Croix du Maine (1584) and du Verdier (1585), Sorel's *Bibliothèque française*, bombastically dedicated to France itself - "O France, happy and fertile country!" (Sorel 1664: sig. a2r) - was a significant milestone in Francophone histories of literature.¹³ Divided into chapters by topic - eloquence, philosophy, conduct, politics, etc. - it is capacious by modern standards but still shares with its siblings elsewhere in Europe a growing contraction of "literature" into belle lettres. Within that, Sorel prioritises the modern over the ancient, the vernacular over the learned, and the polite over the erudite. His *Bibliothèque* is uncompromisingly presentist in its view of French literary history, in its chapter on poetry, for example, giving passing, if positive, judgment on Belleau, du Bellay, and Desportes before spending far more time on the poets of his own generation.

In the following century, a new and far more ambitious project was developed by Antoine Rivet de La Grange, OSB (1683-1749), a Maurist scholar whose *Histoire littéraire de la France*, begun in 1733, had reached nine volumes by his death in 1749 and covered the earliest period through the beginning of the twelfth century. Three further volumes were published by Charles Clémencet, OSB and François Clément, OSB between 1756 and 1763, but even these only reached the year 1167; the project, revived by the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres in the nineteenth century, is ongoing. Rivet de La Grange organised his work loosely by century, beginning each with an "etat des lettres" introduction before turning to individual writers whose life and works he treated in much the same fashion as his predecessors. The introductory discussions of each era became increasingly discursive, however, with that for the twelfth century, in volume nine, expanding to well over two hundred pages and giving a panoramic view of French learning during the high middle ages.

Not long after the temporary cessation of the *Histoire littéraire* project, Jean-Antoine Rigoley de Juvigny (1709-1788), better known for an attack on the *philosophes* in his *De la décadence des lettres et des mœurs* (1787), prepared a new, massively expanded edition of the sixteenth-century bibliographical dictionaries of La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier, mentioned above, in six volumes (Paris, 1772-1773).¹⁴ Instead of the chronological framework of Rivet de La Grange, it was alphabetical but went beyond bare bibliographical and biographical details to comment on the authors covered and their works in a style reminiscent of Bayle's *Dictionnaire*.

Likewise, Italy was not lacking in histories of literature during this period. The seven-volume *Della storia e della ragione d'ogni poesia* of Francesco Saverio Quadrio (Bologna, 1739-52) was rapidly succeeded by the *Gli scrittori d'Italia* of his sometime pupil Giammaria Mazzuchelli (Brescia, 1753-1763), which remained unfinished at the latter's death with only two volumes in six parts having been issued. Quadrio's work was philosophical and thematic while his pupil Quadrio followed an alphabetical-bibliographical approach evidently echoing that of La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier in France. It was Girolamo Tiraboschi, however, who played the most

¹³ See Rosselini 2008.

¹⁴ A digital version, also containing annotations by subsequent readers, is being prepared at <https://bibfr.bvh.univ-tours.fr/bibfr/accueil>

decisive role in the development of Italian literary history.¹⁵ Inspired by Mazzuchelli, as well as by Rivet de la Grange, he nonetheless produced a distinctly different work, tracing "Italian" literature from the Etruscans to the close of the seventeenth century in the course of his fourteen volumes. Tiraboschi's narrative was a triumphalist one of decline from and subsequent recovery of the classical past, culminating in the achievements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is a proto-nationalist narrative, emphasising the cultural unity of greater Italy and explicitly creating an Italian literary tradition out of a disparate range of materials. Its success is amply attested by immediate and frequent reprinting as well as by frequent citation in Italy and beyond thereafter.

The rich eighteenth-century tradition of histories of national literatures is best-known to Anglophone scholars in its English manifestation. Although unpublished in his lifetime, Thomas Gray's fragmentary history of English literature echoed the *Histoire littéraire de la France* in its concern with the multi-ethnic origins of the English literary tradition - Gray identified distinct Norse, Celtic, and other strands in his notes - and in its tracing of those origins through the belles lettres of the middle ages (see Jackson Williams 2014b). For Gray this was intimately connected with his own creative work and several of his poetic translations were initially prepared for this project.

While Gray's work languished in his commonplace book, Thomas Warton's four-volume *History of English Poetry* (London, 1774-1781) met with instant acclaim and rapidly became the standard discussion of its subject for a generation. Though incomplete at Warton's death - it only covered the medieval period - its grand narrative of the fusing of multiple disparate literatures into a unified "English poetry", one not so different from that advocated by Gray, fit well with the British national consciousness of the late eighteenth century and placed Warton's contribution firmly in the camp of the cultural nation-builders who could be found throughout Europe during this period.

Nor should it be assumed that only western Europe participated in this practice of cultural nation-building. Histories of national literature could be found in almost every country by the end of the eighteenth century, with Poland offering a useful example and point of comparison. The *Bibliotheca poetarum Polonorum* (Warsaw, 1754) of Józef Andrzej Zaluski, Bishop of Kiev (1702-1774), was organised similarly to and probably modelled on the older French works of La Croix du Maine and Du Verdier but with a subtly different emphasis: instead of limiting itself to Poles it included poetry in Polish (including translations) regardless of origin, so that one could find Polish versions of Fenelon and Guarini rubbing shoulders with more expected figures from Poland's early modern literary heritage (Zaluski 1754: 4). A generation later, Jan Daniel Janocki (1720-1786) the bibliographer and keeper of the library founded by Bishop Zaluski, published his *Janociana, sive clarorum atque illustrium Poloniae auctorum maecenatumque memoriae miscellae* (Warsaw and Leipzig, 1776-1779). Still alphabetical, its coverage and detail was vastly increased and it pointed the way towards Feliks Jan Bentkowski's 1814 *Historia literatury polskiej wystawiona w spisie dzieł drukiem ogłoszonych* (Warsaw and Vilnius, 1814). Frequently but inaccurately described as the "first Polish national bibliography", it is a *historia literaria* organised by subject and within that by author, such that we may find, for example, Abraham Bzowski (1567-1637), the Polish Dominican and continuator of Cardinal Baronius's ecclesiastical *Annales*, under "Church History" the first sub-section of chapter seven, "Theology" (Bentkowski 1814: ii.

¹⁵ For Tiraboschi see the monograph by Mari 1990 and more recent work by Serrai 1996 and Rodà 2010.

478). Bzowski's life is followed by a short bibliography and subsequent pages of the sub-section treat the remaining church historians of Poland in chronological order. Though undoubtedly a work of Polish romantic nationalism, its framework would not have been unfamiliar to Trithemius, or even Jerome.

While the dominant key of literary history in this period was national, the international - or, rather, universal - impulse of the earlier humanists remained. One of the most comprehensive manifestations of this was by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, whose polymathic ambitions have already been discussed. Eichhorn's *Geschichte der Litteratur* in eleven volumes (1805-1813) began with Moses and proceeded in a series of relentless sections and sub-sections through all of western history. A sense of his method can be seen from an examination of section 2 ("Die Nederlands") of volume 5, sub-section 2 ("Blüthe der schönen Redekünste während des spanischen Krieges, von 1572-1648"), sub-sub-sections 1-10. Occupying thirty-two pages, they cover philology, literature, history, auxiliary historical sciences, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and natural sciences, practical medicine, law, and theology in turn. It is almost inevitable that each individual section is little more than a list of names and titles strung together with the most general commentary and a very sketchy narrative of linguistic and cultural difference - it is not terribly enlightening to be told under the heading of auxiliary historical sciences simply that "genealogy was only pursued sporadically, since ancestral pride, the main nourishment of this science, was never possessed in a high degree by the Netherlandish, or at least the Hollandish, character" - but even so Eichhorn's encyclopedic reach is impressive and his work represents in compressed form a reflection of the more expansive national narratives already discussed.¹⁶

Painting and Sculpture

Writing the history of the visual arts had a long pre-history before the Enlightenment. Giorgio Vasari's 1550 *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, itself directly indebted to the classical *de viris illustribus* tradition, offered a model which was regularly copied and expanded upon into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁷ While Vasari focused only on Italian artists from Cimabue onwards, the next major historian of the visual arts, Karel van Mander, in his 1604 *Schilder-boeck*, began with the artists of the ancient world, continued with Renaissance Italian painting (largely derived from Vasari himself), and added a number of lives of Dutch and German painters not mentioned by Vasari (cf. Melion 1991). The accretive biographical tradition thus established continued in the works of Joachim van Sandrart and Antonio Palomino a hundred years later.

Infamously described by Christian Klemm as "das aufschwemmend Ausbreiten von antiquarischen Wissen . . . ohne Kritik", the scholarship of Joachim von Sandrart in his 1675-79 *Teutsche Academie* has now been re-assessed as an important moment in the longer trajectory of art history from Vasari to the present.¹⁸ As Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann has argued, von Sandrart's complex work, divided into sections on the theory and practice of painting, sculpture,

¹⁶ Eichhorn 1805: v. 933. Nonetheless, he does direct his readers towards Bockenbergs' *Catalogus genealogia, et brevis historia regulorum Hollandiae, Zelandiae et Frisiae* (Leiden, 1584).

¹⁷ See generally Cast 2009 and 2014, Ruffini 2011, and Biow 2018.

¹⁸ See Klemm 1994: 12, 19, cited and discussed in Kaufmann 2001: 528.

and architecture, the history of these arts, and their symbolism, is both analytical and antiquarian in its scope. Bringing a more abstract framework to the biographical tradition of Vassari and van Mander, he - inevitably - remains grounded in the biographical minutiae of individual artists but reads these within larger trends in their discipline, offering a parallel to other works of the late seventeenth century, such as Thomas Pope Blount's *Censura* with its efforts to trace the ebb and flow of learning through the ages (Blount 1690: sig. av).

A generation after von Sandrart, Antonio Palomino prepared a similar work in a Spanish context. His *El Museo pictórico y escala óptica* (1715-24) distilled his own theories, as a practicing artist, of painting, but it was the third and final volume of the *Museo*, containing Vasarian biographies of Spanish painters, which has proven most influential (see Moran Turina 1996). This series of lives, beginning in the sixteenth century, conforms to the standard bio-bibliographical style with a light sprinkling of *censurae* on their relative merits. Lest we suppose that such a work - essentially a Spanish Vasari - should be seen as outdated by the 1720s, its subsequent reception with translations into English (1739), French (1749), and German (1781) strongly argues for the continued relevance of the Vasarian biographical tradition in the European history of art.

Despite his claims to fundamental novelty, Kaufmann and others have decisively established Johann Joachim Winckelmann's (1717-1768) debts to this older tradition of the history of art (cf. Kaufmann 2001: *passim*). His 1764 *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* has nonetheless remained a watershed in the development of the discipline, crystallising and distilling existing narratives of cultural growth and the goals of art into a single history and providing a framework for the understanding and appreciation of art, especially Greek art, from the classical world.¹⁹ If it bore the elegant stamp of philosophical scholarship, however, it remained indebted to the biographical, Vasarian, essentially humanist tradition for the minutiae of its scholarship.

By comparison with the continent, English art history lagged far behind. While there had been some earlier attempts in an English context, such as Richard Graham's 1695 "Short Account of the Most Eminent Painters" and Bainbrigg Buckeridge's 1706 *Essay Towards an English School of Painters*, Horace Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1762-80) was the first substantial printed English history of the visual arts (Junod 2011: 52). Somewhat narrower in scope than Vasari and his successors - it focused on painting first and foremost with secondary consideration given to engraving and architecture - Walpole's *Anecdotes* nonetheless remained in the Vasarian mould, combining biographical anecdote with lists and assessments of works. The end of the eighteenth century saw the history of painting still existing in the same mould which had been made for it in the sixteenth.²⁰

Music

Although Bernhard Jahn has traced the origins of modern histories of music back to early modern *encomia musicae*, as a distinct intellectual and scholarly form it reached its peak in the latter part of the eighteenth century (Jahn 2001). Despite its name, the 1695 *Historia musica* of Giovanni Andrea Bontempi was concerned more with the development of musical theory rather

¹⁹ The literature on Winckelmann is vast - and often myopic as to his place in the contexts established here - but see Potts 1994 and Harloe 2013.

²⁰ For its continued currency in a nineteenth-century English context see Sullivan 2020, which establishes Cunningham 1829 firmly in the same tradition.

than its history as such.²¹ Instead, the first history of music which treated its development from the Biblical era to the present was Wolfgang Caspar Printz's *Historische Beschreibung der edelen Sing- und Kling-Kunst* (Dresden, 1690). Printz was exhaustive, but telegraphic and fragmentary, collecting together disparate notices of musicians and composers from a wide variety of sources, but doing little to shape these raw tidbits into a satisfying narrative, instead simply presenting them in chronological order for the reader to make of them what they would.²² A more narratively-driven, reflective history was that of the Abbé Bourdelot and his nephews, Pierre and Jacques Bonnet, the *Histoire de la musique et des ses effets* (Paris, 1715) which periodised and analysed the development of the western musical tradition up to the authors' own time (Louison-Lassablière 2004). Thereafter, histories of music rapidly proliferated, especially in the German-speaking world where Manuel Gervink has identified no less than twenty-one such histories published between Printz's initial survey in 1690 and Forkel's study of J. S. Bach in 1802 (Gervink 1995: 40-41). Key to the development of the field, however, were three monumental works, each of which had a profound impact on the musicological tradition: those of Martini, Burney, and Forkel.

The Franciscan friar Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784) was a Kapellmeister, composer and owner of an extensive musical library, but is best known for his *Storia della musica* (Bologna, 1757-1781). This three-volume work modestly began with Adam and remained incomplete, only extending as far as the music of ancient Greece. Within that, however, an increasingly recognised narrative of musical origins was developed which would reappear in varying guises in later musical histories of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Equally vast in scope, but more successful in execution, was Charles Burney's *General History of Music* (London, 1776-1789).²³ His first volume covered the same ground as Martini's study, albeit in more elegant and compressed form, while the subsequent three traced music's development up to the eighteenth century. This involved numerous digressions such as "Of the Origin of Modern Languages, to which written Melody and Harmony were first applied" in volume two as Burney attempted to explore, not simply music itself, but the cultural contexts which gave it rise.²⁴

The status of father of modern historical musicology is often attributed to Johann Nikolaus Forkel (1749-1818), whose *Allgemeine Geschichte der Musik* (Leipzig, 1788-1801) and *Allgemeine Litteratur der Musik* (Leipzig, 1792) finish off this triad of general histories. Forkel certainly brought a precision and depth to his topic which even Burney lacked, but his copious chronological treatment of the subject in the *Allgemeine Geschichte*, once again beginning with the Egyptians and the Hebrews, owes more to his predecessors than has generally been recognised. The *Allgemeine Litteratur* served as a natural companion to Forkel's *Geschichte*, offering a polyhistorical, schematic bibliography of writing on music.

While the history of music, like the other disciplines discussed here, exhibits more continuity than discontinuity in its evolution over the early modern period, it is nonetheless structurally distinct. Nowhere else in the history of the arts was the individual artist, whether composer or musician, so subjugated to larger chronological and thematic narratives as in the

²¹ cf. Pietschmann 2015.

²² cf. the complaint that "[t]here is order but little 'story' in Printz's history" made by Murata 1999: 192.

²³ The two men were acquainted, and Martini offered a model - sometimes of what to avoid - for the latter (see Brofsky 1979).

²⁴ For the travel and research which underpinned this endeavour see Agnew 2008.

history of music. None of the principal authors followed the patterns set by *historia literaria* or the *viri illustri* tradition, preferring instead a blend of theory and chronological history, to our eyes an altogether more "modern" approach. The reasons for this remain to be satisfactorily explained, though it is tempting to see in them an indication of the lesser status afforded to musicians as artists than poets or painters. Regardless, the history of music stands out as the exception to the rule of historiographical development outlined in this chapter.

Conclusion

Recovering early modern and Enlightenment histories of philosophy and the arts fundamentally challenges our understandings of those periods. An essential part of our modern identity, whether as scholars, practitioners of the arts or otherwise, is belief in the continued evolution of European culture over the past five hundred years, an evolution punctuated by the dramatic leap forward of the Enlightenment. To see this implicitly believed-in shift almost entirely absent from a discipline in which we might expect to observe it most vividly is disconcerting at best.

As such, the histories of philosophy, literature, and the arts during the long eighteenth century have much to teach us. On the one hand, they present a continuity of intellectual tradition linking humanism to the nineteenth century; on the other, they only too clearly reflect the demise of the universal Republic of Letters and the rise of the nation state as the primary unit of cultural analysis. Looked at, not as reflections of greater cultural shifts, but on their own terms, they offer a vivid witness to the depth of scholarship which underpins modern cultural history and serve to remind us that our own endeavours are at some removes indebted to the patient and laborious work of a Stanley, a Tiraboschi, a Palomino or a Forkel.

This chapter has only hastily sketched a general map of its subject. Much has, of necessity, been left out and far more is unknown. As the twenty-first century becomes increasingly aware of the depth and breadth of pre-modern scholarship - still too often inadequately studied if at all - it is hoped that this provisional map will provide others the tools with which to recover in more detail the cultural historiography of the Enlightenment.

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