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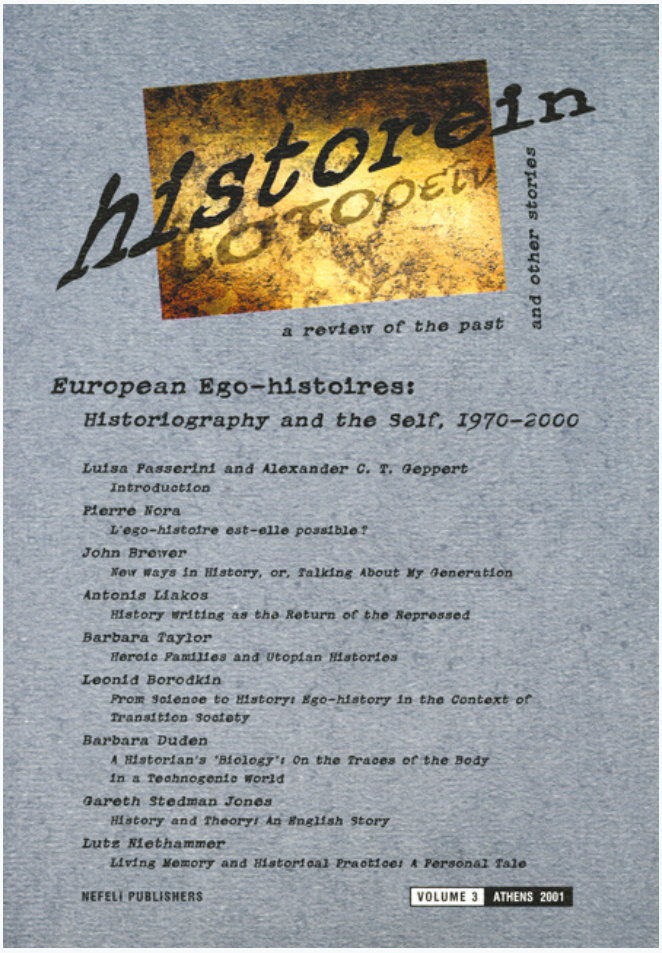
European Ego-histoires: Historiography and the Self, 1970-2000



Historein's Note

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Historein's Note

It is only appropriate for *Historein* to devote its third volume to "European *Ego-histoires*: Historiography and the Self, 1970-2000." As Luisa Passerini and Alexander Geppert argue in their introduction, the concept and enterprise of *ego-histoire* "establish a ground of meta-historical reflection." *Ego-histoire* proves a fruitful ground for the exploration of the relationship between the historian's personality and the writing of history and thus for understanding the process of history making. *Historein* has set as one of its main reasons of existence as a journal (and has also pursued in its previous issues) to reflect on the production of historical knowledge and investigate the positioning of historians within diverse historiographical traditions and methodologies as well as socio-political contexts. This issue on "European *Ego-histoires*" fulfills this promise but more importantly by placing at the center the historian's relationship with the histories he/she produces, it paves the way for new understandings of historiograpical practice.

Eight European *ego-histoires* trace the historians' personal experiences, life-choices, and political attachments, as well as the intellectual adventures and professional trajectories that influenced their history writing. In the process, they shed light on relationships between private and public, individual and collective subjectivities, between the self and the

narratives of history. Placed in time and space, the historian's subjectivity becomes a source of history illuminating the conditions that have shaped contemporary historiography.

Accompanying *Historein*'s orientation towards questions on historical writing and the production of knowledge about the past is an intense interest in public history. In pursuit of this interest in everyday history making, in late 2001 *Historein* sponsored the conference "Claims to History: Contemporary Aspects of Historical Culture," which dealt with the "second life" of the past in the present and the multiple ways in which the present is producing, consuming, and communicating the past. The conference is presented briefly in the bulletin section. The review section includes recently published works that introduce critical new insights on European history, conceptualizations and ideas of Europe and the Balkans, postwar justice and the construction of national memory in Europe, among others.