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Whatever the problems that, to snare the unwary, lurk below the surface of the history of any science, its historian is in other cases at least sure enough of his subject to be able to start right away. This is not our case. Here, the very ideas of economic analysis, of intellectual effort, of science, are 'quenched in smoke,' and the very principles that are to guide the historian's pen are open to doubt, and what is worse, to misunderstanding.

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... It is certainly better to scrap outworn modes of thought than to stick to them indefinitely. Nevertheless we stand to profit from visits to the lumber room provided we do not stay there too long. The gains with which we may hope to emerge from it can be displayed under three heads: pedagogical advantages, new ideas, and insights into the ways of the human mind.

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The significance and validity of both problems and methods cannot be fully grasped without a knowledge of the previous problems and methods to which they are a (tentative) response. Scientific analysis is not simply a logically consistent process that starts with some primitive notions and then adds to the stock in a straight-line fashion. It is not simply the discovery of an objective reality -- as is, for example, discovery in the basin of the Congo. Rather it is an incessant struggle with creations of our own and our predecessors' minds, and it progresses, if at all, not as logic, but as the impact of new ideas or observations or needs, and also as the bent and temperaments of new men dictate. Therefore any treatise that attempts to render 'the present state of science' really renders methods, problems, and results that are historically conditioned and are meaningful only with reference to the historical background from which they spring. To put the same thing somewhat differently: the state of any science at any given time implies its past history and cannot be satisfactorily conveyed without making this implicit history explicit.

Schumpeter

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A man's mind must indeed be sluggish if, standing back from the work of his time and beholding the wide mountain ranges of past thought, he does not experience a widening of his own horizon. The productivity of this experience may be illustrated by the fact that the fundamental ideas that eventually developed into the theory of relativity (special) occurred first in a book on the history of mechanics.

Reference to Ernst Mach, ET by T. J. McCormack 1942; G 1883¹.

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.. it has been recognized many times... that the general science of science.. is not only applied logic but also a laboratory for pure logic itself. That is to say, scientific habits or rules of procedure are not merely to be judged by logical standards that exist independently of them; they contribute something to, and react back upon, these logical standards themselves.

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Definitions of science.

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In Mrs. Robinson's unsurpassably felicitous phrase, economic theory is a box of tools.

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F. A. von Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society," Economica Aug 1942, Feb 1943, Feb 1944. This treatise -- these articles are nothing less than a treatise...

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Sources of hostility to economic theory.

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To use a felicitous phrase: economic ~~maximizing~~ analysis deals with the question how people behave at any time and what are the effects (economic) they produce by so behaving; economic sociology deals with the question how they came to behave as they do.