



## Domande

### Le domande

1. **Quando nasce la rivista? In quale clima politico e culturale si inserisce? Quali indirizzi storiografici intende accostare e con quali avere, invece, un rapporto più marcatamente dialettico?**
2. **Che tipo di "gruppo" raccoglie nella redazione e tra i collaboratori? Quali ne sono le caratteristiche formative, generazionali, e come risponde agli interessi storiografici espressi dalla rivista?**
3. **Se volessimo tratteggiare in uno spazio breve una sorta di "storia della rivista", quali elementi indicherebbe per caratterizzarne l'evoluzione, quali i problemi affrontati, e quali gli esiti più rilevanti delle scelte editoriali fatte?**
4. **Cosa significa fare oggi una "rivista di storia"? Quali problemi gli storici si trovano ad affrontare nel nuovo scenario disegnato dalla trasformazione non solo della scienza storica, ma più in generale dei mezzi e dei metodi attraverso i quali procede oggi la ricostruzione storica?**
5. **Come Direttore di una rivista di storia ritiene che sia condivisibile il segnale d'allarme da più parti lanciato a proposito di una "crisi della scienza storica" ed addirittura di una "inutilità del mestiere di storico"? Quale rapporto ritiene che possa esistere oggi tra la storia concepita e fatta a livello scientifico e la divulgazione che ormai sempre più si affida a mezzi e soggetti che rischiano di eroderne la legittimazione?**

P&P began in 1952 as a Communist party initiative but with a very broad remit; by the end of the '50s (after Hungary) it lost its party connection, but maintained a broad remit, focussing on social and structural history – ie anything which was *definitely not* traditional political and constitutional, or classical-economic, history. With the rise of cultural and gender history around 1980 it picked up that strand too, and now global history. The journal aims at anything which is 'cutting-edge', and which has a clear sense of its relation to interpretative and historiographical problems, but also is properly based in primary research or a very wide historiography.

The aim is to have a coherent group of the best mid-career historians in the Anglophone world (including the USA, Israel and the Netherlands at present); about half the board is now under 45. Again, they are historians with a commitment to the historiographical fields mentioned above. They are also overwhelmingly on the Left, variously defined (but so are most historians nowadays, and

political position has never been a criterion for membership of the board). The P&P editorial board reviews every article or book submission internally, without external collaborators.

The first change was the break with the CPGB and the opening to left-liberals in the late 1950s. The second change was the routinisation of the editorship in the early 1990s and the beginning of a recognition that it was not a lifetime commitment. The third was the opening to cultural history around the same moment. The main problem after about 2000 has turned out to be trying to identify what the 'cutting edge' of History as a discipline actually is. P&P has never had publicised *tournants critiques* like *Annales* has; it has moved more carefully, looking for the best empirically-based work of any kind. (P&P has an 85% turn-down rate, so has always been influenced by the directions of the best work sent into the journal.) But it has certainly moved; global history is certainly the clearest recent direction – which also reflects the articles which get sent to the journal – and many board members now study parts of the globe which are not Europe or north America.

Here P&P does not have strong views; History as a discipline has changed, and the sort of history which gets written slowly changes as well, but the aim of the journal has not changed dramatically as a result; it simply wants to continue to publish high-quality articles from an eclectic range of standpoints.

Here P&P is more optimistic. History is much less in crisis in the United Kingdom than (as some see it) in Italy; it is popular with a wide public, is prominent on TV, etc., and there is high student demand. The 'crisis of historical science/knowledge' is not an issue which gets much discussed or is much feared. There are always people who think that some development or other is going to ruin traditional forms of knowledge; but they never have. (Yet!) In the UK, 'impact' – the increasingly-used word which covers Italian 'divulgazione' – is a controversial issue, but has been absorbed into historical practice without undermining pure research, and the legitimation of History has not been undermined by the means of its dissemination.

