*The following essay is intended to complement and update Ian Harris's 'Berlin and His Critics', in Isaiah Berlin,* Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford, 2002: Oxford University Press), 349–64. Later impressions of that volume include a postscript, most recently updated as 'Postscript September 2013' (365–73), which may be read in conjunction with George Crowder's treatment of recent developments below. The intention is to update the latter piece from time to time.*

## AFTER BERLIN

The Literature since 2002

*George Crowder*

'AMONG ALL FORMS OF MISTAKE,' wrote George Eliot, 'prophecy is the most gratuitous' (Eliot 1871–2: 84). About ten years ago an eminent political theorist told me that the work of Isaiah Berlin would attract little attention in twenty years' time. That prophecy has another decade to run, but at this stage it shows no sign of being vindicated. As a rough measure one might look at *The Isaiah Berlin Virtual Library* (IBVL: Hardy 2000– ), the primary online site for Berlin studies. The section entitled 'Articles on Berlin and other publications that discuss him', <http://berlin .wolf.ox.ac.uk/lists/onib/other.html>, lists approximately 320 items for the 1990s, but well over 400 for the period 2000–10. Berlin clearly continues to have a major influence on thinking about liberty, pluralism, the nature of historiography, the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, nationalism and cultural recognition.

In the following I pick up the story of the critical literature on Berlin roughly at the point where Ian Harris's original essay stopped in 2002. (I shall confine myself to English-language publications, while noting that much has also been published in other languages.) Like Harris, I shall not attempt to be comprehensive – for comprehensiveness readers should go to the IBVL. Rather, I try to give some idea of what I see as the main lines of thought and debate that have addressed Berlin's work or

been directly stimulated by it in recent years. I shall pay particular attention to the work that has been inspired by Berlin's concept of value pluralism. But first I should record a number of recent (re)publications of Berlin's own work.

*Editions, letters and drafts*

Prominent among the republications is a uniform series by Princeton University Press of eleven new editions of Berlin's books, all edited by Henry Hardy. Their colourful front covers feature cartoons of Berlin, and each book (except KM) includes a new foreword by a well-known writer, and relevant additional material by Berlin.[1]

One collection that is not part of the Princeton series is *Russian Thinkers* (essays on writers such as Tolstoy, Herzen, Belinsky and Turgenev), edited by Hardy and Aileen Kelly.[2] This has been revised by Hardy for Penguin Classics. The new editorial preface records Tom Stoppard noting that his trilogy of plays about the Russian intelligentsia, *The Coast of Utopia*, 'was inspired by reading Isaiah Berlin's *Russian Thinkers*' (RT2 xvi). The second edition has been reset to accommodate notes on the sources of previously unreferenced quotations, and adds a glossary of names by Jason Ferrell.

While *Russian Thinkers* concentrates on the nineteenth century, Berlin's writings on the Soviet Union have been collected by Hardy in *The Soviet Mind* (2004). This includes some already familiar pieces, such as 'Conversations with Akhmatova and Pasternak' and the famous study of 'The Artificial Dialectic:

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[1] The Princeton list comprises (in chronological order of first publication, with the authors of their forewords): *Karl Marx* (Alan Ryan, afterword by Terrell Carver); *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (Michael Ignatieff); *Against the Current* (Mark Lilla); *Concepts and Categories* (Alasdair MacIntyre); *Freedom and Its Betrayal* (Enrique Krauze); *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* (John Banville); *Personal Impressions* (Hermione Lee); *Political Ideas in the Romantic Age* (William A. Galston); *The Power of Ideas* (Avishai Margalit); *The Roots of Romanticism* (John Gray); and *Three Critics of the Enlightenment* (Jonathan Israel).

[2] RT contains the essay series 'A Remarkable Decade', from which the title of the present survey has been taken. Berlin himself took it from an essay on the years 1838–48 by the nineteenth-century Russian critic and literary historian Pavel Annenkov (RT2 130).

Generalissimo Stalin and the Art of Government', but also previously unpublished pieces, including the full text of Berlin's 1945 Foreign Office memorandum on 'The Arts in Russia under Stalin'.

Wholly unpublished previously was Berlin's *Political Ideas in the Romantic Age* (PIRA), once more edited by Hardy. Berlin is sometimes criticised for being a mere essayist and never producing the single 'great book' that would do justice to his learning and status. Written in the early to mid 1950s, the material in PIRA gives some idea of what that book might have looked like. As Joshua L. Cherniss points out in his introductory essay, PIRA presents many of Berlin's most characteristic issues and themes in embryo – including his two concepts of liberty, his critique of the positive concept, and his analysis of the complex relation between the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment. Moreover, the work goes further than any other single piece that Berlin wrote in bringing all these themes together. Nevertheless, PIRA remained an unfinished manuscript, which Berlin periodically mined for subsequent essays. In his stimulating foreword to the Princeton edition William A. Galston argues that although the world has changed ideologically since Berlin's work of the 1950s, his analysis of our dual legacy from the Enlightenment and its opponents remains highly relevant.

Perhaps the most revealing of Berlin's formerly unpublished writings to appear since 2002 are his letters, a selection of which have now been edited in four substantial volumes by Hardy, Jennifer Holmes and Mark Pottle. This has been a massive project – as Hardy observes, 'Berlin was a prolific as well as an incomparable letter-writer throughout his life' (L1 xvi). Moreover, the necessary task of selection has been made difficult by the irresistible quality of so much of the material, particularly since Berlin's correspondents included so many of the most prominent people of his time. The first volume, *Flourishing* (2004), covers the years 1928–46, including Berlin's earlier Oxford career and his war service for the Foreign Office in the United States and (briefly) the USSR. *Enlightening* (Berlin 2009) takes the story forward to 1960, when he had become established as a leading public intellectual and Professor of Social and Political Theory at Oxford. In *Building* (2013), which finishes in 1975, Berlin is an international figure, has received many honours, and has served as the first President of

Wolfson, the Oxford graduate college he was (indispensably) instrumental in creating. The final volume, *Affirming* (Berlin 2015) shows Berlin responding at length and revealingly to enquiries about his ideas, and closes with his death in 1997.[3]

A further medium in which Berlin's ideas have been disseminated is the interview. Earlier examples include conversations with Ramin Jahanbegloo (1992) and Steven Lukes (1998). A significant addition to this genre is *Unfinished Dialogue* (UD, 2006), which includes transcripts of a number of recorded conversations between Berlin and Beata Polanowska-Sygulska dating from 1991–5, together with correspondence from 1983 onwards. In some of these encounters Berlin tries to clarify his notion of a 'basic' sense of liberty, prior to the negative and positive variants. In others he is pressed to be more explicit about the relation between liberty and value pluralism (see below).

Berlin often gave the impression that his immense output of lectures and essays was effortless, but in fact he was addicted to 'compulsive over-preparation' (Ignatieff 1998: 225). 'Two Concepts of Liberty', for example, was dictated and revised multiple times before publication. The IBVL now hosts recordings of Berlin dictating two of these drafts, together with links to the texts of some five drafts in all.[4] The drafts throw light on both Berlin's method of composition and his own sense of the trouble spots in the text. FIB2 includes, as an appendix, two of the earlier drafts, with significant additions from later ones; and the much shorter text which Berlin actually delivered appears as an appendix to PIRA2.

### *Book-length studies and collections*

Before 2002 only three of five book-length studies of Berlin in English had had a substantial impact (Galipeau 1994; Gray 1995a; Ignatieff 1998). Since then the number of such volumes has more than doubled.

John Gray's path-breaking *Isaiah Berlin* (1995a) is now in its second edition (2013), featuring a new introduction in which Gray

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[3] Another cache of Berlin's correspondence, his letters to the Polish historian of ideas Andrzej Walicki, has also been published (Walicki 2011).

[4] ⟨http://berlin.wolf.ox.ac.uk/published_works/tcl/⟩.

reaffirms his interpretation of Berlin's thought as more radical than usually supposed, even by Berlin himself. In particular, Gray's book is the *locus classicus* for an issue that has become central to Berlin studies: do the liberal and value-pluralist components of Berlin's thought contradict one another? Gray's basic answer is yes, and consequently his view is that Berlin's pluralism leads in political directions other than the liberalism that Berlin sees himself as defending. I return to this issue below.

In *Isaiah Berlin: Liberty and Pluralism* (Crowder 2004) I take issue with Gray's interpretation of the pluralism–liberalism relationship, but again I postpone that discussion to the next section. More generally, I see Berlin as offering a defence of liberalism in the immediate context of the Cold War, but with much broader implications. To answer the question 'What is the intellectual origin of twentieth-century totalitarianism, especially its Soviet variant?' Berlin digs down through successive layers of Western thought: first to the modern concept of positive liberty, then to the Enlightenment scientism that underwrites some of the most dangerous forms of that notion of liberty, and finally to the moral monism of which scientism is one expression. In his search for the roots of totalitarianism Berlin unearths a deeper and wider problem in moral and political thought, one that still has many implications for us now.

Cherniss's *A Mind and Its Time* (2013) is a meticulous reconstruction of Berlin's political thought during its formative phase in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Overall, Cherniss suggests that some distortions have crept into the standard interpretations of Berlin, and that we do not know him quite as well as we think we do. For example, against those who see Berlin as a one-dimensional anti-Communist, Cherniss points to the essay 'Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century', where Berlin's opposition to the modern culture of managerialism applies not only to the Soviet system but also to contemporary Western democracies. Against those who see Berlin as wholly hostile to positive liberty, Cherniss draws on his close reading of PIRA to argue that there are streams within Berlin's thought that are in fact strongly supportive of certain kinds of positive liberty, especially personal autonomy.

Another striking contribution is Arie Dubnov's *Isaiah Berlin: The Journey of a Jewish Liberal* (2012). Dubnov sees Berlin as a conflicted

figure, his inner struggles deriving from two sources in particular: deeply ambivalent feelings about his Jewish identity, and an intellectual development in 1930s Oxford in which the study of philosophy was divided between warring realist and Idealist camps. Despite the voluminous commentary on Berlin in recent years, these aspects of his background have been largely overlooked, Dubnov thinks, yet they are essential to understanding Berlin's mature themes of freedom and pluralism. He is especially insistent on the Jewish heritage, stressing this at the expense of Berlin's Russian self-image, which Dubnov believes was manufactured 'on the banks of the Thames' (Dubnov 2012: 35). This claim has been fiercely contested by Aileen Kelly (2013), who has always emphasised the role of Russian sources in Berlin's thought.[5]

David Caute's *Isaac and Isaiah* (2013) is an intriguing investigation of the relationship between Berlin and Isaac Deutscher, who came from an Eastern European Jewish background not unlike Berlin's, but ended up on the other side in the Cold War. Caute's immediate purpose is to probe the allegation that in 1963 Berlin blackballed Deutscher's attempt to secure an appointment at Sussex University, but from the perspective of Berlin studies the book is more interesting for its examination of Berlin's work and career from a broadly left-wing point of view.

Four other book-length treatments of Berlin should also be mentioned. In *Isaiah Berlin: A Value Pluralist and Humanist View of Human Nature and the Meaning of Life* (2006)*,* Connie Aarsbergen-Ligtvoet worries that Berlin's pluralism may shade into a relativism that empties life of its meaning. Michael Jinkins examines the theological implications of Berlin's ideas in *Christianity, Tolerance and Pluralism: A Theological Engagement with Isaiah Berlin's Social Theory* (2004). Norman Coles investigates Berlin's account of *Human Nature and Human Values: Interpreting Isaiah Berlin* (2004). And Andrzej Walicki records his *Encounters with Isaiah Berlin: Story of an Intellectual Friendship* (2011).

I turn now to the critical collections on Berlin's work that have appeared since 2002. The one that aims at the most comprehensive treatment is *The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin* (2007), edited by myself and Hardy. The intention was to

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[5] See also the ensuing exchange in Dubnov and Kelly 2013.

commission a set of articles that would cover all of the main aspects of Berlin's thought, beginning with his Russian and Jewish background and his early work on Marx, before proceeding to his 1950s work that culminated in 'Two Concepts of Liberty', his analysis of the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, and his views on history, nationalism and value pluralism. The book also includes three articles on the relatively neglected topic of the implication of Berlin's ideas for religion. Hardy sees religion as an inherently monist enterprise which Berlinian pluralists should allow 'no intellectual quarter' (2007: 289), while William A. Galston and Michael Jinkins are more conciliatory. An appendix to the book discusses different interpretations of Berlin's notion of universal values.

More specialised collections have also appeared. *Isaiah Berlin's Counter-Enlightenment* (2003), edited by Joseph Mali and Robert Wokler, deals with Berlin's abiding interest in those critics of the Enlightenment, such as Vico, Hamann, Herder and Maistre, whom he identifies as prefiguring some of his own ideas, including his anti-scientism and his value pluralism. *Isaiah Berlin and the Politics of Freedom: 'Two Concepts of Liberty' 50 Years Later* (2013), edited by Bruce Baum and Robert Nichols, uses that essay as a platform from which 'to assess the politics of freedom at the start of the twenty-first century' (Baum and Nichols 2013: 1). Contributors consider how Berlin helps us to think about such topics as personal autonomy, the market, national self-determination, democracy and gender. A special issue of the *San Diego Law Review* (2009) focuses on *Isaiah Berlin, Value Pluralism, and the Law. The Book of Isaiah: Personal Impressions of Isaiah Berlin* (2009), edited by Hardy, gathers tributes and testimony both from those who knew Berlin personally and from those who have met him only on paper.

### *Value pluralism and its implications*

In the past decade one set of issues more than any other has moved to centre stage in the study of Berlin and his ideas. This concerns the concept of 'value pluralism' canonically broached in the final section, 'The One and the Many', of 'Two Concepts of

Liberty'.[6] What should we understand by this idea? What are its sources? Does it accurately capture the nature of value? What is its relationship with liberalism and with other political views? Berlin threw out various responses to all these questions, not all of them consistent with one another, and none of them systematically developed. Consequently, vigorous controversies have arisen as to what Berlin intended, whether he was right, and what our answers to these questions ought to be, independently of Berlin's views.[7]

On the initial question of what value pluralism means there is some agreement, but also much dispute. There is widespread agreement that the idea of value pluralism is the notion that basic human goods are irreducibly multiple, potentially conflicting, and often incommensurable with one another. Incommensurable goods are those that have no common measure: none is inherently more or less important than any other. When they conflict we are faced with hard choices, both in the sense that there is likely to be real loss, and in the sense that it may be difficult to decide which course to take.

But opinion divides over the precise meaning of 'incommensurability', which has stronger and weaker versions. Stronger versions tend to deny that conflicts of incommensurables can be decided rationally, while weaker ones allow reason a context-dependent role. There is also debate over what exactly is supposed to be incommensurable – 'values' (in what sense?) or whole value-systems (e.g. moralities, or cultures, or moral theories). The answers to these questions have obvious implications for the relationship between Berlinian pluralism and various forms of relativism, and that relationship in turn bears on the issue of pluralism's ethical and political message.[8]

Another issue is whether value pluralism is a distinctively modern idea, or whether it has older roots. Berlin traces it back as far as Machiavelli (in AC), but a sense of the incommensurability of human values has been attributed to Aristotle (in contrast with

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[6] See also 'The Pursuit of the Ideal' in CTH, and 'My Intellectual Path' in POI.

[7] For general surveys of the field see Müller 2012, Crowder 2013c.

[8] Attempts to analyse these issues include Nagel 1979; Raz 1986; Kekes 1993; Gray 1995a, b; Chang 1997; Crowder 2002, 2004; Galston 2002; Gaus 2003; Lukes 2003, 2008; D'Agostino 2004; Aarsbergen-Ligtvoet 2006; Ferrell 2008; Moore 2009.

the monism of Plato) by Martha Nussbaum (1990, chapter 2). Nussbaum's view is in turn challenged by Charles Larmore (1996). More recently, Lauren Apfel (2011) has argued that an appreciation of value incommensurability can be found in a range of ancient Greek writers, including the Sophists, Sophocles and Herodotus.

The most contested question is that of the relation between pluralism and liberalism. Berlin himself seems to have believed in some connection, although it remains unclear how exactly he understood this. In 'Two Concepts' he refers to 'pluralism, with the measure of "negative" liberty that it entails', giving rise to the possibility that pluralism and liberalism are connected as a matter of logic (L 216; but see also Hardy 2014: 262–4). However, elsewhere he says that 'I believe in both liberalism and pluralism, but they are not logically connected' (Jahanbegloo 1992: 44).

John Gray holds not only that pluralism and liberalism are unconnected logically, but also that pluralism *contradicts* liberalism (Gray 1995a, b, 2000a, b, c, 2013). For Gray, the message of pluralism is that there can be no uniquely correct way of ranking goods when they come into conflict. Liberal priorities, such as Berlin's preference for negative liberty, are themselves no more than one possible ranking among many alternatives. Hence, on a pluralist view (according to Gray), liberalism is at best no more than one, locally justified, form of politics among others: it does not possess the universal authority it typically claims for itself.

Gray's view is opposed by William Galston, whose interpretation in *Liberal Pluralism* (2002) was consolidated and developed in *The Practice of Liberal Pluralism* (2005).[9] For Galston, the liberal and pluralist dimensions of Berlin's thought can be reconciled if we give due weight to 'expressive liberty', or people's right to pursue their own conception of the good life, subject to respect for others' basic civil liberties. On that assumption people have a powerful motive to decide for themselves how to rank conflicting basic goods, which suggests a political system in which they are given the liberty to do so. Thus value pluralism is linked to liberalism by way of toleration. Within a modern society, different groups, including some whose values are not liberal (for example,

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[9] See also Galston 2004, 2009, 2013.

conservative religious communities), should be given space to determine their own way of life. That requires a 'Reformation' politics that fulfils the early liberal promise to contain and manage inter-group conflict.

My own view, set out principally in *Liberalism and Value Pluralism* (2002) and *Isaiah Berlin: Liberty and Pluralism* (2004), agrees with Galston's in linking pluralism and liberalism, but differs about the kind of liberalism that results.[10] On my view, Gray is right to question the pluralism–liberalism relationship in Berlin's work, where this is never really resolved. However, that does not mean that it cannot be resolved. Gray neglects the possibility that the concept of pluralism itself, together with some reasonable empirical assumptions, may point towards liberalism after all. For example, if pluralism is true and we have to navigate between conflicting incommensurables, then it is reasonable to suppose that we need critical reflection, which entails personal autonomy, to do so. If we add the further argument that people are unlikely to develop and retain the capacity for such autonomy without the assistance of a liberal state – through education and other kinds of public policy – pluralism is then linked to liberalism. Contrary to Galston's view, this will be an 'Enlightenment' liberalism in which personal autonomy usually takes precedence over the toleration of group practices, in particular those which suppress individual liberty.

Other liberal pluralists have tried to explain the pluralism–liberal link in different terms. In one of his later interviews Berlin suggested the idea of a 'psychological' connection (UD 87–8, 290–2). The basic claim is that to accept the truth of pluralism is to be temperamentally disposed to support the kind of toleration and individual liberty characteristic of liberalism. This thought had been anticipated by Michael Walzer (1995) and has recently been taken up by Alex Zakaras (2013).[11] A problem with this view is that there would seem to be plenty of pluralists who, like Gray, are not disposed to accept liberal values – at any rate, not in the form required to support liberalism as a general political position.

Another attempt to link pluralism with liberalism is Jonathan Riley's (2000, 2001, 2002, 2013, 2014). For Riley, Berlin holds that

[10] See also Crowder 2007a, b, 2013 a, b, c.

[11] See also the replies to Zakaras by Galston (2013) and Crowder (2013a), and the rejoinder by Zakaras (2013b).

pluralism is constrained by a 'minimum of common moral ground', including a common nucleus of fundamental human interests whose protection is essential for the survival of any 'normal' (that is, decent) human community – compare the 'minimum content of natural law' proposed by Berlin's friend H. L. A. Hart (1961). These interests must be respected, whatever other values may be chosen or rejected by a given society or individual; they generate certain basic human rights, recognised and enforced by any 'decent' society, except in emergencies. A decent society is at least minimally liberal, Riley argues, although it is compatible with non-democratic as well as democratic forms of government.

Such efforts to combine liberalism and pluralism are opposed by a number of thinkers besides Gray. To begin with, some writers deny the pluralist premiss – or at least that the case for pluralism has been fully made out (e.g. Dworkin 2001, 2011). Then there are those who, like Gray, accept pluralism as at least a plausible account of value, but deny that it offers any support to liberalism (e.g. Larmore 1996; Moore 2009; Myers 2010). Still others deny both that Berlinian pluralism is a persuasive account of morality, and that pluralism, if true, would support a case for liberalism (Gaus 2003; Talisse 2012). Again, some writers would argue that not only does pluralism not support liberalism, but it implies a positive case for a non-liberal or even anti-liberal position. To this category belongs Gray's argument that pluralism suggests a politics of 'modus vivendi', or negotiation in search of peaceful coexistence (Gray 2000). Gray's position is discussed in *The Political Thought of John Gray* (2007), edited by Robert Horton and Glen Newey.[12] Alternative arguments seek to link pluralism with conservatism (Kekes 1993, 1997, 1998), with multiculturalism (Parekh 2006), or with democracy (Myers 2013).

<p style="text-align:center">∗</p>

Although the debate over pluralism has dominated the literature, other themes have been significant too. These include Berlin's

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[12] On the related subject of compromise – and 'rotten' compromise – see Avishai Margalit (2010b: 10), who notes that 'it was Isaiah Berlin who initiated me into the topic'.

analysis of liberty, his stress on the role of nationalism and cultural recognition, the nature of his own cultural roots, his approach to the history of ideas, his argumentative style, practical applications of his ideas, and assessments of his thought in general.

### *Liberty*

Berlin's account of 'negative' and 'positive' liberty is still widely discussed and disputed. The collection edited by Baum and Nichols, already noted, is a prominent case in point. Two topics are especially noteworthy. First, a challenge to Berlin's view emerged in the late 1990s in the form of the 'republican' position, represented in particular by Philip Pettit (1997) and Quentin Skinner (2002), which argues that Berlin's focus on negative and positive liberty tends to 'conceal from view' a third conception, namely 'freedom as non-domination' – that is, freedom not merely from the actual interference of others but also from their *power* to interfere with us (Pettit 1997: 19, 21). The past decade has seen further discussion and assessment of this claim.[13]

A second recent trend has been a revised understanding of Berlin's attitude to positive liberty. While much of the earlier literature tended to assume that Berlin was thoroughly hostile to the positive form of liberty, recent work has emphasised the extent to which he in fact regarded the positive idea as legitimate and valuable (Crowder 2004, chapter 4; Cherniss 2013).[14] In addition, significant discussions of various other aspects of Berlin's understanding of liberty have been contributed by several writers, including Adam Swift (2013), John Christman (2005) in debate with Eric Nelson (2005), Theodore L. Putterman (2006), Mark Bode (2011), Maria Dimova-Cookson (2013) and Gina Gustavsson (2014).

### *Recognition*

Another of Berlin's most prominent themes is the importance to human well-being of national and cultural belonging. His insist-

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[13] See, e.g., Crowder 2004: 87–90; the chapters by Matthew H. Kramer, Ian Carter, Skinner and Pettit in Laborde and Maynor 2008; and Pettit 2011.

[14] This view is confirmed by Berlin in two later interviews: Lukes 1998: 93; UD 120.

ence on the resilience of nationalist feelings attracted renewed interest in 1990s, in the wake of post-Cold-War independence movements and Balkanisation (Gardels 1991). Recent work has summarised and reflected on the significance of his thought in this connection (Cocks 2002; Miller 2007). There has also been interest in the relationship between Berlin and multiculturalism. While Berlin was himself no multiculturalist, it is arguable that his emphasis on the importance of cultural identity may point logically in that direction, and may have influenced thinkers who have defended minority group rights (Taylor 1994; Raz 1995; Parekh 2006; Crowder 2013b).

There is a close connection between Berlin's concern for cultural recognition and his own Jewish background. Throughout his life he rejected assimilation as the only response to 'the Jewish question', championing toleration and a moderate, liberal form of Zionism. Berlin's Jewishness has received increased attention from commentators, including Shlomo Avineri (2007), David Aberbach (2009), Margalit (2010a), Dubnov (2012), Caute (2013) and Krauze (in FIB2). But it should be remembered that Berlin himself saw his Jewish identity as only one of 'three strands' in his personal make-up, the others being his Russian and British attributes.[15] The former has recently been explored by Walicki (2005, 2007), the latter by Jamie Reed (2008), Dubnov (2012) and MacIntyre (2013).

*Other issues*

Berlin has also attracted a good deal of attention – and controversy – as a historian of ideas. Opinions continue to divide over the merits of his interpretations of past thinkers. His view of Herder as a representative of the Counter-Enlightenment, for example, has been strongly challenged by Robert Norton (2007, 2008) but defended by Steven Lestition (2007).[16] Similarly, Orlando Figes judges that Berlin's work on the Russian writer Alexander Herzen makes him 'Herzen's most eloquent exponent in the West' (2002: 667), while Derek Offord (2007) criticises the same work as 'hagiographic'. More generally, Berlin's understanding of the nature of history and historical judgement has been examined by

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[15] 'Epilogue: The Three Strands in My Life', added to PI in PI2.
[16] See also Linker 2000; Patten 2010; Sternhell 2010; Spencer 2012.

James Cracraft (2002) and Ryan Patrick Hanley (2004, 2007). One might also include under this broad heading the later work of Berlin's close friend Bernard Williams (2005, 2006), who, like Berlin, stresses the extent to which political and philosophical judgements presuppose a historical context. Berlin can be fruitfully compared to other philosophers who take a similar line, such as R. G. Collingwood (Skagestad 2005), and Michael Oakeshott (Gray 1996; Franco 2004).[17]

Berlin's distinctive style of argument is another topic frequently discussed. His typical method is not to present systematic claims defended by reasoning and evidence, but rather to inhabit different points of view in order to show what these look and feel like from the inside, leaving readers to draw their own conclusions. Alan Ryan (2012) sees this as a form of 'psychodrama', a dramatisation of political argument that may be more effective than more orthodox argumentation. Another feature of Berlin's general approach is his attachment to the essay form, a topic explored by Jason Ferrell (2012).

The practical application of Berlin's ideas remains relatively neglected. Attempts have been made to apply Berlinian concepts and values in several policy fields, including public administration (Spicer 2003), educational policy (Burtonwood 2006), transitional justice (Allen 2007), distributive justice (Crowder 2002, 2009) and feminism (Hirschmann 2013).[18] But there is still much that might be said about the implications of Berlinian notions in these and other important areas. International relations and the natural environment in particular are fields in which Berlin's ideas may be as yet underexploited.

Overall assessments of Berlin's achievement have been easier to come by. Apart from the book-length studies mentioned earlier, several significant articles and chapters have appeared in which Berlin has been evaluated from multiple perspectives, leading to many different conclusions. Something of the range of opinion is indicated by contrasting Nick Fraser's 'Isaiah Berlin: The Free Thinker' (2009) with Hywel Williams's 'An English Liberal Stooge' (2004). More comprehensive assessments are provided by Duncan

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[17] Another comparison worth considering is between Berlin and Max Weber: see Lassman 2011.

[18] See also the references to multiculturalism and minority group rights, 11 and 13 above.

Kelly (2002), Larry Seidentop (2003), Ryan (2005) and Cherniss and Hardy (2004). That Berlin's work still generates such lively controversies is surely strong evidence of its continuing vitality, whatever the future may bring.

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CC     *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays* (1978: Hogarth/Viking; 2nd ed., Princeton, 2013)

CTH     *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas* (1990: Murray; New York, 1991: Knopf; 2nd ed., Princeton/Pimlico, 2013)

FIB     *Freedom and Its Betrayal: Six Enemies of Human Liberty* (2002: Chatto & Windus/Princeton; 2nd ed., Princeton, 2014)

L     *Liberty* (Oxford, 2002; revised ed., 2015)

L1     *Flourishing: Letters 1928–1946* (2004: Chatto & Windus); published in hardback in the USA as *Letters 1928–1946* (New York, 2004: Cambridge University Press)

L2     *Enlightening: Letters 1946–1960*, ed. Henry Hardy and Jennifer Holmes (2009: Chatto & Windus)

L3     *Building: Letters 1960–1975*, ed. Henry Hardy and Mark Pottle (2013: Chatto & Windus)

L4     *Affirming: Letters 1975–1997*, ed. Henry Hardy and Mark Pottle (2015: Chatto & Windus)

PI     *Personal Impressions* (1980, Hogarth; 2nd ed., Pimlico/Princeton, 1998; 3rd ed., Princeton, 2014)

PIRA     *Political Ideas in the Romantic Age: Their Rise and Influence on Modern Thought* (2006: Chatto & Windus/Princeton), 2nd ed., Princeton, 2014)

POI     *The Power of Ideas* (2000: Chatto & Windus; 2nd ed., Princeton, 2013)

RT     *Russian Thinkers*, ed. Henry Hardy and Aileen Kelly (1978: Hogarth: 2nd ed., revised by Henry Hardy with a glossary by Jason Ferrell, Penguin, 2008)

SM      *The Soviet Mind: Russian Culture Under Communism* (Washington, DC, 2004: Brookings Institution Press)

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