



Vico's "New Science": A Philosophical Commentary

Donald Phillip Verene

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Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) is best remembered for his major work, the *New Science* (*Scienza nuova*), in which he sets forth the principles of humanity and gives an account of the stages common to the development of all societies in their historical life. Controversial at the time of its publication in 1725, the *New Science* has come to be seen as the most ambitious attempt before Comte at a comprehensive science of human society and the most profound analysis of the philosophy of history prior to Hegel. Despite the fundamental importance of the *New Science*, there has been no philosophical commentary of the text in any language, until now.

Written by the noted Vico scholar Donald Phillip Verene, this commentary can be read as an introduction to Vico's thought or it can be employed as a guide to the comprehension of specific sections of the *New Science*. Following the structure of the text scrupulously, Verene offers a clear and direct discussion of the contents of each division of the *New Science* with close attention to the sources of Vico's thought in Greek philosophy and in Roman jurisprudence. He also highlights the grounding of the *New Science* in Vico's other works and the opposition of Vico's views to those of the seventeenth-century natural-law theorists. The addition of an extensive glossary of Vico's Italian terminology makes this an ideal companion to Vico's masterpiece, ideal for both beginners and specialists.

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