Stories and Memories, Memories and Histories

A Cross-disciplinary Volume on Time, Narrativity, and Identity

Edited by

James Griffith

BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover illustration: Muses; image made by Ulaş Murat Altay with DALL-E.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Griffith, James (Assistant Professor) editor.
Title: Stories and memories, memories and histories : a cross-disciplinary volume on time, narrativity, and identity / edited by James Griffith.
Other titles: Cross-disciplinary volume on time, narrativity, and identity
Description: Leiden ; Boston : Brill, [2025] | Series: Value inquiry book series. Philosophy, literature, and politics, 0929-8436 ; volume 404 | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2024046072 | ISBN 9789004713321 (hardback) | ISBN 9789004713338 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: History–Philosophy. | History in mass media. | Storytelling–Social aspects. | Memory–Social aspects.
Classification: LCC D16.9 .S815 2025 | DDC 901–dc23/eng/20241115
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024046072

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 0929-8436
ISBN 978-90-04-71332-1 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-71333-8 (e-book)
DOI 10.1163/9789004713338

Contents

CHAPTER 1

The Muses Speak as One

James Griffith

Abstract

This chapter first gives a rough outline of the reasoning behind the division of this collection of essays, one part focused on particular issues and the second on more universal ones. It then works out that reasoning in more detail through an examination of the historical development of the relationship between storytelling, as represented by myth and poetry, and history in the Western tradition from Hesiod through Hegel. The thesis is that Aristotle's philosophical preference for poetry over history is overturned in modernity, an overturning that culminates in Hegel in such a way that the pre-Aristotelian difficulties of determining the differences between stories and histories return. With that in mind, the introduction then summarizes and links the two parts of the collection and the essays collected. Finally, it defends the range of topics in and the multidisciplinary nature of the collection by thinking through the meaning of juxtaposition in relation to Aristotle's differentiation of luck and chance, concluding with an attempt to show the connections between the topics covered made possible by their respective positions within the collection.

Keywords

poetics – philosophy of history – probability – induction – the future – particular – universal – juxtaposition – luck – chance

To Dad and Mom-mom, consummate storytellers

∴

With one exception, the contributors collected here presented work at the 2020 Liberal Herald conference, titled "Stories, Histories, Memories" and held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Liberal Herald is an

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004713338_002

interdisciplinary academic platform founded in late 2012 by a group of undergraduate students at the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts. It was born of the necessity to establish a stable intellectual forum for aspiring scholars from Central Europe and beyond. Since its inauguration, it has provided both students and accomplished academics a chance to discuss pressing issues in politics, philosophy, sociology, and the arts. This volume reflects that opportunity, with established and emerging scholars from a variety of fields—film studies, psychology, literary studies, philosophy, cultural theory, history, and political science—among its contributors.

Such a range of topics makes organization a challenge. To do so, a loosely Aristotelian approach, explained more in the next section, has been taken. That section traces out a historical development of the Western tradition's distinction between storytelling—that is, myth and poetry—and history. Aristotle, always so concerned with making distinctions, is crucial in that regard and argues for a philosophical preference for poetry over history in that the latter is overly concerned with particularities and the former more open to the generalities that philosophy takes up. The issue of particularities and generalities, though not those of what is proper to philosophical thinking or to the distinction between story and history, is thus the rough organizing principle of the two parts of this volume, the chapters of which are described in the second section below, with the first part constituted of chapters on more particular concerns than the second. To be sure, this distinction breaks down over the course of the volume, which I take to be a necessary consequence of the historical development of the distinction between story and history that culminates in G. W. F. Hegel. Of course, the history presented below can in no way be taken as definitive, neither of the differences between stories and histories generally nor of the development of their differentiation, even within only the Western tradition. It is *a* history, a particular story of that history.

1 Once upon a Time in the West

Although he consistently invokes their help for his song, Hesiod in the *Theogony* barely mentions the nine Muses aside from describing their birth following Zeus' copulation with their mother, the Titan Mnemosyne.[1] Of the nine, only Urania and Thaleia are mentioned more than once, the former as

1 Hesiod, *Theogony*, in *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914, ll. 56–103, ll. 914–917.

one of the river nymphs born of Tethys and Okeanos, the latter as one of the three Graces, the daughters of Zeus and Eurynome.[2] The Muses of the various forms of poetry—Kalliope (epic), Thaleia (comedy and idyll), Melpomene (tragedy), Erato (lyric), and Polyhymnia (sacred)—and the one of history, Kleio, would seem to be the most important for our purposes, but in the proem they speak to Hesiod only collectively.[3] Doing so is appropriate given his subject matter: the genealogy of the gods from the beginning of the world through the first births of the ancient Greek Heroic Age according to the myth of the Five Ages of Man in *Works and Days*.[4] In attempting to sing of such a timespan, the foundations of ancient Greek mythology and culture, it is hard to imagine how the various arts and sciences could be taken as distinct. The time of that timespan, about which humans are necessarily ignorant, leads Socrates, in the *Republic*, to both endorse and critique Hesiod and his ilk. In such stories, he says, "we liken the false to the true [*aphomoiountes tō alēthei to pseudos*] as far as we may and so make it edifying."[5] Socrates' endorsement is of Hesiod's attempt at edification, at laying out ancient Greece's foundations. His critique is that it is impossible, logically and politically, for the gods to have behaved in the ways the *Theogony* relates, that Hesiod's lie is not noble enough. To improve the stories, and thereby the whole of ancient Greek culture, they must be, not precisely censored, but retold in more appropriate alignment with what must be true or must be the case.

Such an understanding allows us, I believe, to make sense of what the Muses tell Hesiod, or what Hesiod tells us they told him, at the onset of the story: "'we know how to speak many false things as though they were true; but we know, when we will, to utter true things' [*idmen pseudea polla legein etumoisin homoia, / idmen de, eut ethelomen, alethea gērusasthai*]."[6] With this declaration, the story and history of the *Theogony* is put into question. The daughters of memory could be lying, so they tell us or so the poet tells us they said. Is then the entire mythology about to be laid out false, yet seeming true? Perhaps the condition for the possibility of making this determination is in being more than "'mere bellies'," as the Muses call humans—that is, in being able to think, to reason and imagine.[7] But, at least in Hesiod's time (and ours), which is the

2 Ibid., ll. 346–361, ll. 907–911.

3 Ibid., ll. 25–28.

4 Hesiod, *Works and Days*, in *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, ll. 109–201.

5 Plato, *Republic*, in *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, vols. 5 and 6, trans. by Paul Shorey. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969, 382d.

6 Hesiod, *Theogony*, ll. 27–28.

7 Ibid., l. 26.

Iron Age, we are not yet there, according to the Muses who have not quite yet told us they know how to both lie and tell the truth. They would in this way seem to be challenging us to do exactly what Socrates proposes in Books II and III of the *Republic*, regardless whether we agree with the content of his propositions: to scrutinize the stories we tell ourselves and determine whether they really do make sense.

Two or three centuries after Hesiod, Herodotus seems to at least start to tease apart the different modes of storytelling overseen by those six Muses in calling his work a "display of the inquiry [*historiēs*] of Herodotus."[8] As Liddell and Scott have it, *historia* is rather strongly associated with science and systematic inquiry and less so with mythology.[9] Perhaps this association, in addition to the folktales and other unbelievable accounts that pepper his inquiry, is what leads Thucydides, even if influenced by Herodotus,[10] to call him a mere "'*logos*-writer'."[11] Nonetheless, and despite specifically excluding "Legends, folksongs, traditions" from this category, Hegel says both Herodotus and Thucydides write original history, whose "essential material is what is present and alive in their surrounding world" and whose writers are "not concerned with offering reflections on these events."[12] Herodotus' inquiry thus remains history on Hegelian terms insofar as it takes account of what, contra Hesiod, at least in principle could have been witnessed. Thucydides' critique is that Herodotus' witnessing is unreliable and unbelievable.

Fidelity to the believable is indeed why Thomas Hobbes, in the letter to the reader of his translation of *The Peloponnesian War*, praises the fact that Thucydides "filleth his narrations with that choice of matter, and ordereth them with that judgment, and with such perspicuity and efficacy expresseth himself that, as Plutarch saith, he maketh his auditor a spectator."[13] We can,

8 Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. by A. D. Goodley, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920, 1.0.

9 Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. by Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940, *historia*.

10 See Philip A. Stadter, "Thucydides as 'Reader' of Herodotus," in *Thucydides and Herodotus*, ed. by Edith Forster and Donald Lateiner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 39–66.

11 Oswyn Murray, "Greek Historians," in *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. by John Boardman, Jasper Griffin, and Oswyn Murray. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 191.

12 G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. by Leo Rauch, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988, p. 5.

13 Thomas Hobbes, "To the Readers," in Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. by Thomas Hobbes, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989, p. xxii. The Plutarch Hobbes references is *De Gloria Atheniensium* (see Plutarch, *De Gloria Atheniensium*, R. Smith, in *Morals*, vol. 5, corr. and rev. by William W. Goodwin, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1874, pp. 399–411).

then, imagine the scenes Thucydides portrays, thereby more easily lending themselves, on Hobbes's schema of the human mind in the first three chapters of *Leviathan*, to scrutiny, though of prudence rather than of reason.

If there is another difference between Socrates' scrutiny and Hobbes's, beyond the difference between Hesiod and Thucydides, it is in the relationship to time each has. Books VIII and IX of the *Republic* display an understanding of it, typical of the ancient Greek mind, as cyclical. The so-called *kallipolis* will inevitably fail because, for all living things, "there is a cycle of bearing and barrenness" and its leaders will make some error in that they are imperfect.[14] On the other hand, while genuine tyranny is ruled by lawless unnecessary desires, there are at least implicitly not-unlawful unnecessary desires that may very well pull the tyrant back toward the *kallipolis*.[15] The purpose of the noble lies and the rewriting of Hesiodic myths is to minimize this inevitable temporal-political cycle. By contrast, for Hobbes the future is "but a fiction of the mind," like the results of compound imagination, itself a subset of memory, such as "when a man imagines himself a *Hercules*."[16] As a result, the Hobbesian purpose of history, as distinct from other modes of storytelling, is "to instruct and enable men, by the knowledge of actions past, to bear themselves prudently in the present and providently towards the future."[17] That is, history is written and read with an eye to making bearable, perhaps even controlling or producing, an otherwise open, unpredictable future. Hence the importance of its believability.

This understanding of history, and its distinction from other kinds of stories, probably has its philosophic roots in Aristotle. In the *Rhetoric*, he divides the general forms of oratory into example and enthymeme, turning to example first because "it has the nature of induction, which is the foundation of reasoning."[18] Example is itself divided into "actual past facts [*koinōn pisteōn*]" and "the invention of facts by the speaker [*eirētai peri tōn idiōn*]," the latter subdivided into "illustrative parallel" and fable.[19] Enthymeme is divided into enthymemes proper—i.e., "syllogisms dealing with such practical subjects" and, as such, leaving a claim unstated—and maxims, which are "the premises

14 Plato, *Republic*, 546a.

15 Ibid., 571b.

16 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, rev. student ed., ed. by Richard Tuck, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 22, p. 16.

17 Hobbes, "Readers," p. XXI.

18 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. by W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Rhetoric and Poetics of Aristotle*, New York: The Modern Library, 1984, 1393a.

19 Ibid.; Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, ed. by W. D. Ross. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959, 1393a.

or conclusions of Enthymemes, considered apart from the rest of the argument."[20] Using maxims in oratory, however, "is appropriate only to elderly men" and, "like telling stories [*muthologein*]," off-putting when used by the younger.[21] Further, examples should only serve as "supplementary evidence," like "witnesses giving evidence," if a speaker can deploy enthymemes.[22] If this is impossible, "we must try to demonstrate our point" through examples, though doing so "will give the argument an inductive air, which only rarely suits the conditions of speech-making."[23] It would seem, then, that only enthymemes proper and historical facts are to be used by any but older men, and those facts should ideally follow the argument itself, to bear witness by their exemplary status to its persuasive force.

Unless, perhaps, there is a difference between a speaker's invention of facts, to whatever extent *eirō* can be connected with *poiētikos*, and mythologizing. To be clear, rhetoric for Aristotle is "the counterpart of Dialectic" in that both are general concerns, not particular to any given science.[24] The importance and utility of rhetoric, political or forensic, is its concern for "the modes of persuasion" according to "the circumstances of each particular case," persuasion taken as "a sort of demonstration."[25] *Poiētikos*, however, emerges from two instincts, "to engage in mimesis" and to enjoy "mimetic objects."[26] If the *eirō* of the *Rhetoric* is distinct from *poiētikos*, the distinction would seem to be found in the difference between persuasion and mimesis. Nonetheless, at least for poetic, mimetic purposes, Aristotle gives a different distinction between history and poetry: The former concerns "actual events [*genomena*]" while the latter "the kinds of things that might occur [*genoito*]."[27] Here, this difference makes poetry more philosophical than history in that it "relates more of the universal," by which he means how people would probably or necessarily act, "while history relates particulars," or how they did act.[28] At the same time, "even should his poetry concern actual events [*genomena*], he is no less a poet for that, as there is nothing to prevent some actual events being probable as well as possible [*eikos genesthai kai dunata genesthai*], and it is through probability that the poet

20 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1394a.
21 Ibid.; Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, 1395a.
22 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1394a.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid., 1354a.
25 Ibid., 1355a–b.
26 Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by Stephen Halliwell, in Aristotle, *Poetics*; Longinus, *On the Sublime*; and Demetrius, *On Style*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995, 1448b.
27 Ibid., 1451b.
28 Ibid.

makes his material from them."[29] For this reason, the mimesis proper to poetry is, over and above verse, plot and action—that is, the story—in their probabilities. The relating of historical facts for its own sake would thus seem to have neither rhetorical nor poetic purpose. If in rhetoric the examples of *koinon pisteon* lend persuasive and thereby demonstrative force to a speech, especially when placed at its end, in poetry the probabilities at work in *eikos genesthai* open up a work to imitating universalities of human action. In neither case are the particularities of historical accounts in themselves philosophically interesting. As a result, for centuries history was understood to exist for exemplary political and rhetorical purposes or as a launching pad for poetically working out probabilities. In this way, Socrates and Aristotle agree, though the latter is more specific in identifying the differences.

Those holding this understanding of the role of history includes David Hume, although he also set the stage for its overturning with his turn to probability and the problem of induction. In the first *Enquiry*, historical research may begin with reading accounts by historians, but must work backwards "till we arrive at the eyewitnesses and spectators of these distant events" so as to prevent the conclusions we draw from it being "merely hypothetical."[30] An obvious question to ask regarding this move beyond the merely hypothetical is how or whether we can believe those eyewitness accounts—direct memories, in other words. To answer it, Hume relies on a certain universality of human psychology: "The same motives always produce the same actions."[31] He makes this claim because, in the *Treatise* and similarly to Hobbes among others, "The chief spring or actuating principle of the human mind is pleasure or pain," which becomes various volitions or passions "according as the pleasure or pain changes its situation, and becomes probable or improbable, certain or uncertain, or is consider'd as out of our power for the present moment."[32] While we cannot know another's mind, and so cannot know the pleasures or pains generating their volitions and passions, the universality of human nature lets us know both the effects of those pleasures or pains "in the voice and gesture of any person" as well as their causes.[33] The primary use of history, then, is

29 Ibid.

30 David Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, in *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge, 3 ed., rev. by P. H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, ¶37, p. 46.

31 Ibid., ¶65, p. 83.

32 David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2 ed., rev. by P. H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978, 3.3.1, p. 574.

33 Ibid., p. 576.

taken in the first *Enquiry* to be in discovering "the constant and universal principles of human nature."[34] To understand and judge historical accounts and the actions depicted in them, we can look to ourselves and our contemporaries and measure those actions, both in themselves and in the accounts given of them, against the historical. If the historical does not match contemporary actions and accounts, it is less believable. Thus, in his *History of England*, works by Hesiod and possibly Herodotus "ought entirely to be disregarded" except insofar as they please, over and above insofar as they teach.[35] If we understand "true history" well, though, we understand ourselves and our world better, and vice-versa.[36] Both building on and transforming the tradition following Aristotle, the exemplary status of history hinges on a universality to human action that the *Poetics* would isolate to *poiētikos*.

Also like Hobbes, for Hume the future is ontologically empty, which is how the latter encounters the problem of induction: "*That the sun will not rise tomorrow* is no less intelligible a proposition, and implies no more contradiction than the affirmation, *that it will rise*."[37] While the constant conjunction of events that follow one another does not rise to the level of their necessary connection, the events are not random. Applying probability, which Aristotle argues poets apply to the actions they portray, makes our predictions more certain in that, "As a great number of views do here concur in one event, they fortify and confirm it to the imagination, beget that sentiment which we call *belief*."[38] It is the application of the certainties of mathematics, of relations of ideas, to matters of fact. In terms of what concerns us here, it is, along with an understanding of the universality of human volitions and passions, how we can tell better, perhaps more philosophical, histories and stories.

It takes Johann Gottfried Herder, however, to generalize or radicalize the Humean problem of induction such that history becomes a philosophical concern in a way that Aristotle excluded.[39] For Herder, "Induction will easily demonstrate that this world of inclinations contained *conditions*, by which one of our age's deceits, to have been far *stranger and more terrible* than they

34 Hume, *Enquiry*, ¶65, p. 83.

35 David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Abdication of James the Second, 1688*, vol. 1, Boston: Aldine Book Publishing Co., 1887, p. 2.

36 Ibid.

37 Hume, *Enquiry*, ¶21, pp. 25–26.

38 Ibid., ¶47, p. 58.

39 Thanks to Kevin Thompson for helping me see this connection.

actually were."[40] By attending to the universality of human volitions and passions in his assessment of world history, he argues that, for example, the story of "*Oriental Despotism*" misconstrues the material conditions that allowed 'the Orient' to be "where *religion* belongs," conditions that are "*entirely impossible*" for eighteenth-century Europe, or perhaps Europe in its broad historical conceptualization.[41] In the movement of history, in the changes in mores and socio-political structures over time and place, Herder finds, in a radicalization of the Humean turn to probability, "the *stage* for a *guiding intention on earth*" discerned through "the *openings* and the *wreckage* of *individual scenes*."[42] In short, the generalization of the problem of induction to world history, which Hume addresses through probability and the universality of human volitions and passions, leads to a radicalization of probability in the multiplication of the examples taken up by a historical examination that attends to the universality of those volitions and passions in their historical, material development.

A decade later, Immanuel Kant, retaining more Humean skepticism, makes of this radicalization a quasi-transcendental principle. For him, "History is concerned with giving an account" of "the will's manifestations in the world of phenomena" qua "determined in accordance with natural laws."[43] Doing so on a universal scale reveals "a regular progression" in those manifestations such that, while human actions as a whole may not follow a rational purpose, "a *purpose in nature*" opens up.[44] To take up history in this way, to examine its specificities as if (the quasi-transcendental phrase) such a purpose is discoverable, is not only necessarily possible but also may be "*capable of furthering the purpose of nature itself*."[45] Like Hobbes, history for Kant is to be read and written with an eye to producing a given future. Like Hume, this future is historically discernible insofar as human volitions and passions are universal. Like Herder, this discernment is of the *eikos genesthai* of *genomena* and the material conditions of their manifestation. All told, Kant's 'as if' concerning history, the mark of his non-Herderian skepticism, works its way into a properly Aristotelian

40 Johann Gottfried Herder, *Another Philosophy of History for the Education of Mankind*, in *Another Philosophy of History and Selected Political Writings*, trans. by Ioannis D. Evrigenis and Daniel Pellerin, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004, p. 7.

41 Ibid., p. 7, p. 9, p. 10.

42 Ibid., p. 31.

43 Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," in *Political Writings*, 2 ed., ed. by Hans Reiss, trans. by H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 41.

44 Ibid., p. 41, p. 42.

45 Ibid., p. 51.

poetico-philosophical concern within the exemplary rhetorical qualities of historical facts.

It falls to Hegel, of course, to complete this overturning of the Aristotelian philosophical hierarchy between *poiētikos* and *historia*. For him, world history is the sequential "displaying of the divine, the absolute development of Spirit in its highest forms," configured in "the world-historical National Spirits" as expressed in the specific forms of their ethics, government, art, religion, and philosophy, and sequenced according to the historically progressive unfolding of Spirit's developing self-consciousness.[46] This unfolding occurs through the interaction of "the nature and concept of Spirit"—i.e., the Idea of freedom as that of which Spirit becomes progressively more conscious and self-conscious—understood as an immanent possibility, with "the will, i.e., human activity in general" as the actualization of the concept.[47] Yet the universality of the human will and the generality of human action is here, distinct from Hume's universality and Kant's generality, thought through the particular interests of world-historical individuals, whose overriding passions actualize the Idea, sometimes against those same interests. Such is "the *Cunning of Reason*."[48] The historical particular, in its particularity, brings the universal to light. At the same time, the unfolding of Spirit is neither Herder's providence nor Kant's 'as if'. The former "does not advance to any definite conclusion, as applied to the totality of things and to the all-encompassing course of world history."[49] The latter is too reliant on "the abstractness of arbitrary free will."[50] With this principle of progressive unfolding at hand, the philosopher can examine history "as it is, and proceed historically, i.e., empirically," which means faithful to the *genomena* as they appeared, such that history tells a story answering why its particulars seem to display a "slaughter-bench."[51]

To this end, Aristotle's *eikos genesthai*, as found in the pre-eminent example of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, has become a particularity of the ancient Greek world, the whole of which is now taken as one point—albeit a world-historic one—in the plot of history's story of the unfolding of Spirit, in the story of the actualization of the Idea. Indeed, according to the *Aesthetics* lectures, Aristotle's

46 G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. by Leo Rauch, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988, p. 56.
47 Ibid., p. 25.
48 Ibid., p. 37.
49 Ibid., p. 16.
50 Ibid., p. 29.
51 Ibid., p. 13, p. 24.

"remarks were drawn from a very restrictive range of works of art" whose "*universality* make no advance towards establishing the *particular*."[52]

Art's task, for Hegel, is to present "the Idea to immediate perception in a sensuous shape," hence the importance of its particularity, through which the sequential development "of definite conceptions of the world" take shape.[53] Now, the Idea here is as the beauty of art rather than history's Idea of freedom, neither of which are "the Idea as such, in the way that a metaphysical logic has to apprehend it as the Absolute," and art's Idea, when configured "as a concrete reality," becomes an Ideal.[54] Qua Ideal, "artistic beauty acquires a *totality of particular stages and forms*."[55]

The Ideal of the Greco-Roman, or classical, world "is the free and adequate embodiment of the Idea in the shape peculiarly appropriate to the Idea itself in its essential nature," that shape being "the human body … as the existence and natural shape of the spirit" but having the "defect" that it is not "purely absolute and eternal."[56] Thus, Aristotle's poetics expresses the classical Ideal: the Idea of the beauty of art as the concrete individual human being configured as a non-absolute, non-eternal shape of spirit. It especially expresses this Ideal in favoring poetry over history for the former's affinity with universality and probability, the latter being a mere collection of particular, if rhetorically exemplary, facts. Thus also, the importance of tragedy as a configuration of the individual human's fated struggles against the absolute and eternal spirit of which it is a defective shape. In accord with history's progression of the Idea of freedom, where the classical world became conscious that "*some* are free," the Aristotelian expression of the classical artistic Ideal in the emphasis on tragedy emphasizes the limits of that Ideal as well of history's Idea.[57] The classical artistic Ideal was only implicitly conscious of "the unity of the divine nature with the human,"[58] the explicit consciousness and self-consciousness of which both allows for "the awareness that *every* human is free by virtue of being human, and that the freedom of spirit comprises our most human nature,"[59] and opens

52 G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by T. M. Knox, vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 15.
53 Ibid., p. 72.
54 Ibid., pp. 73–74.
55 Ibid., p. 75.
56 Ibid., p. 77, p. 78, p. 79.
57 Hegel, *History*, p. 21.
58 Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p. 79.
59 Hegel, *History*, p. 21.

onto the next artistic Ideal: "*free concrete spirituality*" expressed "in the heart" and thereby "not susceptible of an adequate union with the external."[60]

What Hegel seems to have accomplished in his completion of the overturning, begun with Hobbes for our purposes, of Aristotle's philosophical prioritization of poetry, especially tragedy, over history is, on the one hand, if not the death of art, then the birth of the concrete individual's life as a work of art, albeit a work constrained by the self-consciousness of one's "determinate National Spirit [as an] individual in the course of world history."[61] On the other hand, he seems to have effected the return of the difficulties in teasing out the differences between stories and histories operative in, again for our purposes, Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plato. Indeed, the production of one's life as a work of art constrained, as in Herder, within one's National Spirit as a single, contingent plot point in history's unfolding of Spirit may be, similar to Hobbes and Kant, a self-conscious production of the future, though now a future (unlike for Hobbes and Hume) far from ontologically empty and the now-historicized appreciation of past art as well as the study of history as such may be, as they are for Hume and Herder, grounded in a universality of human volitions and passions themselves understood as constrained by the contingencies of their respective stages in the progressive historical unfolding of Spirit. Yet, all of this also means that that life, appreciation, and study are themselves the historico-poetic configuration of "an endless process involving the discipline of knowledge and will"[62] and, simultaneously, the poetico-historical expression of an artistic Ideal whose "true reality and manifestation it can seek and achieve only within itself."[63] That is to say, one's life is to be universal in one's particularity and particular in one's universality. Such would seem to mean a historically faithful mythology of the self qua free and qua work of art. Thereby, the endless tensions between our memories, the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves, and the histories we tell each other about each other come back, the ancient cyclical notion of time transformed by the modern notion of an ontologically empty and therefore producible future.

In this way, it would seem to be no accident that philosophies of history, of memory, and of narrativity, each of which seems to need to engage the others, have multiplied in the two hundred years since the great totalizer, Hegel. As represented in this volume alone, there is Marxism's adaptations of the Hegelian philosophy of history; analyses of memory and trauma in psychoanalysis and

60 Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p. 80, p. 81.
61 Hegel, *History*, p. 56.
62 Ibid., p. 43.
63 Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p. 81.

psychology; the phenomenologies of temporality, time, and history; narrative and memory studies; historical literary, aesthetic, and film analysis; archival and historical research; historiology and historiography; quantitative political science and political theory and philosophy. There are of course others, such as Nietzschean and Foucauldian genealogies or deconstructive and linguistic diachronies. Clearly, now, if in fact it was ever not the case, the daughters of Mnemosyne again speak as one, and with the Titan herself.

2 The Stories and Histories Here

Building from the decidedly incomplete history laid out above, the organizing principle for this volume is similar to the Aristotelian and Hegelian distinction and relation between the particular and the general. While this unifying principle does not precisely or entirely apply, the book is nonetheless broken into two parts: "Stories and Memories" and "Memories and Histories." The first part concerns particularities: specific artistic and literary works as well as narratives, individual and otherwise. To be sure, as soon as such works and narratives are examined, their particularity becomes complicated though not dissolved. No story, no work, no memory ever stands on its own, but is always embedded within networks of language and languages, of time and space. In this way, they adhere to and/or disrupt the larger-scale histories and narratives whence they are born and which they help to form. Adhering to the above unifying principle, then, demands the principle's disruption, a disruption embraced from the beginning.

The opening chapter of the "Stories and Memories" part, Sean Homer's "History, Narrative, and Trauma in Balkan Cinema," presents a reading of Corneliu Porumboiu's film, *The Second Game* (*Al doilea joc*), as enacting a Deleuzian positive form of repetition, which Homer links with the temporality of trauma as distinct from history. Taking as his starting point Frederic Jameson's claim that History is non-narrative and the limit of our consciousness as well as Paul Ricoeur's (failed) attempt to give a unified theory of historical time qua narrative that sutures the aporia of the permanence of cosmological time and the linearity of phenomenological and/or existential time, Homer works through Walter Benjamin's thought that modernity, as the negation of tradition, is traumatic in order to link it with Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan's notion of *Nachträglichkeit* (belatedness, 'afterwardsness') as the temporality of trauma: a retrospective construction of a past event that, only after the construction, explains behavior in the present, or perhaps the becoming-present of a trauma as traumatic. In this way, trauma breaks the sequentiality of narrative; the

story it tells is irruptive and interruptive. Returning to the cultural level, this temporality requires attention to the chronological gap between a historical event and its being taken up—re-presented and mediated—as a cultural or historical trauma, the latter marked by a compulsion to repeat the specifics of an event. Historical trauma, the present construction of a past, is then distinguished from structural trauma understood as the very process of the compulsion to repeat or return to the past. Establishing structural trauma in this way allows Homer to return to Gilles Deleuze, for whom the unfolding of the Platonic *eidos* is the repetition of *eidos* and is both a positive form of repetition and the condition for the possibility of its abstract form as found in the repetition of objects already constituted, and to *The Second Game*, a 2014 recording of the director and his father watching and commenting on, though not shown doing so, a 1988 recording of a soccer match between Steaua Bucureşti and Dinamo Bucureşti, for which the father was the referee. For Homer, the film's simultaneous coexistence of the absent presence of father and son, the past of the 1988 recording reproduced and represented in the 2014 recording, and the presence of the 2014 recording itself collide to (re-)produce Deleuze's positive form of repetition, the unfolding of temporal difference through the simultaneity and repetition of and in the present.

We stay grounded in the Balkans with Félix Díaz's "Narratives of Forced Displacement at the Gates of Europe," but in a very different way. Here, the focus is on Europe's so-called refugee crisis, specifically the distinction between the official, institutional narratives about it against the first-person narratives of those who have experienced it. Díaz first notes the shift in the orientation, after the 2016 Dublin agreement, of the large-scale responses to the marked increase, from 2015, in asylum seekers. Early on, fast corridors were opened, large numbers of volunteers went to the border regions to help with applications, and the institutional narratives focused on both asylum seekers' search for liberation and the generosity of host societies. After Dublin, which established quotas for different countries to accept asylum seekers, the borders hardened and many refugees were left in a state of limbo. What is more, this agreement established a hierarchy of European countries, both in the European Union and not, with border regions like the Balkans becoming a second-order area where corruption and harsh policies toward asylum seekers, ostensibly unacceptable in first-order areas more interior to the continent, can be safely practiced. As a result, asylum seekers are left with two hellish choices: return to where they fled or find unofficial paths into Europe. Here is where Díaz contrasts the first-person narratives of abuse at the hands of officials in the second-order areas with institutional European narratives, which have now gone silent about what is happening at its borders. Building on his experience working with, and failing

to be able to work with, asylum seekers, Díaz tells the story of his development of courses with the American University of Bulgaria and the University of San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador in which students both researched and told stories of forced displacement, eventually extending the project to refugees in Jordan and Kenya. This process leads him to conclude that, while an understanding of the limbo in which refugees and asylum seekers live can only be gained through their telling their own stories, attention must be paid to the necessarily othering quality of third-person narratives told by the institutions who both maintain and determine the exits from limbo. Thus, he calls for attention to the strategies of replacing attention to the limbo in which asylum seekers find themselves, specifically replacing their experience with concerns over their ethnic origins and replacing the relevance of their needs with demands for integration and suspicion over the sincerity of their first-person narratives.

Charles Sabatos moves us into another border region, this time more within Europe 'proper', into the internal and overlapping linguistic and cultural borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the moment of its collapse. In "The 'Good Soldier' in Hašek's and Rebreneau's Narratives of the First World War," he compares two novels, *The Good Soldier Švejk* (*Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války*) by the Czech Jaroslav Hašek and *Forest of the Hanged* (*Pădurea spânzuraţilor*) by the Romanian Liviu Rebreanu, both of which feature the linguistic, ethnic, and personal complexities of life in a region where national identity is still emerging. The former is popular—Josef Švejk appears as a mascot in Prague pubs—but is not always considered a high-brow example of modernism. Drawing from Jindřich Chalupecký, however, Sabatos argues that the mixture of soldierly vulgarity and writerliness for which his book is denigrated allows Hašek to push the limits of Czech literature in a similar fashion that James Joyce did to English. Beginning on the day of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination in Belgrade, Švejk is arrested for treason in Prague, committed to a lunatic asylum, returned home, sent to a hospital for hypochondriacs and then a garrison prison whose chaplain enlists him as an assistant before he is transferred to Lieutenant Lukáš. In this role, Švejk separates himself from his batallion, is caught by Russians and almost executed for espionage, returns to the lieutenant, tries on a Russian uniform and is captured by the Austrian army, and is mistaken as Jewish by the prison interpreter. Over the course of the novel, Habsburg bureaucracy is skewered and there are several comic scenes deploying German, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, Czech, and Slovak. Both a contrast with and continuation of *Švejk*, the main character of the less known *Forest of the Hanged*, Apostol Bologa, whose father implored him never to forget that he is Romanian, develops a national awareness over the course of witnessing fellow soldiers of a variety of the Empire's minority

ethnicities hanged for a desertion in which he nearly joined them, after which he is wounded while trying to cross to the Russian side of the Eastern front and recuperates in the home of a Hungarian gravedigger. On leave, he breaks off his engagement with Romanian woman after falling in love with a Hungarian one but, before being able to marry the latter, is called back to his unit and deserts rather than serve on a court martial for his countrymen, but is caught and himself hanged. Sabatos finds in both novels critiques of the unsuccessful multiculturalism of the collapsed Austro-Hungarian Empire and optimism for the nation-states formed in the wake of that collapse, tempered by the ambiguity of Czechoslovak nationalism that Švejk represents and the disillusionment with his Romanian fiancée felt by Bologa.

Returning to the Balkans, but also to the Ottoman Empire, as well as remaining with literary analysis in "The Image of the Turk and Oriental Discourse in Panait Istrati's *Kyra Kyralina* and Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge on the Drina*," Haluk Talay analyzes this image in light of Andre Gingrich's frontier Orientalism, Maria Todorova's Balkanism, and Joep Leerssen's imagology as distinct from Edward Said's Orientalism. While Said argues that, for the European imagination, the Orient and the Oriental is taken as primitive, feminine, submissive, and in need of sophisticated and masculine Western domination, Gingrich and Todorova make more sense of this imagination from the regions of Europe in more direct engagement with and in domination by the Ottoman Empire. For Gingrich, in the experience of the Christian Austro-Hungarian Empire, Muslim Ottomans are not a distant and primitive people but a direct and sophisticated rival for regional domination and influence. For Todorova, Balkanism signifies the ambiguities felt by non-Turkish members of the Ottoman Empire, ambiguities that never coalesced among themselves. Leerssen's take on imagology stresses that cultural images are always both subjective to a given culture and subject to change over time. Using these concepts as a framework, Talay reads Istrati's Romanian novel of the main character Stavro's search throughout the Empire for his sister, who was kidnapped by a Turk, as the search for his own identity after propositioning a male friend and escaping from his abusive father and as representative of the post-World War I attempt by Balkan nations to fashion their own identities. Andrić's work focuses on a single Bosnian village, Višegrad, especially its famous bridge erected on the orders of the Bosnian Mehmed Pasha Sokolović, and plays on shifting images of 'good' and 'bad' Oriental in the European imaginary as the political powers dominating Bosnia as well as the allegiances of the various ethnicities in Višegrad shift over time. According to Talay, the beginning of *The Bridge on the Drina* (*Na Drini ćuprija*) represents the Turk as a power operating by descending orders of fear and violence, from the faraway Sultan down to the local supervisor of the bridge's

construction, and against which Christians struggle. By the end, however, the coinciding of the death of the Muslim Alihodja with the partial destruction of the bridge by the Austro-Hungarians during the Balkan Wars is a denouement of if not requiem for the Ottoman world. Talay argues that *Kyra Kyralina* presents a consistently more complex image of Turks than *Bridge*: Stavro's uncles are Turkish and presented sympathetically, but Nazim Efendi, his sister's kidnapper, initially appears to be friendly and helpful. Meanwhile, Mustafa Bey shelters Stavro in Istanbul, but is a despotic figure. Together, the stories these novels tell in relation to the historically shifting image of the Turk following frontier Orientalism and Balkanism give insight into the complexities at work in the post-World War I nation building in the Balkans.

The first section closes with Michael Samjetsabam's chapter, "History, *Puya*, and *Larei Lathup*: On Rejecting the Myth of the Aryan Origin of the Meitei Community in India's Northeastern State of Manipur," which dramatically changes the geographic and temporal orientation but also begins the transition to part two in being concerned with contemporary political uses and abuses of mythology as history. The landlocked Manipur, a state declared as disturbed by terrorism by the Indian government every six months, became part of India in 1949 when Maharaja Bodha Chandra signed a merger, possibly under duress. Its being considered historically Aryan-Hindu, and thereby Indian, is based on what Samjetsabam argues is a problematic reading of the *Mahabharata*, according to which an exiled prince of Indraprastha, Arjuna, marries a princess of Manipur, Chitrangada, whose son, Babruvahana, became king of Manipur. Babruvahana would later kill his father in battle, yet Arjuna would be resurrected by Uloopi to reunite them. The early twentieth-century historian Atombapu Phurailatpam's writings on this myth were then taken up by supporters of the merger, whereby Manipur's Part C status left it without popular representation. However, a discrepancy in the most recent authoritative critical edition of the *Mahabharata* complicates the myth. There, Chitrangada is the princess of Manalur, a coastal kingdom, though Babruvahana remains the king of Manipur. Turning to the Meitei *puyas*, or traditional knowledge systems, especially the *Court Chronicles of the Kings of Manipur* (*Cheitharol Kumpapa*), Samjetsabam finds support for the claim of an ancient Meitei kingdom culturally and religiously distinct from Indian civilization. Turning to the controversial *larei lathup*, narratives that differ from the official court ones, in particular *Meeyat*, *Sembi Mukaklei*, and *Meetambal*, he finds evidence for an eighteenth-century burning of *puyas*, ordered by the Meitei king Pamheiba at the behest of migrant Indian Brahmins as part of a forced Hinduization of Manipur, that would have shown the Meiteis as neither Aryan nor Hindu. Being able to turn

to the *puyas* and *larei lathup*, Samjetsabam concludes, has at least temporarily allowed historians to stop the continued Sanskritization of Meitei history.

If the chapters of the first part of this volume more or less move from the particular to the general, those of the second part, "Memories and Histories," by and large remain focused on historicization, on the attempt to offer systematic accounts of the past, and the way that attempt folds back in on memory at the individual and collective levels. This is not to say that they move from the general to the particular, however. Rather, these chapters engage fairly directly both the ways in which memory and history intertwine, challenge, and perhaps even distort each other, as well as the ways in which the attempted systematization of this dynamic can be done.

This second section opens with Alexandre Leskanich's "A Sense of Fatality: History, the Anthropocene, and the Apprehension of Inadequacy," which examines what we may call the most general particularity of our time: how to think the fact of the environmental crisis. In many ways picking up where Samjetsabam leaves off, with the deployment of stories and myths, and returning to the temporal anxieties mentioned in Homer's chapter, Leskanich expands these themes to the human compulsion to make logical, narrative sense of the world and of experience along with the contemporary anxiety that this compulsion has produced an incomprehensible world, taking the Anthropocene Epoch, although it was rejected by the Subcommission on Quarternary Stratigraphy in March, 2024,[64] and E. M. Forster's short story, "The Machine Stops," as ways through which to think this dilemma. Humanity's technological prowess has produced a world dependent on the very thing to solve an environmental crisis that the prowess itself produced. Forster tells the story of a society able to satisfy every need and desire with the push of a button, but a button that engages a machine no one in that society understands; when it breaks, the society dies. 'Anthropocene' becomes, on Leskanich's argument, a metonymic historiological term representing or symbolizing both the tendency toward logical, narrative comprehension—in this case, a new geological epoch—and the anxiety about the incomprehensibility of a single species being responsible for the onset of such a massive change. The term thus does not stand precisely for either comprehension or incomprehension, but the apprehension of the inadequacy of the species to its own success. Ironically enough, this apprehension in many ways disrupts the faith in the

64 In addition to the term or concept, which is Leskanich's focus, having taken on a life of its own beyond geology, this decision has been challenged. See Alexandra Witze, "Geologists Reject the Anthropocene as Earth's New Epoch—After 15 Years of Debate," *Nature*, vol. 627, 2024, pp. 249–250.

same historiological narrativity whence it is born. This loss of faith having been felt and noted repeatedly and increasingly intensely in every generation since the onset of the Industrial Revolution (Leskanich mentions Bertrand Russell's shock when reflecting on the difference between the world in 1872, when he was born, and the world in 1952), the Anthropocene marks this apprehension at the species, perhaps even cosmic level. Yet, importantly, he finds precisely in this anxiety evidence for a *living* species, as distinct from the zombies of Forster's story.

Continuing the question of life, Lucie Hunter's chapter, "The View from the Grey Zone: Czechoslovak Underground Journals as Testimonies of Alternative Historical Narratives," brings us back to Central Europe, but a different environment than World War I and its aftermath as discussed in Sabatos, as well as to approaches to controversial or unofficial historical resources, as in Samjetsabam. Hunter investigates material from the underground journal, *Vokno* (*Window*), to offer an interpretive history of the role played by the 1970s and 1980s Czechoslovakia rock 'n' roll movement—dubbed 'the Czechoslovak Underground' and revolving around the band, The Plastic People of the Universe—in relation to the Velvet Revolution in 1989. *Vokno*, The Plastic People of the Universe, and the Czechoslovak Underground more broadly have been understudied in this relation, but Hunter makes connections between its scruffier pub denizens and the more lauded wine drinkers like Václav Havel. In her typology of artistic opposition to the socialist government, particularly after the crackdown following 1968's Prague Spring, Hunter categorizes the Underground as rejecting as much of the social system as possible, its obedient and rebellious elements alike, and outlines its three fundamental tenets: withdrawal from the establishment, rejection of social pressure, and authenticity. Together, especially insofar as formed within the draconian world of the post-Prague Spring 'normalization' period, these apolitical tenets became political and politicized modes of resistance. The last one allowed for the link, she argues, with Havel's set, formally made in 1976 thanks to the art historian Šmejkal. In examining *Vokno* itself, Hunter approaches it as a travelling archive of non-conformist life in 1970s Czechoslovakia and finds in its surviving pages a mechanism for forming and holding together a community as well as a chronicle and self-theorization of its activities. More importantly, however, they represent the production of identities parallel to that endorsed by the Czechoslovak Communist Party and of a counter-history to the official histories of life at that time and in that place, which gave the people of the time and place a resource for individual resistance. In short, what has appeared to be a peripheral movement in the story of the Velvet Revolution may have been more central than official histories have acknowledged.

This tension between official and unofficial histories, between memory and memorialization, between historical facts and contemporary considerations of and discourses on those facts remains at play in Tyler Johnson's chapter, "Remove or Remain? American Attitudes toward Confederate Memorials in the Wake of 2020," a quantitative analysis of surveys on this attitude in October 2019 and August 2020. Between these surveys lies the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis, Minnesota, police and the protests against racially disproportionate police violence that were resuscitated following it. As a result, the chapter is able to present data on the effectiveness of these protests, continuing with relative consistency since the 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, in changing the hearts and minds of the American populace at large. Noting the history of these memorials, usually erected during the Jim Crow era of institutionalized white supremacy, and the recent debates on their meaning and impact in a number of disciplines, Johnson identifies a consistent dichotomy in the white community's support for them, between what he calls the heritage (appreciation for tradition or desire to commemorate military valor) and hate (white resentment and/or supremacy) positions, but also cites other work that finds a complex series of attitudes as demography is further analyzed. As to the impact of the explosion of protests in the spring and summer of 2020, Johnson's study is inconclusive: Among other things, while the percentage of people saying Confederate memorials should be removed increased by ten points, the change becomes smaller as the questions refer to specific memorials. Johnson concludes that, while those protests were somewhat effective, sustained engagement over time may increase that effectiveness.

Alfred Frankowski's "Monuments of Racial Terror," also focused on Confederate memorials, attends to the ways in which memorials in general both mark lived space and refer to the past. Examining Confederate memorials from an aesthetic and a spatial perspective, Frankowski argues that their commemorative effect is bound to the history and aesthetics of racial violence that gave birth to them. This history, in particular the intended extension of a slave empire to the West Coast of the United States and colonization of Mexico and Haiti, partly explains why so many memorials to it are found in places that were not part of the Confederacy. Developing from Kara Barnett's arguments for the memorials as an iconography of haunting, this aesthetics for Frankowski demands rethinking them in their relation to the present, that is, as an iconography of the haunting of the present by the history of institutionalized racial terror, whether of the pre-Civil War or Jim Crow variety. For this reason, memorials to lynching (Frankowski's example is those to Hayes and Mary Turner, lynched during the May 1918 lynchings in southern Georgia)

become for him important loci of analysis, in two ways: First, they bring to light both the everydayness and the spectacle of racial terror and, second, they serve as reminders of unknown and/or forgotten lynchings. Between Confederate and lynching memorials, then, the question of contemporary political space and the aesthetics of institutionalized racial terror, historical and otherwise, must be interrogated. For Frankowski, the Confederate memorials indicate a fundamental and fundamentally racist notion of sovereign space. The lynching memorials are that notion's negation, pointing up the racial state as, precisely, a state of terror and monuments to it the continuation in contemporary lived space of that terror. In that way, lynching memorials articulate the abolition or at least un-liveability of the spatialization of the memorialization and commemoration of not just the history but also of the continuation of the racial state.

Our last chapter is by the contributor who did not present at The Liberal Herald conference, Jozef Majerník. His "Home and Homelessness" accounts for these two states of being through Jan Patočka's phenomenology of home and Friedrich Nietzsche's appeals to the "homeless ones." Through Patočka, Majerník identifies two modes of home, which he terms the natural or birth home and the erotic home. Beginning from our embodiment, which is divided into three temporal dimensions (the past, insofar as we are born into a world we accept and which accepts us; the present, insofar as we labor for each other's needs; and the future, insofar as philosophy and politics seek out some mode of truth), the birth home is the world into which we are born and, perhaps, within which we labor. The erotic home, however, is that wherein we attempt to establish a new home, and is thus decidedly the world within which we labor. Broader senses of home, those of politics or philosophy, build from these in broadening metaphors. Through §377 of Nietzsche's *Gay Science*, Majerník takes up the phenomenon of a philosophic kind of homelessness, the early stage of philosophic development in which a thinker feels a fundamental alienation from a Patočka-esque birth home. To prevent this alienation from falling back into the familiar, domestic, or even domesticating comforts of idealistic moralizing, quietist religiosity, or reactionary nihilism, Majerník argues, Nietzsche congratulates the alienated thinker for having been thoughtful enough to have become alienated in the first place and encourages them to continue such that they might find the happiness of living without fear of the truth, i.e., without fear of Patočka's third temporal dimension. It is at this point that Majerník turns to the question of history, and particularly of historicism, which Leo Strauss called an ultimately nihilistic reaction to the alienations from the birth and erotic homes that mark modernity. It is nihilistic in that historicism never derived any norms from the lessons of history save what a given

culture at a given time developed a given set of values for its birth and erotic homes and ends up becoming a sophisticated version of "might makes right." Following Strauss in a critique of Martin Heidegger for this nihilism, Majerník argues that Nietzsche's appeals to the homeless ones include an alienation from even the comforts of the contingencies and relativisms of historicism. Thus, for Majerník, the properly philosophical turning to great thinkers of the past is less to understand the material conditions of their thought than to continue our ascent, through their works, beyond such contingencies such that the present—Patočka's temporal dimension of laboring for each other's needs—becomes open to philosophizing, to the truth.

3 As Luck Would Have It

I have always had an affinity for juxtaposition, for the ways in which an arbitrary organizing principle can reveal an order and connection between the elements of a group that might not otherwise appear. The arbitrariness, on one level, makes that order and connection a product of luck (*tuchē*) on Aristotle's understanding in the *Physics*—that is, as distinct from chance (*automatos*) and so from merely apparently unintentional results. Chance, wider than luck,[65] is that whereby events occur of their own accord for Liddell and Scott,[66] but for Aristotle it means "an occurrence that is *in itself* [auto] *to no purpose* [matēn]."[67] Thus, Aristotle's differentiation between luck and chance is that the latter is a cause "which incidentally inheres in deliberately purposeful action taken with respect to some other end but leading to the event."[68] Thus, "the behaviour of brute beasts and even of many inanimate things" can result from chance but not from luck in that they "have no self-direction."[69] However, purpose and self-direction in "our doings and farings" make humans "capable of enjoying good fortune [*eutuchēsai*]."[70] Juxtaposition's arbitrariness would thus seem to structure the elements such that the unintentional can purposefully arise.

On another level, what comes into appearance via juxtaposition is not the result of luck. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle distinguishes experience (*empeiria*)

65 See Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. by P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957, 197a.

66 Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, *automatos*.

67 Aristotle, *Physics*, 197b.

68 Ibid., 197a.

69 Ibid., 197b.

70 Ibid.

from art and science (*technē*) in that the former is the multiplicity of memory and the latter the multiplicity of experience in such a way that "a single universal judgement is formed with regard to like objects."[71] He cites Polus saying in the *Gorgias* that "'experience produces art, but inexperience [luck; *he men gar empeiria technēn epoiēsen … he de apeiria tuchēn*]'."[72] If lucky results come from inexperience, although not from the non-purposeful and non-self-directed action of beasts (some of which, having memory and being able to learn, must have experience)[73] and inanimate things, it also seems that luck assists or even is the accumulation of memory and experience allowing the universal judgments of *technē* to develop. Such understanding is why I take the ordering and connection of juxtaposition to be something other than luck: Juxtaposition does not follow from inexperience. It instead follows from the experience of the limits of our purposeful and self-directed attempts at ordering and connecting elements, which is to say from the limits of both experience and *technē*.

Nor is the order and connections among the elements of a group brought to light by juxtaposition an automatization of luck, neither on the term's Aristotelian meaning nor in its modern sense as technologically producible actions developing of their own accord. There is, contra Aristotelian automatization, purpose in juxtaposition: bringing to light order and connection that would remain hidden under a less arbitrary organizing principle. The modern sense of automatization, however, violates the incidental qualities of luck and chance that Aristotle emphasizes in that, like Hobbes's and Kant's productions of the future, the order and the connections are both purposefully produced and non-incidental to the production. It seems to me that juxtaposition brings to light non-incidental, perhaps even essential, but still unforeseen qualities of order and connection between elements according to an arbitrary though purposeful organizing principle determined by the organizer for the precise purpose of allowing those unforeseen orders and connections to appear. The purposeful action, then, is to allow the incidental to display its otherwise hidden essential relation to the elements. It is, on Aristotle's categorization, a logically impossible incorporation of chance within luck.

Taking this understanding of juxtaposition into account, what order and connection emerges from the cacophony of the chapters in this collection?

---

71 Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* trans. by Hugh Tredennick, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933, 981a.

72 Ibid. Aristotle is citing Plato, *Gorgias*, in *Platonis Opera*, ed. John Burnet, vol. 3, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903, 448c.

73 See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980b–981a.

What do these elements tell us about stories, memories, and histories that we might not have otherwise recognized? For one thing, that reconstructions of the past—whether out of trauma (Homer), personal narrative (Díaz), or historiographical incompleteness or debate (Samjetsabam and Hunter)—are in persistent tension and interplay with official and institutional narratives. That is, both the personal as well as scientific work of history must always be a creative work that generates both history and memory. Such generation can itself be traumatic to the institutional memories and histories challenged by this work (Frankowski) and to the individuals faced with reconciling their own ways of being in the world with the institutions, its memories and histories, and the work challenging it (Johnson).

For another thing, the generation of history and memory is also at work in more traditionally creative work. That is, there is no pure literature, even at its most creative—or, better, the purity of creativity is in itself impure qua creative—both insofar as language is already historical and insofar as the work of literature is the creation of a world within the historicized human world (Sabatos). For such reasons, taking account of the creativity of creative works demands taking account of historiographical concerns (Talay).

All of which is to say that our memories are never just residues of sense-perceptions, as Aristotle and Hobbes claim, but generative of the stories and histories we tell, in contestation with others—other stories, other histories, and other memories. This disruptive, not to say traumatic, quality to memory's creativity is indicative of both an anxiety that we are, in the end, incapable of doing the very work that memory would seem to make possible (Leskanich) and of a comfort that this incapacity is what most makes us, what most generates us as human (Majerník). In sum, Hesiod's Muses continue to speak as one, but in cacophony. If we are lucky enough to find harmonies in their stories, we, by the chance occurrence of being more than mere bellies, interrupt them by adding our own voices.

Bibliography

Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, ed. by W. D. Ross, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* trans. by Hugh Tredennick, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933.

Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. by P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.

Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by Stephen Halliwell, in Aristotle, *Poetics*; Longinus, *On the Sublime*; and Demetrius, *On Style*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995, pp. 28–141.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. by W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Rhetoric and Poetics of Aristotle*, New York: The Modern Library, 1984, pp. 3–218.

Hegel, G. W. F., *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by T. M. Knox, vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Hegel, G. W. F., *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, trans. by Leo Rauch, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988.

Herder, Johann Gottfried, *Another Philosophy of History for the Education of Mankind*, in *Another Philosophy of History and Selected Political Writings*, trans. by Ioannis D. Evrigenis and Daniel Pellerin, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004, pp. 3–97.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. by A. D. Goodley, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920.

Hesiod, *Theogony*, in *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914, pp. 78–155.

Hesiod, *Works and Days*, in *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914, pp. 2–65.

Hobbes, Thomas, *Leviathan*, rev. student ed., ed. by Richard Tuck, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Hobbes, Thomas, "To the Readers," in Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. by Thomas Hobbes, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989, pp. xxi–xxiv.

Hume, David, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2 ed., rev. by P. H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

Hume, David, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, in *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals,* ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 3 ed., rev. by P. H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975, pp. 5–165.

Hume, David, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Abdication of James the Second, 1688*, vol. 1. Boston: Aldine Book Publishing Co., 1887.

Kant, Immanuel, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," in *Political Writings*, 2 ed., ed. by Hans Reiss, trans. by H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 41–53.

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott, *automatos*, in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. by Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott, *historia*, in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. by Sir Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

Murray, Oswyn, "Greek Historians," in *The Oxford History of the Classical World,* ed. by John Boardman, Jasper Griffin, and Oswyn Murray, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Plato, *Gorgias*, in *Platonis Opera*, ed. by John Burnet, vol. 3, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903, pp. 447–527.

Plato, *Republic*, in *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, vols. 5 and 6, trans. by Paul Shorey, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969.

Plutarch, *De Gloria Atheniensium*, trans. by R. Smith, in *Morals*, vol. 5, corr. and rev. by William W. Goodwin, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1874, pp. 399–411.

Stadter, Philip A., "Thucydides as 'Reader' of Herodotus," in *Thucydides and Herodotus*, ed. by Edith Forster and Donald Lateiner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 39–66. DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199593262.003.0003.

Witze, Alexandra, "Geologists Reject the Anthropocene as Earth's New Epoch—After 15 Years of Debate," *Nature*, vol. 627, 2024, pp. 249–250. DOI: 10.1038/d41586-024-00675-8.