

Second Philosophy

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Title	Philosophy of History II
Date	05 April 2009

INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time not so long ago history had a degree of certainty. It was the subject that told us about the past. Historians trained in the use of evidence (ie: in rationally assessing its reliability as data to reconstruct what the past had actually been like) could uncover facts about the past and use these to construct a picture, most often a narrative, about what the past was really like. Having achieved this history could be used to assess all sorts of things that were seen as vital to the well being of society.

For instance it could give us a perspective on morality by giving us examples of the good and the bad. It could warn us against repeating our mistakes that led to disasters. In this sense it could be the source of moral improvement.

As other social sciences developed history could provide data, as a corrective or justification, for all sorts of speculations and theories about our individual natures and the nature of society. Of course there were disputes amongst historians. Did the picture of the past show that we were making progress or not?

Were individuals more important than the great social movements of which they were a part?
Could a pattern be seen in history and if so what was it, the rise a decline of civilizations or cycles of change?
Or was there no pattern, was history just `one cock up after another`, an endless train of accidents?

However, fundamentally, history was secure as a profession, with a useful purpose and a reliable method that aspired to, and consistently achieved, a true representation of the past.

In recent times this view of history has been seriously challenged. Critics have claimed it is impossible to recover the real past. All we have are narratives that reflect the dominant ideologies, reflected in individual historians, located in the particular ideological space of a particular time.

As Richard Evans, a notable defender of traditional history, has said, of his critics views ... *“The past is unknowable, all we can know about is historian’s writings, so history disappears and we are left with historiography, as a species of literary endeavour ... What historians write depends on their own purposes and their own point of view and there is no way of deciding whether one representation of the past is true and another contradictory one untrue.”*

This can perhaps be summed up in another way Jean Francois Lyotard’s definition of postmodernity as, *“incredulity towards meta narratives.”*

The critics struck at the heart of the idea that empiricism could be used to recover and reconstitute the truth about the past. History was merely a series of time located `discourse`. In these `discourses` texts float free of their authors. It is not only authors of evidence in the past who are dead; all authors are dead once their text is completed according to Roland Barthes.

All `discourses` could be deconstructed, read against the grain, to reveal their hidden ideological assumptions, the very things that gave them their appearance, their posture of certainty truth and reality. No discourse could reveal reality as such, reality of the past existed but was fundamentally unrecoverable and a refusal to accept this caused serious problems.

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Deconstruction of traditional history was vital because the traditional paradigm of rational scientific history did real harm.

For instance as it had developed in the modern era it excluded whole swathes of humanity from consideration. Male Western Eurocentric history excluded women, the colonial, black people amongst many others. In more subtle ways the impulse to describe the effects of great social movements eg the economic forces that created social classes down graded and devalued the role of individuals as resisters of social change.

For others the creation of spurious certainty about the past simultaneously created a sense of victim hood amongst some groups that prevented reconciliation and in others a sense of moral certainty that endangered the democratic process ... a process that required relativism to function.

Richard Rorty was one who celebrated the reduction of history, and philosophy for that matter, to the fictive and the relative, seeing the fundamental unknowability of the past as essential for leading us back from false certainty to pragmatic decision making about our moral behaviour. The supporters of traditional history have of course not easily accepted these criticisms.

They claim their critics are just another breed of radical sceptics. As such their scepticism is self defeating. Historians have always been aware of the problems of cultural and individual bias. It was to get away from fictive history with its any interpretation goes approach that led to the professionalization of history in the first place.

Further if you break the link between interpretation and narrative and the reality of the past then you are committing a major epistemological error. Richard Evans points out that traditional history, by its correct conceptualisation of the nature of evidence, ensures that some interpretations are better than others. It is true evidence can be read in many ways but these possibilities are not endless ie the evidence guides and them and excludes certain interpretations and favours others. Interpretations fit evidence and evidence reflects reality.

Thus some interpretations are a better fit to reality than others. If you don't accept this then history becomes a sort of parlour game, an extended reading club, where we all exchange our fictions. Worse, it allows the powerful, the fundamentalist the extremist to appropriate a version of the past to use for their own ends. The traditional historians, the authoritative guardians of humanities conscience, will no longer exist. So where do you stand on these issues? Is history relative or real and does it matter?

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the status of a work of history in you eyes? * An entertaining fiction? * A useful fiction? * A useful reconstruction of the past?
2. Is knowing the truth about the past dangerous or having multiple versions of the truth about the past dangerous?
3. If we can't know the truth about the past can we know the truth about anything?

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DISCUSSION:

- [12:12] Reflection Freenote: thanks Os that was very informative and interesting
- [12:13] Oswy Gothly: OK folks over to you what is the status of history in your eyes?
- [12:13] Oswy Gothly: Is it just fiction?
- [12:13] Renald Starostin: No
- [12:14] Oswy Gothly: Ren why is it more than fiction or different to fiction?
- [12:14] Simulat Almendros: I'd say that it gives us valuable information - so its not just a fiction - but its too much to say that its a reconstruction - and as usual truth is too strong a claim
- [12:14] Oswy Gothly: Sim what is valuable about it?
- [12:14] Reflection Freenote: it seems to relate to our other discussions regarding how skeptical we should be of any concept system. If taken to an extreme all understanding breaks down, on the other hand, the appearance of empiricism and certainty certainly hides much that is simply narrative and the view of only one group
- [12:14] Simulat Almendros: some knowledge is better than ignorance
- [12:14] Oswy Gothly: Isn't history just there to amuse and justify ourselves depending on the version?
- [12:15] Deoridhe Quandry: You said: "Worse it allows the powerful, the fundamentalist the extremist to appropriate a version of the past to use for their own ends. The traditional historians, the authoritative guardians of humanities conscience, will no longer exist." I think this sets p a false dichotomy. At least for the last few hundred years I've learned different things about, the "traditional historians" WERE the "fundamentalists" who appropriated the past to their own ends.
- [12:15] Renald Starostin: Os, ideally history is rooted or anchored in facts which can be checked, as opposed to fiction which is free to be anchored in nothing more than what human beings are capable of understanding.
- [12:15] Alaya Kumaki: history status is to reality as what honesty is to man, present foreign information, also reflect how its made today, and can demonstrate what will be the remaining ruins tomorrow...
- [12:15] Seaplane Jonson: perhaps it would be wise to distinguish among the various levels and types of history
- [12:16] Oswy Gothly: Ren what are these facts aren't they not just selections.
- [12:16] Reflection Freenote: yes Deoridhe, the postmodern assault seems to correct scientism as applied to history, perhaps
- [12:16] Oswy Gothly: Deo, were not historians the guardians of our collective conscience?
- [12:17] Reflection Freenote: sure, Renald, there is data, as such which can be verified, although it tends to have no meaning until it is put into a theoretical framework, which is where the fiction is
- [12:17] Renald Starostin: Os, of course the facts used by historians are selections. Some of the selection can be traced to the historian, some to the vagaries of what survives and what doesn't. That history is imperfect should not in itself be an argument that history is an invalid approach.
- [12:17] Oswy Gothly: Deo Do we let the taliban peddle their version of history surely we can do better?
- [12:17] Deoridhe Quandry: No, Oswy, they were not. Historians were the people who denied the existence of humans living in the so-called "new world." Historians are the ones still often framing the foundation of the United States as people seeking religious freedom in a pristine wilderness. That is neither factual, not guardianship of any sort of truth other than the denial of the existence of thousands of people.
- [12:18] Reflection Freenote: right Oswy, about the problem of there being infinitely many facts from the past, and so we are always selecting a microscopically small sample, and in this selection there is inherent bias
- [12:18] Oswy Gothly: Ren Deo you seem to be on a collision course??
- [12:18] Deoridhe Quandry: I refuse to accept a "collective conscience" which ignores the systematic genocide of people.
- [12:18] Alaya Kumaki: as present history makers, and relaters, we sure can conceive our different interpretation of the Korea essay from the last days, and that is from many remaining books , always what in the records, which are army and defense references, but not much on the social alienations from others groups which don't have the authority of the history writing

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[12:19] Renald Starostin: Ref, I understand what you're saying, but I would still distinguish what historians do from fiction per se, simply because the foundation is different. Historians, ideally, start from data and interpret from there. Fiction writers start from a fictive premise, and interpret from there.

[12:19] Seaplane Jonson: the sheer complexity of human affairs makes large scale history narratives somewhat suspect but many working historians now focus on more modest history writing that can be more certain

[12:19] Oswy Gothly: Deo Can we rise above this ? Or are we always doomed to fiction and exclusion?

[12:19] Deoridhe Quandry: Heh. I'm not on my opinion of history, yet. I'm still questioning the framing of some mythical set of "collective consciousness objective historians".

[12:20] Deoridhe Quandry: I don't know, Oswy. I think it depends on whether we start to value the narratives of people who have less power or not. So far, I'm not so hopeful. We can't manage this while things are happening, much less when viewing the past.

[12:20] Simulat Almendros: I don't understand the postmodern stance that unless our knowledge is perfect we have no knowledge

[12:20] Oswy Gothly: Deo If the professional historians are not objective to a degree then who will be?

[12:20] Renald Starostin: Os, I suspect Deo and I agree about much of this, but it would be worth exploring the apparent collision... which I don't see coming. :-)

[12:20] Deoridhe Quandry: Good question, Oswy. But, then, I don't value the fiction of "objective" the way I think many do.

[12:20] Reflection Freenote: I agree Ren, I think I am really just agreeing that we need to be more skeptical of historical facts than we tend to be. I think we unconsciously very much think of it as "just what happened". I sort of doubt that this is the way it is. The Battle of Hastings probably happened, but once you get past the basics, things may get pretty muddled

[12:21] Deoridhe Quandry: Yeah, my guess is Ren and I agree on the use of history. That it is imperfect is simply another point of data so we don't get locked into thinking we know the 'objective truth' and instead staying flexible to new information.

[12:21] Oswy Gothly: All Is there a possibility of Historians getting at a truth?

[12:21] Reflection Freenote: I wonder, sea, is the small scale easier? In some ways the sweep of history might be more secure. this group of people moved in this direction over centuries?

[12:21] Renald Starostin: Ref, I agree with that completely. Also that there are never enough facts, which is only motivation to keep gathering, not to give up.

[12:21] Seaplane Jonson: well, the significance of the Battle of Hastings would be one of the aspects that gets suspect

[12:22] Renald Starostin: Os, do you want to open the "what is truth" can?

[12:22] Deoridhe Quandry: Well, Oswy, the histories are a truth. A truth from the perspective of the winners, who want to justify what they have. That is a truth. It's simply not objective, and rarely takes into account any other perspectives.

[12:22] Oswy Gothly: Ren If historians cant establish a truth then who can. the postmodernists deny that historians can get at truth and deny the whole concept of objective truth

[12:23] Oswy Gothly: Sea What do you mean about 1066 It seems significant to me as an Englishman?

[12:23] Deoridhe Quandry: Oswy, I'm a post-modernist. I deny that historians get at all truths. I don't deny they get at the truth of the justifications needed by the winners to live with what they won.

[12:23] Simulat Almendros: Is a continually improving narrative truth? But also is it without value?

[12:23] Reflection Freenote: like, is the Battle of Hastings really important at all, or is that just our preoccupation with battles coming out. Maybe there is a completely different variable from that time period which is really the important one?

[12:24] Deoridhe Quandry: And Sim, the stance isn't that unless we have perfect knowledge we don't have any knowledge. The stance is that another piece of knowledge is THAT we don't have perfect knowledge.

[12:24] Oswy Gothly: deo that sounds like read the historians and then believe the opposite But why is the opposite any more objective?

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- [12:24] Renald Starostin: Oswy, my position is that if there is an objective truth it is not available and hence might as well not exist. I nevertheless see value in what might be called subjective truths, it's just a question of which side of the line one allows the term to apply. That is, is anything less than THE truth really true? It's, unfortunately a very loaded semantic question.
- [12:24] Deoridhe Quandry raises an eyebrow at Oswy. "That implies there is an opposite."
- [12:25] Renald Starostin: heh
- [12:25] Seaplane Jonson: Battle of Hastings is important ... changed course of English history ... but of course we can debate what the nature of the change was
- [12:25] Deoridhe Quandry: Or that the original story doesn't hold some truths.
- [12:25] Seaplane Jonson: and its implications for later eras
- [12:25] Oswy Gothly: Deo reading against the grain?
- [12:26] Simulat Almendros: I agree with that Deo - but its also too easy to devalue a whole field of knowledge because of imperfection
- [12:26] Oswy Gothly: Sea I agree it seems significant to me .? But according to some its just a version of winners history?
- [12:26] Deoridhe Quandry: I read just about everything against the grain, Oswy. It's part of being post-modern.
- [12:26] 9Volt Borkotron is Offline
- [12:26] Reflection Freenote: well, that is the way it is currently seen sea, but maybe the battle was just a minor element of larger tectonic forces (as one example of a different sort of narrative, and one that is not different because of political persuasion as might be the case of Deo)
- [12:26] Simulat Almendros: and how can we make wise decisions in the absence of knowledge?
- [12:26] Renald Starostin: Ref, what's interesting to me is the way the terminology loads the significance. I think the collection of events leading up to and following the Battle of Hastings is very important -- but the battle itself? In the history of battles, sure. Otherwise?
- [12:27] Deoridhe Quandry: Sim, the people who have the power to devalue history are NOT the post-modernists. There's the people in power. I suggest you talk to them about valuing history, but they have good reasons to not want to.
- [12:27] Oswy Gothly: Deo I know and this argument is as much about the validity of PM as it is about the validity of History?
- [12:27] Simulat Almendros: and also - how can we make collective decisions in the absence of collective knowledge
- [12:27] Seaplane Jonson: I suspect the same is/ought problem that appears in science is also an issue for history
- [12:27] Reflection Freenote: right, Ren, that is my point
- [12:28] Oswy Gothly: Sea If you question whether history can reach truth in whatever terms you want to describe it then scientific truth can also be questioned?
- [12:28] Reflection Freenote: Deo, I thought it was the post-modernists who were in power (at least in academia;-))
- [12:28] Deoridhe Quandry grins at Oswy. "You brought it up. :) And yes, I think in part it is. There seems to be a sense that if we view something, anything, critically from the perspective that there isn't an objective, the leap a lot of people make is to that it has no value. In short, that the only thing valuable or worthy of value is something objective. I don't hold that point of view. Things are valuable because people value them. The trick is figuring out why people value them, how integrated and consistent those values are, and what effects actions based on those values will have."
- [12:29] Alaya Kumaki: I think that past records are as new one, social influences , all social influences are not remaining, since many protocols have rules the records making and approval. Alienation from one group to another, and so many more aspects
- [12:29] Renald Starostin: Os, and perhaps all, it seems useful to me to realize that any position can be pushed too far. Post-modernism provides an important check to over-attributions of certainty in Modernist thought. But it's possible to push that too far, too, although I suspect doing so is a misuse of Post-modernism

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- [12:29] Reflection Freenote: right Oswy, and genuine science probably doesn't talk about truth, but merely the best working model that we have at a particular time
- [12:29] Deoridhe Quandry: Ref, if you think academia is in power, you're not paying attention. ^^ Also, in psychology academia at least as well as the practical, the philosophy is one that values a false scientific objectivity which reinforces existing prejudices. I don't imagine other fields are much different."
- [12:30] Oswy Gothly: Deo Even you are saying that some truths /versions are better than others how do you establish which are better than others?
- [12:30] Renald Starostin: Os... I didn't hear that at all.
- [12:30] Simulat Almendros: Right reflection - the very fact that our knowledge can improve shows that it isn't perfect
- [12:31] Oswy Gothly: Ren what are you objecting to you are saying that there is a core objective stance are you not?
- [12:31] Deoridhe Quandry: Oswy, my basis tends to be on logical consistency, and modification of weighing for observed and predictable biases.
- [12:31] Simulat Almendros: But also for Deo - the fact that our knowledge can improve also shows that its not entirely subjective either
- [12:31] Deoridhe Quandry: Which, ironically, shows my own bias toward the "objective".
- [12:31] IM: Teleo Aeon: well. I just came here to play this piano anyhow
- [12:31] Reflection Freenote: Deo, there are like 90 different divisions in the American Psychological Association, some of them are staunchly post modern others modern, other social sciences are similar, I think. This debate is ongoing currently
- [12:31] Seaplane Jonson: I would say that history is indeed part scientific in its goal to discover truth, and is dedicated to evaluation of available evidence but there are some differences that make history also one of the humanities
- [12:32] Deoridhe Quandry: No, Sim, it shows we can have better subjective knowledge balanced for the perspectives of more than one person.
- [12:32] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy the uses of some polarised historical facts , has always been a power tool, in many aspect, whether they are true or not
- [12:32] Renald Starostin: Os, actually, I don't think I am... as I said earlier, my position is that if there is an objective truth, it isn't available and therefore might as well not exist.
- [12:32] Oswy Gothly: Sea the claim that history is part science is an understandable one and one deep down I agree with. It is problem solving orientated and uses evidence.
- [12:33] Seaplane Jonson: yes
- [12:33] Renald Starostin: Yes
- [12:33] Seaplane Jonson: but there are differences too; historians are notorious for their resistance to explicitly stated methodology
- [12:33] Oswy Gothly: Alaya Doesn't that show we need professional historians to guard the knowledge base. otherwise anyone's views are as good as anyone else's
- [12:33] Simulat Almendros: Deo - the labels aren't so important - the idea that knowledge can improve is pretty important I think
- [12:34] Oswy Gothly: I don't want the Taliban telling me what history is
- [12:34] Renald Starostin: Why not?
- [12:34] Deoridhe Quandry: If the labels aren't so important, Sim, then why not use subjective instead of objective?
- [12:34] Deoridhe Quandry: I dunno. I think the history of US support for the Taliban is some important history people should hear.
- [12:35] Oswy Gothly: Ren Because they are not weighing the evidence they are using it to justify their position?
- [12:35] Simulat Almendros: because both are sort of misleading Deo

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[12:35] Renald Starostin: Oswy, why not let the Taliban speak? If their analysis is flawed, say so. Or are you saying you don't want them in a position of authority? In which case, why should, let's say, Oxford dons have it? ;-)

[12:35] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy this isn't the validation of historian that will prevent the bias of what they make of history since its always related to the authorities who decide of the validity of one over others...and that authority is what others represented groups do records in their not so official history versions

[12:36] Oswy Gothly: Ren I don't mind them speaking its the PM position that they somehow are on an equal playing field with Oxford or Harvard history that I object to . They are not rigorous or scientific in their approach. The Taliban I mean

[12:36] Simulat Almendros: Like it or not the Taliban does have its own sense of history - its just not a narrative that we share I guess

[12:37] Simulat Almendros: which brings up the issue of what to do when narratives differ - just slug it out?

[12:37] Oswy Gothly: Alaya if you are saying the history community polices itself and ensures rigorous standards then I agree.

[12:37] Seaplane Jonson: hmmm....seems that the problem of bias isn't just specific to history as a field ... it affects all academic endeavours ... but there are some aspects to looking at the past that are different from other fields, and that is what is distinctive about history, imo

[12:38] Seaplane Jonson: and indeed there are some historical sciences that must use different approaches as well.....e.g., palaeontology

[12:38] Oswy Gothly: Sim In the slug it out game which I suppose we have to engage in then the methods of western historians are far superior to the Taliban?

[12:39] Reflection Freenote: well, it does relate, it seems Sim, the whole notion indicated in the introduction that history can be used to enlighten morality, values, etc. I would imagine that history more reflects the morass of the historian and his/her times for the most part. So the battles (figuratively) are waged and then history is written, and maybe the history is an important document itself of the contest

[12:39] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - if our only problem with the Taliban was a disagreement among historians we'd be in much better shape I think :-)

[12:39] Oswy Gothly: to be controversial I am saying that some versions of history are better than others and generally the historians of the western world are better than most others?

[12:39] Renald Starostin: Oswy, I think... I don't know. It seems to me a valid observation that anyone promoting a history or any other kind of narrative has a position she attempts to justify, intentionally or not. I think any narrative, to have any appeal or success, must possess something of the "scientific approach" the result of which is coherence and plausibility. Ideally, the most coherent and most plausible wins, but audiences are biased, too. I just don't see where the source should be automatically granted greater authority without the details of an account being examined.

[12:40] Seaplane Jonson: well....not sure about the western historians being best

[12:40] Renald Starostin: Not at all

[12:41] Alaya Kumaki: Seaplane , the bias is ,in my sense something that is as normal as everybody's point of view and diversity have to exist, what I was pointing out, is the establishment of "the official " version as something that is having the effect of a social bomb, from one group to the others, since honesty isn't something that nobody can , only by a seal, established, so establishment itself isn't a safety against anything, even

[12:41] Seaplane Jonson: but you can be confident that any Taliban historians would likely be unreliable :)

[12:41] Oswy Gothly: Ren the problem is that the critics of orthodox history start from the premise that the real past is actually not recoverable so all we are left with is text discourse fiction. In this world all are equal?

[12:41] Renald Starostin: I can't be so confident, Seaplane, not having read any Taliban historians, let alone researched their bases.

[12:41] Seaplane Jonson: what is the official version of anything? History or anything else?

[12:41] Reflection Freenote: well, Os, you mean they have more skepticism and rigor in the process, but also perhaps write a less cohesive and persuasive narrative. So for the galvanizing of political action, for example, something which is more straightforwardly propaganda, might be better?

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- [12:42] Simulat Almendros: As with all narratives - its not just the "best" (whatever that is) that wins - its the one that fits with other local ideas, customs, and expectations that influences a local population
- [12:43] Renald Starostin: Os, I think that's a distortion of the basic post-modern position, though I've heard from post-modernists themselves. That the "real past" is not recoverable does not directly entail that history is fiction. And that any would be historian is equal to any other does not itself entail that any product of any historian is equal to any other.
- [12:43] Oswy Gothly: do we have better method for homing in on what actually happened or is the past beyond us and its all a mater of ideological argument
- [12:43] Alaya Kumaki: Ref , honesty is the only validation seal, and nothing can say that diversity is a lack of honesty , really, and the validation isn't a necessity according to what we could see as the consequences
- [12:44] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - its certainly conceivable that some accounts of the past are more accurate than others
- [12:45] Oswy Gothly: Ren, I have heard critics say that the only interest of history is in the ideological struggle it is nothing to do with truth at all. Objective truth is a fiction?
- [12:45] Reflection Freenote: as a lad, I moved to Hawaii for a few years, and while there I read Michener's "Hawaii" as well as several official history books in the schools. The novel was much better history and I learned a lot more about the islands, even though it was fiction. So can't good history be fiction?
- [12:45] Deoridhe Quandry: Yes, I agree with Alaya. Given that people's perspectives and literally what they notice and remember is different means none of them can "lie" and their histories can still be different.
- [12:45] Simulat Almendros: but the ones who have the less accurate account are hard to persuade
- [12:46] Oswy Gothly: Sim I thin that point is denied by many. Why would some version be more accurate?
- [12:46] Alaya Kumaki: Simulat, accuracies do exist, but we have to keep that uniformisation or standardisation or protocol validation cant suit the diversity of those that history represents
- [12:46] Seaplane Jonson: perhaps some of you are talking about the problem of memory and history which is well know among historians ... there is an academic journal dedicated to just that problem, in fact
- [12:46] Renald Starostin: Os, objective truth is unavailable, that is my position. And further that anyone who claims to have it or know it is telling a fiction in that regard, to others if not herself.
- [12:46] Simulat Almendros: Because it accords with what was actually the case Oswy :-)
- [12:47] Oswy Gothly: Ren and Sim, I cant reconcile your two positions.
- [12:47] Seaplane Jonson: you guys are considering history way to much in the abstract
- [12:47] Renald Starostin: Further, ideological struggles USE history. I think history can be done without ideological struggle being the primary motive. But what gets picked up and promoted tends to be increasingly ideological over time.
- [12:47] Oswy Gothly: As expressed in those last two posts.
- [12:48] Seaplane Jonson: there are different levels and scales, and different levels of confidence that apply in those various cases
- [12:48] Seaplane Jonson: few historian now attempts world history
- [12:48] Renald Starostin: Os, Sim, I can't reconcile certain of my positions with Sim's either. But it often winds up making much less difference than one might expect.
- [12:48] Oswy Gothly: Ren, the PM critics say it is impossible to get away from ideology. It's what contaminates all version of truth?
- [12:48] Seaplane Jonson: but the history of a specific building can be done, for example
- [12:48] Alaya Kumaki: memories, yes seaplane, the need for memories, pronounced memories have been a very important decisive factor , in the social reforms, and that is where it is really a sharp tool of conditioning and alienation of ones from his one origins even
- [12:49] Simulat Almendros: Renald - around here the aboriginal histories say that they have peacefully occupied this ground since the beginning of time - while archaeological studies show that they came here 500 years ago
- [12:49] Simulat Almendros: I personally trust the archaeologist's account

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- [12:49] Renald Starostin: Os, I think that's generally correct, though I also think it's a matter of degree and something to be corrected for, not something to cause one to abandon a historical approach.
- [12:49] Seaplane Jonson: another factor is that different historians use different methods
- [12:49] Winston Haystack: When I listen to the varying interpretations of Obama's policies, it makes me wonder what interpretations will make the history books. And how the facts are only as good as the interpretation of them-
- [12:49] Seaplane Jonson: they are not all the same, and don't all yield equivalent results
- [12:50] Oswy Gothly: Sea, but that seems to be a recipe for small scale local history. Not the history of great events?
- [12:50] Deoridhe Quandry: Winston, Obama is a socialist communist fascist. We all know that. ;)
- [12:50] Winston Haystack: HAHA
- [12:50] Renald Starostin: Sim, you are biased in terms of what you call "time". :-) But when we abandon the insistence on one Truth, we can have room for both, as useful.
- [12:50] Seaplane Jonson: ah....so are you only asking about history of great events or world history? Similar problems exist with asking large questions in the hard sciences; how did life originate? Know the answer to that yet?
- [12:51] Renald Starostin: heh
- [12:52] Oswy Gothly: Well lets consider some great events , Imperialism for instance . If history is to be worth anything it has to have a view on such things. Or revolution or Why World War 2 broke out?
- [12:52] Pun Couffer: Well, I think the natural scientists are fair enough to admit they don't know for sure.
- [12:52] Alaya Kumaki: the need of memories...the need of references, I wonder if historians did has this mandate to fulfil, of if many did only in reference to this human attitude uses fabricated memories
- [12:52] Simulat Almendros: Renald - its important that we do our best to get along in the present which is a present political process - it doesn't work for one group to push another around on the basis of historical claims
- [12:52] Seaplane Jonson: of course I am biased I was trained as in an area of applied history ... historic preservation
- [12:52] Renald Starostin: Sea, I suspect the reason science hasn't made much progress with that question is because it's actually a historical question, rather than scientific per se. :-)
- [12:52] Seaplane Jonson: clever Ren
- [12:52] Pun Couffer: Conflicting histories and manipulation of people with history is very apparent in ex-Yugoslavia. Croatian and Serbian history, for instance, show opposing views on their national histories.
- [12:53] Seaplane Jonson: and true....involves an historical aspect of science
- [12:53] Deoridhe Quandry: My mom once told me that she got a very different perspective on US history when she studied it in Germany. I always rather regretted not getting a chance to do something similar.
- [12:54] Oswy Gothly: All, Please continue thrashing that subject but I will thrown in another. Some say that the idea of objective history is dangerous. ie if we believe our stories about the past then we develop a sense of victimhood. We in a sense know too much history like Northern Ireland. It gets in the way of reaching peace, eg Middle East and Palestine?
- [12:54] Renald Starostin: Sim, I agree with that completely. One of the most important aspects of an approach that doesn't require one truth is the recognition that different accounts have different uses, and not to confuse them. People can't go into the game of multiple truths expecting to make it on opportunity to crush the others.
- [12:54] Pun Couffer: I guess the sad thing is that history can be a tool which works best if it's twisted, whereas science is a tool which works best when pure.
- [12:54] Renald Starostin: O dear
- [12:54] Pun Couffer: Political manipulations work best with twisted history.
- [12:55] Seaplane Jonson: if you are thinking about history as applied mainly to very large scale human affairs it is true that history is problematical ... but then would sociology, anthropology, etc also have similar problems at that scale/scope?

Second Philosophy

[12:55] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy I wonder what are the effect of the historical denying of the WW2 main point for the Jew, has created, unto the community, and all around, since we only perceive it from the outside, but the creations of others memories, so called official ones, may have brought a lot of dissentions among certain communities...from witch we don't read the inner history back, as a response, so much it can look like an fierce opposition to the establishment...

[12:55] Oswy Gothly: Sea, remember historians think that sociology is history with the dates left out!!

[12:55] Seaplane Jonson: haha....good point Oswy

[12:56] Renald Starostin: Oswy, I think the problem there results from an over-identification with past players, which can become obsessive...

[12:56] Pun Couffer: I presume they would, Seaplane. But I think history, primarily because of its uses for politics, is of all sciences most prone to being intentionally twisted.

[12:56] Reflection Freenote: that's interesting pun, but it seems that science works best, for example when it is put to the purposes of war for example. So maybe it is just that raw functionality in the present doesn't necessarily represent the best functionality over time?

[12:56] Pun Couffer: Science in general, Reflection?

[12:56] Alaya Kumaki: i also wonder if the after maths of this created memories, are really handled late after, of if they just loss control over that, since no establishments is there for ever

[12:57] Marya Blaisdale: it could be if people lived by it Pun, which they seem to do - if people could learn 'from' it instead of living 'by' it - I expect we would all be better placed.

[12:57] Alaya Kumaki: civil wars being as in Africa what is left for decades

[12:57] Oswy Gothly: The point is if you think history can get at truth ie your version of the truth then you can become the eteranal victim demanding recompense . History then justifies you. If you say to hell with history then we might be better off.

[12:57] Reflection Freenote: sure, Pun, from physics to psychology WWII gave the biggest boost to the American scientific infrastructure

[12:57] Renald Starostin: Oswy, again, I think that's leaping from one premise to another without much justification...

[12:58] Seaplane Jonson: do any of you read the professional academic history journals? You will see there various historians reviewing new books, articles, films, exhibits, etc and debating issues of bias, among other aspects

[12:58] Oswy Gothly: Ren What premise to what premise. I am voting my throat here and saying perhaps we should ignore our histories. What good has ever come from knowing your history?

[12:58] Seaplane Jonson: there is much debate

[12:58] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy that is the point, the official version creations is having this denial effects and is the strategic point of putting groups in the defending positions witch is denied

[12:59] Renald Starostin: Os, I will trot out the Santayana cliché which can nevertheless not be referred to enough... those who fail to learn from history, etc.

[12:59] Alaya Kumaki: from that I rather no take any version as official but as a part of history itself

[12:59] Pun Couffer: Ref, I know new weapons were developed at a fast rate. I know the Bomb was created. I think radar was perfected, too. Well, I don't know whether it was detrimental to longer-term development of science or beneficial for it.

[12:59] Deoridhe Quandry: how do we distinguish between "eternal victim" and "justifiable rebalancing of resources," Oswy? Much as I'm horrified by the current situation in Israel and Palestine, I can't deny that many Jewish people have valid reasons to want a place they can't be kicked out of. Granted, that sanctuary isn't as good for transgendered, homosexual, or other people who don't fit into Orthodox Judaism, but given how other countries reacted to Jewish refugees during WW2, if I were Jewish I'd want a safe place, too."

[13:00] Oswy Gothly: Alaya Perhaps we should have a bout of collective amnesia about our past.

[13:00] Seaplane Jonson: :)

Second Philosophy

[13:00] Renald Starostin: Not amnesia, detachment.

[13:00] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - maybe it would be better not to see people as being victimized for historical reasons, but to instead see how they are harmed by present circumstances and then try to alleviate the harm

[13:00] Pun Couffer: I think it's more likely that it was beneficial, if we exclude events in which scientists were murdered, and facilities useful for scientific research were destroyed.

[13:01] Oswy Gothly: Deo, the Palestinians see themselves as victims.

[13:01] Simulat Almendros: I wouldn't call alleviating present harm recompense

[13:01] Alaya Kumaki: past, is happening today, what is the official version of what is going on in the foreign country that affect what will happen here, distance from yesterday is similar of the present distance.. how do we relate to what is related

[13:01] Renald Starostin: If one approaches history from the attitude that all the participants are human, as are we, it rather changes things, and tend to diffuse the potential for thinking along the lines of "I'm going to get those whoever's back for what they did to 'me.'"

[13:01] Oswy Gothly: Ren What do we actually learn from history?

[13:02] Renald Starostin: Os, what humanity is capable of, likely to do

[13:02] Seaplane Jonson: that is good point Ren

[13:02] Deoridhe Quandry: Yes, Oswy, and they are victims as well, as they were treated as unwanted visitors inland they lived in, and are now licked into a space smaller than Rhodes Island with bombs being dropped on it. But anti-Semitism is still alive and well, as well. Layered over that is, of course, the issues of gender and romantic orientation which make it even more complicated. Just because one group has disadvantages doesn't mean magically no others do, or that disadvantages don't overlap and effect each other.

[13:02] Pun Couffer: I presume war dictates in which directions science and technology will develop. If you have constant war, I guess that'd lead us more away from peacetime applications of science which most of us would agree are more useful than tank, or a bomber.

[13:03] Oswy Gothly: All We know that history feeds into nationalism and that nationalism in the current situation is probably a bad thing. So why not have a moratorium on history?

[13:03] Renald Starostin: And the Palestinians ARE victims, but also aggressors, as are just about any group one might care to single out.

[13:03] Alaya Kumaki: Ren the distance relating of everything that is not witness by another, is putting us in the forever integrating attitude towards what we call "the other"

[13:03] Pun Couffer: So, in that sense, I guess war is detrimental for science.

[13:03] Marya Blaisdale: Yes Ren, agreed - at yesterday's meeting I said that people should not be taking credit nor blame for what their ancestors were responsible for - we have nothing to do with that - hence we should not be living 'by' history - we should be learning 'from' it

[13:03] Renald Starostin: Yes, Marya, exactly.

[13:04] Deoridhe Quandry: But history has made the current situation. Sundown towns and lynching set the ground for economic disparities based on race, for example.

[13:04] Oswy Gothly: Deo So in Israel and the Middle east we have victims justified in their mutual positions the same as Ireland and other parts of the world. If we accepted the view that there is no truth in history then that could help people search for a solution?

[13:04] Seaplane Jonson: right Marya....although it must be said that sometime we do inherit the problems our ancestors left to us

[13:04] Alaya Kumaki: Marya that is why the other as the distance one, is only similar to the yesterday unwitnessd aspect ... can we relate with one another since this distance with this 'distant other' will always be different, an unofficialised

[13:04] Pun Couffer: I agree with that, Marya.

[13:04] Renald Starostin: There aren't many groups to be found, with which one might choose to identify, genetically or otherwise, about which there is not as much to be shamed by as to be proud about. I wish I could through in a few more negatives in that sentence.

Second Philosophy

[13:05] Deoridhe Quandry: Yes, Oswy. Amazingly, life doesn't have neat little situations where one side is "good" and the other "not" and we can just make the "not" side disappear. Instead we need to come up with new solutions which meet multiple, sometimes conflicting, needs.

[13:05] Pun Couffer: Ex-Yugoslavia is a sad example of plenty of people living by history.

[13:05] Simulat Almendros: the problems may come from history Seaplane - and its good to know as much as we can - but our problems aren't historical problems - they are problems in the present

[13:05] Marya Blaisdale: sure, we do indeed inherit the problems and the benefits, but we cannot make progress with these problems if we keep the same mindset that created the problems in the first place (I think Einstein said that)

[13:05] Pun Couffer: Lying by history was probably one of the necessary prerequisites for the war ex-Yugoslavia had in 1990s.

[13:05] Simulat Almendros: absolutely Pun

[13:06] Reflection Freenote: sure, I suppose, Marya, that if everybody started the game of life with the same general opportunities, less would be made of the past. But the reality is that all of us are powerfully facilitated or inhibited by the legacies into which we are born

[13:06] Marya Blaisdale: but it is the truth methinks

[13:06] Seaplane Jonson: yes Marya

[13:06] Oswy Gothly: In the questions I raised the issue of whether having multiple versions of history was better than having a single objective version?

[13:06] Alaya Kumaki: sure that the relation we do entertain, with memories or related present "others point of view, has been rule by profits and monopoly

[13:06] Deoridhe Quandry: Yes, absolutely, Oswy

[13:07] Simulat Almendros: yeah Ref - but that gives a strong hint how to make things better :-)

[13:07] Pun Couffer: Oswy, if this single objective version is completely correct (and no version we have currently is, I think), then I think this single version makes all other versions obsolete.

[13:07] Marya Blaisdale: yes we are indeed Ref - but we have the ability (from learning from that history and seeing what those actions resulted in) to make different choices - the cycle has to be broken at some point

[13:07] Oswy Gothly: History is an identity former. Is it too powerful?

[13:07] Seaplane Jonson: well....if we consider the definition of history that is sometimes use, that history is a true story about the past it is certainly possible that there may be multiple true stories about the past

[13:08] Renald Starostin: Os, since the latter would, in my opinion, always be off in some way, the former is superior, with caveats. The truths in a multiple-truth scenario cannot usefully be treated the way that in a single-truth scenario are. But for good reason, I think.

[13:08] Pun Couffer: Oswy: Knowledge of history, or history per se. Or both?

[13:08] Deoridhe Quandry: Recognition of history is a good thing. Unfortunately, a lot of people react defensively to it, trying to keep the same power imbalances in place.

[13:08] Seaplane Jonson: that's not any different from fundamentalists arguing about evolution :)

[13:08] Oswy Gothly: Sea How can you have multiple true versions? You are back to the Jewish version and the Palestinian version and never the twain shall meet?

[13:09] Renald Starostin: Oswy, there aren't even one each of those!

[13:09] Reflection Freenote: it may be that the history of a particular period of time is the perspective upon the past which a particular generation needs at that moment to solve the problems which are most ascendant

[13:09] Deoridhe Quandry shrugs. "Fundamentalists are right that in their religion they have creationism. The issue is that they are trying to insist that scientifically, which is a different set of standards."

[13:09] Renald Starostin: What Deo said. :-)

[13:09] Pun Couffer: IMO, one of science's top goals is uncovering the truth.

[13:10] Deoridhe Quandry: Oswy, to further complicate things, there are multiple Israeli and Palestinian versions.

[13:10] Pun Couffer: Unless the truth is very dangerous, I think history should try to be impartial and aim at creating one single version of the narrative about the past.

Second Philosophy

[13:10] Oswy Gothly: Pun History as Knowledge of the past a true reconstruction of the past as opposed to a series of models about the past?

[13:10] Pun Couffer: A correct one.

[13:10] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy from what is the relations entertains or attitude towards 'the distant "other, from the past of from foreign country, as well as with our neighbor , the trustworthiness cannot be resume in only a single view a of situation.. not more than in a one to one personal relation records of the situation, since we can never perceive the whole at once

[13:10] Marya Blaisdale: You're probably right Ref, at least I think in the sense of finding how the problem came to be - but I don't think keeping that mindset is the way to solve the problem - only perhaps in identifying the source

[13:11] Pun Couffer: I guess so, Oswy. Why have a series of models, if one of the models is better than all other models.

[13:11] Renald Starostin: Pun, unlike in matters of scientific experiment, it seems likely there will never be enough facts available to create a single version of the narrative of the past, unless it includes large areas of uncertainty. Which is also good.

[13:11] Pun Couffer: In every way that matters.

[13:11] Seaplane Jonson: is light particles or waves?

[13:11] Oswy Gothly: Pun you express the ideal but the critics of orthodox history say that your ideal is an illusion?

[13:12] Deoridhe Quandry: How do we determine "correct," Pun? To go back to an old example, is it "correct" that Europeans who came to the Americas found a pristine wilderness for freedom? Or is it "correct" that Europeans who came to the Americas perpetrated slavery and genocide against the inhabitants, eventually sealing them away on reservations with as few resources as possible? Or something else, entirely?

[13:12] Reflection Freenote: agreed, Marya, that an identity based on victimhood tends to disempower, rather than empower, the possessor

[13:12] Marya Blaisdale nods

[13:12] Pun Couffer: Well, it's the ideal to which we should strive. Even natural sciences can't have much hope of reaching that ideal. But the best they can do, IMO, is to strive toward it.

[13:12] Deoridhe Quandry: Does it disempower, or does it verbalize an existing power differential?

[13:12] Oswy Gothly: Marya you say we have the ability to learn form the past. I don't think that is true. Where have we learnt from the past?

[13:13] Alaya Kumaki: Deo trustworthiness cannot be resume or evaluated from a protocol fitting

[13:13] Renald Starostin: Ref, Marya, the danger to me seems located in identities based on relation to those with different identities, i.e. "I am that which is not X."

[13:13] Reflection Freenote: well Deo, it is probably more true to say that the germs did them in about 90%, otherwise they would not have been herded into reservations quite so easily

[13:13] Pun Couffer: Deoridhe, I'm not a historian, but I think history should try to be impartial. Those two things you said seem impartial to me, because they seem to contain an attitude toward an event.

[13:14] Pun Couffer: Hang on, I'm ranting.

[13:14] Oswy Gothly: it is interesting that we think history si a vital areas especially as a tool to ur identity as a yardstick on the truth as a means of learning.

[13:14] Pun Couffer: Well, both those things you said seem correct.

[13:14] Deoridhe Quandry: I mean, if someone decides to no longer consider herself a black woman, will that change her resume with the name, "Letisha" on the top being thrown out? And what does it say if we say that not having an identity requires one have, for example, a European name?

[13:15] Oswy Gothly: Yet when we get down to analysing its nature it proves to be more complex than we thought.

[13:15] Alaya Kumaki: Ref what about the identity of the terrorist or the dominant one.. Is it empowering them, if created by related historical facts?

Second Philosophy

- [13:15] Reflection Freenote: so, Ren, don't we first have to have some such identity which is "as opposed to" others before we can move on to the next stage?
- [13:15] Marya Blaisdale: Ren, I think (and it is quite possible that I'm wrong) that people should perhaps try to live more in the now - relate more to life as it is now, and not define themselves by their history - that is where the problems originate
- [13:16] Renald Starostin: Marya, I agree there are problems with carrying historical information in one's identity. But I don't think that's the whole story, and it can be a wonderful thing, too, as with so many dangerous things. :-)
- [13:16] Alaya Kumaki: can we make our history twice?
- [13:16] Oswy Gothly: Very interesting that the two debates on successive days took different trajectories.
- [13:16] Marya Blaisdale: Sure Ren, as long as we don't live 'by' them :D
- [13:17] Renald Starostin: And, Ref, I don't agree that there's necessarily a required order of identity formation except perhaps in very very early individual stages, where of course we form "self" by saying "not other"
- [13:17] muchpru Petrov: it is the first time I attend to a meeting here, sounded quite interesting :-) thanks
- [13:17] Seaplane Jonson: what was the trajectory on the first debate?
- [13:17] Alaya Kumaki: being known as on a memory based, is typical of the lazy human mind that doesn't want to make the effort to refresh it on a daily based
- [13:17] Reflection Freenote: what was the trajectory yesterday Oswy?
- [13:17] Deoridhe Quandry: Can one have a sense of ones own identity that is not "against" but simply "is"?
- [13:18] Oswy Gothly: Ref Much more on issues of PM and its validity.
- [13:18] Reflection Freenote: well, Ren that is what I mean, with teenage and event 20's still being a time for identification "as opposed to", and many people don't go beyond that at all, of course
- [13:19] Renald Starostin: I think so, Deo. That's similar to what I was alluding to. Identities composed of positive, self-referential statements seem less prone to problems than those composed of negative, other-referential ones. Of course, both imply each other, so... it's just a matter of emphasis.
- [13:19] Oswy Gothly: Ref Marya has put the transcript on Facebook
- [13:19] Marya Blaisdale: yep, transcript of yesterday's meeting is already on FB :)
- [13:19] Reflection Freenote: great Oswy, thanks
- [13:19] Renald Starostin: Right, Ref... I was earlier thinking of group identities, not individual.
- [13:19] Alaya Kumaki: Ren all identities fixed into time, are some sort of fixation of the reality of the present movement and are part of a great insecurity
- [13:20] Reflection Freenote: well, Ren, our individual identity tends to begin with our group identities, family and tribal, community, nation, church, etc.
- [13:20] Renald Starostin: If you say so, Ref :-)
- [13:20] Pun Couffer: Deoridhe, both those things about the conquest of the new world are correct. However, each of them will cause a different emotional reaction in the listener. Perhaps we should try to see only facts, and ignore the implications our mind likes to make when we hear those two statements. If they made a genocide, and they did, it's not the whole story. The rest of tit might make the genocide seem differently. If they found a pristine wilderness for freedom, it's still not the whole story. Since they committed genocide in that wilderness.
- [13:20] Alaya Kumaki: if you like to be fixed ref...in case some wind pass by
- [13:22] Renald Starostin: Actually, Pun, the problem is that while both statements are somewhat loaded, one was more correct, if correct means accurate to facts.
- [13:22] Pun Couffer: Was it a pristine wilderness?
- [13:22] Reflection Freenote: "committed genocide in that wilderness" tends to be a highly abstracted and very emotional way of describing the tectonic encroachment of one culture upon another pun. Could create a sense of victimhood in someone
- [13:22] Renald Starostin: No, Pun
- [13:23] Renald Starostin: Not if that means "empty and unused"
- [13:23] Pun Couffer: Okay. In that case, I guess that one isn't accurate.
- [13:23] Pun Couffer: I guess that's true, Reflection.

Second Philosophy

- [13:23] Alaya Kumaki: I'm asking myself this question today are we afraid of the change we need to make, in order to look always back into the past, for lacking of real elders , alive ones, that have the knowledge of the past present.... integrated into experience,, and not into a form of non applicable guidance, recital...repetitive recital
- [13:24] Renald Starostin: We tend to fear change, Alaya, in general
- [13:24] Alaya Kumaki: the experience of going forward
- [13:24] Marya Blaisdale: I think so Alaya - because it means stepping out of a comfort zone - changing the way we think is incredibly hard, and impossible for many
- [13:24] Oswy Gothly: Alaya, I agree we need leaders who can ignore the past
- [13:24] Alaya Kumaki: than we don't have trustworthy experienced elders; we were alienated; we sit and look to the recital of the rebaked past
- [13:26] Oswy Gothly: I used to say to my students Study the past understand the present invent the future. Was I being too idealistic?
- [13:26] Renald Starostin: Alaya, do you mean we use disembodied ideas of the past, rather than consulting ...
- [13:26] Reflection Freenote: oh Oswy, not at all ;-))
- [13:26] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy this is a real nice way to put it as an integration of the whole
- [13:27] Oswy Gothly: I really do believe we must forget the dead at some point.
- [13:27] Renald Starostin: No, Os, I think that's exactly right... although on a metaphysical level, I suspect we invent in both directions.
- [13:27] Teleo Aeon: Oswy.. it may be that studying the past and understanding the present is actually not at all the same as understanding the present.. as we touched on the last time.
- [13:27] Renald Starostin: The present requires explanation, which the past provides.
- [13:27] Alaya Kumaki: Renald the consulate, must have been those of the near past, as elders, those that have been there and still there....only for to be integrated science,, but the age isn't always the reference
- [13:27] Oswy Gothly: Ren Could be . I am a presentist in all these areas.
- [13:28] Reflection Freenote: hmmm, Ren could be that the present requires awareness, which might be different than explanation
- [13:29] Reflection Freenote: it is good to have lots of different frames of reference which can be tried on the present, but in the end it is also good to be able to throw all the frames of reference away
- [13:30] Alaya Kumaki: through life experience one elders become the past history applied in its movement forward in the present, so these books, living ones are precious
- [13:30] Renald Starostin: It's an interesting problem... it's easy for me as an American to look at conflicts rooted in "history" around the world and see the American revulsion for history as a gift. But it just makes a different cut, leading to us making really stupid mistakes that could easily be avoided, and allows people to be manipulated just as easily, depending on what one wants to achieve. Also we aren't immune to the problem here, as witness the attitudes toward our Civil War.
- [13:30] Oswy Gothly: Ref I think there is a huge danger of becoming sentimental about the past and this then leads to nostalgia. Nostalgia has been described as a second hand emotion. I hate it.
- [13:31] Teleo Aeon: Nostalgia I believe means a painful longing for the past.
- [13:31] Reflection Freenote: agreed Oswy, nostalgia is pure distortion and selection
- [13:31] Renald Starostin: Anything can be too much.
- [13:31] Alaya Kumaki: the attachment to what is gone, is also some grief is not finished and they haven't moved forward
- [13:32] Reflection Freenote: nostalgia is just the engrained neurological tendency to remember the good and forget the bad as applied to personal experience
- [13:32] Marya Blaisdale: don't you find it strange though how only the better things are remembered in nostalgia?
- [13:32] Alaya Kumaki: but that doesn't lead to the opposite to throw all away, both extreme is not good
- [13:32] Marya Blaisdale: ditto on that Ref
- [13:32] Reflection Freenote: for a creature living a hard life it is good to remember the kill and forget the tedium of the hunt, I think

Second Philosophy

- [13:32] Oswy Gothly: In the north east of England I sometimes think I am living in a heritage park. We have to transcend our past. To me that is the real use of history
- [13:32] Alaya Kumaki: Reflection some do remember only the negative aspect
- [13:32] Renald Starostin: Oh, I don't know... I come across people nostalgic for bad circumstances all the time :)
- [13:33] Alaya Kumaki: and it even to accurate anymore
- [13:33] Reflection Freenote: sure, Alaya, depression leads to a reverse "filter" on the memory
- [13:33] Alaya Kumaki: every fixation create a limits in the forward movement, but en this could be interpreted in its extreme as a necessary renunciation of all roots
- [13:33] Oswy Gothly: Marya People remember the cooperative spirit of the mining communities in my area. They forget the brutality of mining as a process.
- [13:34] Marya Blaisdale: mmm, how does that work Ren? Is it linked to the good things? Like those 'bad circumstances' were a sideline that happened while something good or something that was perceived to be good was happening?
- [13:34] Alaya Kumaki: forward and rooted are twins
- [13:35] Oswy Gothly: Alaya Well put as long as rooted does not mean transfixed?
- [13:35] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy the southern American didn't forget those young countries who just went out of this as Quebec, do remember it in their lungs
- [13:35] Renald Starostin: Marya, I understand your curiosity... these people somehow just seem to feel that there was something better about the negative circumstance... maybe a moral superiority sometimes, or maybe just having been in a position of less responsibility, as the case with children
- [13:36] Teleo Aeon: somehow people do not have the toolset to apprehend the present for some reason. They can never seem to find value in the present... the mind is always searching backwards or projecting forwards. It is almost like some kind of perpetual trauma.
- [13:36] Reflection Freenote: sure, I think we remember childhood as a time of play, and forget the constant chaffing at the lack of control over our own behavior
- [13:36] Oswy Gothly: Not sure I follow that last point Alaya?
- [13:36] Renald Starostin smiles at Teleo
- [13:36] Renald Starostin: The present is unstable...
- [13:37] Alaya Kumaki: transfixation, is happening also in the scientific laboratory Oswy and then applied into human roots.... or transplants,, and now we will be organised also; historically talking
- [13:37] Marya Blaisdale: aye Ren, I understand what you mean :)
- [13:37] Oswy Gothly: Teleo I agree but the present is all we have got?
- [13:37] Reflection Freenote: well, Teleo, I think people who have enough real survival issues to content with, do stay in the present, its just that most of us are never in that circumstance, and with so much neural problem-solving machinery at hand, it goes off into the future trying to find something to do
- [13:38] Renald Starostin: Shh... Oswy, don't wake them
- [13:38] Reflection Freenote: so, for example, I don't have any problem staying in the present when I'm hunting
- [13:38] Alaya Kumaki: Oswy , "in their lungs was a reference to the recent past
- [13:38] Oswy Gothly: Ref Teleo Do we live in the present or the past?
- [13:39] Teleo Aeon: Ref, to be honest I think that play in the present may be the key.. whenever it is that technology offers us the mode of productivity which has this play as its central feature.. we may find the solution unfolds there.
- [13:39] Reflection Freenote: agreed Teleo
- [13:39] IM: Thoth Jantzen: and my recollection is correct - even PM's can't define themselves very sensibly.
- [13:39] Oswy Gothly: Ref are you saying we live in the present and think in the past?
- [13:39] Teleo Aeon: nods.. too
- [13:39] Reflection Freenote: that's one reason, I like SL Teleo ;-)))
- [13:39] Teleo Aeon: that's why I am here too ref :)

Second Philosophy

[13:40] Reflection Freenote: Os, I think most of the time, I am either in the future or the past with my thoughts, not mostly in the now; except at this moment with you or in this discussion which is pretty demanding cognitively, and is one reason why I like it, I think

[13:41] Alaya Kumaki: be prepared that all scientific experiments always end up into our social happening, so we will be , or have been already told stories as if its our past or roots or identities, newly created, but taken from others.. and this is what I call orginastion historically talking

[13:41] Oswy Gothly: ref Not sure about the future but then I am a historian?

[13:41] Reflection Freenote: being in the now is really pretty good when we can pull it off

[13:41] Renald Starostin: For what it's worth... I have a contrast in my own background that I find interesting in this regard. My mother's family, as I remember growing up, anyway, was never one to dwell too much on the past, or to hold on to much of it, but they did tell stories about it all the time, that is, they held on to that much of it which was personal. My mother's father was actually mostly German, but because his surname was Scottish, the family has this attachment to that as an identity formulation -- but it's empty, I think partly BECAUSE he was actually mostly German.

[13:43] Renald Starostin: My father's family, on the other hand... it was almost is if, past a certain point, the past did not exist. They appeared on the shores of the United States in the early 30s as if by magic.

[13:43] Alaya Kumaki: this kind of thing also lead to some sort of uniformisation, in the term of thinking in that way:: it has been done here with them, and we had this and that results, and it will be taken as you potential future, now, since this will be made upon this groups now.. but on others referentials, and statistics, for identities

[13:43] Reflection Freenote: sure, Ren, I think we gravitate to having labels (symbols) even though they are mostly empty in reality (my family has a lot of that too)

[13:43] Oswy Gothly: I am amazed by how much adolescents reminisce about the past. I suppose it's an identity thing

[13:43] Alaya Kumaki: it s also denial...of identities

[13:43] Reflection Freenote: hahahaha, Oswy, Yes!!! They do

[13:44] Renald Starostin: So on the one hand, I grew up with a vague, empty sense of history which turned out be wrong in a key aspect... while on the other hand I grew up with nothing.

[13:44] Teleo Aeon: yes that sounds a little odd Oswy. is that or has that always been the case ?

[13:44] Reflection Freenote: they can be sooooo nostalgic too Oswy, for like last week, they get all wistful and stuff

[13:44] Alaya Kumaki: not to fixed but not to loose also... is the best way to adapt

[13:45] Pun Couffer: There are Croatian and Serbian immigrants in Australia, young adolescents, which are still making-believe they're the members of their national armies in World War Two who are fighting each other, or so I hear.

[13:45] Oswy Gothly: Ref, isn't the sense of having appeared by magic one of the great things about the US I wish we had more of that in the UK

[13:45] Marya Blaisdale: lol Ref

[13:45] Alaya Kumaki: statistics and some protocols of application in science are really not taking the context nor the identities

[13:45] Reflection Freenote: well, actually Os, I remember doing that myself (just came back to me), I think it must have to do with youthful enthusiasm and hysteria:))

[13:45] Renald Starostin: Os, I was talking about that earlier... it has it's good and bad sides.

[13:46] Oswy Gothly: I noticed the adolescent thing when I was a teacher. I thought adolescents so conservative. I urged them to think a revolutionary thought a day. They thought I was mad!!

[13:46] Alaya Kumaki: and this I'm afraid has been the major error in politic and history executive department

[13:46] Renald Starostin: It feeds our current inability to follow the connections between things, I think. It makes us manipulable in ways we never see.

[13:47] Reflection Freenote: sure, Os, you were not playing "your" role properly, you are supposed to give them something to revolt against, not tell them they are not revolutionary enough!

Second Philosophy

[13:47] Oswy Gothly: Pun not quite. I used to say do something constructive every day. When I left the school the sixth formers bought me a Lego set. To do just that!

[13:47] Alaya Kumaki: well this is wanted Ren so that you will search for a valid...reference...and who has it?? will officially present himself to your door.. ding dong!! We sell this

[13:48] Teleo Aeon: maybe its because the nature of the experience for the youth these days is one of continual technological redundancy... so they have cause to remember games which are no longer present. but much more regularly and much earlier.

[13:48] Renald Starostin: Yes, Alaya, that's exactly my thinking :-)

[13:48] Oswy Gothly: Ref I guess so I did berate them for not being revolutionary enough . They replied we want a car and house like yours.

[13:49] Thoth Jantzen: how so pre-modern of them! ;o)

[13:49] Reflection Freenote: well, it just goes to show Os, that teenagers are flexible in the ways they can be oppositional!!;-)

[13:49] Alaya Kumaki: and it will work Ren , I already done ,and the lost of references, will, is replace with those that doesn't belong to your identity, nor will suit you forwardness , but will suit others social conditionment, political blindness

[13:50] Oswy Gothly: I thought it was a neat reply to this aging radical who taught them.

[13:50] Vajra Raymaker: it is a problem... I find in teaching too that they don't seem radical; enough given age

[13:50] Renald Starostin: Radically irrational?

[13:51] Marya Blaisdale: programmed apathy

[13:51] Oswy Gothly: I also castigated them for not being intellectuals. They replied Sir, just tell us what to write.

