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The Tension between Art and Science in Historical Writing

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A thesis  
presented to  
the faculty of the Department of History  
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Arts in History

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by  
Michael Lee Depew  
August 2005

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William Douglas Burgess, Chair  
Melvin Page  
Ronnie Day

Keywords: Historical Theory, Historiography, Philosophy of History, Pre-Socratics, ἱστορία,  
Aristotle, Herodotus, Homer

## ABSTRACT

The Tension between Art and Science in Historical Writing

by

Michael Lee Depew

A perennial question in the philosophy of history is whether history is a science or an art. This thesis contests that this question constitutes a false dichotomy, limiting the discussion in such a way as to exclude other possibilities of understanding the nature of the historical task.

The speculative philosophies of Augustine, Kant, and Marx; the critical philosophies of Ranke, Comte along with the later positivist, and the historical idealist such as Collingwood will be surveyed. History is then examined along side art to discuss not only the similarities but, the differences.

Major similarities—narrative presentation, emplotment, and the selective nature of historical evidence—between history and fiction are critiqued. A word study of the Greek word *ἱστορία* will show the essential difference between history and literature. The essential nature of the historical task can best be revealed in the differences between history and art.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family. My wife, Lanette, and my five children, Lydia, Priscilla, Leo, Isaac, and John, have shown me love, patience and support through the entire process of writing my thesis. Without their love and understanding I do not believe I could have succeeded at this milestone task. For these reasons, my thesis is lovingly dedicated to them.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer my gratitude to the chair of my thesis committee, Dr. William Douglas Burgess. Without his wisdom and guidance this thesis would not have come together. His expertise in the area and his enthusiasm for the philosophy of history helped to encourage me on my quest through the thought of not only historians, but philosophers in the field. I would also like to thank my other two readers; Dr. Mel Page and Dr. Ronnie Day. I thank Dr. Page for always being ready to stretch my mind with questions that would lead me into areas I had yet to discover. I thank Dr. Day for always reminding me that a good philosophy of history is one that is serviceable to historians and the discipline as a whole. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Colin Baxter and the history department at East Tennessee State University for encouraging me to write, present, and publish my research while allowing me the opportunity to discover my love for teaching history.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, much discussion has taken place over the nature of the discipline of history. The problem is that the two sides essentially fight this battle apart from each other. At times, this battle seems to be little more than saber rattling between the practicing historians of the world and those involved in the philosophy of history. Of course, not all practicing historians are oblivious to the problems raised by the philosophers of history, but by and large, the majority of teaching, practicing historians find the pursuits of the philosopher of history to be fruitless. Why has this vital question of the nature of history seemed like a tempest in a teacup? There are a few possible reasons which could be speculated upon. One is merely the answer of pragmatism. Some ‘working’ historians may think that the constant and incessant investigation of the theory of history detracts from the work at hand. Another is the idea that some historians don’t want to become involved in the discussion because they are afraid of the answers they might come up with. In an effort to reject a dogmatic absolutism some historians have embraced a notion of historical relativism. The phrase “We don’t have big ‘T’ truth only little ‘t’ truth.” comes ringing from classrooms. By accepting this skepticism about the notion of truth they feel conflicted in their task, for the postmodernist historians have called into question the historical task *en toto* because of this point. Keith Jenkins says, “In a really very tangible sense postmodernism thus seemed to me to signal the end of at least these sorts of conceptualizations of history [histories which seek truth] and, maybe, even the end of thinking historically at all.”<sup>1</sup> Even though some historians are willing to accept the presuppositions of the postmodernist thinkers, they feel compelled to reject their conclusions because they believe that they are *telling the truth* about the past. What does that mean? Telling the truth. Giving a true account of the

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<sup>1</sup> Keith Jenkins, *Refiguring History: New Thoughts on an Old Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2.

past. Questions of this nature fall under the category of historical theory or the philosophy of history. What is the importance of philosophy of history to historians? It is the understanding behind what the historians do. It is the *raison d'être* for their entire discipline. It not only provides the reasons for the discipline but also identifies methods and procedures by which to proceed in the discipline. In reality, though, historians do not have the luxury of either having or not having a philosophy of history. The historian's only choice is between having a bad philosophy of history or a good philosophy of history.

By a bad philosophy of history I mean one in which the historian has not considered the reasons for the discipline and simply operates with a philosophy that was inherited from family, culture, upbringing, college training, and the uncritical encounters with fellow historians in past experience. The historian may, in fact, be doing the work, getting the job done, while completely unconscious of the philosophical concerns that lay beneath the task. However, this is bad for two reasons. The first is that it could wind up being a waste of energy for the historian. By doing history in an uncritical way, the historian could be subject to sloppy work and fruitless effort. Second, the historian may actually miss the point entirely. This type of uncritical endeavor may produce a work of epic proportions that, in reality, is not history but something entirely different. The historian would do well to heed the injunction of Socrates when he explained to the court at Athens, that "...the unexamined life is not worth living."<sup>2</sup>

A good philosophy of history is one in which the historian has examined the presupposition of the task and has rationally examined the goals and purposes of the task of doing history. Historians must come to grips with the methods and problems raised in their discipline, and, even though they may not have all of the answers, they must continue to wrestle with them while they perform the tasks of teaching, research, and writing that this discipline requires.

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<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Apology*, 38A.

One of the perennial questions in the philosophy of history is whether history is a science or an art. Jenkins asks, “Is a scientific history possible or is history essentially an art?”<sup>3</sup> The way in which Jenkins has couched the question sets up an informal logical fallacy known as a False Dichotomy. According to Patrick Hurley, a False Dichotomy is an “Informal fallacy that is committed when an arguer presents two nonjointly exhaustive alternatives as if they were jointly exhaustive and then eliminates one, leaving the other as the conclusion.”<sup>4</sup> A legitimate dichotomous question would be ‘Is the light on or off?’ or ‘Is he alive or dead?’ A valid dichotomous question is one in which the negation of the one option would entail the second and *visé a versa*.

An example of a false dichotomy would be ‘Is it animal or vegetable?’ The false dichotomy comes in because there is a third option that was not included in the question. The two options presented are linked in some way, but they are not the only options available to the questioner. The answer in this case is neither if the object in question is a piece of quarts. It is in the way that the question was framed attempts to focus the answer in such a way as to exclude other options. There need not be any insidious motivations behind the false dichotomy, but the fallacy, if allowed to remain in the argument, has the ability to severely limit the possible answers to the problem at hand. In stating the question of the nature of the historical task in this way, it seems that the only answers that are available is that history is either a science or an art.

Some have felt the tension of this dichotomy when they perceive elements of what they believe to be both, science and art, in historical writing and attempt to frame the question as ‘Is history more of an art than a science?’ By doing this, they attempt to put history on a scale of gradation placed somewhere between science and art. Even though this seems to open the options to allow both, elements of science and art to co-exist in one discipline, it still has the

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<sup>3</sup> Keith Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Patrick J. Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1991), 590.

impact of causing difficulties in understanding the discipline. What happens is that history becomes shackled to the definitions of these other disciplines leading to another fallacy called equivocation. Equivocation has been defined by Hurley as an “Informal fallacy that occurs because some word or group of words is used either implicitly or explicitly in two different senses.”<sup>5</sup> By maintaining that history must be either a science or an art, that which seems similar in history, by analogy, to science or art causes the historian to make application errors to the discipline. It may be that in examining history by the use of these two analogies is helpful in understanding the discipline, but, at some point, analogies break down, as they are want to do. The principle of simile only applies to very specific aspects of an object, not to the object as a whole. For example, a person can make the comparison that coaching a football team is like being a general in the army. The coach must take care of logistic problems as well as formulate the over all plan of attack for the game and delegate responsibilities to subordinates to win the game. The general must do the same thing, by analogy, but the methodology that each uses is quite different. If the general went out to the battle field and used the tactics of the football field to fight a war, the results would be disastrous.

Even though history is analogous to art and to science, it must be evaluated as a discipline on its own merits. History resembles both a science and an art in that they are attempts to explain the human condition in their surroundings. By attempting to define history in the terms of this false dichotomy, the historian may be asking the wrong kind of question, such as “what does orange sound like?” or not even able to come up with an answer because in essence we are engaged in a metaphorical discussion (Is History and art or science?) and then try to apply the answer ontologically (in reality), as if we were trying to ‘grasp’ an idea with our hands. In this last example, the word ‘grasp’ was used metaphorically, but then, it was applied functionally (grasping and idea) creating and absurdity.

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<sup>5</sup> Hurley, *Introduction to Logic*, 590.

In reality the question must be restated as two questions—Is history a science? Is history an art? Historians should attempt to jettison the metaphorical and allegorical understanding of history after it has served its purpose and seek a functional equivalent in order to provide a model of the historian's task that can not only stand philosophical scrutiny, but also is practically workable. Even though the nature of the historical task can be examined by the use of the analogous similarities between history with art and science, history must be evaluated and understood as a discipline apart from the analogous metaphors in order to establish its methodologies and processes along which it proceeds. The intent of this thesis is to examine the first of these questions in detail. Is history an art?

I propose to do this by first getting a more precise understanding of what is meant by philosophy of history and an explanation of how the term will be used in this thesis. Then history as a discipline will be examined by the use of its analogous relationship with art to discover the similarities and why history is thought of by some as an art. After that, the investigation will proceed with showing where this analogy breaks down and will demonstrate how and why that makes history substantially different an art.

## CHAPTER 2

### UNDERSTANDING THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Before an attempt is made to examine history, a selective survey will be conducted explain what I mean by the philosophy of history and how it will be used in this thesis. When historians want to examine their own discipline it usually comes under the heading of Historiography or the Philosophy of History. This can be misleading, however, because philosophers and historians mean different things when they use these designations. With regard to this Karl Lowith says, “In the following discussion the term ‘Philosophy of History’ is used to mean a systematic interpretation of universal history in accordance with a principle by which historical events and successions are unified and directed toward an ultimate meaning.”<sup>6</sup> However, others would say that the philosophy of history is akin to the philosophy of science in which there is a fairly well defined set of philosophical problems that are particularly associated with the historical task. These problems focus on the methods and assumptions of the historian and the field as a whole and address questions of the nature and status of historical knowledge.

Some will use the term historiography to explain the different ways that a topic has been discussed over time, while others use the term as a synonym for the philosophy of history. The two definitions above show the two ways in which people have understand the phrase ‘philosophy of history.’ These two ways of understanding the philosophy of history are called by many the Speculative Philosophy of History and the Critical Philosophy of History. These distinctions will be examined and then the exclusivity of each will be rejected. Afterward, examples of these approaches will be given and explained. Finally, the understanding of the philosophy of history that is used in this thesis will be demonstrated to show its suitability for the task set before it.

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<sup>6</sup> Karl Lowith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 1.

## Speculative Philosophy of History and the Critical Philosophy of History

In his book entitled *The Hedgehog and the Fox*,<sup>7</sup> Isaiah Berlin examines Tolstoy's Philosophy of History. In this work, Berlin says that history can be viewed in two different ways. The analogy he uses to make this point comes from an ancient Greek parable of the poet Archilochus.

Πόλλ' οἶδ' ἀλώπηξ ἀλλ' ἐχῖνος ἓν μέγα.

The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows only one big thing.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, the parable may have a very simple meaning that speaks of real foxes and hedgehogs, but Berlin prefers a more figurative understanding of the parable as is the case with most parables. The hedgehog knows one thing—the world outside his hole—while the fox sees the world as many parts. Berlin says, “For there exists a great chasm between those, on one side, who relate everything to a single central vision,...a single, universal, organizing principle in terms of which alone all that they are and say has significance.”<sup>9</sup> He then goes on to say, “on the other side, those who pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory, connected, if at all, only in some *de facto* way,...related by no single moral or aesthetic principle.”<sup>10</sup> Berlin's analysis of this analogy goes a long way in introducing the difference between the two types of philosophy of history. In this section the distinction between Speculative and Critical Philosophies of history will be explained. Afterward, I will try to show why they are not mutually exclusive and that they are, in reality, both present in any philosophy of history, but one may, in fact, be under the surface and not the predominate topic of discussion.

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<sup>7</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1953).

<sup>8</sup> Berlin, *Hedgehog and the Fox*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

### Questions which Interest Speculative Philosophy of History

Those who practice a speculative approach to history—the hedgehogs—they try to see how all the pieces fit together to create one giant, universal history. For these philosophers and historians, the task of history is to understand the past in such a way that the pattern of the cosmos is revealed in the grand interpretive schema. William Dray has identified three major questions with which the speculative philosopher of history will primarily be concerned. Is there a pattern to the past or ‘history’? What is the mechanism by which ‘history’ moves? What is the purpose or value of history?<sup>11</sup> For the most part, the questions asked by the speculative philosopher concerning history will be answered by the worldview or the conceptual frame of reference used by the historian. More will be said about this below.

### Questions which Interest Critical Philosophy of History

Walsh says that a good critical philosophy of history should concern itself with four main groups of questions. First, it is concerned with history and other forms of knowledge.<sup>12</sup> Second, It should deal with questions about truth and fact in history.<sup>13</sup> Third, it will address questions about historical objectivity.<sup>14</sup> Fourth, it should deal with questions about causal language and history used as a method of explanation.<sup>15</sup> William Dray identifies the questions of the critical philosopher of history as follows. “The first is the question of the kind of understanding or explanation the historian tries to give of his subject matter, it being asserted by the idealist, and

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> William H. Dray, *Philosophy of History*, Foundations of Philosophy Series (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 64-66.

<sup>12</sup> W. H. Walsh, *An Introduction to Philosophy of History* (Bristol, England: Thoemmes Press, 1961), 16.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 22.

denied by the positivists, that this is different in concept from what is sought in scientific studies proper. The second is the question whether the conclusions historians seek to establish can be asserted with the kind of objectivity which scientists claim to achieve.”<sup>16</sup>

### These Interests are not Mutually Exclusive

Even though these are very different ways at looking at history in general, these are not mutually exclusive investigations. The person who focuses on a speculative philosophy of history will have answers for the questions that the critical philosopher asks, but they will not be given the same amount of importance in his investigation. Likewise the critical philosopher will have answers to the cosmological and metaphysical questions of the speculative philosopher , but they will not figure that prominently in his system.

A speculative philosophy is one that deals heavily with metaphysical and cosmological questions. Many of the questions asked by the speculative philosopher of history can be answered by an examination of the historian’s worldview. By worldview I mean the conceptual framework by which the person interprets the world and the events that happen. Ronald Nash gives this definition of a worldview, “A worldview, then, is a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”<sup>17</sup> This idea of worldview deals with, what some people call, questions of ultimate reality. James Sire says that a worldview is a persons “rock bottom” answers to seven questions. “These are, What is prime reality—the really real? What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us? What is a human being? What happens to a person at death? Why is it possible to know anything at all? How do we know what is right and wrong? and What is the

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<sup>16</sup> Dray, *Philosophy of History*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ronald H. Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992).

meaning of history?”<sup>18</sup> This is not to say that the idea of worldviews creates a kind *de facto* relativism. This kind of reasoning does not preclude the ability of choosing between worldviews, but that is a discussion for a later paper. The only thing being stated here is that individuals make judgments and decisions based upon this conceptual framework. For example, an Atheist philosopher (such as Karl Marx) and a Theistic thinker (such as Augustine) may have some similarities in their philosophy of history, as will be seen below, but the reasons for these similarities are only superficial. They have very different worldviews, and this difference will affect the way in which they not only interpret the world around them but also the way they perceive meaning and significance in a universal history. Everyone has a world view, even if it is held uncritically. Even most positivist philosophers will not have the same kind of problem with the idea of a worldview as they would with the idea of answering questions about their metaphysics.

A critical philosophy of history is more concerned with epistemological questions. These questions deal with the nature and character of the discipline of history and the presuppositions of the historian and the task of doing history. It deals with general questions in analytical philosophy such as theories of truth and also deals with questions that are particular to history—the status of historical knowledge, the question of objectivity, and the use of causal language in the writing of history. These questions can be asked by the critical philosopher and by the speculative philosopher as well. Even though the speculative philosopher will not focus on these questions in the main, the historian must formulate answers for them in the same way that the critical philosopher will have answers to the questions of worldview. With this explanation of the differences between speculative and critical philosophies completed, I will move on to show representatives of both groups so that the ideas can be seen in the ways that they did philosophy of history.

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<sup>18</sup> James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 3d ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 18.

### These Distinctions Demonstrated in the Varied Philosophies of History

It is not enough to merely define these differences in the types of philosophies of history; there differences can also be seen in the works of representative historians and philosophers who are concerned with the task of historians. Below, representative examples of thinkers on history are examined with the view to understanding the distinctions between the speculative approaches and the critical approaches to the discipline of history.

#### Speculative Approaches

The speculative approaches to history which will be examined here have at least two things in common. The first is that they focus on progress in the historical process and second, they do not believe that there is a distinction between the events of the past and history. They believe that history, and mankind along with it, are moving toward a goal of some sort. These representatives of the speculative approach do not agree on what the goal of history is, but the notion of progress will be seen clearly in all three systems.

In the three systems examined here, progress in history is seen as natural, efficacious, and inevitable. Progress in history is natural, to the speculative thinker, because this is the only way to make sense of the events of the world. Most of the speculative philosophies arise out of conflict and apparent chaos. The task of the historian is to seek out the pattern that proves that there is order in the cosmos and that all of these things that appear bad and destructive in the world are merely small points of conflict that will help in pushing history toward its final goal. For some, like Kant, it must be this way or people could not make sense of the world at all. It is an *a priori* understanding of how things work that cannot be empirically proven but must be accepted and maintained. One could attempt to tinker with the outcome of history, but the process would merely sweep the tinkerer along in its path. Not only is history seen as natural by these thinkers, but it is also efficacious.

Progress in history is efficacious to these thinkers because there is nothing needed to cause history to move. History moves by its own power—which will be different for each of these thinkers—and does not need to be assisted by outside influences. Because history is a natural process that is efficacious on its own, it will also inevitably move toward its goal.

Inevitability in the historical process is what gives the social scientists their hope for constructing a new society. For, it is not only the process of history moving that is inevitable, but the goal of history will be inevitably achieved also. It is this inevitable progress in history that cannot be stopped or blocked that the historian is intent on finding. Once this pattern is found, then all of history can be seen to be purposeful and full of meaning. History will work out this way because this is the way history works out.

Three speculative philosophers of history will be examined here. They are not meant to be an exhaustive sample but merely a representative selection of these thinkers. The first is Augustine, the second is Kant, and the third is Marx.

Augustine (A.D. 354-430). Augustine's philosophy of history stems from the need to explain how the sacking of Rome by the Goths can in anyway be deemed part of God's plan for the world and more specifically, His people. *The City of God* (413-426 AD) was written and addressed to "my dearest son Marcellinus" in answer to the question mentioned above.

Augustine's understanding of history is basically that God is working out his plan of redemption in the world. As was stated above, there is no distinction made for Augustine between the events of the past and history. In a very real sense, everything that has happened is History—with a capital 'H'—because it is the working out of God's plan. It has a definite beginning and a definite ending place and a goal which the plan is moving toward.

The beginning of history, for Augustine, is at the creation when God called both matter and time into existence for His purpose. At the beginning of the plan, God created Mankind to have fellowship with Him but Adam sinned and thrust the whole of mankind into alienation from

God by his disobedience. This fall of man did not surprise God it had already been planned for. The end of history is when God calls all things together at the final consummation. All wrongs will be ‘righted’ and all good works will be rewarded. Equally so, all evil works will be punished. The mechanism for the movement of history is the providence of God. It is God working out his plan or, as Augustine would say, building the City of God over against the City of Man. The fall of man can be seen as a necessary part of this plan. This fall will be taken care of and all of creation will be redeemed. God would send His son to redeem the world and heal the alienation between Himself and His creation. Even though the plan is hard to see in the working out of history, God has given not only His Son but also the Scriptures to help interpret these events and see how they fit into God’s Plan. It is that God who guarantees the outcome that makes progress inevitable—what better guarantee would be needed. In the next theory, that of Immanuel Kant, progress toward the goal is just as inevitable even, though Kant does not need God to micro manage every aspect of the transaction.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). For Kant, the primary way to understand the notion of history is that man is progressively moving toward rationalism. Three of the main propositions of Kant’s philosophy—whether logic, ethics, metaphysics, or history—is first, that man is autonomous or free, second that man is rational, and third, that all things happen according to rules or laws—nothing is random or arbitrary. These three main ideas are to be understood as *a priori* principles and not the result of any type of empirical investigation. These three primary observations about Kant’s thought will be examined before their application is seen in his historical thought.

The first of these is probably the most important for Kant—that humans are autonomous. For humans to be considered agents they must be free in their choices. People must be uncoerced in their actions in order to be held responsible for them. For Kant, autonomy was a rational requirement of any system that had value based evaluations. The very notion of a moral

duty requires a person be free to act upon it. This autonomy will sometimes get people in trouble at times when they don't fulfill their duties or the requirements of the categorical imperative. It is this aspect that will be examined a little below as part of Kant's answer to what is driving history.

The second of these is foundational to understanding anything that people are involved in—that humans are rational beings. This is what separates humans from animals. Humans are the thinking animal. This rationality allows people to live in harmony with each other and create a society which is governed by right.

The third of these assumptions is that everything is governed by laws. In the opening lines of his *Logic*, Kant says,

Everything in nature, in the inanimate as well as the animate world, happens according to rules, although we do not always know these rules. Water falls according to the laws of gravity, and the locomotion of animals also takes place according to rules. The fish in the water, the bird in the air move according to rules. All nature actually is nothing but a nexus of appearances according to rules; and there is nothing at all without rules. When we believe that we have come across an absence of rules, we can only say that the rules are unknown to us.<sup>19</sup>

With this understanding in place Kant develops his thought. The clearest statement of what Kant believes history is can be found in his essay “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View” in statement number 8. It says, “The history of mankind can be seen, in the large, as the realization of Nature's secret plan to bring forth a perfectly constituted state as the only condition in which the capacities of mankind can be fully developed, and also bring forth that external relation among states which is perfectly adequate to this end.”<sup>20</sup> Kant believed that society, in general, would evolve into the state of being that the rational capacities of humans would allow them to bring about a period of perpetual peace. It will not necessarily be

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<sup>19</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Logic*, trans. Robert S Hartman and Wolfgang Schwarz (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988), 13.

<sup>20</sup> Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View” in *On History* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1963), 21.

individuals who bring about this change but humans as a species will develop according to Nature's plan. The driving force behind this great creative power would be the impulse that Kant felt was most important in man—autonomy. In statement four Kant says, “The means employed by Nature to bring about the development of all the capacities of men is their antagonism in society, so far as this is, in the end, the cause of a lawful order among men.”<sup>21</sup> Kant believes that there is an internal conflict in human beings that causes history to be driven forward in a progressive manner. Essentially, people are social beings that desire to be in a collective with other people, but, at the same time, the individual's autonomy causes conflict within that group which, on the surface, would tend to destroy society. It is out of this conflict that society creates the laws that govern and maintain order in society and as people obey the law and fulfill their duties in society history progresses. These laws are not artificial or imposed upon the race but are the discovery of the natural order that Nature intended for human beings. This process allows people to be, at least in a small way, involved in the process on a conscious level—recognizing the need to apply reason to the conflict in society—but in the next system, people do not even need to be aware that there is any process going on at all.

Karl Marx (1818-1883). Marx's ideas on history are best summed up as inevitable process based upon the ideas on wealth and power. From the opening statement in *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx's theory of history is clearly seen. “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.”<sup>22</sup> Of course, Marx's fuller understanding of the nature of history is found in volume one of *The German Ideology*<sup>23</sup>. Marx's theory of history involves both cyclical and linear aspects. The cyclical aspect is bound up in the idea that there is

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<sup>21</sup> Kant, “Universal History” in *On History*, 15.

<sup>22</sup> Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1969), 13.

<sup>23</sup> Karl Marx, *The Portable Karl Marx*, edited by Eugene Kamenka (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 162-195.

a repeating conflict between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots.’ This conflict has been repeated again and again in human history along a progressive linear path as classes develop and are successively destroyed in this revolutionary process until a classless society is created by the process itself. This relationship between the means of production, the wealth produced by that means of production, and how those who produced this wealth are alienated from it by the power system produced by the accumulation of wealth to a centralized nexus is the conflict that produces change. This is the inevitable process by which history is driven. All of humankind and all of its history can be understood in these terms. The important elements of the Marxist understanding of history are not individuals but the classes of society. When discussing the Marxist understanding of history, Isaiah Berlin says, “Men do as they do, and think as they think, largely as a ‘function of’ the inevitable evolution of the ‘class’ as a whole—from which it follows that the history and development of classes can be studied independently of the biographies of their component individuals.”<sup>24</sup> The individuals of society are not involved in any cognizant or conscious way but are driven by these blind, material forces as the forces themselves seek a kind of economic equilibrium.

These ideas reigned through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, as will be seen below, still carry a significant influence today, but at the beginning of the twentieth century there was a break with the idea of a grand scheme that provided unity for all the events of the past—the idea of universal history was losing some of its influence.

### The Break with the Grand Scheme

In the late nineteenth century there was a disruption in the intellectual traditions in Europe that caused a break in the way history was thought about. When this break came, it had the effect of removing two elements from the speculative philosophy of history which would

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<sup>24</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *Historical Inevitability* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 9.

lead to a new investigation about the nature of the historical task. The two elements that were being questioned in historical thought were the notion of the ‘goal or end’ of history—which brought in renewed questions about meaning in history—and the idea that the events of the past form a pattern that can be used, again, to establish meaning. The two representative individuals who will serve as the examples of this type of questioning are Fredrick Nietzsche and Jacob Burckhardt.

Fredrick Nietzsche (1844-1900). Nietzsche was a philosopher and philologist in Germany in the nineteenth century who was a prolific writer. His philosophy was far reaching and took on the topics across the philosophic spectrum. A large part of Nietzsche’s philosophy was bound up in his understanding of history. He was a critic of the histories—or rather the theories of history—produced by his contemporaries. In *The Use and Abuse of History*, Nietzsche criticized a kind of theory that looked backward or dwelt in the past. Of *The Use and Abuse of History* Julius Kraft says,

Written (1873) and published (1874) shortly after Bismarck’s victory over France, it attacks a specific ingredient and pride of German—and not only German—cultural life during the 19<sup>th</sup> century: its excessive esteem of history as nourished by Hegel’s projection of reason into everything historical. The intense awareness that an overemphasis on history is bound to paralyze the spirit of action and thereby weaken genuine civilization, leads Nietzsche to a most fruitful reconsideration of man’s relation to historical knowledge and of historical presentation.<sup>25</sup>

These backward looking schemes of history would absorb the thoughts and cause the historian to stop moving forward. He says of history, “In other words, we need it for life and action, not as a convenient way to avoid life and action, or to excuse a selfish life and a cowardly or base action. We would serve history only so far as it serves life; but to value its study beyond a certain point

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<sup>25</sup> Julius Kraft, “Introduction” in Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, trans. by. Adrian Collins (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1949), viii.

mutilates and degrades life.”<sup>26</sup> It also may be argued that Nietzsche did not like the notion that something in the past was that which determines the future. “Or, to put my conclusion better, there is a degree of sleeplessness, or rumination, of ‘historical sense,’ that injures and finally destroys the living thing, be it a man or a people or a system of culture.”<sup>27</sup> Along with his critique of history methods that are absorbed with the ‘historical sense,’ Nietzsche also brings an idea to the study of history that demonstrates the futility of the obsessive fixation on the past—eternal recurrence.

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche revives the ancient notion of eternal recurrence but with a stricter twist. It has been explained, by some, to be the same as the idea that was popular with the Stoics of the early Stoa (300-200 BC). It makes sense that they would exercise some influence on Nietzsche seeing that he was a philologist and spent much time studying the later Pre-Socratics and early Stoics. This stricter idea is that the events of the past are relived exactly as they are being lived now an innumerable number of times. He says,

The greatest burden.—What would happen if one day or night a demon were to steal upon you in your loneliest loneliness and say to you, ‘You will have to live this life —as you are living it now and have lived it the past—once again and countless times more; and there is nothing new to it, but every pain and every pleasure, every thought and sigh, and everything unutterably petty and grand in your life will have to come back to you, all in the same sequence and order—even this spider, and that moonlight between the trees, even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence turning over and over—and you with it, speck of dust!’<sup>28</sup>

These words that are being typed now have been typed an infinite number of times before in exactly the same way that they are being typed now. What’s more, they will be typed again, an infinite number of times in the future, in exactly the same way. Nash believes that Nietzsche saw this as an evaluating tool for life. “The doctrine of Eternal Recurrence gave Nietzsche a test

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<sup>26</sup> Fredrick Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, translated by Adrian Collins (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1949), 3.

<sup>27</sup> Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, 7.

by which he could measure the value of a person's life. When a person could approach with joy the possibility that everything would happen an infinite number of times, Nietzsche believed the person had achieved an ideal life."<sup>29</sup> In reality, what Nietzsche has done is effectively removed the notion of a goal from the historical process and, therefore, the idea of progress is now an empty idea in the study of history. By positing that history is not moving toward a goal but infinitely repeating itself *ad infinitum*.<sup>30</sup>

If Nietzsche can be seen as 'liberating' the historian from the shackles of progress and a goal, Burckhardt can be seen as releasing historians from the illusion of the elusive pattern that so many of his contemporaries strove to discover.

Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897). For Burckhardt the idea that the historian finds a pattern in the events of the past is not a strange thing. Anytime the human mind examines something with many parts the mind attempts to provide structure and discover patterns. For example, if a person stares long enough at a terrazzo floor that person will begin to see patterns. However, the terrazzo floor is created by mixing a white concrete with colorful stones and as the floor hardens the floor is sanded and polished until the colorful stones show through. Is there a pattern or order to the terrazzo floor? The only order the floor has is that which the cement mixer put on it. It's not a trick of the mind as some would call it but the way the mind investigates things in the real world. The mind collects things together and makes distinctions between things. According to Lowith, Burckhardt believed that his time period would need to go through a time of struggle

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<sup>28</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, cited in Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Vol. 2, The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, translated by David Farrell Krell (New York: HarperCollins, 1984), 18.

<sup>29</sup> Ronald H. Nash, *The Meaning of History* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 36.

<sup>30</sup> It may very well be that Nietzsche did not in fact believe in the doctrine of eternal recurrence as a cosmological understanding of the universe but merely used the doctrine as a metaphorical tool to measure the worth of a person's life. This being said, Nietzsche may not have believed it himself but the people and thinkers who followed him thought that he believed it and it is their belief that has had the effect on the philosophy of history.

in which would take place "...a radical change in the thoughts and hearts of men, from progressive optimism to ascetic pessimism."<sup>31</sup> Burckhardt consciously was not doing the same thing as other historians. He was not attempting to identify the grand theme in history but rather he was trying to create in his students a kind of historical sense or, if you will, an historical consciousness. Even though Burckhardt denied that there was an ultimate plan or that if there was one we could not it, he did find "some kind of permanence in the very flux of history, namely, its continuity."<sup>32</sup> Everything that has happened is connected to that which came before and that which will follow. It is not necessarily progressive in nature—as a matter of fact, it could be regressive. Burckhardt believed, and rightly so, that progress implies a plan, and a plan implies purpose. This was the very thing that Burckhardt believed could not be discerned from history itself. There was no need for progress to take place. For Burckhardt, humans and society had progressed as far as they could. There was no need for history to produce an improved human being. People were fully developed and had the capacity to remember and to develop an historical consciousness. The continuity of the past gave a culture tradition. Tradition is contrasted with custom in Burckhardt in that custom is actions devoid of meaning and memory. They are the empty shell of tradition that has lost the sense of continuity. Tradition is the conscience effort but the historian to reclaim the past to reconstruct the connection with the present which gives tradition its meaning.

These two examples of thinkers breaking with the predominate view of history left the discipline with a group of questions that needed to be answered. The response to these comes from the so called critical school of historical theory.

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<sup>31</sup> Karl Lowith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), 23.

<sup>32</sup> Lowith, *Meaning in History*, 21.

## Critical Approaches

Critical approaches to the philosophy were not concerned with understanding the past as a grand universal whole as they were to understanding what it meant to do history. In this section I will examine three representative groups from the critical approach to the study of historical theory. The first has been called the ‘father of scientific history,’ Leopold von Ranke, the second is Auguste Comte and the later Positivists, and finally, a group which may be called the historical idealist represented here by R. G. Collingwood.

Ranke (1795-1886). Ranke is credited by most as the individual who began the quest to relate history as it really was. Ranke may have started his quest for ‘accurate’ history as a result of what he perceived as excesses in the histories produced in the Romantic tradition. Two things were hallmarks of Ranke’s system, his notion of objectivity (dispassionate detachment) and returning to the original sources and firsthand accounts for the creation of the historical account. This is where the notion of a hard objectivity is clearly delineated. Historians must detach themselves their own desires, opinions, and feelings in order to tell the story of history as it really happened. Most people who fight the objectivity battle still do it in attack upon this notion of objectivity. More will be said on the objectivity question below. Ranke made the statement in his *History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations* that “History has had assigned to it the office of judging the past and of instructing the account for the benefit of future ages. To show high offices the present work does not presume; it seeks only to show what actually happened [wie es eigentlich gewesen].”<sup>33</sup> This phrase has become the watchword for everyone attempting to do history in a more scientific way. In a sense, it was a move to provide validity to the task of historical writing. The focus was off of the grand scheme, at least for a growing number of historians, and on to the particular events themselves. It demonstrated a desire to show history

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<sup>33</sup> Cited in Marnie Hughes-Warrington, *Fifty Key Thinkers on History* (London: Routledge, 2000), 257.

from an unprejudicial point of view. Ranke believed that history could be written in such a way that anyone who examined the evidence in unprejudiced way would come to the same conclusions. It is this dependence on valid evidence that demonstrates Ranke's second contribution to the critical study of history—original sources.

In his *History of the Reformation in Germany*, Ranke says that the character of the historical task was changing.

I see the time approaching when we shall base modern history, no longer on the reports even of contemporary historians, except insofar as they were in possession of personal and immediate knowledge of facts; and still less on work yet more remote from the source; but rather on the narratives of eyewitnesses, and on genuine and original documents.<sup>34</sup>

Ranke's concern with original sources and telling history 'as it happened' shaped the discipline even to this day. Ranke's concern may have been with the historian's objectivity and sources, but the second group, the positivists, was more concerned with the discipline of history itself and the status of historical knowledge.

Comte (1798-1857) and the Positivists. Even though Comte is quite early compared to the other positivists, it seems right to place them together because the positivists trace their thought back to Comte. Comte's program required that all knowledge be placed on a firm foundation of verifiable assurance. With the advances in science and the apparent successes in the scientific fields, Comte's desire was to place what he called the human sciences on that same firm footing of science. One of the primary questions for Comte was 'What is historical knowledge?' If history produces knowledge, then it must be scientific and, therefore, the method that has been applied in the other sciences with such success should be applied to history as well.

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<sup>34</sup> Cited in Marnie Hughes-Warrington, *Fifty Key Thinker*, 258.

Comte began by identifying four types of science. He says, “Now that the human mind has grasped celestial and terrestrial physics,—mechanical and chemical; organic physics, both vegetable and animal,—there remains one science, to fill up the series of science of observation,—Social physics.”<sup>35</sup> In this he demonstrates his desire for a social science or physics to use his words. From this he postulated that all knowledge passes through successive three stages to become what he called Positive Knowledge. These three stages of knowledge are the Theological—or fictitious, the Metaphysical—or abstract, and the Scientific—or positive.<sup>36</sup> For history to advance to this positive stage it had to move beyond this last hurdle of the Metaphysical knowledge. History needed to take a lesson from the sciences and move to discover the laws that govern the flow of history and events in the human past. This will provide the historian with a unifying principle that could be used to make generalizations about the past that could be considered legitimate knowledge. Under the umbrella of uniform laws that governed their disciplines, history would move into the Positive stage of knowledge and be considered along side the other branches of legitimate knowledge.

Later positivists make even more stringent claims about the futility of metaphysics and attempt to establish the principle of verification which—they believe—constitutes the only criteria for which any claim to knowledge can be made. Along with this, the ideas of metaphysics and anything that could not be established by the principle of verification is relegated to the category of nonsense. For the positivist, the historian’s time is best spent in the pursuit of a two pronged approach to the historian’s task. The first was the discovery of facts. This was the first step in any scientific endeavor. The second was the formulation of the laws of history that governed the flow of human affairs. The resulting reproductions of the past would then be able to claim not only the status of knowledge but would also be scientific.

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<sup>35</sup> Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*, trans. H. Martineau (London:1893) cited in Ronald H. Nash, *Ideas of History*, vol. 2, *The Critical Philosophy of History* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1969), 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

The first of these two programs resulted in a mass a data and evidence that have made their presence and influence known to this day. Archives, museums, and private collections of artifacts and documents were filled with research material for historians to pursue their task but the second program, the formulating of covering laws, moved along much slower than expected. So slow, as a matter of fact, that some in the academic community doubted whether the notion of laws of history was even possible. Some of these critics were the historical idealists.

Collingwood and the Idealists. One of the critiques of the positivist understanding of history comes from the British philosopher and historian R. G. Collingwood. Even though Collingwood was a critical philosopher of history he did not believe that history and historical knowledge could be boiled down to the status of a science in the same way that physics was. He believed that historical knowledge was possible but that it had a different character than that of purely scientific knowledge. Collingwood asks the question about historical knowledge this way. The historian writes history. The historian's claim to knowledge is based upon the historian's investigation of the past or better yet the evidence of the past. But for Collingwood, the mere sequence of events was not what the historian was attempting to get at. While commenting on Benedetto Croce's treatment of historical theory, Collingwood claims that the proper understanding of history is something unique from what he called chronicle. "For history is not contained in books or documents; it lives only, as a present interest and pursuit, in the mind of the historian when he criticizes and interprets those documents, and by so doing relieves for himself the states of mind into which he inquires."<sup>37</sup> He believed that history was the synthesis of two things evidence and criticism. The past leaves evidence or traces behind. The past had two components—the event and the action. The event was thought of as that which has actually happened in the world of appearances. The action, on the other hand, is not only the

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<sup>37</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 202.

event but also the inside of the event. This not only included what has happened but also what lead up to it the motivations and rational thought of the actors. For Collingwood the primary task of the historian was to take the traces of the past, the evidence, and re-think the thoughts of the actors of the past. It is easy to understand how Collingwood's ideas of historical understanding have become known as re-enactment. If the historian can take the documentary evidence and think the thoughts of the actors of history, then the historian is not only an observer, but is involved in the historical process

While the objections in critical philosophy continued between the idealists and the positivists a new type of speculative philosophy of history started. This new investigation brought theorists back to the idea of the grand theme.

### The Swing Back to Speculation

The swing back to speculation did not merely reinstall the old systems that had been torn down, but sought to restate and observe the true history. Instead of a universal history, as in the older version of historical speculation, the scope of the process has been lessened to encompass what can be seen as the unit of historical investigation. The three representative groups I will use to illustrate this are Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, and a look at the postmodern challenge to history. With Spengler and Toynbee, the scope has been reduced to cultures and societies as the unit of historical investigation. There is still the search for a way of unifying human history, but it must be seen in the microcosm of cultural distinction and then applied to other cultures at varying stages of development. For the postmodernist, the scope is reduced even further. Its focus is merely to texts, but more on this below.

Oswald Spengler (1880-1936). Spengler's idea was that cultures develop in the same way as human beings do. His idea for explaining history was to use a kind of biological model. All beings grow, mature, wane, and then die. Not only was this an attempt to reaffirm the grand

theme into history but it was an attempt to show that a pattern can be present in history even if the notion of progress is absent. Nash points out that he believed that “Cultures are born, grow strong, weaken, and die.”<sup>38</sup> In his book *The Decline of the West*, Spengler spells out a four-stage development for cultures based on the seasons of the year and the four major stages of human life. The first stage of a culture is spring. Life is simple, as it is when a person is young and naive. The second stage is likened to summer, the stage in human life of adolescence. There is much growth, learning, and becoming strong. The third stage is autumn the time when the child becomes an adult. This is when the first hints at weakening start to show themselves, but there is still growth and development. The fourth and final stage is winter. This is when the culture becomes a civilization. It is at this period that death comes and the civilization dies. Spengler had used eight cultures to demonstrate the pattern he believed had been discovered from history itself. Arnold Toynbee believed that this was too small a sample to make any type of decision with regard to the status of history.

Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975). In Toynbee’s work – which spanned decades (1934-1964)– he examined more than twenty cultures in order to solve the problems that he had found with the limited account of Spengler’s work. His conclusions were similar to Spengler’s except they were a little more optimistic and Toynbee had dropped the biological analogy. Toynbee came to the conclusion that all cultures do go through cycles of challenge and growth that resemble a rise and fall but the idea of the fall was not a necessity rise and fall. The mechanism that is operating in this system is that of challenge and response. If a culture meets the challenges presented to it, it develops and remains, but if the culture fails to adapt to the challenge it will fall into decay and die. Toynbee wanted his research to be solidly based on an empirical model. He studied twenty-one different cultures and wrote twelve volumes in his *A*

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<sup>38</sup> Ronald H. Nash, *The Meaning of History* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 132.

*Study of History*. Toynbee did not want to be accused of not basing his universal pattern on too limited a sampling. His desire was to produce a history that could be considered scientific by the sheer bulk of data that was gathered and worked through.

The Postmodern Challenge. The, so called, postmodern challenge to history stems basically from a literary approach to understanding the historian's task. The postmodern theorist believes that the attempt to discover truth about the past is an impossible task. And as with the two theories above, the unit of study had to be changed from the idea of universal history of the past to what is one of the most radical of the postmodern claims. The unit of study is the texts of history not the past. There is a marked distinction between the past and history made by the postmodernist. Keith Jenkins says in his *Re-Thinking History* that "The past has occurred. It is gone and can only be brought back again by historians in very different media, for example in books, articles, documentaries, etc., not as actual events."<sup>39</sup> He says in another place that, "...no historian can cover and thus re-cover the totality of past events because their 'content' is virtually limitless."<sup>40</sup> What historians do is to select what they feel is significant from this vast cornucopia of past events and provide a literary structure to account of those events that are significantly different from the events themselves. This is the epistemological problem that Jenkins feels invalidates the historical task. He says, for example, that when you study the history of England you might use Geoffrey Elton's book *England under the Tudors* as your primary text. When you have passed the course you receive an A level in English history. "But really it would be more accurate to say you have an A level in Geoffrey Elton: for what, actually, at this stage, is your 'reading' of the English past if not basically his reading of it?"<sup>41</sup> Jenkins

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<sup>39</sup> Keith Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991), 6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*., 7.

says, “For me what determines interpretation ultimately lies beyond method and evidence in ideology.”<sup>42</sup> This is the same idea presented by Hayden White’s work on historical theory.

White believes that all works of history have an internal content that underlies the work itself.

“In addition, I maintain, they [histories] contain a deep structural content which is generally poetic, and specifically linguistic, in nature, and which serves as the precritically accepted paradigm of what a distinctively ‘historical’ explanation should be. This paradigm functions as the ‘metahistorical’ element in all historical works that are more comprehensive in scope than the monograph or archival report.”<sup>43</sup>

These metahistorical elements of history structure and control what the historian finds significant and influences even the understanding of the past.

Most of the criticism of history-as-a-discipline in contemporary discussion comes from the postmodernist and is actually based on a type of literary theory that has been described as ‘the linguistic turn.’ The linguistic turn can be defined as the change in the understanding of historical narratives placing an emphasis on the role of language in creating historical meaning. Alun Munslow says, “The debate over the linguistic turn hinges on the extent to which one believes objectivity and truth are possible in historical descriptions.”<sup>44</sup> This linguistic turn provides a basis for a radical epistemological cynicism that not only questions the validity of literary and historical narratives but questions the ability of narrative to convey truth in any form.

This ‘Postmodern Challenge’ has had the effect of causing the line of distinction between history and fiction becoming blurred. Both the statements of White and Jenkins above serve to illustrate this contention. Jenkins has essentially stated that the rise of postmodernism has demonstrated the fruitlessness of history and there by has signaled the end for even the need for

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>43</sup> Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), ix.

<sup>44</sup> Alun Munslow, *The Routledge Companion to Historical Studies*, s. v. “Linguistic Turn” (London: Routledge, 2000), 151.

historical thinking at all. As a result, the next step in this investigation will be to examine the question 'Is history an art?'

### CHAPTER 3

#### HISTORY AS ART

What does it mean for history to be like art? What the question is not asking is does the author of historical narrative have style. Is what he writes not only legible but also enjoyable to read. Peter Gay says that even though Ranke is known as the father of scientific history as we know it, "...there is no law holding that a scientist must be unreadable; the giving of pleasure does not in itself compromise the telling of truth."<sup>45</sup> This sense of artistic can also be applied to logical proofs. The argument that arrives at the desired conclusion with the least amount of steps is said to be more elegant. This does not make the claim that logic is in reality an art (even though a small minority may argue this) but that even in logical constructions, the reflective mind can appreciate symmetry. The idea that is being examined here is that history is merely another form of literature. Hayden White makes this claim when he says, "Historical narratives are verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences."<sup>46</sup> Keith Jenkins believes that postmodernism has rendered the 'old school history' obsolete and that the discipline is backward because it has failed to explore new ways of viewing the task. In order for history to yield any type of significance, it must look to the disciplines of philosophy and literary criticism for new methodologies with which to reconfigure history as a viable discipline in this postmodern age.

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<sup>45</sup> Peter Gay, *Style in History* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974), 67-68.

<sup>46</sup> Hayden White, "Historical Texts as Literary Artifacts" in *Tropes of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 82.

## The Similarity between Fiction and History

In this section I will examine history as art or fiction. After I have presented the similarities between the two I will examine where the analogy breaks down. It is there that the most instructive information will be gleaned. At the point where the analogy breaks down, that is where the essential difference between history and art will be seen. This is the nature of definition. If two things are closely related, it is with more stringent definition that the essential nature or essence is found. It is not in the similarities but in the differences that these studies will precede. Three areas of similarity will be examined here. The narrative structure of history is one of the similarities. Second, the fact that history can be evaluated as a piece of literature with a theme and plot progression is another reason to compare history to art. Finally, the selective nature of the writing of history is the third similarity. It is the historian who chooses what to include in the history. It is thought by some that this has the same force as creating the story in its entirety.

### History is Narrative

The primary reason for people to assume that history is an art is the fact of the narrative presentation of history. History is after all a story. It is something that is read and not visited first. Keith Jenkins makes this point when he says,

What this means is that history is quite literally on library and other shelves. Thus if you start a course on seventeenth-century Spain, you do not actually go to the seventeenth century or to Spain; you go, with the help of your reading list to the library. This is where seventeenth century Spain is—between Dewey numbers—for where else do teachers send you in order to ‘read it up’?<sup>47</sup>

As in an example cited above, when students enter college to study history they are given a stack of books to read and learn the story of the past. Jenkins says, if a student entered college to get his A level in English history he may use Geoffrey Elton’s Book on English history. Once the

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<sup>47</sup> Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History*, 7.

course is finished he receives his A level in English history. Jenkins goes on to say, “But really it would be more accurate to say you have an A level in Geoffrey Elton: for what, actually, at this stage, is your ‘reading’ of the English past if not basically his reading of it?”<sup>48</sup> Jenkins sees the distinction between the past and the narrative reconstruction of the past as significantly different. He believes that rather than learning about English history, the student has learned about Elton’s values and interests. The gist of the argument seems to be because history looks like literature it must be literature. The next similarity takes this contention one step further.

### Literary Criticism and History

Both Jenkins and Hayden White believe that historians should open themselves up to the techniques of literary criticism in order to get a better understanding history. When Aristotle begins speaking about narratives in his poetics, he starts by looking at narration in general—all forms of narration. He makes a very interesting claim about poetics or narration. Paul Ricoeur captures the gist of it when he says,

Poetics is thereby identified, without further ado, as the art of “composing plots” (47a2). The same mark has to be preserved in the translation of mimesis. Whether we say “imitation” or “representation” (as do the most recent French translators), what has to be understood is the mimetic activity, the active process of imitating or representing something. Imitation or representation, therefore, must be understood in the dynamic sense of making a representation, of a transposition into representative works.<sup>49</sup>

Ricoeur goes on to argue that this is not only Aristotle’s thinking on poetry only but the entire idea of composition, which is revealed later to show that it includes history along with epic. More on this will be brought out below. For Aristotle then, composition itself is representative in nature and is completed by emplotment or the composing of plots. One way of viewing a plot is a series of significant points that provide a flowing structure to the work. One point leads to

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 33

the next. Placed side by side—a work of history and a novel or play—they both clearly show evidence of plot progression.

### Selective Nature of Evidence

Because there is a distinction between the past and the narrative written as a representation of the past, the composing of history is very selective. In reality, it must be the case because of the sheer bulk of information that is available to the historian. One example that Jenkins uses in *Re-Thinking History* has to do with women in the historical record. He says, “For example, although millions of women have lived in the past (in Greece, Rome, the Middle Ages, Africa, America...) few of them appear in history, that is, in historical texts.”<sup>50</sup> The point I want to make from his statement may be a little off his point in the book, but the observation is still valid. For whatever reason, these millions of women were not selected for inclusion in the main histories of the past. For that matter though, there are millions of men who never made it into the history books as well. This point begs the question of what criteria the historian uses to select the data and evidence that is deemed significant enough to be used in the reconstruction. Barbara Tuchman says that G. M. “Trevelyan wrote that the best historian was he who combined knowledge of the evidence with ‘the largest intellect, the warmest human sympathy and the highest imaginative powers.’ The last two qualities are no different than those necessary to a great novelist.”<sup>51</sup> Tuchman’s contention is that while the historian may have huge amounts of evidence to work with, sometimes there are gaps that need to be filled in. Tuchman and others believe that these gaps are filled in by the use of ‘historical imagination.’ As Tuchman states above this property of historical thought is the same as it is for the novelist; at least it seems that way.

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<sup>50</sup> Jenkins, *Re-Thinking*, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Barbara Tuchman, “The Historian as Artist” in *Practicing History* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1983), 47.

Another part of this selection process, contends Hayden White, is bound up with an idea he calls metahistories. White believes that all works of history have an internal content that underlies the work itself. It is as if there are only four types of stories that can be told. Any representation of the past will naturally fit into one of these tropes. He goes on to say.

In addition, I maintain, they [histories] contain a deep structural content which is generally poetic, and specifically linguistic, in nature, and which serves as the precritically accepted paradigm of what a distinctively 'historical' explanation should be. This paradigm functions as the 'metahistorical' element in all historical works that are more comprehensive in scope than the monograph or archival report.<sup>52</sup>

These metahistorical elements of history structure and control what the historian finds significant and influences even the understanding of the past.

These three areas: history as a narrative, history's relationship with literary criticism, and the apparent arbitrary nature of evidence selection does make the historical task seem very close to that of producing other types of literary narratives. However, at this point I will contest that these similarities do not cause history to be identical with fiction.

### Apparent Similarities Contested

Even with these apparent similarities between history and art, I intend to show that these similarities are merely superficial. With a closer look at the three areas of narrative style in historical writing, history's relationship with literary criticism—especially emplotment—and the way that historians select their evidence—with special emphasis placed on the theory of metahistories as presented by Hayden White, I hope to show that not only is there a difference between history and art but that the difference is significant and then attempt to show where the primary essential difference lies.

The question of narrative style being similar in both history and fiction is almost a moot point, because all attempts to tell a story or give a report, whether true or make believe, is done

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<sup>52</sup> White, *Metahistory*, ix.

in a narrative style. Arthur Danto says, if a person had witnessed an automobile accident, when the police officer asked what happened to give him an answer of ‘a car accident’ would not satisfy his request. The policeman is looking for story of the accident. He wants to know the significant events which led to the terminal event—the accident.<sup>53</sup>

Danto also contends that all attempts at explanation are narrative in nature—even scientific explanation. If all attempts to explain and report are narrative in style and function, then the use of narrative as a method to identify history with art is futile because at that point even scientific explanation must be seen as artistic. The answer must lie at deeper level in the types of narratives themselves.

### Plot Identification and Significance

Another significant similarity between history and art is the ability to recognize a plot in both history and in fiction. However, the plot of a piece of literature such as epic, drama, tragedy, or comedy is pristine and artificial. The plot of a piece of history is navigated by the establishment of significance. The fiction has a specific plot that makes the events described inevitable. Aristotle’s comment on the difference between epic and history speaks directly to this issue when he says, “What we have said already makes it further clear that the poet’s object is not to tell what actually happened but what could or would happen either probably or inevitably.”<sup>54</sup> The points or plot in a play are fixed and necessary. For example in *Oedipus Rex*, when the reason for the plague that was destroying Thebes is discovered, Oedipus allows his pride to cloud his judgment and he exhibits his hubris before the gods. One could say, “Why did Oedipus speak with such pride when he heard the proclamation of the Delphic Oracle?” The

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<sup>53</sup> Arthur Danto, *Narration and Knowledge* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1985), 201.

<sup>54</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 35.

Oracle's remedy was clear. The king's murderer should be exiled from Thebes, Creon tells Oedipus,

In plain words  
The god commands us to expel from the land of Thebes  
An old defilement we are sheltering.  
It is a deadly thing, beyond cure;  
We must not let it feed upon us longer.<sup>55</sup>

Oedipus' response to the people goes beyond that, which the Oracle commands when he pronounces his own judgment upon the unknown killer,

As for the criminal, I pray to God—  
Whether it be a lurking thief, or one of a number—  
I pray that that man's life be consumed in evil and wretchedness.  
And as for me, this curse applies no less  
If it should turn out that the culprit is my guest here,  
Sharing my hearth.  
You have heard the penalty.<sup>56</sup>

From this point on the die is cast. It sets up an unwavering, inevitable chain of events that will lead to Oedipus becoming the fulfillment of his own curse. The statement hangs in the mind, he should have kept his mouth shut and not have been so arrogant, but, if that had been the case, the result would have been a much shorter play. One response to the person who asks why the character did not do this or that is "It was not in the script." This is a very valid response, for fiction. The purpose of the literature is not to describe an event but to create the entire sequence of events, from start to finish. Every event in a piece of fiction is necessary to the work as a whole. The work of history is different in that significant points must be selected. The plot in history is not created, it is navigated. There are numerous events that need to be selected. In the same way that points are plotted on a map or a graph, it is the selecting of specific points that are of significances. What does the historian mean when speaking about significant events?

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<sup>55</sup> Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, 7.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

## Selective Nature of Historical Evidence

When the historian is selecting what points should be included in the history, a process of identifying the events that are significant is initiated. As was stated above, the very nature of the past with its virtually unending list of events and its unfathomable amount of evidence makes the selective nature necessary, but there is another limiting feature in the historical that will help to exclude some events from consideration—significance. As in the example above with the police officer, suppose the witness had told him “...at the moment the truck veered left the radio in the car was playing the Appassionata Sonata.”<sup>57</sup> The witness would have received the classic, stereotypical response “Just the facts please.” But the song that was playing on the car’s radio is a fact. However, it is not a significant fact. This fact did not contribute in a significant way to the series of event that led to the terminus event that is in question. One method of identifying significant events in the series is by the use of counterfactual reasoning.

A simple way to understand the concept of counterfactual reasoning is to look at examples. David Lewis tries to illustrate the idea of counterfactuals in this way.

‘If kangaroos had no tails, they would topple over’ seems to me to mean something like this: in any possible state of affairs in which kangaroos had no tails, and which resembles our actual state of affairs as much as kangaroos having no tails permits it to, the kangaroos topple over.<sup>58</sup>

The idea is that if one thing changes, based upon some type of principle of sufficient reason, the outcome could be hypothesized based upon that change. The logician’s use of counterfactual reasoning is used in Modal Logic and possible-world semantics as an aid in making metalinguistic comparisons, but the historian uses counterfactual reasoning is far more simplistic and more practical. I would add, that it is so much a part of historical reasoning that some historians might not even notice when they have done it. A historian might say, “If the United States had helped Ho Chi Mien at the end of World War II to gain independence from French

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<sup>57</sup> Danto, *Narration and Knowledge*, 202.

<sup>58</sup> David Lewis, *Counterfactuals* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1973), 1.

Colonial rule, there would not have been a Vietnam War in the 1960s.” What is the historian doing when counterfactual examples are used in research? The historian is identifying significant events in a series of events. What would have been necessary to change this outcome? Could this outcome have happen without this specific event? These types of questions inform the historian of the extent to which a specific piece of data is relevant to the terminus question under consideration.

Hayden White, as was mentioned above, believes that there is another consideration that must be taken into account with any discussion of the selective nature of the historical process—Metahistories. Again, briefly, White believes that the number of possibilities for telling a story of any kind is limited but the number of tropes of literature there are. All stories, narratives, and histories fit in to one of these tropes. With reference to Hayden White’s notion of tropes in history, when novelists sit down to write a novel they have the luxury of selecting the type of metanarrative that they will use because the entire work comes from them, internally. White’s metanarratives are creations for the novelist but not for the historian. While it may be true that these metahistories are identifiable and underlie the works of historians, they are not at liberty to select any style of narrative arbitrarily. They must select the narrative style based upon the events they seek to portray with that narrative. Suppose for example, a person who witnesses a young boy riding a bicycle getting hit by a car will describe this event as tragic. “Oh, it was a tragic accident.” This is the option available to the witness. The witness could not have called it a comic accident, unless the boy was, in fact, a clown and, when he was hit, confetti filled the air and he got up and danced around. In this instance, it could be described as a comic accident. The event itself shapes the style of the metanarrative that will be used for the reconstruction of the event. The arbitrary nature to this process that White seems to endorse is simply not the case.

While it is clear that history is a narrative like other literature, a good history has an identifiable plot that highlights the significant events in a sequence of events and that the

historian must select the evidence used to relate the story, the way the historian performs these tasks is substantially different from the way that the novelist does.

At this point it will serve this study to attempt to draw some clearer distinctions between different types of fiction and history proper.

### Definitions of Fiction

Even though it is helpful to see the similarities in different types of literature have, it is more instructive to come to grips with the things that makes them different. This is primarily the methodology that Aristotle used in most of his studies. It really is a simple principle; things are defined based on that which delineates them from each other. This serves the purpose of clearing up certain elements of genre confusion and can be used to help define history as distinct from fiction.

I believe fiction can be divided into three types. Of course, there can be overlap and subtle distinctions, but by and large this threefold distinction can provide some clarity in this study. I will explain my divisions of fiction, give an example of each, which I believe will serve to clarify the distinction, and then compare the fictions to an historical work that may be suspect as to its validity.

The three type of fiction are pure fiction or fantasy, elaborate fiction, and finally historical fiction. A very prominent example of pure fiction or fantasy is Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings*. Tolkein created an entire world—Middle Earth—to serve as the setting for his story. Middle Earth had no connection with this world but the story was internally consistent. A good history will be internally consistent but not merely internally consistent.

The second type of fiction I call elaborate fiction. To represent this class I use Tom Clancy and his novels of political and military intrigue. Elaborate fiction differs from pure fiction or fantasy because the world presented in Clancy's novels is our world and secondly the inclusion of detailed factual data. Facts make elaborate fiction more enjoyable because it makes

the story more life like. For example, in Tom Clancy's book *Without Remorse*<sup>59</sup>, there are numerous instances of factual details. By the inclusion of specific details the story becomes more believable in its portrayal of real life. Detailed information about things, methodologies, procedures, and locations brings the fictional story closer to the realm of reality and makes it more plausible. Many of Tom Clancy's novels are so well researched that people who have been in the navy or army acknowledge that his facts are right. The workings of submarines and other naval vessels, operational procedures, issues of chain of command, and military protocol are all represented accurately. However, the events described are entirely fictional and did not take place at all. The difference between history and literature is not merely the inclusion of data or facts.

The third type of fiction is historical fiction. A very good example of historical fiction is James Jones' *From Here to Eternity*. Many of the accounts given of the places and events around the base are factual. However, the individual characters in the book were not. It was meant to relate the life of the everyday soldier in the days that led up to the attack on Pearl Harbor. A work of historical fiction is historically significant but with a different purpose than that of history. The same can be said of Homer's *Iliad*. Victor Ehrenberg says of Homer and the *Iliad*, which will be seen in more detail below, "To Homer it [The Trojan War] was the background rather than the theme of his stories of heroic deeds and men..."<sup>60</sup> There may be some significant issues that are raised by the two conflicts mentioned above (World War Two and the Trojan War) that may have suited the author in telling his story, but the war itself was not the theme but merely provided a time setting in which the human drama could be played out in front of.

It is the characters that are of chief importance. In her thesis on James Jones' *From Here to Eternity*, Penny Sonnenburg, commenting on how Jones produced his characterizations cites

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<sup>59</sup> Tom Clancy, *Without Remorse* (New York: Berkley Book, 1993)

<sup>60</sup> Victor Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization During the Sixth and Fifth Centuries B.C.* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1968), 4.

Jones saying, “He admitted to Maxwell Perkins that while he was making notes on certain types of characters that he had found in the army, he also wanted to ‘inject the true reason why a man becomes like that: social forces which bottleneck and dam up his natural energies rather than giving them a channel in which their tremendous powers of energy and work may be useful.’”<sup>61</sup> It was from a process of generalization that these characters were created, a kind of amalgam of personalities to create a type of person.

From this look at fiction I will compare it to a questionable work of history. Some believe I must use the term ‘history’ very loosely when speaking of E. A. Pollard’s *The Southern History of the Civil War*. Pollard was the editor of a newspaper in Richmond during the Civil War. When he started publishing them in 1862, he seemed to be very pleased with how things were going in “The Southern War for Independence.” But, as later volumes were published in the next three years, his optimism for the success for the cause waned. Does that make this work a piece of fiction? My answer is no. Biased? Yes, most defiantly. Slanted? To be sure. Propagandistic? Undoubtedly. Inaccurate—maybe, but still not fiction. Why? Because, it is an attempt to present the story of the civil war in an accurate way—even though it is from the prospective of the south. He may even be guilty of fabricating data or even outright lying. But it is presented in a way that marks it off from the other fiction about that time period—works such as Stephen Crain’s *The Red Badge of Courage*. Its events and people correspond to the events and people of the past.

So where does the distinction between fiction and history lie? I believe the only real distinction between fiction and history is to be found in the work’s relationship to truth.

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<sup>61</sup> Penny Sonnenburg, “Fiction as History: James Jones, From Here to Eternity” (MA thesis, East Tennessee State University, 2002), 16. Here, Penny cites from Jones’ personal letters found in George Hendrick, editor, *To Reach Eternity: The Letters of James Jones*. (New York: Random House, 1989), 55. The letter is from Jones to Maxwell Perkins, dated 10 February 1946.

## Difference between History and Fiction

There is a significant difference between historical writing and fictional literature. Even though history can be evaluated on a literary level like a piece of fiction (novel, tragedy)—because of the similarity in the nature of narrative presentation—the purpose, function, and outlook of history cannot be exhausted by that literary evaluation. History is attempt to explain what really happened. Paul Ricoeur puts it this way.

What does the term ‘real’ signify when it is applied to the historical past? What do we mean when we say something really happened?

This is the most troublesome question that historiography puts to historical thinking. And yet, if it is difficult to find a reply, the question itself is inevitable: it makes the difference between history and fiction, whose interferences would pose no problem if they did not grow out of a basic dissymmetry.<sup>62</sup>

The primary difference between history and fiction is the fact that the historian is attempting to tell the truth about the past. It is an attempt to relate the past in a truthful way. Aristotle put it this way, “The difference between a historian (ἱστορικὸς) and a poet is not that one writes in prose and the other in verse—indeed the writings of Herodotus could be put into verse and yet would still be a kind of history (ἱστορία), whether written in metre or not. The real difference is this, that one tells what happened and the other what might happen.”<sup>63</sup>

It is here that I know that my postmodernist friends will say that I have fallen into the same old trap. That language is incapable of expressing truth in the way that I mean. But the postmodernist argument against language as an effective vehicle for truth is problematic at best. Let me illustrate. If I were to make the claim that Keith Jenkins has never written a book. I would assume he would object, and strongly.

Before I can speak about the idea of history being grounded in truth, I need to explain what I mean by the word true.

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<sup>62</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Reality of the Historical Past* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1984), 1.

<sup>63</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 35.

## Theories of Truth

The only things that can be defined as truthful and untruthful are propositions or statements. There are a number of theories of truth that are available to the researcher, but the two main ones that will be discussed here are the coherence theory or test of truth and the correspondence theory or test of truth.

Correspondence Theory of Truth. In the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Simon Blackburn defines the correspondence theory of truth as, “A correspondence theory is not simply the view that truth consists in correspondence with facts, but rather the view that it is theoretically interesting to realize this.”<sup>64</sup> Aristotle’s basic understanding of truth is this, “To say of what is that it is and of what is not that it is not, is true.”<sup>65</sup> But the same claim is made by contemporary philosophers also. William P. Alston says,

“A statement (proposition, belief...) is true if and only if what the statement says to be the case actually is the case. For example, the statement that gold is malleable is true if and only if gold is malleable. The ‘content’ of a statement—what it states to be the case—gives us everything we need to specify what it takes for the statement to be true. In practice this means the ‘that’ clause—the content-specifying clause—that tells us what statement we are referring to can also be used to make explicit what it takes for the statement to be true. Nothing more is required for the truth of the statement, and nothing less will suffice.”<sup>66</sup>

Another contemporary philosopher, John R. Searle, holds to the same correspondence theory of truth. He says, “Truth is a matter of correspondence to the facts. If a statement is true, there must be some fact in virtue of which it is true. The facts are a matter of what exists, of

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<sup>64</sup> Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, s. v. “Correspondence Theory of Truth.”

<sup>65</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, IV, 6, 1001b, 28.

<sup>66</sup> William P. Alston, *A Realist Conception of Truth* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 5.

ontology.”<sup>67</sup> He says here that the truth or falsity of a statement is bound up in what really exists (ontology) apart from our perceptions or how we come to know the truth (epistemology).

Coherence Theory of Truth. Simon Blackburn defines a coherence theory of truth as, “The view that the truth of a proposition consists in its being a member of some suitably defined body of other propositions: a body of consistent, coherent, and possibly endowed with other virtues, provided these are not defined in terms of truth.”<sup>68</sup> Simply put, no statement stands alone in the real world. The statement that is being evaluated must be so in light of the other statements that are held with assurance.

As a historian, I would like to be able to claim a direct correspondence of my statements about the past directly to the events of the past. However, there are a number of difficulties with this kind of position and the most severe of which is what constitutes a fact. Most correspondence theorists believe that a fact is the event itself. To use the illustration of the auto accident again, the accident itself is the fact and my statements about the accident are true if and only if they correspond to the fact. There are two problems with this position for the historian. The first is that the past is now gone. There is no way to check the correspondence of my statements to the fact—if the fact is the event itself. Second, it is a very hard to make the argument that a fact is the event itself and not fall to what seems more natural that a fact is a statement about an event. This seems to be the common way of understanding facts, as statements, and not as events.

Alternatively, there are problems with a pure coherence theory of truth when it comes to the fact that all of the types of fiction listed above have internal coherence. For the coherence theory of truth to be a valid test of truth, it must have a virtually unlimited scope to include all of the truths the person holds in a truth system or web and must be tested against other webs that

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<sup>67</sup> John R. Searle, *Mind, Language and Society: Philosophy in the Real World* (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 5.

<sup>68</sup> Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, s. v. “Coherence Theory of Truth.”

hold different truths. So to some very real degree, the ontological truth of a single statement is not really at the core of a coherence system. It serves a more pragmatic function when it comes to truth statements. Can there be an alternative to these theories that takes the positive elements of both and minimizes the negative?

I would like to offer the idea that the desire for a correspondence theory of truth or that my statements about the past are more than merely consistent with other accepted statements about the past, I want them to represent the ontological reality of the past. The way I propose to do that is with the notion of evidence. Evidence is the contemporary connection to the past. In much the same way that a fingerprint leaves a trace behind of the person who had been there, so every event in the past that has had some significant impact has left traces. Through the principle of sufficient reason (ie. nothing is here with out some sufficient reason for its being here) evidence is left by people in the past of their activities. In this way there can be a correspondence theory of truth based on the statements corresponding to the past through the traces left by the events? Of course, the criticisms of this theory are that evidence is selective and that evidence needs to be interpreted.

The discussion above about the selection of significant evidence goes a long way to dispel the first objection and the second is not as detrimental to the theory as it seems at first glance. Some evidence, by itself, has no way of communicating its reference easily to the interpreter. However, some types of evidence clearly indicate very specific interpretations. The task of the historian is to use the evidence that is beyond reasonable question as support to attempt to establish interpretations for the evidence that is attested.

In this way, statements about the past may be deemed true based upon the evidence from the past that exists today. Another way to show this distinction between history and literature is in the same way that Aristotle did, by making a comparison between the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Histories* of Herodotus.

## Herodotus and Homer

Many historians have made the claim that the *Iliad* is the first history or that it at the very least established the framework that all following Greek historians would emulate. T. J. Luce says, “History owed its origin chiefly to Homer, although it was one of the latest genres of literature to be created by the Greeks.”<sup>69</sup> Timothy Duff makes the claim that, “History for the ancient Greeks began with the *Iliad*, one of the Epic poems ascribed to Homer.”<sup>70</sup> Of the Homeric literature J. B. Bury says,

The Homeric lays not only entertained the imagination, but also satisfied what we may call the historic interest, of the audiences who heard them recited. This interest in history was practical, not antiquarian; the story of the past made a direct appeal to their pride, while it was associated with their religious piety towards their ancestors.<sup>71</sup>

What is important to note is that even though the Homeric corpus fulfilled the need for a history in early Greece it does not necessarily mean that the *Iliad* was a history proper. Michael Grant says,

Homeric poetry is not ancient history (as subsequent Greeks usually believed it was), for its personages are half-gods or heroes. Their stories, whatever factual core they may or may not possess, are framed in terms of myth and legend.<sup>72</sup>

He does go on from there and recount that the Homeric literature had historic as well as didactic value in spite of the fact that they were not history proper. History, as is commonly thought of in the Western intellectual tradition, was invented by Herodotus as an application of the principles produced as a result of the paradigm shift in Greek thought brought about by the Pre-Socratic philosophers of his time. Even though the ancient Greeks were able to use Homer’s *Iliad* to fulfill the societal needs for a common story about the past, it is not a history in the strict sense. The *Iliad* is epic poetry. Epic poetry—and fiction in the broader context—can have historical

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<sup>69</sup> T. J. Luce, *The Greek Historians* (London: Routledge, 1997), 1.

<sup>70</sup> Timothy E. Duff, *The Greek and Roman Historians* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2003), 11.

<sup>71</sup> J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1958), 2.

<sup>72</sup> Michael Grant, *The Ancient Historians* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1970), 15.

significance, but this significance does not make the work of fiction a history. There are similarities between the method of presentation of fiction and history that can allow history to be evaluated on a purely critical, literary level, but this evaluation on a purely literary level does not exhaust the intent, purpose, and meaning for history.

It can be safely argued that Herodotus was a Pre-Socratic thinker. This can be supported in three ways: temporally, geographically, and ideologically.

The first connection of Herodotus with the pre-Socratics is his time period. Herodotus is living and working at the same time as the later Pre-Socratics. The traditional dates for Herodotus are 484-430 BC. It is instructive that Herodotus is thriving in a period in which much of the Pre-Socratic revolution is taking place. The basic time frame for the Pre-Socratics runs from the sixth century to the mid fifth century. It should be remembered that the dissemination of information in the ancient world is facilitated greatly by temporal proximity. The most influential individuals of this period were the Milesians, Pythagoras and his followers, Xenophanes, Hecataeus, and Heraclitus.

The Milesian philosophers are generally thought of as starting this process of philosophy and scientific investigation. There is a traceable genealogy to the thought of these Milesian individuals on the coast of Asia Minor. These time periods for the Milesians are as follows. Even though there is some debate as to the influence of this individual, Thales is considered by most to be the first recorded philosopher of the Pre-Socratic revolution.<sup>73</sup> The traditional date for his life is set by the prediction of the solar eclipse that was recorded by Herodotus<sup>74</sup> and

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<sup>73</sup> John Mansley Robinson believes that even though Thales is mentioned as the first philosopher by many biographers, there is no documentary evidence to support this assertion. He states, "To all intents and purposes the history of Greek Philosophy begins with Thales' fellow citizen and younger contemporary Anaximander." John Mansley Robinson, *An Introduction to Early Greek Philosophy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), 23. This is, however, the minority position.

<sup>74</sup> Herodotus, 1.74.

others<sup>75</sup> and occurred in 585 BC. Thales would be survived by Anaximander, who was his pupil. Most classical dating of individuals are given as the most likely date when they were at the pinnacle of their careers. The traditional date for Anaximander is 555 BC. The Pupil of Anaximander, Anaximenes, has for the traditional date of his flourishing around 535 BC. Also from Militus is Hecataeus who has dates fall between 550-476. Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans were said to have flourished around 525 BC. This date for Pythagoras is in reality the date at which his school flourished. The dates for Pythagoras himself are probably earlier but not by too much. Another Pre-Socratic Philosopher who flourished around the 60<sup>th</sup> Olympiad was Xenophanes of Colophon. Traditionally his dates are around 520 BC. Another Ionian philosopher who taught, wrote and flourished at this time was Heraclitus of Ephesus. Traditionally, the date of his flourishing is about 500 BC. Finally, there is Hippocrates and his followers who were said to have been active around 450 BC. Again, as with Pythagoras, Hippocrates' dates are probably much earlier than this, but the date listed is for the flourishing of his school and followers who were very active after his death. The traditional date for Herodotus is around 485 BC, which places him right in the midst of this intellectual revolution happening in Asia Minor. The table below represents this information in a way that is more easily accessible. Herodotus can be seen along side not only the great philosophers of his day, but also the mathematicians, scientist, and doctors. Not only was Herodotus related to the Pre-Socratic by time period, but he was also geographically close to the Pre-Socratics.

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<sup>75</sup> Diogenes Laertius, 1, 23. In this passage Diogenes Laertius says, that Thales was renowned for his work in Astronomy and specifically mentions the predictions of solar eclipses. He makes reference not only to this being recorded by Herodotus, but also Xenophanes, Heraclitus and Democritus.

<b>Pre-Socratic Thinker</b>	<b>Date</b>
Thales	585 B.C.
Anaximander	555 B.C.
Anaximenes	535 B.C.
Hecataeus	530 B.C.
Pythagoras	525 B.C.
Xenophanes	520 B.C.
Heraclitus	500 B.C.
Herodotus	485 B.C.
Hippocrates	450 B.C.

**Figure 1 - Chronological Table for the Pre-Socratics**

The Pre-Socratics lived and worked on the Ionian Coast across the Aegean Sea from what is considered Greece proper. These were colonies that were established to create trade and expansion. The importance of geographic proximity should not be overlooked in an investigation of the transmission of ideas. The map below shows the locations of these prominent city-states and helps to establish their proximity to one another. One of the more important of these Greek city-states was Miletus. Miletus was the home of many of the Pre-Socratics. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Hecateus were all four from Miletus and were active in civil life as well as in philosophy. Another of the Greek city – states that was famous is Ephesus. This was the home of Heraclitus, the enigmatic philosopher who wrote one book and criticized everyone. Another of the Pre-Socratic, Xenophenes, was from Colophon also on the Ionian coast and finally, Herodotus is from Halicarnassus. As can be seen from the

map below, the city-states of these individuals are in close proximity to each, which would facilitate the dissemination of information along these areas.

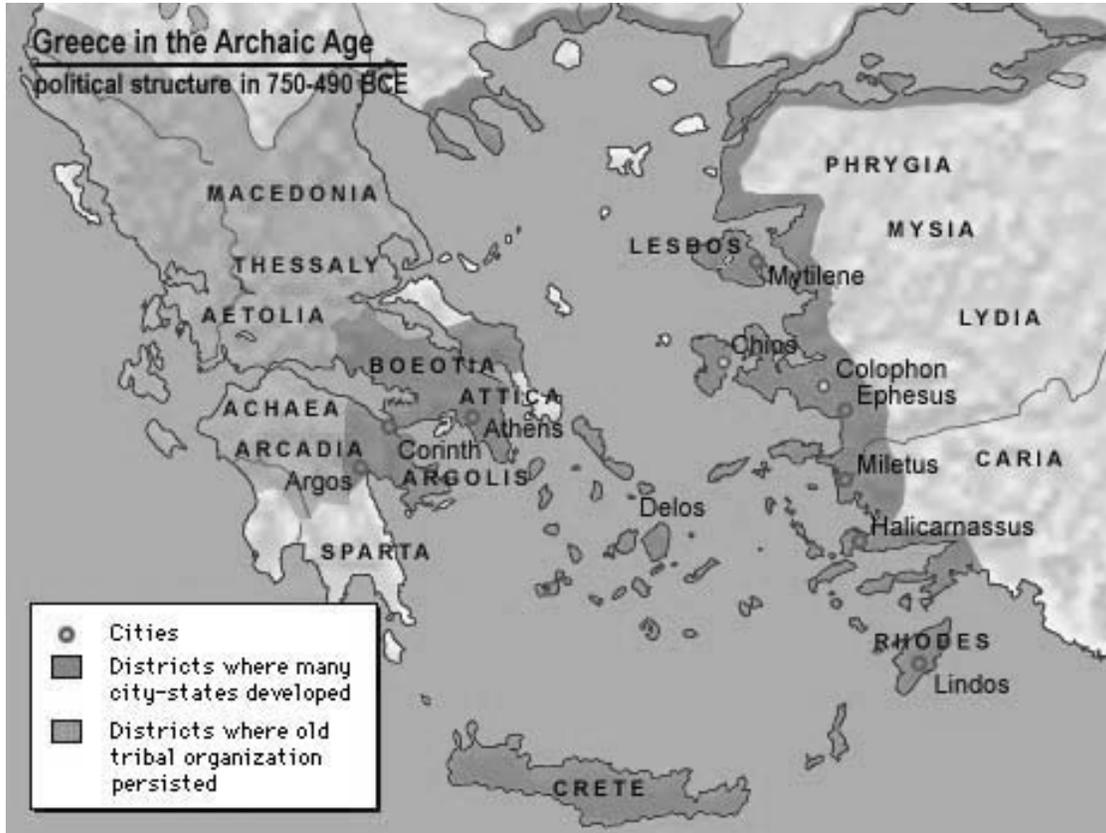


Figure 2 - Major City-States on the Aegean Coast

Even with the temporal and spatial proximities of these thinkers, the most telling evidence for the inclusion of Herodotus as a participant in the paradigm shift in the intellectual life of Iron-Age Greece was the fact that the Pre-Socratics showed evidence of familiarity with each other's work. They not only mentioned each other in their works but they were arguably doing the same things. The third piece of evidence that establishes Herodotus in this Pre-Socratic tradition is the ideological connection.

In his *Histories*, Herodotus mentions Hecataeus and his involvement in the lives of the Ionian Greeks four times.<sup>76</sup> Herodotus mentions Thales twice and the part he played during the Persian War.<sup>77</sup> He also mentions Pythagoras twice.<sup>78</sup> Herodotus is not the only one to mention some of the other Pre-Socratics. Heraclitus does so also. Heraclitus is not as gracious as Herodotus is when he makes reference to his contemporaries. In one of the fragments Heraclitus mentions and criticizes a number of the Pre-Socratics along with Hesiod.

D. 40 Much learning does not teach understanding. For it would have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras, and also Xenophanes and Hecataeus.

Heraclitus seems to have a warm spot in his heart for both Homer and Hesiod as these next few fragments show.

D. A22 Homer was wrong when he said ‘Would that Conflict might vanish from among gods and men!’ (Iliad XVIII.107). For there would be no attunement without high and low notes nor any animals without male and female, both of which are opposites.

D. 56 Men are deceived in the recognition of what is obvious, like Homer who was wisest of all the Greeks. For he was deceived by boys killing lice, who said: what we see and catch we leave behind; what we neither see nor catch we carry away.

D. 42 Homer deserves to be expelled from the competition and beaten with a staff – and Archilochus too!

D. 106 Hesiod counted some days as good, others as bad, because he did not recognize that the nature of every day is one and the same.

D. 57 “The teacher of most is Hesiod. It is him they know as knowing most, who did not recognize day and night: they are one.”

Herodotus also participates in the program of critiquing Homer. In the *Histories*, Herodotus critiques Homer for changing the story of the Iliad to suit his epic rather than the facts. In 2.116 Herodotus says, “And, to my thinking, Homer too knew this story; but seeing that it suited not so

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<sup>76</sup> Herodotus, 2.143, 5.36, 5.25, and 6.138.

<sup>77</sup> Herodotus, 1.74-75, and 1.170.

<sup>78</sup> Herodotus, 2.81, and 5.95.

well with epic poetry as the tale of which he made use, he rejected it of set purpose, showing withal that he knew it.”<sup>79</sup> From here Herodotus cites three places in the *Iliad* that still relate that Paris stopped over in Egypt, but this is not how the episode is written in the text itself.

Herodotus believes that this is the more accurate account and he goes on to list the reasons why he believes that Paris was forced to leave Helen in Egypt. Herodotus believes that Homer took poetic license with these events because it was better for the structure of the poem that Helen be in Troy and that the Greeks Sack the city and take Helen home.

The differences between the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Histories* of Herodotus can also be seen in their self-conscious understanding of what they are doing with their writing. The stated purpose and the stated sources of their information will serve to demonstrate the nature of their writing.

Both Homer and Herodotus relate their purpose in writing at the beginning of their respective works. Homer’s purpose seems to be a kind of morality tale with regard to “the wrath of Achilles.” In the opening line of the *Iliad* He says,

The wrath sing, goddess, of Peleus’ son Achilles, the accursed wrath which brought countless sorrows upon the Achaeans, and sent down to Hades many valiant souls of warriors, and made the men themselves to be spoil for dog and bird of every kind; and thus the will of Zeus was brought to fulfillment. Of this sing from the time when first there parted in strife Atreus’ son, lord of men, and noble Achilles.<sup>80</sup>

From this statement, it would appear that Homer is more interested in exploring the psychological implication of Achilles’ anger rather than the details of the war with Troy. It is only later in the poem that Homer discusses Paris, Helen, or Menelaus. As was stated above, “To Homer it [The Trojan War] was the background rather than the theme of his stories of heroic

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<sup>79</sup> Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), 407.

<sup>80</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, Translated by A. T. Murray (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1999), 13.

deeds and men....”<sup>81</sup> Homer’s concerns are not with the past; however, Herodotus’ concern is specifically with the past. In the opening lines of his *Histories*, Herodotus says,

What Herodotus the Halicarnassian has learnt by inquiry is here set forth: in order that so the memory of the past may not be blotted out from among men by time, and that great and marvelous deeds done by Greeks and foreigners and especially the reason why they warred against each other may not lack renown.<sup>82</sup>

Here, Herodotus states, in no uncertain terms, his primary three reasons for the *Histories*. First, that “the memory of the past not be blotted out.” People tend to forget what has happened in the past and Herodotus wants the past to be remembered. The second reason for writing was so that the great deeds of both the Greeks and the ‘foreigners’ would be remembered. It is a desire to preserve these significant events for posterity that he has taken to writing these events.

The second difference between the *Iliad* and the *Histories* is seen in the author’s sources of information. How is it that the authors’ came by their information to construct their stories. For Homer it is a matter of divine inspiration. Again, the opening lines of the *Iliad* demonstrate this vividly.

The wrath sing, goddess, of Peleus’ son Achilles, the accursed wrath which brought countless sorrows upon the Achaeans, and sent down to Hades many valiant souls of warriors, and made the men themselves to be spoil for dog and bird of every kind; and thus the will of Zeus was brought to fulfillment. Of this sing from the time when first there parted in strife Atreus’ son, lord of men, and noble Achilles.<sup>83</sup>

Homer invokes the Muse to sing the song through him. This is not contrary to the other literature of the day. The same can be seen in the works of Hesiod. In both the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, Hesiod invokes the Muses to inspire and teach him the ancient stories of the gods and their generations. He says in the *Theogony*,

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<sup>81</sup> Victor Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization During the Sixth and Fifth Centuries B.C.* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1968), 4.

<sup>82</sup> Herodotus, *The Persian Wars: Books 1-2*, trans. A. D. Godley, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 3.

<sup>83</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, Translated by A. T. Murray (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1999), 13.

“So spoke the daughters of great Zeus, mincing their words.  
And they gave me a staff, a branch of good sappy laurel,  
Plucking it off, spectacular. And they breathed into me  
A voice divine, so I might celebrate past and future.  
And they told me to hymn the generation of the eternal gods,  
But always to sing of themselves, the Muses, first and last.”<sup>84</sup>

An again the same acknowledgement of divine inspiration can be seen in *Works and Days*,

“Still, I can teach you the mind of Zeus the Storm King,  
Since the Muses have taught me ineffable song.”<sup>85</sup>

However, contrary to this general practice Herodotus makes a clear departure when he state that what he would relate would be the result of inquire. He says,

What Herodotus the Halicarnassian has learnt by inquiry is here set forth.<sup>86</sup>

What Herodotus is relating is of a new kind. The Greek word used here that is translated inquire is ἱστορίης. This is the Greek word from which our English word history comes. Our understanding of the word suffers from having histories lining our book shelves. What did the word mean to Herodotus when he used it? There may be some kind of connection between Homer and Herodotus but as Timothy Duff notes,

But if Herodotos was inspired by and tried to rival Homer, there were other influences on him too. In the opening line he declares that his work is *historie*—the Ionic dialect form for the more usual Greek *historia*—from which the modern word ‘history’ is derived.<sup>87</sup>

At this point it will beneficial to take a closer look at this Greek word ἱστορία in order to get an understanding for Herodotus’ program in contrast with that of Homer.

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<sup>84</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* 27-35.

<sup>85</sup> Hesiod, *Op.* 732-733.

<sup>86</sup> Herodotus, *The Persian Wars: Books 1-2*, trans. A. D. Godley, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 3.

<sup>87</sup> Timothy Duff, *The Greek and Roman Historians* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2003), 15-16.

## CHAPTER 4

### HISTORY AND ἹΣΤΟΡΙΑ

The question of the meaning of a word is a tricky matter. It can be argued that words do not have meanings, only definitions. Meaning comes from words when they are used in a phrase or sentence placed in some context where the meaning is. It is the context of the phrase or sentence that helps us determine which definition of a word is meant for a particular context. For example, what does the word ‘run’ mean? It depends upon the context of the sentence. A car can run. A candidate can run for office. A refrigerator can run. A jogger can run. There can be a run in ones hose. Even a nose can run. The only way to understand the notion of the meaning of the word run is to know it in its context. All of these examples of ‘run’ above are instances of the word’s meaning changing according to context in which the word is found. This gives the word ‘run’ a denotative range. This is the list of things that the word can mean or more simply put its list of definitions. The investigation of the Greek word Ἱστορία and its cognates will begin in the lexicon to try to establish a lexical range for the words in question and then the words will be examined not only in the contexts of phrases and sentences but according to time period to demonstrate the shift in not only definition but also meaning.

The origin of our English word ‘history’ comes directly from the Greek word Ἱστορία. In common parlance, the word ‘history’—in very basic terms—is something written about the past. It is the purpose of this section to demonstrate that when Herodotus used Ἱστορία and its cognates, he used them in the same manner that the Pre-Socratic philosophers used them and not necessarily the way we use the word history today. The word Ἱστορία, for Herodotus and his contemporaries, did not refer to a type of literature, but had more to do with an investigative methodology. Herodotus was producing something new and was participating in the ongoing intellectual revolution of the thinkers of his day.

In this section, I will investigate the shift in definition of the Greek words Ἱστορέω and Ἱστορία from archaic usage to the Pre-Socratic and on into the classical period and then I will

examine Herodotus' uses of ἱστορία in the context of his writing in an effort to demonstrate the contextual mean that Herodotus places on the word. To accomplish this I will first examine the lexical range of the word to try to establish the different denotative possibilities for the word. After that I will example the usage of the word and its cognates in the Archaic period, the Pre-Socratic period—when Herodotus was writing—, and then the classical period. From this examination, I will attempt to discover how the word was most often used in these contexts by Herodotus, his contemporaries, and the writers of the later period who examined his writing.

In *Liddell and Scott's* lexicon, the Greek verb ἱστορέω has the following denotative range: “to learn or to know by inquire and so in general to know.” Secondly, “the definition is to question, to ask, inquire of a person, to inquire about something, to examine and to survey.” Finally, in later years it has the definition of “to give a written account of what one has learnt, to relate as fact.”<sup>88</sup> As a result, the noun form, ἱστορία, has the following denotative range: “a learning or knowing by inquire, hence, the knowledge so obtained, information.”<sup>89</sup> Two other nouns built on the same root are ἱστορήμα and ἱστόριον. Both of these nouns are neuter and refer to the outcome of investigation. The noun ἱστορήμα has the definition “that which is known by inquiry, a subject for inquiry, a question.”<sup>90</sup> The noun ἱστόριον has the definition of “a fact learnt by inquiry, a positive fact, authentic proof.”<sup>91</sup> Along with these nouns is the adjective ἱστορικὸς which has the definition “belonging to knowledge or inquiry.”<sup>92</sup> When ἱστορικὸς is used with the definite article it serves as a substantive and it can carry the definition “historian” (ὁ ἱστορικός) as in Aristotle's *Poetics*.<sup>93</sup> All of these words are related to the more

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<sup>88</sup> Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek – English Lexicon*, s.v. “ἱστορέω.”

<sup>89</sup> Liddell and Scott, s.v. “ἱστορία.”

<sup>90</sup> Liddell and Scott, s.v. “ἱστορήμα.”

<sup>91</sup> Liddell and Scott, s.v. “ἱστόριον.”

<sup>92</sup> Liddell and Scott, s.v. “ἱστορικὸς.”

<sup>93</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 9.2(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 34.

primitive word ἴστωρ or ἴστωρ. This noun can be used as either a masculine or a feminine and has the definitions “knowing, acquainted with, versed in.” When used as a substantive it has the definitions of “one who knows law and right, a judge.”<sup>94</sup> These definitions provide a good place to start the investigation, but it is the investigation of the words used in their context that will yield the most profitable outcome in understanding the meaning that Herodotus intended when he used these words.

The evolution of the Greek word ἱστορία and its cognates can be clearly seen in a survey of how its connotations affected its denotations over time. An examination of ἱστορία and related words from the Archaic period to the pre-Socratic period and into the Classical period will show that the way Herodotus used ἱστορία was different from the way it was used in both the Archaic periods and the Classical periods. Much of what we mean when we say history comes from the classical period and not from Herodotus’ usage, per se.

The primary texts used here for the examination of the use of ἱστορία in the Archaic period are those of Hesiod and Homer and the texts that make up the Homeric Hymns. It will be shown in this section that the noun ἱστορία and the more primitive ἴστωρ was commonly used in three basic ways. The first was to indicate a person who had skill, was acquainted with something, or had special knowledge. The second referred to a person acting as a judge or even an umpire. This was a person who had seen both sides of some kind of contest and must render a judgment about the outcome. The third was when supplicants would beseech the gods or heroes to act as witness to an event or to an oath. As in the second usage, it seems clear that the reason the gods are invoked is that they have some authority by which to enforce or absolve from blame the supplicants in these cases.

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<sup>94</sup> Liddell and Scott, s.v. “ἴστωρ or ἴστωρ.”

### Archaic Usage

In Hesiod's *Works and Days*, Hesiod is recounting the days of the month in order to give an account of the significance of the day and what it is best to do—or not to do—on that day. In referring to the twentieth day of the month he says, “On the great twentieth, in full day, a wise man (ἴστορα) should be born. Such an one is very sound-witted.”<sup>95</sup> It is on this day, according to Hesiod, that a wise man (ἴστορα) or one having knowledge will be born. In commenting on the passage, Martin West says that Hesiod's usage is, “...not in the Homeric sense of ‘judge’ but ‘wise, learned.’”<sup>96</sup> This understanding is supported by the next sentence in which the wise man is identified as one who is ‘sound witted’ or strong minded (νόον πεπυκασμένος). This understanding of the word can also be seen in the *Homeric Hymns*. In the *Homeric Hymns* 32.2 “To Selene,” the writer says referring to the Muses, “And next, sweet voiced Muses, daughters of Zeus, well-skilled in song (ἴστορες ᾠδῆς), tell of the long-winged Moon.”<sup>97</sup> The Muses are said to be well-skilled or having expert knowledge in singing and to have special ability in educating their listeners.

Along with Hesiod's work the use of ἴστορία, it can also be found in Homer's writing. In the *Iliad*, ἴστορία is seen used in two ways. The first is of an arbitrator or an umpire, and the second as someone acting as a witness. This first usage of a cognate of ἴστορία can be seen in *Iliad* 18, 501, in which there is a dispute over the price of restitution for the wrongful death of another.

But the people were gathered in the place of assembly; for there a strife had arisen, and two men were striving about the blood price of a man slain; the one claimed that he had

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<sup>95</sup> Hesiod, *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), 61.

<sup>96</sup> Hesiod, *Works & Days: Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary*, ed. Martin West (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1978), 357.

<sup>97</sup> Hesiod, *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, 459.

paid all, declaring his cause to the people, but the other refused to accept anything; and each was eager to win the decision on the word of an arbitrator (ἵστορι).<sup>98</sup>

The two parties are eager to have the argument settled and would let the judgment be made by an arbitrator. This arbitrator is the ἵστορι and he will act as the judge between the two parties involved. Again, in *Iliad* 23, 486 a dispute has arisen about a race.

Then the leader of the Cretans grew angry and spoke in answer: “Aias, excellent in rebuke, witless in counsel, in all things else you fall behind the other Argives, for your mind is harsh. Come now, let us wager a tripod or a cauldron, and as umpire (ἵστορα) let us choose Atreus’ son Agamemnon, as to which mares are in the lead—so that you may learn by paying the price.”<sup>99</sup>

The leader of the Cretans, Idomeneus, wants to place a wager on the outcome of this race and attempts to get Aias to essentially ‘put his money where his mouth is.’ As part of the wager, Idomeneus recommends that Agamemnon act as the umpire in order to see to it that the contest is a fair one. Clearly, from these two passages it can be seen that one way to understand ἵστορία and its cognates in the Homeric corpus is as an umpire—a person who can make judgments based on a knowledge of both sides of a dispute of contest.

The second way that ἵστορία is used in Homer’s writings is as a witness. One thing that is interesting about this usage is that the reference to the witness is most commonly to a divine person. For example in *Iliad* 7, 411, there is a request sent to Agamemnon by the Trojans for two things. First, Alexander (Paris) is willing to give up a whole ship full of gold to stop the fighting but he will not give up Helen. The second request is that the Greeks stop the fighting long enough to bury the dead. To the second request, Agamemnon concedes that it is only right to allow those fallen in battle to be given a proper burial, but to the first request he says, “But to our oaths let Zeus be witness (ἵστω), the loud-thundering lord of Hera.”<sup>100</sup> Here, Agamemnon

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<sup>98</sup> Homer, 325.

<sup>99</sup> Homer, 529.

<sup>100</sup> Homer, 345.

is letting the messenger from Troy know that they are here because of the oaths they had sworn and because Zeus was their witness, they would not stop until they had Helen back. Again in *Iliad* 10, 329, Hector has called together the nobles of Troy to ask for a brave volunteer to sneak down to the Greek ships to spy on the Greeks and find out if they are ready to flee or if they were planning to continue the assault. As a reward for the task, he offers a chariot and a team of his swiftest horses. One man steps forward to accept the task—Dolon, the son of Eumedes. However, Dolon wants some assurances of the reward, so he asks Hector to raise his staff and swear before the group that he will truly receive the horses. Homer tells us,

So he spoke, and Hector took the staff in his hands, and swore to him, saying: ‘Now let Zeus himself, the loud-thundering lord of Hera, be my witness (ἵστω), that on those horses no other man of the Trojans will mount, but it is you, I declare, who will have glory in them continually.’<sup>101</sup>

In so doing he calls for Zeus to be the witness (ἵστω) to the agreement to guarantee the transaction. It would appear that this cognate of ἵστορία is used as a formula in which the gods are invoked not only bear witness to also ensure or at least act as a judge if the oath were broken. This formula was carried on even as late as Thucydides. In Thuc. II, 74, the Plataeans find themselves between the allies of the Spartans and the Athenians. They confront the Lacedaemonians with the fact that they have had a treaty with the Plataeans since the end of the Persian war. Not only were they violating that treaty, but they had also allied themselves with the Thebans, who were the bitter enemies to the Plataeans and were involved in an unjust war against the Plataean people. The Plataean ruler sends word to the Lacedaemonians stating that he refuses to break his oath to Athens and will resist this new alliance. In response to this, Archidamus, the leader of the Lacedaemonians, justifies his plan to attack the Plataeans by stating that the oaths given after the Persian war were as much to the Lacedaemonians as they were to the Athenians.

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<sup>101</sup> Homer, 473.

Ye gods and heroes who protect the land of Plataea, be our witnesses (ξυνίστορες) that we did no wrong in the beginning but only after the Plataeans first abandoned the oath we all swore did we come against this land, where our fathers, invoked you in their prayers, conquered the Persians, and....<sup>102</sup>

Archidamus claims that the Plataeans have broken their vow to the Lacedaemonians and he calls the gods to act as witness to the fact that he is acting justly. He wants the gods to act as judges to demonstrate that his actions are justified.

In all of these Archaic references to ἵστορία and its cognates, there is one thread of similarity that runs through them—the noun refers to a person who is in a position of judgment and has the power to render a decision of authority and the verb forms refer to the act of judging or refereeing. This usage of ἵστορία will carry over into the Pre-Socratic usage but will become even more refined.

### Pre-Socratic Usage

“The Ionian representatives of ἵστορίην, Thales, Heraclitus, Hecataios of Miletus, and Herodotus, surpassed their contemporaries as investigators.”<sup>103</sup>

Thales is traditionally the first to have revealed the investigation (ἵστορίαν) of nature to the Greeks; he had many predecessors, as also Theophrastus thinks, but so far surpassed them as to blot out all who came before him. He is said to have left nothing in the form of writing except the so-called ‘Nautical Star-guide’.<sup>104</sup>

One of the primary problems with doing any kind of research on the Pre-Socratics is the fact that all of the documents that are available are in fragments. This primarily boils down to the notion that all of our primary sources are in reality secondary. Richard McKirahan points out

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<sup>102</sup> Thucydides, 395.

<sup>103</sup> Friedrich Büchsel, s.v. “ἵστορέω” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 392.

<sup>104</sup> Simplicius in *Phys. P.* 23, 29 Diels cited in G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 86.

that these are problems peculiar to the study of any ancient texts. The main reason is, before the invention of the printing press, if you wanted a copy of someone's book you had to copy it by hand or pay someone to copy it for you. There are no existent autographs (prototype or original) of any of these ancient works. McKirahan says this presents a problem because, "Each time a text was copied by hand, the scribe might introduce errors, especially as the Greek language changed over the centuries."<sup>105</sup> As an example of this he uses one of Plato's dialogues. He says,

The earliest complete surviving text of Plato, for example, was written in the late ninth century, some 1250 years after Plato's death, and, in fact, closer in time to us than to him. In the best case, then, we have one or more complete manuscripts of the text, from which scholars known as textual critics attempt to determine what the author actually wrote.<sup>106</sup>

This is the state of affairs when you have whole manuscripts to work with. In the case of the Pre-Socratics, this problem is compounded by the absence of any manuscript evidence at all and the only thing left to rely upon is the quotations of these thinkers in the writings of later authors. So, not only must the above problem be dealt with but also the problem of attempting to identify authentic citations of the Pre-Socratics. These problems made the study of the Pre-Socratics difficult to say the least and would also bring about some innovations that would facilitate the future study of the fragments. In the late eighteenth century, if historians or philosophers wanted to study the Pre-Socratics they did so by reading the sources that quote them and work from there. For example, the major sources for Heraclitus are Aristotle and his school with 11 fragments, Clement of Alexandria with 25 fragments, Hippolytus with 18 fragments, Plutarch with 19 fragments, Stobaeus with 11 fragments, and Diogenes Laertius with 8. Some of the others who quoted Heraclitus fewer than five times are Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Origen, Potinus, Maximus of Tyre, Sextus Empiricus, Polybius, Porphyrius, Strabo, Proclus, and Theophrastus just to name some of the list. Even with these difficulties, most believe that a rough estimation

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<sup>105</sup> Richard D. McKirahan, Jr., *Philosophy Before Socrates: An Introduction with Texts and Commentary* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 1.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

of Pre-Socratic thought could be reconstructed. Even though we have scant references to the word itself what it had become in the hands of the Pre-Socratics was a methodology for examining the cosmos with a view to understanding the causal relationships in the world.

Guthrie says of Anaximander,

Such meager information as we have from non-Peripatetic sources about Anaximander, for instance, suggests that he had the true Ionian spirit of universal *historie*, and that his remarks about the origins of the universe and of life were only introductory to a descriptive account of the earth and its inhabitants as they at present exist, containing elements of what would now be called geography, ethnology and cultural studies.<sup>107</sup>

From Heraclitus of Ephesus there are two fragments that mention ἱστορία specifically. The first is D. 35 (Clement of Alexandria) “The person who loves wisdom (φιλοσόφους) must be a good inquirer (ἱστοραζ) into a great many things.”<sup>108</sup> In this fragment, Heraclitus is not endorsing the practice of inquiry, but is in fact criticizing those who do. The second fragment, D. 129 (Diogenes Laertius), demonstrates this clearly. “Pythagoras, son of Mnesarchus, practiced inquiry (ἱστορίην) more than all people, and choosing from these writings he made a wisdom of his own—much learning, fraudulent dealing.”<sup>109</sup>

The Pre-Socratics had taken a word that meant to judge a game and used it in their investigation of the material world.

### Classical Usage

It is here, in the classical period, that ἱστορία started to be used as a style of writing. This shift can be seen in the way ἱστορία is used from Plato to Aristotle. It may very well be that the success of Herodotus’ work had given this prose/narrative type of writing its name from

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<sup>107</sup> Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. 1, *The Earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 43.

<sup>108</sup> Dennis Sweet, *Heraclitus* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1995), 17.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

his usage of ἵστορία as the title of his work. This change in the way ἵστορία and its cognates are used happens at some point after Plato's and is seen in Aristotle's usage. It is in Aristotle's work that ἵστορία is contrasted for the first time with epic poetry. First, Plato's usage of ἵστορία and its cognates will be examined and then Aristotle's references will be examined to demonstrate this change.

Plato's Usage. In the beginning of the classical period Plato uses the word for the most part as the Pre-Socratics have used it. Friedrich Büchsel, in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* under “ἵστορέω” says that, “Plato knows the term, and uses it as a target of witticism. He does not adopt it into his scholarly vocabulary.”<sup>110</sup> As a matter of fact, Plato uses other words to speak of investigation in other contexts. In an earlier passage, Socrates uses yet another Greek word for investigate (σκοπεῖν). For example, in *Phaedrus*, Phaedrus asks Socrates if he believed a local legend about a spot along the river they were walking beside. Socrates remarks that if he were one of the ‘wise men’ he would find a way to come up with a rational explanation to explain the origin of the story but that would require a great deal of leisure. Socrates says,

I am not yet able; as the Delphic inscription has it, to know myself; so it seems to me ridiculous, when I do not yet know that, to investigate (σκοπεῖν) irrelevant things. And so I dismiss these matters and accepting the customary belief about them, as I was saying just now, I investigate (σκοπῶ) not these things, but myself, to know whether I am a monster more complicated and more furious than Typhon or a gentler and simpler creature....<sup>111</sup>

In this passage Plato—through Socrates—is contrasting his philosophical focus with that of the ‘wise men’ who investigate irrelevant things like myths in an attempt to provide a rational explanation for the stories' origin. In doing this he uses σκοπεῖν a word for investigate. This

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<sup>110</sup> Büchsel, s.v. “ἵστορέω” in *TDNT*, 392.

<sup>111</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus*, 230A.

word has a basic meaning to look at, to examine, and to spy. It may be that Plato is using this word to poke a little fun at those ‘wise men’ of which he speaks and to separate his intellectual program from theirs. Even though this is the case, Plato does use ἵστορία in his writings, but, as was observed above, not as part of his technical vocabulary.

Three passages from Plato’s dialogues have the term or its cognates and they will be examined here. From these three passages it can be seen how Plato used the word and that it had not yet taken on the ‘form of literature’ understanding that it will in later writings. In the following passages, reference is made to what Plato believes but the quotations are of dialogues in which Socrates is the primary interlocutor for the first two and the ‘Eleatic Stranger’ is the main interlocutor for the third. For the sake of brevity, it will be assumed that because Plato is the author of what Socrates or the Stranger says, Plato believes.<sup>112</sup>

In the first dialogue to be examined, *Phaedo* 96A, Socrates is explaining to Cebes about his past experiences in order to help Cebes with a question he has about causes of disintegration. Socrates says, “When I was young, Cebes, I was tremendously eager for the kind of wisdom which they call investigation of nature (τερὶ φύσεως ἵστορίαν).”<sup>113</sup> This, according to Socrates, was the kind of investigative process that he spent his youth on—looking into causes of things. He believes that he was headed in the wrong direction with this investigation of nature but the point is that ἵστορίαν is used here to refer to a kind of methodology of research and not Socrates’ critique of it.

The second passage is found in *Phaedrus* 244C. In this dialogue, Socrates is in a discussion with Phaedrus in which a young man is being taught by their debate about love and selecting a lover. In the passage Socrates is speaking about the process that oracles are able to

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<sup>112</sup> There are some who doubt that Socrates was a real person much less that these are records of actual dialogues in which Socrates was involved. More on this subject can be found in Charles Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>113</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 96 A

divine the future. In this discussion, Socrates says, “So also, when they gave a name to the investigation (ζήτησιν) of the future which rational persons conduct through observation of birds and by other signs, since they furnish mind and information (ἱστορίαν) to human thought from the intellect...”<sup>114</sup> What is interesting about this passage is that Plato uses a different Greek word for investigate (ζήτησιν) but when he speaks of the information this investigation produces he uses the noun ἱστορίαν. The final passage from Plato comes from the *Sophist*.

In the *Sophist* 267, E, even though Socrates is present, he is not the primary interlocutor but is replaced in that function by the Eleatic Stranger. Some believe that the shift in character from Socrates to the Eleatic Stranger is a result of a change in Plato’s philosophical ideals or a change in methodology that the Stranger uses—a process of reasoning by dichotomy or defining a thing by division and comparison of its smaller parts. For example in the passage from the *Sophist*, the Stranger explains,

However, even though the innovation in language be a trifle bold, let us, for the sake of making a distinction, call the imitation which is based on opinion, opinion-imitation, and that which is founded on knowledge, a sort of scientific imitation (ἐπιστήμης ἱστορικὴν τινα μίμησιν).<sup>115</sup>

Here the stranger is using this dichotomist methodology to explain the difference between people who imitate something with knowledge of the thing—copying a musical style—and someone who has an opinion (no real knowledge) about something and can merely give an external imitation, such as a politician using other people’s arguments. He says the person who makes an imitation based on knowledge has produced a “scientific imitation” (ἱστορικὴν τινα μίμησιν). Here, a cognate of ἱστορία is translated as scientific—and is by definition based on knowledge (ἐπιστήμης). Plato’s use of the term is similar to that of the Pre-Socratic. It is a kind of knowledge based on inquiry or it is the methodology that Socrates says he had practiced in his

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<sup>114</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus*, 244 C

<sup>115</sup> Plato, *Sophist*, 267 E.

youth. His critiques of the practice are along the same lines as Heraclitus', but Socrates will also criticize Heraclitus and his work in other dialogues. Another critic of the Pre-Socratics is Aristotle who also happens to use ἵστορία or some of its cognates.

Aristotle's Usage. It is with Aristotle's use of ἵστορία that the definition shifts from meaning 'to inquire' and 'to investigate' to a type of writing. Aristotle does use ἵστορία in the earlier sense of 'to investigate' in his *History of Animals* (*των περι τα ζωια ἱστοριων*).<sup>116</sup> In this work, Aristotle does not provide a written, prose account of the history (our term) of animals but rather he uses his dichotomous methodology to mark out the distinctions of the animal kingdom. He takes the animal kingdom and divides it in to two parts. From these divisions he makes more divisions. For example, a few lines from the first book of the *History of Animals* should serve to demonstrate this methodology. "The parts which are found in animals are of two kinds: (a) those which are incomposite, viz., those which divide up into uniform portions, for example, flesh divides up into flesh; (b) those which are composite, viz., those which divide up into non-uniform portions, for example, the hand does not divide up into hands, nor the face into faces."<sup>117</sup> Again a little later, "Now, generally speaking, the differences exhibited in animals by most of the parts lie in the contrasting oppositions of their secondary characteristics."<sup>118</sup> Again, "We can also distinguish differences among the uniform parts: some are soft and fluid, others are solid and firm."<sup>119</sup> Again, "Here are examples of differences in respect of manner of life, dispositions, and activities. Some are water-animals, others land-animals."<sup>120</sup> And once again,

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<sup>116</sup> Aristotle, *History of Animals*, 3 vol., trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

<sup>117</sup> Aristotle, *Animals*, 3.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

“Furthermore, some animals are stationary, others move about.”<sup>121</sup> From these first few pages of the *History of Animals*, it is clearly evident that Aristotle is involved in a kind of investigation, so the translation ‘to investigate’ is quite legitimate in this context. Aristotle speaking of this methodology says that the process of understanding the animals can be complete “...only after we have before us the ascertained facts about each item. (ὑπαρχούσης τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς περὶ ἕκαστον.)<sup>122</sup> In this context, Aristotle uses the word ἱστορίας in the sense of ascertained facts the result of the investigation into the different types of animals. A. L. Peck says, “HISTORIA—information obtained through investigation: this is how Aristotle describes the fundamental requirement in zoology; this is what we must have before us to begin with: the ascertained facts about each kind of animal.” He goes on to say, “The emphasis is laid upon the actual facts. This work is first and foremost to be a factual survey.”<sup>123</sup> Not only does Aristotle use ἱστορία in his *History of Animals*, but he also uses it in the *Poetics*.

It is here in the *Poetics* that Aristotle draws a comparison between Epic literature and history. These passages will be examined in more detail later, but for the purposes of this section, this is where Aristotle uses ἱστορία and its cognates.

What we have said already makes it further clear that the poet’s object is not to tell what actually happened but what could or would happen either probably or inevitably. The difference between a historian (ἱστορικὸς) and a poet is not that one writes in prose and the other in verse—indeed the writings of Herodotus could be put into verse and yet would still be a kind of history (ἱστορία), whether written in metre or not. The real difference is this, that one tells what happened and the other what might happen. For this reason poetry is something more scientific (φιλοσοφώτερον) and serious (σπουδαιότερον) than history (ἱστορίας), because poetry tends to give general truths while history (ἱστορία) gives particular facts.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 34-35.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., v.

<sup>124</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 35.

In this passage Aristotle clearly is using the term ἱστορία in a way that is different from that of the previous generations but also different from his own uses in other contexts. It may be that in spite of his critique of history as something less scientific than epic, Herodotus' Histories had been successful in its purposes that history has come in common use as a written account of the past.

It must not be such as we normally find in history (ἱστορίας), where what is required is an exposition not of a single piece of action but of a single period of time, showing all that within the period befell one or more persons, events that have a merely casual relation to each other.<sup>125</sup>

From the understanding gathered from these other uses of ἱστορία, an attempt to understand Herodotus' usage can now be conducted.

### Herodotus' Usage

Herodotus names his work *ἩΡΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΙ*. The title, *The History of Herodotus*, is, in this case, merely a transliteration of the Greek title. The question that must be asked here is, "Was Herodotus using the word to speak of a type of literature or does he have something more like the Pre-Socratic notion in mind?" One way to discover the answer to this question is to examine Herodotus' usages of ἱστορία in the context of his writing.

There seem to be two ways in which Herodotus uses the word. The first is simply a synonym for the word 'ask.' In Book 1.24, Herodotus says that sailors had attempted to kill Arion on their way to Corinth in order to take his gold. The story that Herodotus relates says that Arion was given the opportunity to jump off the boat by himself and save them the trouble of killing him themselves. After he jumped into the water, the story says that he was saved by a dolphin and made it to shore before the sailors. Arion went to the king, Periander, to explain what had happened. When the boat landed, the sailors were brought before the king and the

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid. 91

question was asked, “When they came they were called and questioned (ἵστορέεσθαι), what news they brought of Arion,…”<sup>126</sup> Here the word ἵστορέεσθαι is translated ‘questioned.’ The next two accounts from Book two of Herodotus’ *Histories* recount the questioning or interviews with the priests in Egypt. Herodotus had specific questions about the Nile which apparently the Egyptians had no knowledge. The first quote is from Book 2.19.

“Concerning this matter none of the Egyptians could tell me anything, when I asked (ἵστορέων) them what power the Nile has to be contrary in nature to all other rivers. Of the matters aforesaid I wished to know, and asked (ἵστόρεον); also why no airs blow from it as from every other stream.”<sup>127</sup>

The next passage is from Book 2.113 in which Herodotus asks the Egyptians about Helen’s being kidnapped by Paris in the *Iliad*. He says, “When I enquired (ἵστορέοντι) of the priests, they told me that this was the story of Helen:”<sup>128</sup> In these three passages the word ἵστορία is used in an interview type of investigation.

The second way it is translated in to inquire which can be a synonym for ask but may also involve some type of investigation. Both of these passages come from in which Herodotus is showing that Homer’s account of the rape of Helen may, in fact, be fraudulent. The two passages are as follows.

2.118 “But when I asked the priests whether the Greek account of the Trojan business were vain or true, they gave me the following answer, saying that they had inquired (ἵστορήησι) and knew (φάμενοι) what Menelaus himself had said:”<sup>129</sup>

2.119 “The priests told me that they had learnt (ἐπίσταθαι) some of this tale by inquiry (ἵστορήησι), but that they spoke with exact knowledge (ἀτρεκεώς ἐπιστάμενοι) of what had happened in their own country.”<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Herodotus, 29.

<sup>127</sup> Herodotus, 297.

<sup>128</sup> Herodotus, 403.

<sup>129</sup> Herodotus, 409.

<sup>130</sup> Herodotus, 411.

In these last two references, Herodotus also shows that ἱστορία is meant to produce knowledge. In 2.118 the Egyptians claim that they had made inquiries of what Menelaus himself had said about the event it gave them knowledge or an understanding of what transpired. The Greek word φάμενοι translated here as ‘knew’ means to bring to light or to discover the truth. The second text is even more telling. In the passage from 2.119, makes a statement about inquiry (ἱστορία) producing not only learning (ἐπίσταθαι), but also it produces exact knowledge (ἀτρεκέως ἐπιστάμενοι). The Greek word ἐπίσταμαι is a term that basically means knowledge but is in many places found contrasted with beliefs which are unfounded or merely option.

Not only do these passages show that ἱστορία is at odds with literature, but that it is something quite different.

From these usages it has been demonstrated that Herodotus uses the Greek word ἱστορία in the same way that the Pre-Socratics did—as an investigative method that was intended to produce knowledge. If the *Histories* of Herodotus were designed to produce knowledge then the relationship between history and science becomes more closely established. I will now examine history by the use of it analogous relationship to science.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

At this point a provisional definition of history can be delineated as it is now seen as contrasted with art. The primary distinction between history and literature is that history is telling a story about the past that is intended to be true. This is the same observation that Aristotle made with regard to history and epic poetry. When Aristotle delineates the distinction between history and literature, he does so on more than stylistic grounds. He says,

“What we have said already makes it further clear that the poet’s object is not to tell what actually happened but what could or would happen either probably or inevitably. The difference between a historian (ἱστορικός) and a poet is not that one writes in prose and the other in verse—indeed the writings of Herodotus could be put into verse and yet would still be a kind of history (ἱστορία), whether written in metre or not.<sup>131</sup>

In reality, the task of the historian and the poet are, at times, at cross purposes with each other. The historian and the artist may both be seeking truth, but as Aristotle says they are seeking two different kinds of truth. When he spells this out he says that, “...poetry is something more scientific (φιλοσοφώτερον)<sup>132</sup> and serious than history, because poetry tends to give general truths while history gives particular facts.”<sup>133</sup> Aristotle makes the claim that poetry is more scientific (or philosophical) than history because the truths poetry produces are more general or,

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<sup>131</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 35.

<sup>132</sup> Roberts translation of φιλοσοφώτερον as ‘scientific’ is the common translation among classical scholars. However, it does not carry the same force that enlightenment ideas relating to use of scientific method to gain knowledge has. In R. G. Collingwood’s *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1972, re. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.) this is made clear. He says, “The word ‘science’, in its original sense, which is still its proper sense not in the English language alone but in the international language of European civilization, means a body of systematic or orderly thinking about a determinate subject-matter.”(4) In discussing what Aristotle believed the study of metaphysics is he says, “Aristotle calls the science of metaphysics by no less than three names. Sometimes he calls it First Science, πρώτη φιλοσοφία, φιλοσοφία being his regular name for science as I have just defined the word.”(5) This word science, in the broad sense as used here, must be differentiated from the more narrow meaning that the word found in the enlightenment—applied to disciplines using scientific method to discover knowledge.

<sup>133</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), 35.

to use Bernard Williams words, more lawlike, whereas, history tells particular truths or facts. The artist is concerned with the idea of revolution, whereas the historian is interested in ‘the’ American Revolution. Aristotle’s critique still carries force with the identification of an underlying difference between history and art: the idea of generalization. This distinction will also be shown to be a major distinction between history and science.

A second aspect in the difference between history and art is that history starts with a question of contemporary interest and, instead of seeking the solution to the question in contemporary thought, the historian looks to the past to answer the question. Like a detective, the historian searches for traces or evidence of the past to reconstruct the significant events that will help answer the question or provide the explanation that answers the question. The historian does not need to create an artificial form or theme as has been suggested by the individuals who desire an artistic history. The form is there in the chronological sequence of significant events that are delineated in an attempt to answer the question poised by the historian. This allows the historian to be involved in the process of history not only the observer of history.

Ronald Nash defines history in this way.

Taking all the distinctions we have made into account, we may define history as the attempt to reconstruct in a significant narrative of the important events of the human past through a study of the relevant data available in the historian’s own present experience.<sup>134</sup>

As the question is answered from the beginning as to whether history is an art or not, the answer can be no. But this does not default the investigation to the position that history needs to be a science. At first glance, all the talk about truth and theories of truth would seem to indicate that before a fully orbbed definition of history can be articulated the second question must be asked also—“Is history a science.” However, this will need to be a topic for another day.

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<sup>134</sup> Ronald Nash, *Christian Faith and Historical Understanding* (Lima, Ohio: Academic Renewal Press, 2002), 14.

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