THEMES IN
HISTORIOGRAPHY

Conference Schedule

University of Liverpool June 23rd – 24th
Conference Organisers

David Griffiths, Jan Haywood, Jason Wickham

For Details and Link to Booking

Visit: http://themesinhistoriography.yolasite.com/

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Conference Programme

Saturday June 23rd

9.00 - 10.00  Registration  Tea/Coffee
10.00 -10.15 Welcome Address by Prof. Christopher Tuplin
10.15 -12.00 Paper Session 1 "Alternative Narratives"
12.00 - 13.30 Lunch
13.30 - 15.15 Paper Session 2 "Economy and Technical History"
15.15 - 15.45 Break  Tea/Coffee
15.45 - 17.00 Paper Session 3 "Polemic Rhetoric"
17.00 - 19.00 Drinks Reception and Evening Social
19.00 - Late  Conference Dinner

Sunday June 24th

9.30 - 10.30 Sunday Registry and Morning Reception  Tea/Coffee
10.30 -12.00 Paper Session 4 "Nationalism and Identity"
12.00 - 13.30 Lunch
13.30 - 15.15 Paper Session 5 "Biography, Narratology and Philosophy"
15.15 – 15.45 Break  Tea/Coffee
15.45 - 16.15 Keynote Address by Kostas Vlassopoulos
The Discourse of Antiquity in Classical Athens: Re-writing the History of Democracy
Carol Atack (University of Cambridge)

While classical Athens, in the modern political “imaginary”, serves as the original home of democracy, within the ancient city itself democracy’s legitimacy was constantly contested through claims to the city’s past, and specifically the foundation of its constitution. The concept of the ‘ancestral constitution’ (*patrios politeia*) emerges in the 4th century BCE from the oligarchic revolutions in which democracy’s opponents re-described the past, painting a picture of decline from the battle of Marathon to the decadence of the current radical democracy.

Ancestral constitution arguments were presented across a range of historical and theoretical literary genres, namely Isocrates (*Areopagiticus*), Plato (*Menexenus, Laws*), and Xenophon (*Lacedaemonion Politeia*), as they contested the traditional self-representation of democratic Athens in oral genres, such as the annual public funeral speech ([Lysias] 2).

Developments in historiographical methodology permit more sophisticated readings of this literature. Gehrke’s concept of ‘intentional history’ (*Mythos, Geschichte, Politik*, 1994) particularly applies to narratives generated by self-governing communities such as the Greek polis, and provides a means to analyse the appropriation and re-invention of history, or the incorporation of myth into history, for political ends.

Another methodology for analysing these narratives is as political myth, following Castoriadis (*Imaginary Institution of Society*, 1987) and others. This approach is attractive for understanding ancient political thought, as it provides a framework within which alternative histories can be more easily assessed alongside myth in other genres, particularly Athenian tragedy, which was a principal means by which Athenians explored and contested their ‘imaginary’.

With these methodologies one can explore how Athenians incorporated myth into history and created alternative narratives of the city’s past to support values linked to anti-democratic positions, challenging the legitimacy of the current regime and undermining its philosophical underpinnings.

Alternative Narratives, Repetition and the Future of the Augustan Principate
Andrew Stiles (University of Oxford)

This paper will explore the fragility of the historiography of the early Principate. It will focus on two potential ‘successors’ to Augustus – Germanicus Caesar and Agrippa Postumus – to examine how they came to represent ‘alternatives’ to the scenario in which Tiberius became *princeps*. In some instances, these ‘successors’ embodied the imagined ‘alternative futures’ desired by various opposition groups in an almost metonymic manner – as symbols, they could later be used by authors such as Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio, to shape their works and hint at alternative narratives.

The virtues and vices of the ancestral ‘archetypes’ of key figures in the early Principate could be manipulated with a particular agenda in mind, to ‘explain’ contemporary events in such a
way as to make them intelligible, in a changing political environment. For example, despite the fact that Tiberius and Germanicus (his nephew) had ancestors in common, in the Tacitean account the traditional Claudian vice of superbia, which can be traced back to Appius Claudius Caecus (censor 312 BC), is applied only to Tiberius and not Germanicus. On the other hand, Germanicus and his father the elder Drusus receive the ‘republican sentiments’ of Tiberius Claudius Nero senior – which are not passed on to Tiberius.

While this exemplary mode in Roman historiography stretched far back into the Republic (if not to its possible origins on the stage), what is especially interesting with these two cases is the manner in which two members of the domus Augusta were used as focal points for opposition (of various kinds) both before and after their deaths. The ‘alternative futures’ they had come to represent could still be ‘realised’, to some extent, through forms of ‘repetition’, such as children or pretenders. ‘Repetition’ and ‘metonymy,’ therefore, probably played a role in articulating political opposition at the time, and more certainly, had a part to play in the construction of opposition in later historical narratives, and in establishing causal links between the ‘past,’ ‘present’ and ‘future.’

The Significance of the Maiestas Laws in Julio-Claudian and Flavian Historiography

Lesley Ryan (University of Liverpool)

This paper examines the influence of the Maiestas laws on our historiographical sources and the historians’ motivations when discussing the Julio-Claudian and Flavian principates. My starting point is the treatment of Titus in our sources. Why is he the only emperor not to be accused of murdering his predecessor and why is his death then handled with sympathy? What stands out is that the historiographical evidence shows Titus to have dismissed the Maiestas laws and under his reign no senators were executed. This contrasts with their accounts of the other Julio-Claudian emperors and Domitian, who are all shown to allow informers to prosper under the principate and to have used non-legitimate means such as murder and conspiracy to secure their successions. Therefore, my paper will argue that a historian’s methodology and motivations depended on an emperor’s use of the Maiestas laws and subsequently the senate. I will argue this by demonstrating how the accounts of Titus’ accession and death contrast significantly with those of his predecessors and successor. I will then demonstrate how Titus’ treatment of the Maiestas laws separates him from the other emperors, which accounts for his positive portrayal in historiography.

My argument builds on previous scholarship concerning the significance of the treatment of the senate, but I place greater focus on the importance of Titus’ reign. The previous discussions of which I am focusing are that of Bauman (1967, 1974) and Rogers (1933), but I am taking a different approach by using a sociological and political methodology in my research, in comparison to their purely historical and legalistic approaches. Secondary to my focus on Maiestas, I will also briefly evaluate the significance of other possible motives, such a moralistic methodology (as argued by Mellor, 1993), and the possibility that Titus may have been glorified in order to further demonise his predecessor, and apparent murderer, Domitian.
To Burn the Royal Palace at Leisure Re-assessing Historiography on Early 17th Century Mexico

Angela Ballone (University of Liverpool)

This Paper postulates that an examination of the various reactions of the metropolitan court of Madrid and the vice-regal court of Mexico City to the so-called “Tumult of Mexico”, 1624, calls into question the hitherto widely-accepted notion that a well developed Creole community was already in existence in the early seventeenth century.

Fresh analysis of official documentation exchanged between Madrid and Mexico City reveals that the implementation of the *peninsulares-criollos* dichotomy is far from straightforward for the early part of the Colonial Period and invites a re-assessment of those traditional historiographical approaches, perhaps most notably championed by J.I Israel and D. Brading, that seek to present a self-conscious Creole (national) identity as differentiated from the Peninsular (Spanish) identity.

A detailed consideration of the period of conflict in Mexico during the first half of the seventeenth century shows, contrary to what Israel and others suggest, a clear predominance of Peninsulars as opposed to Creoles. In particular, the concept of royal authority was freely adapted to fit different cases and political schemes regardless of strictly “Peninsular” or “Creole” agendas.

This Paper proposes that interpretations of contemporary events surrounding the Tumult have been cast in the mould of “proto-nationalistic” sentiments that have more to do with the Latin American independence period than with a close reading of the primary sources, due attention being paid to the language therein used.
Comic Productions and Popular Opinion: An insight into Agricultural Development in Italy During the 2nd Century BC
Eleanor Reeve (University of Oxford)

The nature and extent of social and demographic change in Italy during the 2nd century BC has long been an issue of debate, with increases in urbanisation and in the commercialisation of agriculture a particular point of contention for historians (for example Toynbee (1965); Brunt (1971); Gabba (1989); Cornell (1996); Roselaar (2010)). While there seems little scope to reconcile scholars’ differing view points on the basis of current archaeological and historiographical evidence, the value of literary sources from this period has yet to be fully considered.

My paper will offer a re-appraisal of this debate in the light of evidence from Roman Comedy, highlighting the importance of these literary sources and providing a case study of the particular insight which they can provide. Building on the approach of Leigh (2004), which emphasised the connection between comic plays and their historical context, this paper will focus upon the works of Plautus, Terence and the fragmentary fabulae togatae over roughly a 60 year period (c.210-150 B.C.). It will consider the profound concern which these comedies express over contemporary changes in the countryside: Plautus offers reflections on the Sicilian grain tithe and the impact of increasing grain imports on the city of Rome; the development of large, commercialised estates is treated in both Plautine and Terentian comedy; the growing phenomenon of absenteeism recurs frequently, and the figure of the slave-manager becomes something of a stock type; rural dialect and the patterns of rural-urban migration become figures of fun.

Comedy’s evidence, it will be concluded, strongly suggests that popular opinion saw these developments as dramatic in pace and vast in scale: an assessment which finds parallels in our historiographical sources, but is an overall contrast to archaeological findings. The discrepancy between this popular opinion and the actual situation on the ground may well underlie much of the conflicting evidence which continues to fuel this significant debate.

The Growth of Neoliberalism and the Study of the Ancient Economy
Mathew Hobson (University of Leicester)

This paper addresses the impact of the growing influence of neo-liberalism on the study of the economic history of the Roman period (Harvey, 2007; Howard and King, 2008). Subtle shifts and changes in approach over the last thirty years have resulted in a radically different agenda currently being adopted by ancient historians to that of the 1970’s (Finley, 1985). A range of modern economic concepts, once deemed inappropriate for application to the ancient world, have been implemented. First, those that tend to smooth over and ignore social inequalities: per capita income, per capita growth, GDP, and so on (Hopkins, 1980, 1983, 2002); and second, those that have been adopted wholesale from the current brand of economic imperialism practiced by international organisations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund: Human Development Indices (HDIs) being the most significant recent addition (Scheidel, 2010a,b; Silver, 2007).
Aligning itself with a recent brand of American economic history that evolved from the “cliometrics revolution” of the 1960’s (The New Institutional Economics), the stated aim of the recent Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World (Scheidel et al., 2007) is to compare the structure and performance of economies of different historical epochs. This has manifested itself in the use of the aforementioned quantitative approaches, as well as an interest in finding possible proxies for economic growth; the number of shipwrecks recorded through time, or alterations in the quantity of pollution in the ice-core data, for example.

Here I try to argue that, as well as there being many obvious weaknesses to this new brand of economic history, serious internal contradictions have arisen in recent works that profess to be post-colonial in outlook whilst maintaining much of this neo-colonial/neo-liberal conceptual framework (Faulkner 2008).

**Arrian’s Tactic Between Greece and Rome**
Anna Bussetto (Roma Tre University)

In A.D. 137 Arrian wrote the *Ars Tactica* (Τέχνη τακτική), a military treatise consisting of two parts. The first concerns the organization, formation and drill of a Hellenistic phalanx, and seems to follow a conventional literary trend (represented by Asclepiodotus’ and Aelian’s works). The second part (chapters 32, 2 – 44, 3) is a unicum in the survey of Greek and Latin military writers; here Arrian describes Roman cavalry exercises at the age of Hadrian, with exceptional accuracy and exactness. These elements lead us to believe that Arrian’s interest in the subject was not due just to his admiration for Xenophon (author of *Ipparchicus*), but even to his likely relationship with Hadrian, to whom the treatise may have been dedicated. The second part of the *Ars Tactica* shows similarities (as for the subject and terminology) with the *Hadlocutio Adriani*, an epigraphical registration of a speech the emperor delivered in Lambaesis (Algery).

The *Tactic* is contained in the *codex Laurentianus* LV.4, the “preserved archetype” of the manuscript tradition of Arrian’s, Aelian’s and Asclepiodotus’ treatises and the most important testimonium for ancient and Byzantine military authors. Due to its seemingly disjointed structure and lack of references in ancient literature, the second part of the *Tactic* was neglected by scholars of Humanism up to the modern era. However, even if it was excluded from the first modern translation – by Vincenzo Racchetti (1809) – and from the first edition of Köchly and Rüstow’s *Griechische Kriegschriftsteller* (1853), a thorough analysis reveals that it can bear a unique witness on Roman military history of the second century A.D.

**Ementiri in monumentis: Arguments in Architectural “History**
John Oksanish (Wake Forest University)

Vitruvius’ *De architectura* offers an unexpected, but valuable lens through which to approach ancient historiography. Not only do Vitruvian monuments and the *De architectura* share historiography’s memorializing function (memorias posteris tradere, et sim. D.A. 1. Pref.3; 1.1.5; cf. Livy. 29.14.9, etc.), but Vitruvius also concerns himself explicitly with historia as an element in the architect’s training. Indeed, Vitruvius’ “history” of the Caryatids suggests that exemplary value, not accuracy, motivates architects who want to “make history” for Augustus—even if that means violating natural, rational, and aesthetic truth in the process.
To explain why an architect must have familiarity with *plures historiae*, Vitruvius narrates the sack of Carya, a Peloponnesian city that was justly punished for its medizing by its fellow Greeks (*D.A.* 1.1.5). This unique account, which supports Vitruvius’ aetiology of the Caryatids, has long interested historians of the Peloponnesian War and art alike. Some scholars have tried to redeem chronological problems in the passage, but even well-disposed readers accuse Vitruvius of historical inaccuracy. The error, however, lies with those who disregard Vitruvius’ admission that his Caryan tale is not *historia*, but rather *argumentum*, defined by rhetorical handbooks as “*ficta res, quae tamen fieri potuit*” (*Inv.* 1.27, *Her.* 1.13; cf. Callebat (1994) on Vitruvius’ rhetorical lexicon). By acknowledging Vitruvius’ “technical” use of *argumentum* in this discussion of architects and *historia*, we corroborate recent suggestions that Vitruvius’ monuments are distinctively textual and moreover imply active efforts at controlling reception (Lowrie (2009) and Oksanish *Diss.* (2011)). Because Vitruvius’ Caryatids violate his notorious ban on decorative surrealism (*D.A.* 4.2.5-6; 7.5.6-7), they expose even “natural” truth as expendable when important *exempla* (e.g., of punished traitors) are at stake.
Oracular Consultation and the Historian: (re)writing Authority
Jan Haywood (university of Liverpool)

Oracles appear frequently in Herodotus’ *Histories*. From his Croesus *logos* in book one (1.46-91, *passim*), to his account of Athens’ decision to flee Attica and fight at Salamis in book seven (7.139-144), Herodotus typically incorporates mantic sessions at crucial junctures in his monumental work. And in contrast to his capricious use of other sources, such as poetry and inscriptions, Herodotus is considerably more willing to cite the specific oracular text that has helped inform his painstaking research into others’ “great and marvelous deeds” (cf. proem).

Indeed, recent analyses into Herodotus’ use of oracles have focused acutely on the manner in which the narrator crafts individual *logoi* around certain oracle stories, thus eliciting a profound moralistic, historiographical, or even political point to his reader (see esp. Kindt (2006), Barker (2006), Kurke (2009), Hollmann (2011)). But while such investigations have richly improved our understanding of the historian’s sophisticated use of oracular texts, it remains underappreciated the extent to which Herodotus conspicuously attempts to overcome the hermeneutic challenges presented by some of the more arcane prophetic messages (e.g. the Lichas episode, 1.65-68; the Siphnian oracle, 3.57-8). Moreover it has not been fully articulated in contemporary scholarship how far Herodotus intentionally contributes to the textualisation—and in turn reification—of an array of (predominantly hexametric) oracular verses.

In what follows, then, I shall discuss further the subtle textures of Herodotus’ presentation of oracular texts and oracle stories, illustrating how, and indeed why, they act as an effective tool in his quest to write the definitive inquiry into the recent hostilities between Greeks and non-Greeks.

Tragedy and Rhetoric in Hellenistic Historiography
Scott Farrington (University of Miami)

This paper offers a re-examination of Polybius’s conception of tragic history, a label Polybius applies to any historical narrative that is intended to deceive the reader through emotional manipulation. I argue that only the method of this type of history is tragic; its aim is rhetorical. An analysis of Polybius’s conception of tragic history shows that he is following a rhetorical tradition of literary criticism that can be traced to the fourth-century.

Polybius considers tragic histories false because they include invented elements that excite the reader’s emotions and render critical reasoning impossible. Phylarchus’s tall tales and invented speeches stun and delude the reader. By preventing the acquisition of a true understanding of the past, tragic history cannot impart the primary benefit of historical study: moral and practical instruction.

Polybius describes the nature of tragic history as ignoble, womanish, and preoccupied with lamentation. Remarkably, Plato uses the same vocabulary to describe tragedy in the *Republic*. Like Polybius, he asserts that tragedy distresses the emotions, makes reasoning impossible, and impedes moral and practical education. Polybius’s description of the
elements of tragic history, however, such as its vivid portrayals of peripeteiai, recalls Aristotelian thought. Nevertheless, Polybius and Aristotle differ in one important respect; tragic history arouses pity and anger, but anger is incompatible with Aristotle’s tragic emotions of pity and fear.

From the fourth century onward, the combination of pity and anger is associated with rhetoric. Polybius rejects tragic history because it arouses these emotions in order to deceive the reader and pass off mendacious narratives as true. Similarly, he attacks Zeno and Fabius for legitimizing their histories through appeals to their own characters, and he denounces Timaeus for seeking credibility through the power of language. These observations admit the conclusion that Polybius uniformly directs his polemic toward attempts to disguise falsehood in historiography by employing pathetic, ethical, and logical appeals.

Truth and Rivalry in the Greek Historians

Alexander Meeus (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

In the introduction of his ‘Against Apion’ (1.15-18), Flavius Josephus notes how Greek historians were constantly refuting the works of their predecessors, claiming that they alone presented a truthful account of the past. Indeed, as Marincola (1997) put it, “nearly every ancient historian seeks to portray himself as a lonely seeker of truth, as the only one who has somehow understood the historian’s proper task, while his predecessors (as he will frequently remind us) failed in the effort”. Moreover, it is clear that historians often misrepresented the works of their predecessors or exaggerated certain features of them in order to show how they had failed to establish the truth, as Ctesias and Plutarch for instance did with Herodotus (Bigwood 1980; Brunt 1980) or Polybius with Timaeus (Baron 2009).

We can draw two rather paradoxical conclusions from this polemical tradition. First of all, as has perhaps not been yet stressed sufficiently, it shows very well that the quest for truth was considered to be at the heart of the historian’s task (no longer the most obvious points since Woodman 1988, but see also Vercruysse 1990). Second, we should be most careful in using such polemical testimonia about disregard for the truth as straightforward evidence about the nature of the works of lost historians. In combination with fragments that have often also been selected for polemical reasons or for their curious or marvelous nature (cf. e.g. Lenfant 1999), such testimonia could indeed give us a very misleading image of a lost historian. One may wonder for instance whether Duris, called a “homo in historia diligens” by Cicero (Att. 6.1.18), has not suffered too much from the effect of polemical testimonia about his reliability combined with fragments that were selected (most of them by Plutarch and Athenaeus) because of their marvellous or gossipy nature. It seems that the phenomenon of what Meister (1973-1974) has called “absurde Polemik” in Diodorus, i.e. to constantly criticize one’s main source for its lack of reliability, may well have been a much more widespread practice that is rhetorical rather than just absurd. In as far as time permits the paper will also reflect on the paradox between both conclusions, and what it means for our understanding of Greek historiography.
Writing Ancient Battle: The Case of the Teutoberg
Joanne Ball (University of Liverpool)

In A.D. 9 three Roman legions commanded by Quinctilius Varus were destroyed by a coalition of Germanic tribes under the command of Arminius, an ex-Roman auxiliary. The Battle of the Teutoberg effectively ended Roman expansion into northern Germany, with a lasting impact on the face of both ancient and modern Europe. Both the battle and Arminius have been central themes in Germanic culture, from art and literature to German nationalism and Nazi propaganda. The prominence of this battle in German culture and scholarship is not a consequence merely of the event itself, though the defeat of a Roman army is unusual, it is certainly not unique. The actual events of the battle had been little understood prior to archaeological work on the battlefield from 1987- the battle itself is poorly documented in the ancient sources, where only Dio provides a narrative account (Dio 56.18-24).

Previous work on the reception of the Teutoberg has examined its symbolism and place in Germanic national culture from the medieval period through to the modern, but has not considered how these factors have affected the interpretation of the actual battle itself. This paper will address the impact of changing academic and political agenda on the study, writing, and exploitation of the Battle of the Teutoberg. This will consider how the narrative accounts and historical analysis of the battle have changed over time, and how they were affected by contemporary politics. It will then explore how the past associations and historiography of the battle have affected modern interpretations, both in the Germanic and non-Germanic academic world, and how this has been influenced by the recent developments in theoretical historiography. This will contribute to a greater understanding of the impact of outside influences on the historiography of individual events in the ancient world.

Possessing the Barbarian Past: Nationalist Constructions of pre-Roman Legacy in Spain
Tomás Aguilera-Durán (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

Throughout the modern and contemporary era some recurrent issues, episodes and characters of the ancient past of the Iberian Peninsula have been used to construct the problematic idea of a “Spanish Nation”. While the Tartessos myth was the symbol of the primal origin of its civilization and kingship, the northern and western peoples represented the genuine and uncorrupted essence of an imagined Spanish race; from the 16th century onwards Viriathus and the “martyrs” of Numantia and Saguntum became national heroes for their resistance against the Carthaginian and Roman conquests. In the 19th century these, and other less known topics about the wars of conquest and the idealized primitivism of these peoples, were exalted in a recognisably nationalistic and romantic shape and adopted into new ways of artistic, literary and historiographical expression similar to that of Gauls in France, ancient Germans in Germany or Celts in the British Isles.
The racial and political radicalization of discourse on nationality in the early 20th century wavered between fascist and socialist ideology, culminating during Franco’s dictatorial regime. New popular and political interests about these issues have emerged in recent decades, in the construction of a democratic state based on a system of autonomous regions, and new diversity of local and regional myths have been devised and reinvented. This paper analyses the complexity and evolution of the appropriation of pre-Roman past in configuring Spanish nationalism.

**Convivencia: Is it Dead Yet?**

Jonathan Wilson (University of Liverpool)

*Convivencia* denotes the peaceful coexistence of Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities in medieval Iberia and their cultural interchanges. Entering into circulation in the late 1940s as the central issue in a debate on Spanish identity, *convivencia* has more recently been championed by those seeking to offer medieval Iberia as a model of multicultural harmony and torch of hope in a contemporary world drowning in sectarian bloodshed. In the last decade, two popular paperbacks are outstanding for propelling this vision: María Rosa Menocal’s *The Ornament of the World* and Chris Lowney’s *A Vanished World*.

However, away from the broad brush-strokes of populist formulations, and after half a century of academic soul-searching, there is an increasing sense that *convivencia*’s days are numbered. Indeed, for many, it is the pariah in medieval Iberian studies. This paper briefly examines the changing fortunes of *convivencia* and asks if there is still a place for it in the lexicon of present-day historiography.
Thucydides and Religion: A Narratological Interpretation

Vasileios Liotsakis (Aristotle University, Thessaloniki)

One of the most important steps of Thucydidean research, which has led to its present state of maturity, was the realisation that Thucydides’ Historiae are both science and fiction. This change of our perspective has brought, over recent decades, several narratological studies. Such studies, in turn, have led to new interpretations of the Alimousian’s thought and proposed new solutions for difficult issues of the Historiae, which purely historical approaches had not so far managed to solve [e.g. the debate on the (in)completeness of the eighth book].

In the present paper I focus on an equally important issue of Thucydidean research, the religious aspect of the work, from a narratological point of view. So far, scholars have tried to detect seeds of faith as well as of atheism within Thucydides’ work, based primarily on his personal comments on oracles, natural phenomena etc., rather than on narrative schemes. However, personal judgments are not the only element which can help us see Thucydides’ true religious face. He possessed an already shaped narrative background of religious character inherited from his predecessor Herodotus. He was, therefore, well aware of the fact that, just like Herodotus, he himself was able to colour his narration through a metaphysical style by using certain techniques. These Herodotean techniques were well known, not only to Thucydides himself, but also to his audience; his contemporaries may have understood the religious messages of his narrative more than we do today. The comparison of texts of the two historians reveals that Thucydides occasionally follows Herodotus, in order to integrate the factor of religion into the plot, as the events unfold.

On Schopenhauer Against History, Historicism, and Hegel

David Woods (University of Southampton)

This paper aims to identify the best explanation for the all but complete absence of reverence for the significance of history in the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, despite the fact that a new historical sense characterized much of the philosophy of his time (Fichte, Schelling, and above all Hegel), as well as of the 19th century generally (Kant, Herder, Nietzsche, Marx, etc.). Evidence for this explanation is drawn partially from Schopenhauer’s general philosophy and partially from his outspoken criticisms of his contemporaries. It is found that there emerges a number of categories of reasons for opposition to the introduction of a historical awareness into philosophy. These range from the philosophically uninteresting, such as Schopenhauer’s personal grievances against his contemporaries; through the politically interesting, wherein Schopenhauer suggests links between the new historical turn in philosophy and the control of the reigning Prussian state (a suggestion not taken seriously until the later work of Karl Popper); to the historiographically interesting, such as Schopenhauer’s attempted arguments for why history cannot possibly aspire to the cognitive value of such disciplines as the arts and the natural sciences, from the perspective of universalisability; and the philosophically interesting, in which Schopenhauer raises concerns about the moral objectionability of the prevailing historical spirit, particularly in the form of
the spurious and sophistic theodicy that he takes Hegelian historicism and historiography to constitute.

The scholarly outcome of the paper is a new perspective on Schopenhauer’s attitude towards history and the philosophy of history, according to which, Schopenhauer did not merely overlook or become ignorant to the spirit of his times, but instead conscientiously resisted it. The philosophical outcome is a considerable proposal for the various objective limitations on the scope of history as a discipline, as an object of philosophy and finally as a means of philosophy.

Hellenistic Biography and the Right Way of Life: the Nature of Works On Lives
Gertjan Verhasselt (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

Biography is a new historiographical genre that emerged in the Hellenistic period. One flourishing type was called On Lives. The nature of this subgenre remains debated, however: some assume it to be a collection of biographies, whereas others believe that it was a philosophical type of work. This discussion arises from the fragmentary preservation of most Hellenistic biographical works (and Hellenistic historiography in general). I shall attempt to clarify the position of works On Lives by discussing how they tackle the question of the right way of life. This popular question in Hellenistic philosophy revolved around the three ways of life as distinguished by Aristotle, viz. the life of pleasure, the philosophical life and the political life. A connection with biography was probably facilitated by the polysemy of the Greek word bios, which could mean “life”, “biography” and “way of life”.

The main representative of works On Lives was the Peripatetic Clearchus of Soli. The fragments of his work primarily treat the life of pleasure, for which he adduced examples of decadence of both individuals and nations. Other representatives included Epicurus and the Stoic Chrysippus, whose fragments are more clearly philosophical in nature. Most controversial is the position of the Peripatetic Dicaearchus of Messene, who is known to have defended the political life. If his biographical fragments (on the Seven Sages, Pythagoras and Plato) belonged to his work On Lives, as is usually assumed, this would support the hypothesis that such works consisted of biographies. However, I contest such an attribution for several fragments. Based on the information gathered from works On Lives, I shall try to assess their historiographical value and define the relation with other types of Hellenistic biography. This may lead to a better understanding of the interrelation between historiography, biography and philosophy.

Horace’s Historiae: Lyric Historiography and Mythmaking
Ian Goh (University of Cambridge)

Horace tells his patron Maecenas in Odes 2.12 to write up the battles of Augustus Caesar in pedestribus ... historis, ‘prose histories’ (C. 2.12.9-10). This paper compares these historiae with the only other use of the word historia in Horace’s Odes, denoting those supposedly told to Gyges in Odes 3.7, when his deserted girlfriend Asterie is consoled that he is not unfaithful. The argument extends to Odes 2.1, whose addressee Pollio has given up tragedy to write his history of the civil wars.
In poetry and grammatical works *historia* can imply myth as well as factual narrative, and I argue that Horace exploits the term’s slipperiness. Maecenas is known as an author for arch, effeminate poetry, which makes Horace’s injunction that he write history an unlikely prospect. *Pedester* can suggest pedestrian dullness, far removed from the lyricist’s charisma; Horace continues by serenading Maecenas’ wife Terentia under the pseudonym *Licymnia*. The *historiae* in *Odes* 3.7 are stories about heroes who resisted the charms of women intent on adultery (Gyges is apparently being seduced by his host’s wife). The *Odes* 2.12 use of the same term *historia* forces us to reread the lyricist’s rejection of prose history subversively, as the creation of an Augustan mythology.

A mythographic work by Nicolaus of Damascus, the biographer of Augustus and contemporary of Horace, apparently called *Historiae*, has been linked with several aspects of *Odes* 3.7. The implication for the history Maecenas is challenged to write and the one Pollio has already begun is that not only can Horace usurp their authority by writing history himself in lyric, but recent military history is not remote from myth-based tragedy. I conclude by arguing that Horace’s references to Pollio’s insistence on eyewitness accounting explode Cicero’s rhetorical strictures about the separation of *historia* and untrue *fabula* (*de Inv.* 1.27).