

## EDITORIAL

In periods of major geopolitical upheavals, history acquires an intensified significance. Moments of profound political and social transformation compel societies to return to their foundations, to revisit the narratives through which they have understood themselves and others, and to reconsider the historical experiences that continue to shape the present. In such circumstances, history is not simply a record of what has happened. It becomes an active field of contestation in which questions of identity, legitimacy, responsibility, memory, and political belonging are articulated. With increasing urgency, one question returns: *whose history are we dealing with?* This question is neither merely political nor historiographical. It is, at its core, epistemological. The contemporary proliferation of historical narratives makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish between historical inquiry and the ideological uses of the past. Historical narratives may conceal ideological assumptions, political interests, collective fears, and aspirations, while ideology itself frequently presents its claims in the language of history. The past can therefore become a resource for legitimizing present positions, establishing genealogies of belonging, constructing antagonisms, or assigning responsibility. The task of historical thought is consequently not exhausted by the accumulation and interpretation of evidence. It also requires a critical examination of the conditions under which the past becomes intelligible as history.

For the philosopher and theorist of history, this creates a distinctive responsibility. Philosophy of history must continuously undertake a work of critical filtration: not in the sense of seeking an impossible history purified of every perspective, but by identifying the conceptual, ideological, linguistic, and political structures through which historical experience is transformed into narrative. Such work requires attentiveness both to the narratives themselves and to what may remain concealed, excluded, or rendered inaudible within them. It requires asking not only what history is being told, but also what makes this history possible, what it presupposes, and what forms of experience it leaves outside its field of vision. This critical task becomes particularly important at the intersection of history and catastrophe. Genocides, wars, forced migrations, imperial violence, and other forms of collective destruction confront historical representation with experiences that resist easy narration. They challenge the adequacy of established conceptual frameworks and expose the distance between an event as experienced and an event as subsequently narrated. To study past catastrophes is therefore not simply to reconstruct an empirical sequence of events. It is also to investigate the possibilities and limits of historical understanding itself: how suffering becomes testimony, how

memory becomes narrative, how silence acquires historical meaning, and how the remnants of violence continue to inhabit subsequent generations. Yet the philosophical significance of historical inquiry is not confined to modern catastrophes. Research into the ancient world can perform an equally important function. The temporal distance separating us from antiquity does not make the ancient past irrelevant to the present; rather, it can provide a productive estrangement from contemporary assumptions. To encounter distant forms of political organization, religious experience, social order, temporality, or conceptions of the human is to encounter possibilities that may illuminate what appears self-evident in our own age. The ancient and the modern thus belong to a common hermeneutical field: each can become a means through which the other is rendered more intelligible. In this sense, historical research is ultimately directed not only toward the past but toward a deeper understanding of the present. We return to genocides because their consequences have not disappeared. We study ancient societies because their difference allows us to question our own categories. We examine historical narratives because the ways in which we represent the past influence the ways in which we inhabit the present and imagine the future. History becomes, therefore, neither a repository of examples nor a mere instrument of collective memory. It becomes a mode of critical self-understanding.

*Historia: Philosophy & Theory* is conceived as a space for precisely this kind of critical inquiry. The journal seeks to bring philosophy, theory, historiography, and interdisciplinary approaches into productive dialogue, while remaining attentive to the conceptual problems raised by historical experience itself. Its aim is not to establish a single authoritative perspective on history, but to encourage reflection on the conditions, possibilities, and limits of historical knowledge. The present issue is offered in this spirit, with the hope that it will contribute, however modestly, to the difficult and necessary work of understanding our historical present.

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