Why did analytical philosophy of history disappear? Three narratives of decline

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CHAPTER 2

Why Did Analytical Philosophy of History Disappear? Three Narratives of Decline

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Introduction

Once upon a time, philosophy of history in the English-speaking world was near-synonymous with a debate on the pros and cons of the covering-law model of historical explanation. In the 1950s and 1960s, dozens of books and articles examined what the model such as proposed by Carl G. Hempel entailed, why historians should, or rather should not, use law-like generalizations in explaining past events, and how the model could be revised, as some deemed necessary, so as to account for exceptions on rules and reasons that differ from causes. If philosophy of history in especially North America has ever had a more or less shared focus—not something as robust as a 'paradigm' or 'research program', but at least a common ground of debate—it was in the decades following the publication of Hempel's paper, "The Function of General Laws in History" (Hempel 1942). In the long run, however, this turned out a mixed blessing. When the editors of *History and Theory*, founded in 1960, discovered that the first volumes of their journal almost read like a series of theme issues on the covering-law model and its critics, they declared the subject to be exhausted "except as a first-year seminar exercise for graduate students" (Vann 1995, p. 48).

Half to three-quarters of a century later, not only the covering-law model, but the entire field once known as analytical philosophy of history is generally considered a thing of the past. This can easily be inferred from a content analysis of *History and Theory*. Initially, 'explanation' made way for 'narrative' and 'language', partly though not exclusively in response to Hayden V. White's *Metahistory* (1973), which editor Louis O. Mink described as a "book around which all reflective historians must reorganize their thoughts" (Fay, Golob & Vann 1987, p. 22). Over the years, however, diversity in themes and approaches increased to the point of making philosophers of history wonder where the days of shared problems and shared goals had gone. If the programmatic pieces included in the fiftieth anniversary issue of *History and Theory* (2010) are any example to judge by, the field nowadays known as "historical theory" (Klein 2011) seems united only by a common determination not to practice

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philosophy of history in ways too reminiscent of Hempel, W.B. Gallie, Arthur C. Danto, Alan Donagan, Morton White, and Leon Goldstein (with Rigney 2010 as a possible exception, given that her article builds quite extensively on Danto's "narrative sentences").

Interestingly, at some occasions, this felt distance to analytical philosophy of history as it flourished in the mid-twentieth century is made explicit, typically in one of three different ways. One marker of distance is a phrase like "post-analytic philosophy of history". Whatever this umbrella category contains, its post-prefix clearly conveys that the days of analytical philosophy of history are supposed to be over (Skodo 2009). Another hard to miss sign are calls for revival of analytical philosophy of history such as issued by Paul A. Roth. Calls for revival obviously presuppose a perceived decline: they are premised on the assumption that analytical philosophy of history does not currently receive the interest it deserves (Roth 2017). Finally, there are stories of "decline and fall", which trace in greater or less detail how philosophy of history of the sort once practiced by Hempel and his critics in the 1970s virtually disappeared from the academic scene (e.g., Danto 1995).

In this chapter, I will analyze three of these narratives of decline in the light of two questions that are increasingly receiving scholarly attention. The first question is: On what grounds do people—in our case, philosophers of history—distinguish between 'past' and 'present'? What is it that makes them regard some philosophical debates as belonging to the past and others to the present (Fasolt 2004; Lorenz & Bevernage 2013)? Secondly, once such past-present divides are established, what sort of "past-present relations" or "relations with the past" do people then maintain? Is their interest in the past primarily an epistemic one or is it motived instead by political, moral, economic, or religious concerns? In other words, what is it that people situated in the present expect from what they regard as the past (Day 2008; Phillips 2013; Paul 2015)? In our case: How do philosophers of history position themselves vis-à-vis analytical philosophy of history as it flourished in the mid-twentieth century United States?

The three narratives that serve as my case studies come from different American authors, writing in different decades. The first dates from 1969 and is a polemical address by Hayden White, by then still a young *enfant terrible* in American philosophy of history. The second narrative comes in two versions, dated 1985 and 1995, and emerged from the pen of Arthur Danto, the philosopher of history who gradually turned into a philosopher of art. Finally, I will examine Paul Roth's recent call for revival of analytical philosophy of history, such as issued most explicitly in a 2013 article on Thomas Kuhn. Although these narratives have some features in common, most striking is how differently they position themselves vis-à-vis analytical philosophy of history

(on the definition and scope of which they disagree in the first place), mainly as a result of their diverging assessments of what, if anything, is 'past' about the analytical tradition.

Consequently, this chapter does not offer anything like an explanation of the decline of analytical philosophy of history. Rather, it analyzes how philosophers of history themselves have represented its history in narrative key. Neither does this chapter suggest that White, Danto, and Roth have been key figures in bringing about a 'post-analytical' turn in philosophy of history. It does not even offer a definition of analytical philosophy of history, given that the narratives it purports to analyze portray this tradition in different ways. The focus will be strictly on narratives of decline such as told by three American philosophers of history. My question is not what happened to Hempel's legacy, but what happens when philosophers of history locate themselves at various levels of distance from "the world according to Hempel" (Danto 1995, pp. 75–76). My questions are: What sort of past-present distinctions do these philosophers make and what sort of past-present relations do their distinctions serve?

Hayden V. White

In April 1969, York University in Toronto hosted a conference attended by a broad selection of North American philosophers of history now associated with the analytical movement. Its sessions focused on such typically analytical topics as "action and purpose in history and the social sciences" (N. N. 1969, p. 322). Yet the keynote address delivered on the opening evening by Hayden White, the then UCLA-based historian cum philosopher of history, was not exactly a vindication of the analytical tradition. To the contrary, it was one long assault on a movement that White accused of ideological bias and deliberate blindness to the one big question facing historians and philosophers alike: How to contribute "to the salvation of the human *species* which it is our duty as thinkers to serve" (White 1973, p. 53)?

The principal target of White's criticism that evening was the foundational distinction between "analytical" and "speculative" philosophies of history. Supposedly, this was an epistemological distinction between knowledge that could and could not be falsified. Thus, Hempel's claim that historians provide "explanatory sketches" counted as analytical because it could be shown to be wrong on empirical grounds, while Karl Marx's claim that class struggle will culminate in a communist revolution was regarded as speculative, because the future is as yet unknown. White, however, in the best tradition of 1960s ideology criticism, argued that this distinction was saturated with ideological baggage.

More specifically, he told his Toronto audience that the distinction served conservative purposes by discrediting the 'prophetism' of the 'metahistorian' as 'unrealistic' (White 1973, p. 42). Yet who is entitled and on what grounds, to decide what is 'realistic', White continued? Isn't the quarrel between analytical and speculative philosophers of history, among other things, a quarrel about the question who can determine the rules for what counts as 'realistic'? And if so, then isn't the 'proper' or 'ordinary' mode of historical realism privileged in the analytical tradition as 'metahistorical' (in the sense of relying on unfalsifiable views on the nature of historical reality and the forms historical representation should take) as its more adventurous counterparts?

To add force to his argument, White situated analytical philosophy of history in time and space, thereby highlighting its context-dependency. The field was, first of all, entirely Anglo-American. White explained this under reference to the world wars, which in Great Britain and the United States had not challenged trust in scientific rationality to the same extent as in continental Europe, where the totalitarian experience had given "ethical thought and ontological inquiry a different orientation" (White 1973, p. 49). This had implications for the kind of questions that could be raised about history. Whereas most British and American philosophers of history were content with analyzing historical scholarship as it had come into being in the nineteenth century, their European colleagues generally saw this bourgeois legacy as something "to be destroyed, or revised, or filled with a new content more adequate to a culture threatened by barbarism from within its own confines" (White 1973, p. 49). Consequently, while Europeans had good reasons for being interested in nineteenth-century critics of "proper history", such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche, Anglo-Americans remained stuck in bourgeois anxieties about the potentially unsettling effects that such criticism might have. Ultimately, then, for White, the divide was a political one: "What I am suggesting is that the uniform opposition, not merely to the specific conclusions arrived at by 'metahistorians', but also to their very project, is inspired by a fear among British and American intellectual elites of the revolutionary implications of such projects" (White 1973, p. 48).

Was there a more effective means for criticizing analytical philosophy of history shortly after the 1968 student protests than to emphasize the conservative implications of its political aloofness? Speaking about analytical philosopher Gilbert Ryle, Iris Murdoch once observed that the world of Ryle was one "in which people play cricket, cook cakes, make simple decisions, remember their childhood and go to the circus; not the world in which they commit sins, fall in love, say prayers or join the Communist Party" (Murdoch 1967, p. 42). White ended his Toronto address by quoting this passage (White 1973, p. 52) and

suggesting, with a nod to Marx, that philosophers could no longer be content with leaving the world as they find it. "It is perhaps time now to begin asking whether any intellectual or scholar, philosopher, social scientist, or historian can afford the luxury of ignoring the 'involvement' or 'confrontation' or even 'relevance' of the sort that militant social reformers are (legitimately) demanding of the academic community all over Western society" (White 1973, p. 53).

All this implied that, for White, analytical philosophy of history belonged to the past—not the chronological past, but the "completed past", which has ceased to be relevant to the present (Paul 2015, pp. 21–23). Ironically, the tradition that had often prided itself on being committed to "modern" standards of rationality now found itself being labeled as "old-fashioned". These were polemical framings, of course, especially in so far as they "othered" alternative traditions so as to make theirs appear as "up to date" (Fabian 1983). Accordingly, if White with much rhetorical embellishment declared the analytical tradition to be *passé*, this offered yet another illustration of Constantin Fasolt's observation that people often claim a place for themselves "in the here-and-now" by holding it "in opposition to the there-and-then" (Fasolt 2004, p. 12). White's performative past-present division was, in other words, as assertive as it could be. The Marxist and existentialist-inspired thinker that was White in the late 1960s relegated the analytical tradition to the past so as to create space for his own "liberation historiography" (Paul 2011).

Arthur C. Danto

Absent in White's Toronto audience was Arthur C. Danto, White's former fellow-student at Wayne State University (where both had studied with William J. Bossenbrook). This was surprising, given that Danto's *Analytical Philosophy of History* (1965), acclaimed in *History and Theory* as "a landmark in contemporary philosophy of history" (Donagan 1967, p. 430), was one of the most significant publications that had recently appeared from within the analytical tradition (Vann 1995, pp. 45–46). Notably, also, Danto's book was based on the very distinction between 'analytical' and 'metahistorical' ('substantive') philosophies of history that White's Toronto lecture sought to undermine (Danto 1965, pp. 1–16). One wonders, therefore, how Danto would have responded to White's accusations. Would he have joined the chronopolitical game (Wallis 1970), as respondent William Dray did in exclaiming that White's "instrumentalist claims" tended "to fall back upon a conception of the nature and status of history" that predated modern differentiations between history and propaganda (Dray 1973, pp. 73, 75)?

Although Danto's immediate response is unknown, the Columbia philosopher followed White's example in historicizing analytical philosophy of history when in 1985 he looked back on his 1960s work. The most important marker of this historicizing impulse was Danto's frequent use of the past tense in referring to *Analytical Philosophy of History*, which he characterized as "a writing with a specific location in time" (Danto 1985, p. xiv). Danto's historicizing, however, differed from White's. First of all, he did not *wish* analytical philosophy of history to become a thing of the past, but *observed* that by the 1980s it had come to be regarded as such. This is not to say that Danto adopted the pose of a passive spectator. From a hindsight perspective, he recognized that *Analytical Philosophy of History*, its title notwithstanding, had contributed to a dismantling of the Hempelian "problematic of the philosophy of history" (Danto 1985, p. x). It had been part of an increasingly iconoclastic mode of rethinking positivist philosophy of science that Danto saw embodied in Norwood Hanson's and Thomas Kuhn's classic studies, *Patterns of Discovery* (1958) and *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962):

> My book is colored by this drama of philosophical transformation. The structure it works with and against were inherited from the philosophy of science as practiced by Hempel, but the spirit of its revisionism and innovation is that of Hanson and of Kuhn, whose book appeared in the same year in which I published "Narrative Sentences"....
>
> DANTO 1985, xii

Hanson and Kuhn, to be sure, had not dissociated themselves from Hempel in the way White dissociated himself from analytical philosophy of history. As Danto was fond of recalling, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* was originally commissioned for the *Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, "a thirty-volume monument to Neo-Positivist thought" (Danto 1985, pp. xi–xii). Just as Kuhn's theory of paradigms had "subverted the enterprise that sponsored it", so Danto believed that his own 1960s work—that on narratives sentences in particular—had contributed to a gradual but steady move "beyond analytical philosophy" (Danto 1985, pp. xii, xiii). Danto's 1985 position vis-à-vis his 1965 book was thus a paradoxical one: he depicted it as an analytical study that had contributed to a vanishing of the very tradition from which it had emerged. Danto therefore less resembled Fasolt's self-assertive boundary setter—"We draw a fence around a part of reality [and] call that the past" (Fasolt 2004, p. 12)—than the conflicted figure once invoked by Frank Ankersmit: a man who realizes with a mixture of guilt and matter-of-factness that he has unintentionally helped destroy a world that he himself inhabited (Ankersmit 2005, pp. 357–358).

This brings us to a second way in which Danto's historicization differed from White's. As Dray observed with unconcealed dismay, White put all his cards on 'relevance', "in the currently fashionable sense of helping us deal more effectively with contemporary social problems" (Dray 1973, pp. 69–70). In White's vocabulary, indeed, 'relevance' was the very opposite of 'detachment' of the sort represented by Jørgen Tesman, Antoine Roquentin, and other (real or fictional) representatives of the historians' professional guild (White 1966). For White, relevance or, more specifically, "relevance to current social problems" (White 1969, p. 606) served as an non-negotiable baseline for responsible scholarship. Danto, by contrast, did not summon philosophers to be 'relevant', but used the term to explain why philosophical positions could be abandoned despite the fact that their truth-value was uncontested (Danto 1985, p. x). Danto, then, defined relevance in distinction from truth, not in opposition to detachment or aloofness.

This is particularly clear from his 1995 essay, "The Decline and Fall of the Analytical Philosophy of History", in which Danto defended Hempel's covering-law model despite the fact that he himself had contributed to its disappearance. "Hempel's theory in fact strikes me still as true. It just stopped being relevant, the way the whole philosophy of history it defined stopped being. It was replaced with a different set of questions, a world in effect, into which it no longer fit" (Danto 1995, p. 85). Unlike truth, relevance for Danto was relative to 'worlds' of philosophical assumptions that resemble Kuhnian paradigms in so far as they determine the agenda of philosophical inquiry. While "the World according to Hempel" had been shaped by a positivist commitment to logic, the world that replaced it, due to Hanson's and Kuhn's interventions, was one in which philosophers understood themselves "as through and through historical" (Danto 1995, pp. 75–76, 85). Consequently, Hempelian philosophers raised different questions and searched for different answers than their Kuhnian successors. For it is 'worlds' that shape "points of view", which in turn define "horizons of relevance" (Danto 1995, p. 79). Relevance, for Danto, thus served as a category of historical analysis that could help explain why Hempel's questions disappeared from the agenda:

> The issues stopped being what the rebel students of 1968 were correct to call "relevant". I recall people saying … "Relevance isn't relevant; truth is". They were wrong. The point of bringing the apparatus of worlds, horizons, and points of view into the discussion is to underscore the relevance of relevance.
>
> DANTO 1995, pp. 84–85

Yet, ironically, despite the fact that Hempel's covering-law model had lost its relevance, Danto's apparatus of worlds, horizons, and points of views was also

intended to illustrate the abiding truth or validity of this now "old-fashioned" model. Notably, his explanation of "the decline and fall of the analytical philosophy of history" neatly followed the template of a covering-law explanation by invoking such laws as "logical positivists are terribly dogmatic", "world-holders are by nature conservative" and "worlds … give way to other worlds through changes in shared points of view" (Danto 1995, pp. 75, 78, 85). Danto thus applied the covering-law model to Hempel himself (Danto 1995, p. 79), thereby unmistakably accepting it as a valid explanatory model.

In terms of past-present relations, this again placed Danto in a somewhat paradoxical position vis-à-vis analytical philosophy of history. Although he firmly located Hempel's world in an "earlier period" in the history of philosophy (Danto 1995, p. 85), thereby highlighting the distance between his own historical location and that of Hempel, Danto added that "there are many beliefs invariant to the two worlds—beliefs which do not change when the worlds change" (Danto 1995, p. 85). Apparently, for Danto, among those stable beliefs was the view that historical explanation can take the form of a covering law explanation. Does that imply that Danto conceived of himself, as an heir to Hempel ("of whom I was extremely fond as a person" [Danto 2007, p. 227]), distances between worlds notwithstanding? Was he, in matters of historical explanation, prepared to "rescue Hempel from his world" (Leone 2006)? Could he perhaps even envision the possibility of reviving parts of the analytical tradition in a world that no longer resembled "the world according to Hempel"?

Paul A. Roth

The need for such a revival has recently been advocated by Paul Roth, a former student of Louis Mink who inherited from his teacher a lively interest in what Danto had called "narrative explanation". Much of Roth's work revolves around the question in what sense historical narratives can be said to offer explanatory accounts of the past and how such explanation by narrative resembles or differs from explanations following Hempel's covering-law model (Roth 1988, 1989). Given that this was a question central to Danto's *Analytical Philosophy of History* as well as to Mink's work, Roth's work is an attempt at continuing a conversation launched in the 1960s. Yet, half a century after *Analytical Philosophy of History*, the number of people contributing to this conversation has dwindled significantly. Although Roth is not alone in pursuing questions of narrative explanation (see, e.g., Kuukkanen 2015; Klauk 2016), he increasingly worries that the field nowadays known as "historical theory" has moved to other areas of interest. More disturbingly, Roth observes that philosophers of science have by and large stopped paying attention to philosophy of history,

even though Roth believes they have good reasons for dusting off their Danto and Mink. Consequently, Roth increasingly finds himself advocating for a revival of analytical philosophy of history as practiced by Danto and his contemporaries (Roth 2013, 2016, 2018).

In comparison to Danto, two similarities and three differences stand out. First of all, like Danto, Roth stresses the watershed significance of "the Kuhnian revolution". Although the nature of this revolution in American philosophy of science is an issue of historical debate (see, e.g., Weingart 1986; Reisch 1991; Fuller 2000; Zammito 2004), Roth agrees with Danto that *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* made a decisive contribution to what in hindsight can be called a historicization of philosophy of science:

> Prior to Kuhn a work of history, in order to count as providing a legitimate explanation, needed to conform to a certain standard determined by an ahistorical account of science. Post-Kuhn, philosophers fashion histories to account for which explanatory forms come to prevail and why.
>
> ROTH 2013, p. 547

Secondly, like Danto, Roth explains this shift in terms of a "philosophical *Zeitgeist*" (Roth 2016, p. 4). While White liked to emphasize the sociopolitical context of analytical philosophy of history, Roth agrees with Danto that the most crucial factor in demolishing "the world according to Hempel" was the emergence of philosophical positions incompatible with the Hempelian worldview. This amounts to what one might call an 'internal' history of philosophy, as distinguished from an 'external' account *à la* White (Schneewind 1984, pp. 175–175).

Yet, there are differences between Roth and Danto, too, which lend a distinctive flavor to Roth's call for revival of analytical philosophy of history. Most importantly, Roth defines this analytical tradition in broader terms than Danto. While the latter located *Analytical Philosophy of History* in a transition "beyond analytical philosophy to a kind of rapprochement with phenomenology" (Danto 1985, pp. xiii-xiv), thereby implying that analytical philosophy of history already by the 1960s was beyond its prime, Roth treats Danto's 1965 book as a key specimen of analytical philosophy of history. 'Analytical', for Roth, includes not only defenders of the covering-law model, in one version or another, but all philosophers of history concerned about the question what defines a good historical explanation (Roth 2013, p. 546). 'Analytical' denotes positivists like Hempel, but also post-positivists such as Mink and Kuhn (Roth 2013, pp. 547, 550). Analytical philosophy of history, then, is as broad as reflection

on issues of historical explanation among philosophers in the 'analytical' (as conventionally distinguished from the 'continental') tradition of philosophy.

Secondly, while Danto, given his definition of analytical philosophy of history, perceives a wide chasm between "the world according to Kuhn" and the analytical tradition, Roth, from his perspective, sees no rift at all. To the contrary, precisely because the "Kuhnian revolution" historicized science, Roth argues that philosophers of science from the 1970s onwards had better reasons than ever for joining Danto and Mink in their exploration of what constitutes a proper historical explanation. "[P]hilosophy of history arguably should have 'taken off' as a core philosophical discipline, riding a wave of professional concern one might have expected Kuhn's work to generate" (Roth 2013, p. 546). Specifically, given that *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* took the form of a historical narrative, it would not have been surprising if philosophers of science had recognized "narrative explanation" as an important topic for reflection. Indeed, for Roth, it is more surprising that philosophers of science took hardly any notice of Mink's or Danto's work, and still ignore the problem of "narrative explanation", despite the fact that not only *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, but also well-received histories of philosophy such as Michael Friedman's *A Parting of the Ways* (2000) explain philosophical change in narrative terms (Roth 2016, 2018).

This, finally, lends a tone of indignation to Roth's story of decline that markedly differs from the resignation with which Danto observed that philosophical fashions come and go. For Roth, what declines is neither the validity of analytical philosophy of history nor its relevance in Danto's sense of the word, but merely the amount of interest that philosophers display in questions of historical explanation. Moreover, he perceives this lack of interest as undeserved and, philosophically speaking, as counter-productive. This explains why Roth does not hesitate to speak in dramatic language of "a great irony" and an "unsolved and allegedly worrisome mystery of a philosophical topic gone missing" (Roth 2013, pp. 545, 546). Roth's narrative of decline is a philosophical argument wrapped in the cloth of a story.

Consequently, if Roth explicates this argument by advocating a 'revival' of analytical philosophy of history, the past he seeks to revive is past only in a chronological sense (Paul 2015, pp. 19–21). Philosophically, for him, the issues are very much alive, as are the arguments that Danto and Mink put forward with regard to narrative explanation. Varying on Stephen Toulmin (1971, p. 63), Roth can therefore straightforwardly declare that "[w]hat we now have to do is to take up the discussion once again at the point where it broke off some 60 years ago" (Roth 2013, p. 551). Consequently, the past under discussion is not past; it is present, among us, here and now, at least for those whose eyes have

recovered from "willed blindness" (Roth 2013, p. 551). Roth, in other words, refuses to relegate analytical philosophy of history to the past. He would agree, in this case at least, with William Faulkner's famous line: "The past is never dead. It's not even past" (Faulkner 1951, p. 92).

Conclusion

What the three examples examined in this chapter have in common, except that they are all American, is a commitment to determining what is 'living' and what is 'dead' in analytical philosophy of history (to paraphrase the title of Benedetto Croce's celebrated critique of G.W.F. Hegel). More specifically, they do so in chronopolitical terms by positioning themselves in an "here and now" that is expressly contrasted with a "there and then" (White, Danto) or, vice versa, by challenging such substantive past-present distinctions (Roth). All three examples thereby suggest that analytical philosophy of history—or philosophy in general perhaps—is not something that naturally disappears into the past. It requires deliberate border drawing, or performative 'break-ups' of time (Lorenz and Bevernage 2013), to relegate a philosophical debate to the past or to highlight its timeliness.

This implies that histories of analytical philosophy of history such as written by White and Roth have strong normative undertones, in the sense that they challenge its legitimacy or advocate its importance in the light of present-day agendas. Their narratives of rise and fall resemble "disciplinary histories" as defined by Stefan Collini in so far as they offer "an account of the alleged historical development of an enterprise the identity of which is defined by the concerns of the current practitioners of the field" (Collini 1988, p. 388). For both authors, indeed, it is current concerns that determine what is 'past' and 'present' about analytical philosophy of history. Consequently, the relations they maintain with the tradition in question are not only epistemic (what sort of debate did Hempel's "General Laws" article provoke?), but political, too (how to push some issues higher on the philosophical agenda?).

Finally, a prominent sociologist once suggested that "the history of a discipline can be traced by recalling the succession of disciplinary histories produced by their practitioners" (Levine 1995, p. 12). Judging by the examples discussed in this chapter, it seems not impossible indeed to write a history of late twentieth-century philosophy of history through the prism of how historical theorists positioned themselves, explicit or implicit, vis-à-vis their predecessors. Yet in order to make this more than just another exercise in the study of academic memory cultures (which philosophers of history were deemed relevant enough to be remembered posthumously?), the concept of past-present

relations such as employed in this chapter is indispensable. What makes the cases of White, Danto, and Roth philosophically interesting is not that they argue for or against analytical philosophy of history, but that they negotiate various forms of 'pastness' and 'presentness', most notably by distinguishing between chronological pastness and philosophical timeliness or by relegating 'old-fashioned' yet chronologically present modes of philosophizing to a 'completed' past. The question, hence, is not *whether* present philosophical debates become past, but *to what extent* and *in what way* they are perceived as past and/or present.

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