

Lost in Narration

Abstract

The past in itself (Kant) is visible only if we get puzzled by something. Its strangeness makes the difference between past and present. Strangeness interrupts our daily routines in a positive way. Therefore, curiosity is an important motive of historical thinking. Past in itself is devoid of all information, but it proves that our present is not unchangeable. The empty past in itself stimulates us to imagine alternative histories for alternative presents we wish would come true. Those narrations constitute the three dimensions of time—present, future and past—for us, those A- and B-series mentioned by McTaggart. They are linguistic phenomena and nothing ontological like past in itself is. They cover practices. Past in itself is lost by narration. The one and only past in itself which is not empty is the traumatic past. We may lose it by narration.

Keywords

Historical Thinking, Time, Narration, Curiosity, Alterity, Emancipation, Constructivism, Anthropology, Presentism