

DeNora's examination of narratives of "Turkishness" in music (production) in Berlin. As it stands, however, the editors do not provide enough guidance (which might have taken the form of a much more comprehensive introduction or explanatory pieces at the beginning of each section) to make these chapters more accessible by highlighting key themes or pointing out what insights they offer about the field.

The main way in which the reader is supported in her quest to make sense of memory studies is the volume's division into six parts. These are broad umbrella concepts and divide up the field logically. I had especially high hopes for Part IV "Technologies of memory," which encompasses issues that I believe are in dire need of development in memory studies and which I also expected to discuss innovative methodological practices. The technologies under scrutiny here include music, cinema, photography, "brick-and-mortar" memorials, and autobiographical accounts. Strangely missing is a contribution that tackles the challenges posed by digital media, above all the Internet, but also the use of mobile devices in memory production, reception, and archiving. While individual chapters touch on digitalization, a more comprehensive treatment would have been welcome in a handbook.

On one hand, Part VI on "Body and ecosystems" could be seen as an unprecedented contribution to memory studies in the sense that proponents of the field often point out its tremendous breadth—stretching from literary studies via the social sciences all the way to psychology, biology, medicine, and neuroscience. This volume is one of the few places where these diverse perspectives are actually put together between two book covers. However, after reviewing this final part, I am more skeptical than before about the practical possibility of actually talking across the boundaries between hard sciences and the rest of us. Neither the editors nor the authors suggest how these studies about memory in evolution, in cells, in water, in bodies—each in their own territory fascinating—can inform how we think about individual, social, and political processes of remembrance. Since the scientific languages employed here are very far from my own, I would have needed significant translation to make them fruitful for my own thinking.

Overall then, the *Handbook* is a valuable resource and an impressive collection of memory scholarship that will be useful to political scientists already engaged in or considering the field. However, it does not quite deliver the "multi-disciplinary conversation" it promises and is at times rather "difficult to manage" (p. 2)—something that the editors were hoping to avoid.

Rethinking the field of memory studies: A reply

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"Have no fear of perfection, you will never reach it"

Salvador Dali

Dali offers the only possible advice to editors of a project such as this one. Forty chapters, almost 50 authors coming from 17 countries and universities and 3 years in the making, the editors had no need to fear perfection. We are therefore grateful to the editors of the journal *Memory Studies* for hosting this review symposium which, in our view, has opened up many potential directions for the future of this interdisciplinary field.

In fact, we note at the outset that the reviewers of this *Handbook* hail from five disciplines—philosophy, psychology, cultural history, sociology, and political science. While what they have to say is not always complimentary, and while we might wish to, and shall, engage in further debate

on some points they raise, we relish the points of difference that their varying standpoints bring to the work collected in this volume. We were heartened by the many positive comments offered by all the reviewers, particularly their appreciation of the volume's diversity and its ecumenical approach to the field of memory studies. Indeed, it was the aim of the editors to approach the field, as William Hirst so kindly put it, "with open arms to anyone who sees what they are doing as involving memory." And indeed, the very subject—memory—demands a constant kind of reflexive vigilance: just as memory itself is subject to constant interrogation, so too should the field of memory studies. We are grateful to Daniel Levy for noting this point in his comment that the bringing together of such a wide range of scholars has helped to "elevate the study of memory to another level of reflexivity" and in ways that promote the renewed historicization of our concepts. So too, we hope and believe, the wide range of reviewers here has elevated this debate.

And so to some points of critical debate. First, representation of a diverse field. Some of the reviewers have suggested that there were areas and disciplines that were under-represented in the *Handbook*—philosophy, psychology, and political science perspectives most notably. At one level, we agree, and naturally wish that the volume could have been even longer, though we also note that what it omits probably reflects our own positions within the field. There was, for example, only one chapter by a political scientist. However, as Jenny Wüstenberg commented, even if the handbook "contains only one contribution by a political scientist. This, however, does not undermine the possible utility of the volume for political scientists."

But numbers tell only one kind of story, and a review of each author's home discipline probably does not quite do justice either to the aim of the *Handbook* or to the individual—and typically highly interdisciplinary—chapter contents. (Although we take note of Jeffrey Blustein's call for a more fruitful collaboration between philosophy and memory studies. As a philosopher himself, Jeffrey Blustein is best placed to envision how such a collaboration may affect the future of memory studies and we look forward to learning from this work.) As William Hirst appreciated, the *Handbook* did not seek to "define" the field but to map some of its plural and emerging "regions" so as to facilitate future exploration. For those journeys, interdisciplinarity resides as much within each mode of exploration as between them; because of this any one study, or any one chapter, in this *Handbook* defies precise disciplinary classification.

That said, we agree with the critical points raised by Hirst in relation to the necessity of "more psychology" for the field. The fact is—as also one of the reviewers noted—that the field of memory studies has grown in the last decades so rapidly and to such an extent that it is difficult to capture its variety and its richness in a single handbook. Probably in a few years it will become a "mission impossible." If we re-examine the *Handbook's* list of contents now, we spot at least 10 topics that ought to be included. (In addition to work from scholars from regions such as Africa, South Asia, and Australasia, as well as those already represented from Asia and South America.)

Interdisciplinarity raises yet other concerns. And perhaps Kate Hodgkin's worry that, "the focus on scientific models" may displace "other significant debates on the ways in which memory is embodied" is one to which we should attend. In our view, though, we need to engage with all models and ways of conceptualizing memory. Yes, the *Handbook* includes a section with chapters by authors who work in the so-called "hard" sciences. Is this inclusion merely, as Daniel Levy suggests, "fetish-like adulation of interdisciplinarity"? Does it challenge the otherwise "legitimate" borders between fields? We disagree. Science and technology studies suggest that the location of boundaries is a matter of cultural practice, flux, and conflict/negotiation in time and space. Why not then include chapters on the memories of body cells, plants and ecosystems, the memory of water? These studies offer more than metaphors for our interdisciplinary project. For example, the studies on memories of water and ecosystems can have important implications for the memories embodied in spaces and places (especially those where traumatic events have occurred): if water

remembers, why should stones, flesh, or bones remain “neutral”? There are many challenging ideas that have yet to be explored if we take into account some of the contributions coming from biology or chemistry.

If comprehending chemistry or biology means needing to learn new disciplinary languages, we should not recoil. Good science—and scholarship—has always been about testing and reshaping boundaries in ways that involve the craft of translation. If the *Handbook*'s interdisciplinary diversity can contribute to that kind of work, we will feel that it has done its job, and we look forward to future publications that continue that work. And so we propose the questions: Why were those perspectives on memory excluded from the field until now? Why should “soft science” possess a monopoly on these topics? And in fact, what do (or should) we mean by the juxtaposition of “soft” versus “hard” science? Surely memory is a topic of sufficient complexity to deserve exploration from each and every angle.

In short, a project such as this inevitably throws into relief a wide array of suggestions for what ought to have been. These discussions are fruitful and, we think, have been productively pursued in this review symposium. For us, what remains are the core issues, the vitality and—without being histrionic—the *urgency* of memory studies. We write this reply at a time of severe international insecurity and deprivation, and amid the heightened incommensurability of viewpoints and beliefs. Memory—as a practice, as a set of technologies and physiology, the memory of what violence and instruments of war have done and can do, the vulnerabilities that emerge when memory fails, the individual and collective dangers of false or co-opted memories, the profound risks associated with collective forgetting—has never been more present or more prescient for our global futures. We look forward to continuing the conversations in and around memory studies and, on behalf of all the authors included in the *Handbook*, we thank the five reviewers for their very thoughtful and thought-provoking engagement with the *Handbook* and its ideas.

Note

1. Trever Hagen, co-editor of this volume, was unable, for personal reasons, to contribute to this reply. On invitation of Tota, DeNora, who is Hagen's close colleague at Exeter and co-author of one chapter in the *Handbook*, appears here as co-author.