

Time, Repetition and Intelligence

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Time

People talk about time as if it were something imposed upon them, particularly at work. In jail, they speak of "doing time" and outside of jail, they say "there are never enough hours in the day." "Where did the time go?" "It seems like only yesterday."

I don't know if this is true for everyone, but for me, time is an organization *I* impose on things. I frame the photographs. I choose how to see what I see.

What I see is there of course, but even the most realistic realist must admit that I have at least *some* role to play in *how* I see it. When one looks in the mirror, one sees one's face as face-size, but if the bathroom is steamy and one outlines one's face in the moisture on the glass, one sees that one's face is not face-size. It is much smaller. We have to learn even how to look in a mirror.¹

I recently had the opportunity to do something I like to do very much. To keep this from being too personal, I will call what I had the opportunity to do: B. I had not had the opportunity to do B for a while and I was quite excited when I realized I would soon have the opportunity again. This is close to what Aristotle means when he speaks of *dynamis*, which is usually translated as "potential," "capacity," or "power." I realized I would soon have the *dynamis* to B. When I B, that is *kinesis*. "Movement" is the usual translation: "action," "doing." Time is *dynamis/kinesis*. The slash between the two, the /, is the most momentary of moments. It is change, without which there would be no time.

When I do B, I like to do A before it. A takes almost no time but it has consequences that last for awhile. The idea that something happens and then *lasts* assumes there are things that happen that do not last. In Classical Greek there are three past tenses. There is an imperfect past tense for

¹ As I am against method, I will not use footnotes. I provide this one cryptic footnote as a vacation from my rule.

something that happened continually, repeatedly or habitually: so and so worked until retirement. In Greek, the word “worked” would be different in that sentence and in the sentence: so and so worked on Tuesday. The second is a simple past. We get the time sense from the surrounding words; Greek gets it from the conjugation of the word “worked.”

In Greek, the imperfect is lumped in with the present tense and called the “present aspect” as distinct from another aspect, called the “aorist.” The aorist is used for something that does not last, for something that happened once and only once, something that happened once and was done with. Certain actions, by their very nature, must take time, while other actions, by their very nature, must take place in an instant. The best example I know is to seek and to find. You seek for a while, you find once, at once. Having found something may be of consequence, but the finding itself doesn’t last. It is over as soon as it is done; once it is past, it remains in the past.

Here is a table of times.

Present aspect	Aorist Aspect
to seek	to find
to go or travel	to arrive or depart
to cry	to burst into tears
to be dying	to die
to urge or argue ..	to convince
to look at	to perceive
to believe	to realize

This list is a version of a list found in a text that teaches Attic Greek. I have rearranged the list to make the distinction most apparent at the top and least apparent at the bottom and reserved the most opaque item for last:

to be to become

In Greek there are two words for “to want”: *boulomai* and *ethelo*. *Boulomai* is to desire; *ethelo* is to be willing. *Boulomai* has no aorist. I can *ethelo* once and stop, but if I *boulomai*, that lasts. The same deep understanding of time is expressed in Greek in the two words that mean “to need”: *dei* and *khrei*. Both *dei* and *khrei* can be used in the imperfect. Only *dei* can be used in the aorist. A necessity that is *dei* can be satisfied or go

away, a necessity that is *khrei* lasts. *Khremates* is a plural noun meaning money, goods or property. *Khreima*, a singular noun, is something one uses. *Khreimatizo* is the verb for to do business, get the necessities, earn the bread. *Khreisimos* means useful.

Our need for money, the Greek language says, lasts, as does our seeking after what is useful. The Greeks did not like this any more than we do, but while we say leisure is being free from work, the Greeks said it the other way around. The noun for business in Greek is *askholia*. The *a* at the beginning is a negation. Memory is *mnesia*.

Business, the Greek language says, is the absence of *skholia*. *Skholazein* is to be at leisure, to do things for their own sake. From this we get scholarship, and we scholars must be grateful to the universities that pay us to think about things that are *not* useful. It sometimes makes me sad when my university misunderstands this, but perhaps, if universities understood they were paying us *not* to be useful, they would stop.

Aristotle does not talk much about time because the important distinction for him is not how long something takes or how hard it is but whether one is doing it for its own sake or for the sake of something else. I call it work, he says, when I do something for the sake of something else. When I do something for its own sake, I call it play or fun. And then who cares how long it takes. One wishes it would go on forever.

Returning now to A and B. A takes a moment but lasts; B takes a little time but doesn't last. When I realized I had the opportunity to B, my next thought was, "Oh yes! and with A!" My second thought was, "On no! I have to C this afternoon."

I make it a practice not to A before I C. One might almost say I have a rule not to A before I C, and it is very clear that if I "make it a practice" or "have a rule" not to A before I C, then I should not A when I am going to C, but the chance to B (with A) was too strong for me. I was going to do it, so I rationalized, "I have five hours till I C. It'll be O.K. I'll worry about C later."

Since I have not said what A, B and C are, we can put aside morality. We do not have to worry about whether A, B or C was going to hurt anyone and we do not have to worry about whether A, B or C was morally wrong on

some other standard, if there is one. We also, therefore, do not have to worry about whether there is another standard.

And since (at least, here,) I am not worried about my character, we can put its weakness aside too. The only thing I am concerned with here is time and what I noticed was that as soon as I had finished B, my very first thought was "Oh oh! C."

When I said, "I'll worry about C later," I was not kidding. It was the very first thing that came to my mind after B was over. I did not have time to think and then gradually come to "Oh, oh! C!" It was like "Oh, oh! C!" was waiting there. As soon as B was over, there was "Oh, oh! C!"

But interesting as that is, that, too, is not the point. The point is "after B was over." I impose structure on time. I make B into a thing that can be over. I do so below the level of language. I don't think of B as "B" but as soon as B was done, it was "after B." This all went on inside of me. I have undoubtedly been taught to see things as I do, but I *do* see them that way and thus, impose time on myself. I frame the photographs.

Repetition

On a sunny morning, I walk to the park carrying a book of Aristotle and my mandolin. I notice that I did the same thing yesterday and I notice that yesterday I noticed that I was walking to the park on a sunny morning carrying a book of Aristotle and my mandolin, and I noticed myself noticing that I was walking to the park on a sunny morning carrying a book of Aristotle and my mandolin, and I noticed myself noticing that I had noticed this before.

Lately, I have begun to wonder whether this is the right way to think about things. Did I do the same thing yesterday or is my going to the park with a book of Aristotle and my mandolin one thing that I do repeatedly? Is my noticing a repetition? Is a coin one thing or two things, a head and a tail? Are there events in life or is there just life?

Are there things? Or is there just one thing? Reality. Life. "Being," as Parmenides said. "There is only *to hon*. There is only being." To be is just to be. There is nothing else. Whatever else we say about anything, is laid on by us. "All that is is being."

Heraclitus said, "No. Everything is not one thing. Everything is two things, in back-bending, harmonious tension with one another. *Palintonos harmonieia*. Look at the bow, look at the lyre. Inert string and wood till they are put into quivering, back-bending harmonious tension with one another. Being is the quivering tension of opposites, pulling harmoniously against each other.

Heraclitus also said, you cannot step in the same stream twice. This is taken to be because the stream is different. The water that is *in* the stream today, the water that *is* the stream today, is not the same water that was in the stream yesterday. The water that was in the stream yesterday, the water that *was* the stream yesterday, has gone down to the ocean or become the ocean and the water that is in the stream today, the water that *is* the stream today, was in the clouds yesterday, or was the clouds, or the rain or the snow, or something. In any case, it was something other than the stream into which you stepped yesterday, which is why you cannot step in the same stream today.

Of course, when Heraclitus said you couldn't step in the same stream twice, he also meant *you* were not the same. You are different today than you were yesterday, a day older, for example, and lest we make the mistake of thinking a day can make no difference, notice that if my Aristotle books are library books or my mandolin is rented, then what I am doing today might be illegal or in breach of a rule, while what I did yesterday was not.

Property freezes time. Perhaps all law does. Property extends through time, and lasts, at least theoretically, over time and for all time. If you own something and do not alienate it (that is actually the legal word for this idea), it belongs to you forever. At your death, it passes to your heirs or assigns and if they do not alienate it, you and your descendants will own the thing forever. That is the law, plain and simple.

You can, of course, lose what you own to taxes or eminent domain. Since the law makes property, it can take it, but short of that, you own it forever. A thief, the law says, *never* acquires title.

This, of course, is not true. Time is unavoidable, even for law. Eventually, even a thief acquires title and it has often been remarked that every great fortune began with a theft. At a certain point, a thief ceases to be

a thief and becomes an owner. No one knows how, or why or exactly when this happens, and no one ever will because at the moment it happens, the law demurely looks away, as it did when the Berlin Wall came down.

In this sense, law is natural. In another sense it is positivist, for instance, when it says: One-Hour Parking. At any time, it can say: Half-hour Parking.

So time makes a difference but that doesn't answer the question, which, in case you have forgotten, was: can I repeat something I have done or is there never any repeating, just doing? Is it possible to step in the same stream twice?

When you remember that you forgot to brush your teeth and brush them, when you remember that you forgot to turn off the stove and turn it off, aren't you repeating something? If you sleep on one side of a stream and eat on the other, is it possible not to step in the same stream over and over and over again? Isn't almost everything we do a repetition? We breathe and we eat and we pee and we sleep and we do these things again and again and again and again.

Since we have eaten, why must we eat again, and how can eating again be anything but repetition? Because you're not eating the same thing? It's still eating, or take thinking, isn't that repetitive in two senses? Almost all the ideas you think you have thought before, and while you can have new ideas, you have had new ideas before, so when you are having a new idea you are doing something you have done before: having a new idea.

From Parmenides, Zeno learned to make this into a paradox; from Heraclitus, Aristotle learned to say: "Well, in one sense, yes; in another sense, no."

Aristotle does this *all the time*. The biggest thing I have learned from him is that because the number of things is unlimited and the number of words is limited, words have to mean one thing in one sense and another thing in another sense. Often one meaning of a word will be almost the opposite of another meaning. For instance, we often say, "I don't believe it!" to express how amazed we are that we *do* believe it.

Or take “by accident.” In one sense, to say something happened “by accident” or “by chance” means that what happened has *no* significance. “It was *just* an accident. In another sense, as Aristotle explained, it means exactly the opposite.

Aristotle’s explanation of this point is part of his discussion of causation. He is famous for identifying four causes: final cause, efficient cause, material cause and formal cause. I will not explain Aristotle’s four causes here, only point out that Aristotle actually says there are *five* causes. He lists the four and then says: “Oh, by the way. There is a fifth one.” (This incidentally is a trope with Aristotle. In a completely different context, he says, there are four kinds of democracy, “Oh yes, and by the way, there’s a fifth kind, too.”)

The fifth cause is chance or accident. Aristotle explained the way chance is a cause with an example about going to the market. If you go to the market, he says, you may see lots of people you did not plan to see or expect to see, people you could be said to have seen “by chance” or “by accident.” But you would not say, “I saw so and so by accident and so and so by accident and so and so by accident.” You wouldn’t say you saw them at all. The only person you will say you saw “by accident” is the one who owed you \$10.

In one sense, to say something happened “by accident” or “by chance” means that what happened has *no* meaning. In another sense, to say something happened “by accident” or “by chance” means precisely that it means something. Chance is the cause of irony, tragedy and comedy. Aristotle wrote a book called On Making Art, *Peri Poetikeis*. In it he says timing is the essence of tragedy. The cathartic effect of tragedy depends on the timing of the play, when things happen. The best way to understand this is in terms of a joke. If you tell a joke wrong, nobody laughs.

Peri Poetikeis is about tragedy. In it, Aristotle remarks that he has written another book about comedy. That Aristotle’s book on comedy has not survived is a source of great sadness to many, but Aristotle’s book on comedy has survived. Aristotle was making a joke when he said “another.” He was punning on the word. Aristotle’s long-lost book on comedy has never been lost. It is *Peri Poetikeis*, read in a mirror.

Aristotle says, all things are two things and one thing and many more things. To ask questions about what things are and how they work requires *logos*. Joachim says *logos* is untranslatable because it means so many things. This is a little like Wittgenstein's comment that though what we call "games" have a family resemblance, there is no one thing common to all games. Wittgenstein was wrong about this. When we call something a "game," we are saying that the ordinary rules of life do not apply, a different set of rules apply.

All uses of *logos* have one thing in common, at least metaphorically. What they have in common is the root meaning of the Greek word. *Logos* means "words." Actually it means, "word," which is precisely what it comes to mean in New Testament Greek, but in Attic Greek, *logos*, though a singular word, normally has plurality. People have *logos*. They use words and word-substitutes, signs, symbols, numbers, maps, pictures, equations, and other things like them, to communicate with each other, to teach their children and to think.

Logos is often translated as "reason," but *logos* is not so much reason, as what we reason with. When we reason it is with words or word-substitutes. Since "repetition" is a word, it figures that in one sense you can *never* repeat anything, while in another, you can *only* repeat things. It also figures that in one sense, repetition is to be avoided, while in another sense, it is to be sought. You do not want a doctor who treats you like just another patient, but you do want a doctor who has cured lots of people with your symptoms.

You want a doctor who is in the habit of curing people. Aristotle is very keen on this idea of habit, which in Greek is called *hexis*. A good person Aristotle says, is not a person who does something good, but a person who has the *hexis* of being good. Kant says you are not a good person unless you were tempted to do something wrong and resist the temptation. Aristotle says just the opposite. He says you are not a good person if you are tempted to do what is wrong.

For Aristotle a good *hexis* is desirable, but "habit" being a word, a habit is also undesirable. We do not like addictions, but if an addiction doesn't get you into trouble, it is nothing to be unhappy about, indeed, it is something to feel very good about. I feel as if I am "addicted" to Aristotle. If I don't get a fix every day, I feel bad. If this made trouble for me, if I

could not support my family because of it or hurt people because of it, I would have to check into a clinic and kick the Aristotle habit. As it is, I am quite happy to have it.

I think many religious people, though they might be loathe to say this, are addicted to their religions. They are in the habit of praying. They miss it when they do not. This is part of what Marx meant when he called religion the opiate of the masses. There is nothing wrong with an opiate unless you think it is bad for you. Prayer and ritual are repetitions, that is precisely what they are meant to be, but how can we want our prayers to be routines, repetitions? Is the truest prayer to God one that is offered with total awareness or without any awareness? And which of these is the repetition?

When the rabbis were compiling the Masoretic text of the Old Testament and considering Song of Songs, Rabbi Akiba is said to have said: "If we had to have only one book and give up all the others, the one book should be Song of Songs." Impressed, the other rabbis agreed that Song of Songs was in. Then when they were considering Ecclesiastes, Rabbi Akiba said the same thing: "If we had to have only one book and give up all the others, the one book should be Ecclesiastes." All right, the rabbis said, Ecclesiastes is in, too, but you can't use that argument again.

Intelligence

The idea of intelligence interests the intelligent. What does it mean to be intelligent? Aristotle says to be intelligent one must take in food. A stone cannot be intelligent. One must also sense things. Animals can be intelligent, in a sense. You can certainly have a smart dog, but there is another sense in which animals cannot be intelligent. Only people can be intelligent because, Aristotle says, only people have *logos*.

Logos is a feature of intelligence. Someone, who could not talk at all or use signs of any sort, could not and would not be called intelligent and of course, everyone is intelligent, because everyone can use *logos*. Some use it better than others. They are considered very intelligent, geniuses. In the Western culture, Einstein is the model of genius. His name is byword for intelligence; thus, we say: "I'm no Einstein."

What is Einstein famous for? $E=MC^2$. *Logos* if there ever was. A summary of the physical universe in 5 symbols. In Japan, the most

intelligent person is Shotoku Taishi, Prince Shotoku, who was said to be able to listen to 10 conversations at once. Another form of *logos*. In China, the most intelligent person is Chu Go Liang, a military man, who, though he had no forces of his own, was able to defeat a powerful enemy by using *logos*.

Cho Go Liang was defending a city. He had no troops and the city was surrounded by a large enemy force. Chu Go Liang ordered the city gate opened and he sat on a platform above the open gate playing music. The enemy took the sign (*logos*) to mean that Chu Go Liang had overwhelming forces at his disposal and abandoned the siege.

Aristotle's example of *logos* is $\frac{1}{2}$, which he liked because it is embodied in nature. Take a taut string and pluck it. It makes a note. Take half the string and pluck it. It makes the same note an octave higher. $\frac{1}{2}$ expresses this. It captures the relationship that is an octave. Aristotle says mathematics was developed in Egypt because they had a class of priests who could *scholazein*: think about things for their own sake. He says people naturally love to figure things out. Even when there is no practical use to it, people enjoy understanding. "A sign of this," Aristotle says, "is how much we like our eyes. They let us see so much and make so many small distinctions."

Being able to play music is a skill but it is not the same skill as being able to use *logos* and the two will not always be combined in one person. A great musician or composer may be very intelligent, but need not be. Some people can do things. Others can talk about them. If you are sick, what you want ideally is someone who can do both. Someone who has lots of experience making sick people healthy and can explain (*logos*) how that is done. Someone, Aristotle says, who knows the why and wherefores of medicine, the *archai* and *aitia*, the first principles and causes. But if you can't find someone like that, Aristotle says, you're better off with someone who can make people healthy, but doesn't know how, than with someone who can explain how to make people healthy, but can't do it.

People ask whether machines can be "intelligent." The answer is obvious. In one sense they can; in another sense they cannot. The so-called "thinking" machines use a series of on/off connections. These connections are either on or off. That is not the way humans think. Humans think with *logos* and words are not on *or* off, they are on *and* off. Human intelligence

and machine intelligence are different. If Turing's test for distinguishing between the two shows anything, it is not that human and machine intelligence are the same, but that humans may not be able to distinguish between the two.

Points:

Question 1 10

The gift would not be saved to a spouse with no issue.

Question 2 5

No.

Question 3 5

The letter was accurate when Yoltroy wrote it. Do the events that happened after Yoltroy lost testamentary capacity influence whether his will made adequate provision for the child he disinherited? 2

Question 4

The 1999 will:

1. Though Itsy had been given medication, she had the capacity to make a will. 4
2. She did not sign herself, but she asked Clutsy to sign for her. Clutsy signed in her presence and It does not matter whether she signed "Clutsy" or "Itsy". 4
3. Itsy was still awake when Clutsy and Louise signed. 4
4. Zelda's signature is not valid since she was out of the room when Clutsy signed for Itsy. 4
5. The condition expressed in the will "In the event of my death on the operating table," will be read as a motive for making the will rather than a condition of validity. 4
6. Clutsy would not take because she signed as a witness. 4

The 2005 will:

7. The destruction of this will is invalid since it did not occur in Itsy's presence. If otherwise valid, this is a good will. 4

8. The 2005 will mentions the former will and thus incorporates it by reference. 4
9. The mistake in the date of the 1999 will can be rectified but only by dropping the date. 4
10. Hector exercised influence to get Itsy to sign it was not undue influence until he twisted her arm. 4
11. Hector's coercion did not affect Itsy's signing, but it did affect the witnesses' signing. Does this invalidate the will? Maybe yes, maybe no. 4
12. If the 2005 will is invalid, the gift to Clutsy in the 1999 will is void. 4
13. If the 2005 will is valid, the gift to Clutsy in 1999 will does not fail. It is saved by the two new signatures. 4
14. Even if the 2005 will is valid, the gift to Hector will be severed. 4

Applying the 1999 will.

15. Clutsy is older than Itsy so she would be presumed to die before her. If the 2005 will is not valid, Clutsy's gift is void. 4
16. If the 2005 will is valid, the anti-lapse provision works in Clutsy's case. The gift is saved. It goes to Mitzi and Fitz. Slick gets nothing. 4
17. Zelda is younger than Itsy, so she is deemed to survive her. Clyde gets 1/3. Lois and Bob each get 1/3 of 2/3s. Lance and Dominic get 1/2 of 1/3 of 2/3s. 4
18. Bitsy is younger than Itsy so she would be deemed to survive her, but the will provides for what is to happen in the event of her death, so that is deemed to occur. Bitsy's share goes to Bertha. 4
19. Bertha's will is presumed to have been destroyed *animo revocandi*. There is no evidence to displace the presumption. Bertha dies intestate. 4
20. The \$10,000 counts as an advance to Morris, but by the hotchpot method, he will be allowed to share in the large estate. He and his sisters share Bertha's estate roughly equally. 4