

# Kaliban and Ariel

## *The question of form in contemporary historical theory Narrativity in the representation of historical reality*

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In the beginning of the nineties, already more than two decades separate us from the discussion about whether history should remain an objective chronicle of political treaties, great battles and famous personalities or whether it should direct its interest toward a kind of structural analysis of historical processes. Like Paul Veyne, the contemporary historians don't go after only mere facts, but – answering, for example, the question of who were the favorites of Louis 13<sup>th</sup> – try to find out what this is at all – a favorite. The extent to which this decision is or is not just a matter of principle is of course another question to leave aside here. However we can undoubtedly state that there are only a few historians left nowadays who still think aloud about the objectivity in the way the German classical historiographical school did. We are faced, though, with a totally different problem: that we still come across chroniclers who theoretically claim to agree with the principles of the new historiography, but who in concrete work avoid attempting an interpretation of their own wherever it is possible, usually avoiding theoretical self-reflection of their science. Moreso, until not long ago they despised it as something that doesn't belong in the historian's sphere of work. Nowadays their unexpressed positions are still seen to exert influence, especially on their frightened students, who, in abundance of dates learnt by heart, are forced to guess whether Rudolf the Habsburg was really elected to be the German king in 1274 – or was it perhaps a year later or before?

In short, the initiative for a different view of the nature of historical explanation, and thus the creative contribution to the development of historiography, is to be sought elsewhere, by those authors who – following Humboldt – make distinction between (or join) historical research as mediation between empirical statements about what happened in the past and historiography, which only gives meaning to these events and thus constitutes them as history. Within this frame we can place the »grandfathers« (Febvre, Bloch) and »fathers« (Braudel) of the new historiography, as well as all younger authors who try to answer the question what is and what is not history by analysing the forms of historical representation. Thereby, as already noted, they proceed from distinction between the real (or material) notion of »history« i.e. the notion that refers to the subject of historical research, and between the theoretical (or formal) expression which is, on the contrary,

defined by activity concerning the given object, that is to say, by the ways of interpretation of the past.

Within such a theoretical and philosophical frame we are therefore interested mostly in those authors who tackled the problem of historical representation by opening the question of narrative in contemporary historical theory. By analysing their theories we would like to point at the scope of a similar discussion within Slovene theoretical reflection of historiography.

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In contemporary historical theory, the topic of narrative has been the subject of extraordinarily intense debate. Viewed from one perspective, this is surprising; on the face of it, there should be very little to debate about narrative. Narration is a manner of speaking as universal as language itself, and narrative is a mode of verbal representation so seemingly natural to human consciousness that to suggest that it is a problem might well appear pedantic.<sup>1</sup>

If the position quoted above – expressed in the middle of the eighties by Hayden White, who wanted, referring to Barth, to substantiate his conceptualization of contemporary historical narration – is now to a great extent already acknowledged, then, the process of this acknowledgment wasn't a very simple one. The authors who undertook such a rehabilitation, or to be more precise, such an analysis of narration, until as long as three decades ago didn't come across – save a few exceptions – to many listeners and sympathizers. The later advocates of narrative conception – White being here a big exception – also often overlooked the meaning and the position of some »classics«, i.e., pioneers in the contemporary theory of historiography. Even rarer were those who included Croce in their »genealogy« from Gervinus up to Danto, although precisely Croce in his »genial confusion or confused genius« was the first to draw the distinction between »theory of historiography« and »philosophy of history«, proceeding from the standpoint that the basic questions of the theory of historiography belong in the sphere of aesthetics.<sup>2</sup>

1. Hayden White, »The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory«, XXIII/1, 1984, p. 1. Reprinted in: Hayden White, *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, John Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore – London 1987. Slovene translation in: Oto Luthar (ed.), *Vsi Tukididovi možje. Sodobne teorije zgodovinarstva*, Ljubljana 1990.
2. Resumed from: Hayden White, *Auch Klio Dichtet oder Fiktion des Faktischen: Studien zur Topologie d. histor. Diskurses*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart 1986, p. 259, where Croce, in a quotation of White, concludes his comprehension of aesthetics with the following thoughts: »In case aesthetics is a pure intuitional science... then we perceive it as philosophy as art; but as soon as it wants to be a theory of a special group of intuitions (intuitions the subject of which is some particular reality), then it appears in front of us as theory of historiography which doesn't meditate about what should have happened in a certain time and in a certain place, but just gets acquainted with what happens in the society in general.« (p. 263).

In this regard, it is almost inevitable, before sketching up the up-to-date discussion on the subject of narrative discourse and historical representation, to present at least those views of Croce enabled this topic at all (or at least made the way to it easier). What we have in mind, first of all, are certain questions concerning his synthesis of evidence and criticism.

Stimulated by Vico's equation of philosophy with science and history, Croce substantiated his distinction between theory of historiography and philosophy of history with the argument that the former is supposed to form the criteria by which the historians would shape and unify their narrations, as well as give them adequate contents, while the latter should, in his opinion, tend toward discovering seemingly general rules, on the basis of which human acts can be displayed in the forms they had adopted on different places in different times.

According to this, he was convinced that the theory of historiography is justified only in cases when we have to deal with intuitional – and not also with notional – logic, that is to say, in cases when it is clearly defined that the activity of historiography is to be placed within the frame of art. In view of this, he strictly separated *poetical* history, as well as *chronicle* and *practically oriented*, i.e., »oratorical« or »rhetorical« history from *philological* history.

His criticism, however, didn't aim only at poetical history, but also at derivation of all representation forms within romantic historiography, as well as at all later forms of historical representation that treated the sources (»reports« and »documents«) merely as assistant means of historical cognition.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, it is also true that his deepest interest was precisely the analysis of so-called »poetics«, for he kept repeating that insofar as we consider human history to be a history of mind and agree to the mind being a value that can be understood, then it is clear that history is always a history of values. But since in the »historiographical perception the mind is recognizable as thought, then the latter appears as the basic value of historiography. The defining principle of history therefore cannot be the so called 'sensual value', since the latter *is* life and not thought. Insofar as this »on the part of mind not yet reflected life finds a way to express itself, then we have to deal with a poem and not with history.« If we therefore want to change a poetical biography into a historical one, »we must keep our ...

3. In the first chapter of his book *Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Historiographie* (Mohr, Tübingen 1915, p. 24-25), Croce – counting up the representatives of poetical historiography (from Herodot up to Mommsen) and introducing numerous cases of such historiography offered to us in enthusiastic biographies of popular and respected persons and satirical accounts of the unpopular ones, as well as in patriotic stories that praise the successes and accuse the failures of a nation, etc., points to the fact that »poetical history cannot be exhausted in such a fundamental and abstract unison of love and hatred (hatred that is love and love that is hatred), but slips through the most complicated forms and the finest devious ways of feeling and appears in front of us as a trustful, loving, melancholic, yearning, pessimistic, resigned, cheerful... poetical history.«

dreams, love and contempt for ourselves and ask for the merits which place the individual whose life we want to show into the frame of social and civilizational activity«. <sup>4</sup> In short, he felt sure that when writing history we must overcome sensual values and modify them into mental values, for in the opposite case, »when we cannot rise up to this 'subjectivity', the result of our work will not be history, but poetry: and the problem of history will remain untouched«. <sup>5</sup>

History, says Croce, has only one duty: to unfold the facts. What we therefore refer to as the search for reasons of these facts, is merely a »more careful analysis and understanding of individual relations among them.« In his opinion, taking into account the claim for »a new form of history,« the history or historiography should be reformed totally or not at all. Here, of course, we have to deal with two levels of reflection. From the »abstract« point of view, says Croce, the tendency towards a kind of »real history« is unjustified: »the history is and will always be the same; that is to say, the living history or history of (ideal) past, as well as the chronicle, the philological, poetical and practically oriented history are, have been and shall always be the same«. It turns out that those who wanted to »thoroughly reform« history could never avoid confrontation between philological and poetical history (and vice versa), unless they opposed both of them to the »contemporary« history. But such an undertaking usually doesn't turn out well, therefore – proceeds Croce – some historians as well as some »dull sociologists and positivists« on the edge of the century, with a lot of noise but a poor knowledge of the essence of history, regretted the fact (if, of course, they managed to realize it at all) that history cannot be subjected to the methodological grips (abstraction, observation, experiment) of natural sciences. <sup>6</sup>

The changes in history, i.e., historiography, should therefore be undertaken concretely. If we look at history from a concrete point of view, thinks Croce, then we are to reform just about everything within its frame, which means that history should constantly be elaborated, enriched and deepened, as well as that »there's no history that could satisfy us entirely.« »Every construction of ours indeed does reveal new facts and raises new questions..., but«, and this is the point he firmly insisted on, »history always reforms itself alone and remains nevertheless always the same; last but not least, it is precisely this persistence of it wherein the power of its development is hidden«. <sup>7</sup>

His criticism of the so-called reformers, therefore, doesn't signify that, like Windelband, he understood history as a merely descriptive science. On the contrary, in a controversy with Windelband Croce argued that »description« is

4. B. Croce, *Zur Theorie der Geschichte...*, p. 26.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 35-36.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

undoubtedly an adequate expression for analysis and generalization of description of the subject of empirical research. But if description means what we imagine under this notion in history, then the notion »descriptive science« is *contradictio in adiecto*. A historian doesn't treat facts as a mere reflection of general laws, but »thinks« about his subject. And this is precisely what the artist does as well. Therefore – proceeds Croce – the »comparison« (most clearly articulated by Dilthey) »between history and art is perfectly justified.«<sup>8</sup>

Although some authors, with Collingwood at the head, share the opinion that Croce in his early works spent too much effort trying to justify and ground the connection of history and art, we still think that such views nevertheless signify an important step ahead of the unappealable German positions in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although German historians have, like later Croce, considered the distinction between the individual and the universal as the key to distinguishing history from science, they still kept thinking of history as science, without answering the question of how a science about the individual is possible at all. This was mostly due to Windelband's distinction between *nomothetical* science (oriented into formation of general laws) and *ideographic* science, where history also should belong, her duty being simply to describe facts. What's more, by adopting this distinction without further reflection, many historians (also outside German borders) even decades later still successfully rejected reproaches on account of their modest possibilities concerning the theoretical reflection of the historian's work.

But this is already another story. The important thing for us is that with the criticism of Croce's views, the discussion about the relation between art and history got a certain continuity. A nice example of this offers us the well-known booklet of Hughes, *History as Art and as Science*,<sup>9</sup> where the author promoted »sensibility« as the manner of author's engagement in creating historical science and argued for the theory that »in writing his report, the historian should act like a dramatist.«<sup>10</sup> Most important, however, is the

8. In this connection, Robin G. Collingwood (*The Idea of History*, Clarendon Press 1946, Part IV) already points out, not without reason, that in his comprehension of relation between history and art Croce has gone too far into another extreme, since both represented to him the same: intuition and representation of the particular, whereby history is included into art as narration of the possible. Hence the definition of history as »intuition of the real«, which is the same as to assert in the same breath that history is art and yet that it is more than art. But if »descriptive science« is *contradictio in adiecto*, then so (following Collingwood) is the syntagm »intuition of the real«; for intuition, precisely because it is intuition and not thought, doesn't know the difference between the real and the imaginary.

9. Stuart Hughes, *History as Art and as Science*, New York 1964. The first Yugoslave translation, alas, not until 1989: *Istorija kao umjetnost i kao nauka*, Gradina, Niš.

10. *Ibid.* Hughes says: »When writing his report, the historian must act like a dramatist. As he cannot be on several places at the same time (in this respect he is just a mortal), he must shift the happening from one place to another, whereby his own judgement and feeling tell him whereupon to focus his story.« In Hughes' opinion, the narration goes on in two plans: in the first or in the big plan there's everything that is later to remain as history (the main event,

fact that Croce's views (although only in a close circle of theoreticians) were finally accepted as an important stage on the way to recognition that there's only one sort of judgment in history, and that judgment is of individual nature.

Croce's theories began to be compared also with the French »critique de la science«, i.e., with the German views represented by Rickert. Most outstanding is the analysis of his criticism of positivism and materialism of his time, although also Croce, under the influence of Labriola, at first accepted historical materialism as a corrective of the one-sided comprehension of history. Later, however, he realized also that the very one-sidedness of this abstract doctrine – as he said – doesn't grasp historical facts in their full concreteness. For Croce there's no abstract Truth, but only concrete thinking; there's no Good as such, but only ethical volition; no Beauty, but only poetical and artistic creation. The whole reality is nothing but spirituality in its ever changing-activity.<sup>11</sup>

According to this, Croce considers every true history to be at the same time a contemporary history, for it is born directly out of the activity performed by the mind as the consciousness of this activity. In other words, the real history arises directly out of life, which means that – as self-reflection of the living mind – it must *vibrate* in historian's consciousness; in the opposite case, separated from the living document, what we get is only a chronicle. Proceeding from such a principle, which leads us to the thought that mind itself is history, its creator and as such the result of all preceding history, we can thus trace in Croce's thought also the outlines of Voltaire's comprehension of philosophy of history, for example, in his equation of history as insight into eternal contemporaneity with philosophy. What is by far the most important for the theory of historiography is that he reckoned among the organic works of »philosophy of mind« (»aesthetics«, »logics« and »philosophy of praxis«) also the »theory of historiography.« (Collingwood 1946)

Such a classification, of course, had to be based on the insight that history doesn't consist of books or documents, but of interest and work living in the historian's consciousness when criticizing and interpreting those documents. For Croce, the subject of history is therefore not past as such, but past about which we have a certain »historical evidence.«

Understandable. A great deal of the past is doubtlessly forever lost for us precisely for the reason that we have no documents to reconstruct it. We can, of course, believe that something we are told about by way of some undocumented testimony really happened, yet this is still no historical

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the army general, the most furious battle), and in the second there's the »huge anonymous acting and dying mass«.

11. About this Boris Furlan wrote already in his preface to the Slovene translation of *Croce's History of Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Zgodovina Evrope v devetnajstem stoletju), published in 1934 (Hram, Ljubljana).

knowledge, but only »chronicle.« Since a similar view can be traced already by Ranke, Croce's novelty should be searched for in his questioning the difference between the »real« history and cronicle.

In his opinion, chronicle is a past in which we believe only on the basis of testifying; but chronicle is also every historical representation where the author cannot or does not know how to live through the experiences of the given agents of the past. From that we can draw the conclusion that mere recapitulation of sources, i.e., testimonies, isn't history yet, but only chronicle. History is – according to Croce – based on the synthesis of two things: evidence and criticism. We can, though, speak of evidence only when it is used as evidence, i.e., interpreted on the basis of critical principles, whereas criticism can be recognized as such only when it is practically used in interpretation of evidence. In short, history becomes history when we revive (in the process of historical thinking) parts and aspects of the past when our present interest, i.e., view of the life we live in, plays a decisive role.

How this »reviving« or »re-experiencing« looks like in praxis becomes evident from the conclusion of the chapter »Pseudohistory,«<sup>12</sup> where its author calls our attention to the fact that we can, »absorbed into research of a certain historical subject, see our sympathies and antipathies (our poetical history), our purposes in the realm of practical activity (our rhetorical history), our memories composed into a chronicle (our philological history) defiling in front of us one after another...«, and concludes the warning with the statement that deeper historical truth can be reached only when we (over and over again) successfully overcome in our mind all these forms one by one.<sup>13</sup>

When he later, on different occasions, keeps assuring us that real history can be distinguished from non-history only through this process of »self-overcoming,« then what we hear in the background is another, no less famous judgment of his where he compares the whole history of historiography – which he experiences as a most effective confirmation of historical errors – not perhaps with Caliban, but with the ever –oaning, crying, misleading and yet ever-escaping Ariel.<sup>14</sup>

The pleasure of this is double. First we enjoy his metaphoric, and second we enjoy the knowledge that his criticism doesn't aim only at positivism and materialism, but also at pseudohistorical romanticism and poetical historiography, the authors of which, insisting on feelings and passions, do not reveal the past, but express merely their own feelings. Additional satisfaction for the reader represents the fact that in his criticism he demands that historian defend only what he is obliged to do on the basis of evidence and thus, consequently, argues for the severity of interpretation. Yet at the same time he

12. In *Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Historiographie*.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

in no way denies the literary value of historical record. His writing is the best proof of it, but unfortunately it is also the reason for the fact that after literary theoreticians he was rediscovered for history again only by the adherents of contemporary narrative historiography. Even they discovered him by a roundabout way, through analytical reflection of different approaches to the relation between »to understand« and »to explain.«

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From the chronological point of view, we should in this connection first mention the discussion pro and contra Carl G. Hempel's work, *The Function of General Laws in History* (1942), where the author – on the basis of a hypothetically-deductive model of explanation as the undergird of scientific historiography – assures us that the dichotomy between these two modes of knowledge is unnecessary. Within this criticism we recognize, only conditionally, of course, two main orientations: the complex that creates the first one (hypothetically-deductive and probabilistic, genetic and functionalistic model and model of limited generalization, Nicholas Rescher, Carey B. Joynt), namely in its very essence doesn't exceed the frame of the revision.

More freshness can be traced in Gardiner's and Dray's attempt to draw the language of historiography nearer to colloquial language<sup>15</sup>, the attempt Thath in a way proved also that the means for analyzing the historical language shouldn't be limited to a single type or model. Gardiner was also the one who – with the help of Collingwood – rejected the thesis on singularity of historical events and argued that explanation in historiography doesn't »progress« from individual to general, but from general to individual. W.H. Dray in *Laws and Explanation in History* additionally radicalized his position by impugning his central thesis. According to it every historical explanation, although only implicitly, refers to one of the types of generalization – with the claim that a historian should search out the characteristics of a certain historical happening, and not only state which general criteria this happening suits. Therefore, as he says, we must always – for example when explaining the deeds of a certain agent in the past – first reconstruct the way of thinking of the given time.

But no matter how sharp was Gardiner's and Drey's criticism of Hempel, it nevertheless still rested on his very position, that is to say, on the field of historiographical theory which – although occupied mostly with analysis of explanation – still contains certain recognizable features of Weber's theory of »understanding«. We therefore had to wait for a serious alternative till the midst of sixties and seventies, when William B. Gallie and Arthur C. Danto started developing the so-called narrative theory of historiography; and it

15. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, in Pietro Rossi, *Theorie der modernen Geschichtssreibung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1987, p. 9.



should be pointed out immediately that this time the break really signified a turning point in historiography. What happened was not only renaming of notions (*explanation* into *narration*), but also emphasizing the role of the so-called »documented narration«, which leaves the »unessential« understanding, in words of Paul Veyne, to the world of the living, to the world of reasons and ends...<sup>16</sup>

*Explanation as narration:*

What is narrated (earlier we would have said »explained«) is from now on also comprehensible, since it is narratable; for the historian's »practising« of understanding it therefore »suffices that a man is a man, which means, it suffices that he gives himself up.« Veyne adds that Dilthey would undoubtedly like to see also the humanities using such a way of understanding. But, as he states immediately afterward, it soon turns out that the humanities, not unlike »physical« sciences, as hypothetically-deductive systems, mostly care about a precise explanation.

History, however, is not supposed to explain in the sense of deducing and anticipating or foretelling. Its explanations shouldn't signify a return to some principle in the light of which a certain event would become recognizable, but rather represent the »*meaning assigned to the narration by the historian himself*«<sup>17</sup> (underlined by O.L.). Or as Danto would have said: historiography is essentially not explanation, but narration, narration that is explainable out of itself and as such capable of explaining the events it tells us about without searching for elements out of its own frame. And the reason every narration should be understandable and (implicitly) explainable is that it throws light upon the logical structure of a certain sequence of events. In his work *Analytical philosophy of history*, Danto lays especially great stress on the so-called auto-explanative character of historical narration. In his opinion, the narrative form offers to the historian a kind of organizational scheme that has a similar function as theory of science. The main task of analytical philosophy of history is therefore to discern the logical structure of narration and throw light upon its difference from the logical structure of scientific research. He says: »Narrative statements don't describe only a certain state or particular event, but a certain change and thus bring to light the consequences of individual events, as well as their causal connections with other events.«<sup>18</sup> At the same time he was, like Gallie, convinced that presentation and introduction of narrative interpretation in historiography require the use of the instrumentarium of linguistic analysis.

This appeal was most evidently and nearly simultaneously responded to by Hayden White, one of the most outstanding representatives of the narrative

16. Paul Veyne, *Geschichtsschreibung und was sie nicht ist*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1990, p. 72.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, p. 14.

»school« in the last fifteen years. We can realize this already when reading his early texts (1966) and finally with his book *Metahistory*<sup>19</sup> (1973), where the author is seen to have entirely devoted himself to the research of historiographical narration and to have »decided« in favour of that kind of verbal structure of narrative discourse that refers to the insights of modern linguistics and semiology.

The structure conceived in this way doesn't depend on the logical structure of discourse, but – what we must always pay attention to – on some kind of deeper cognitive level on the basis of which the historian makes his own decision concerning the strategy of explanation, type and mode of discourse, as well as his own »style«. It should be pointed out that White comprehends such a decision as *poetical act*; the joint of narration and explanation (which enabled us before the appearance of his theory to attribute the explicative character to the first one) is now substituted by persuasion that historiography is based upon poetical ground.

In this way, the historical narration is brought back again onto the narrative ground of discourse, and historiography – as well as the philosophy of history, which White by all means tries to join to the historian's sphere of work – is justifiably obliged to different forms of explanation, all of them supposed to proceed from »poetical act«. In White's opinion, the logical structure »extends to (touches) the prefiguration of a deeper level,« of the level on the basis of which the historian »creates« the actual subject of research, as well as of the level where basic linguistic decisions »fall«: he is sure that the logical structure is based on a kind of precognitive ground.<sup>20</sup>

*Narrative historiography*, which experienced its full bloom in the eighties, wants first of all *to change or at least to limit the structurally-historical, theoretical and analytical influence of the sixties and seventies*. Its principles, however, don't announce expulsion of theory, as we are needlessly »warned« by some, but mostly want to establish a certain »tension between narration and theory«<sup>21</sup>. The growing interest in narration that we can trace in the last years therefore doesn't tend towards any kind of restoration of narration from the period of romanticism, but speaks about a »vitally important cultural possibility«, i.e., about an »elementary, all-embracing speech act based on the time experience and brought up to the highest point of conscious organization of human life praxis.«<sup>22</sup> The narration of today doesn't aim only at

19. The entire title runs: *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Europe*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1973.

20. Pietro Rossi, »Einleitung«, p. 16.

21. Jürgen Kocka, *Geschichte und Aufklärung*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1988, p. 10.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 10-11. Also in: Jörn Rüsen, *Wie kann man Geschichte vernünftig schreiben? Über das Verhältnis von Narrativität und Theoriegebrauch in der Geschichtswissenschaft*, in: Jürgen Kocka, Thomas Nipperday (eds.), *Theorie und Erzählung in der Geschichte*, München 1979.

representation of the actual state, but searches backward into the very processes of research.

In regard to this, the »discursive argumentation«, or any other »use of theory,« can also be reckoned among narration; it has only to refer – in one way or the other – to the »time changes of human reality« or to »the need for orientation within the contemporary world of life« (Lebenswelt, J. Rusen 1988).<sup>23</sup> This is the only way how to handle the tension between theory and narration, i.e., between analytical and narrative historiography. What is especially important is that in this way narration becomes a synonym for dealing with reality – it is no more just one of the many special ways of how to treat history (S. Quandt),<sup>24</sup> but a constitutive principle of historical science in general, without any anti-theoretical and anti-structuralist prickle.

All these expressions are concerned with a kind of »time differentiation and specification of what happened in the past« which (following Quandt and Süßmuth) proceeds from a certain »temporality of language« where »time theory« is substituted by language of time.<sup>25</sup> If we understand historical narration as constitutional principle, then we must also explain the meaning of this for the representation of historical knowledge. We also must – when taking over the principle of representation – ask after the constitutional principle of historical knowledge. On the basis of this we then realize that the fundamental questions of contemporary theoretical discussion in historiography have to deal with the relation of representation and constitution and not only – like it used to be – with the question of the form of historical representation. But before we can actually force our way through with such principles, the historical science must (as Theodor Schieder tells us) overcome its »solipsistic tendencies«. Overgrow its so called scientific »self-reflectivity« and (besides the gossip, thing itself and narrator) systematically draw into the »narrative discussion« also the listener. His relevance system and his system of processing, as well as the »narrative environment« itself.<sup>26</sup> Because this is the only way how to come to a consistent narrative expression which includes – besides the problems of representation – also the problems of intermediation. The narration thus shouldn't be understood only as a »temporal structure of text and argumentation« (H. M. Baumgartner), but as a »basic and urgent

23. *Ibid.*

24. See: Siegfried Quandt, Bernd Mütter, *Historie – Didaktik – Kommunikation. Wissenschaftsgeschichte und aktuelle Herausforderungen. Geschichte, Grundlagen und Hintergründe*, Hitzeroth, Marburg 1988, as well as: Siegfried Quandt, Hans Süßmuth, *Historische Erzählung*, collection of essays, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1982.

25. S. Quandt, H. Süßmuth, *Historische Erzählung...*, p. 8.

26. Theodor Schieder, »Einleitung«, in: Kurt Gräufig, Theodor Schieder (eds.), *Theorieprobleme der Geschichtswissenschaft*, Darmstadt 1977, p. XI; the beginnings can be traced already in: Theodor Schieder, *Geschichte als Wissenschaft*, Oldenbourg – München – Wien, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. remade ed. from 1968.

*form of representation* (and intermediation, added by O.L.) *of the past reality, proceeding from the basic human existential need*.<sup>27</sup>

A similar, though less sophisticated, conclusion also has been reached, as already mentioned, by Paul Veyne. We should also pay attention to the findings of Lawrence Stone – only that he based his striving for return to the narrative form of historical representation mostly on the critical survey of Marxist, »demographic« (the Annales school) and »cliometrical« (North American) model. We should, of course, know that the so-called »return to narration« has a somewhat different meaning with the »historians« Veyne, Stone, P. Burke or C. Ginzburg, as it does in case of the philosophically-oriented authors like Gallie, Danto or White.

The former speak in favour of the narrative theory because they see in it the most adequate form for representation of historical work, while the latter see in the badly needed return to narration mostly an alternative to the »programmes of scientification« (Verwissenschaftlichung) of historiography – an alternative to the historical science subjected to general theory of society and to the historiography based on expressive and narrative schemes liable to social sciences.

*Translated by Seta Knop*

27. Jürgen Kocka, *Geschichte und Aufklärung*, p. 10. See also: Hans Michael Baumgartner, Jörn Rüsen, *Seminar: Geschichte und Theorie. Umriss einer Historik*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1976, p. 17-58, and especially the work of Werner Schiffer, *Theorien der Geschichtsschreibung und ihre erzähltheoretische Relevanz*, J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart 1980, p. 23-84.