

## The theoretical basics of studying ancient historiographical biography

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**Abstract.** The present article is an attempt to summarize the theoretical achievements which allow to analyze narratives within the methods of narratology, reader-response criticism, Euclid's theory of the golden ratio and Aristotle's concept of the peripeteia. In particular, the analysis of the ancient histories, as this article argues, can be conducted not only to understand the level of their factual reliability, but also to describe their possible impact on contemporary readers or listeners. It is also stressed in the present article that the narrative structure of histories is a perspective object of study, for it may reflect that of the ancient tragedy.

**Keywords:** *narrative strategies, narrative, narratology, reader-response criticism, peripeteia, golden ratio, ancient historiographical biography.*

**Introduction.** The specificity of studying ancient biographical historiography is that traditional Quellenforschung itself turns to be not enough for an adequate interpretation of the content of such texts. A characteristic trait of the ancient historiographical biography is a blurring of the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. A recipient's comprehension of such texts necessitates, besides source studies, to engage the information about their narrative structure which makes a text reveal its real semantic charge. Not only must the analysis of historiographical writings evaluate them as historical sources, but also consider them as acts of narration.

**A review of publications on the subject.** The present article will treat the works which, from the author's point of view, best fit its main goal, i.e. help to find out the best way to describe the narrative structure of the ancient historiographical biographies. In narratology, this will be mainly the works of Cl. Lévi-Strauss [27], Cl. Bremond [1], E. Benveniste [17], O. Tkachuk [13], W. Schmid [15], O. Kovalov [9, 10], G. Genette [20, 21], W. Booth [18], V. Vinogradov [2] and L. Dolezel [19]. In reader-response criticism, the ideas of W. Iser [8, 24] and R. Ingerden [23] will be summarized. There appears also a need to pay attention to the theory of the ancient tragedy (Aristotle's "Poetics" [28]) and of the golden ratio (Euclid's "Elements" [22]).

**Goals.** The present article aims to present the scheme of studying ancient historiographical biographies. In particular, the paper is an attempt to describe the specifics of the narrative structure of the ancient historiographical texts. All ancient historiographical narratives make use of rhetorical and narrative strategies [29], and the scope of this article will be to propose a possible way to study the narrative structure of the ancient historical biography.

**Materials and methods.** Considering the above understanding of the ancient historiographical biographies, it seems helpful to involve into the present study narratological theory, works of the reader-response criticism, Aristotelian "Poetics" and Euclidean "Elements" which make it possible to describe the narrative structure of such a specific kind of texts as the ancient historiographical biography is. As for the methods of the study, they are structural-systemic, observation, analysis and synthesis.

**The basics of narratology.** Ancient historiographical biographies obey the rules of constructing narratives which

are fundamental for any type of narrative writings. Narratology is the theory of narrative texts. According to M. Zubrycka, it is "a theoretical discipline studying narrative genres, systematization of the narrative types and plot structure" [7, p. 799]. In other words, "it treats the nature, forms and functioning of the narrative" [7, p. 799]. Moreover, narratology is not only to represent the theory of the narrative, but also to explain how it forms our comprehension of the world: "Narratology studies the ways in which the narrative structures our comprehension of cultural artifacts and the world which surrounds us".

The basics of the structuralism were laid out in F. de Saussure's "Course in General Linguistics" (1916), but while the latter worked mainly in the realm of linguistics, C. Lévi-Strauss was the first to apply his sign theory to ethnology ("The elementary structures of kinship", 1949). His contribution consists in the fact that he was the first to formulate a hypothesis that "the culture has a structure similar to that of the language" ("Structural anthropology", 1958) [27, p. 79].

French structuralists have chosen literary works as the object of their study. They applied, like C. Lévi-Strauss did it in ethnology, the sign model of F. de Saussure. Thus, the main idea of the structuralists was to reveal a constant sign model in the text – which they called "the structure". They based the study on the previous attempts of the formalists, namely on V. Propp's theory about a constant set of functions of folktale characters ("Morphology of the folktale", 1928). They also paid attention to his comprehension of the tale as a temporal sequence made by 31 subsequent constant functions [3, p. 156–157].

As C. Bremond stresses it, "... the need emerges to expand Propp's method to all the types of tales and to the totality of narrative genres. In this respect, one must discuss the applicability of Propp's model within the general narrative grammar" [1, p. 475]. C. Bremond, thus, uses the model proposed by F. de Saussure in studying narratives. He claims that "structural studies on the narratives can be divided into two groups referring to different aspects of the message narrated: the history told and the discourse which tells" [1, p. 475]. Thus, C. Bremond grounded the possibility to analyze narratives in the field of structuralism, which previews treating the text as a system of signs, each of which is a relation between signifier and signified, that means, in the occurrence of the narrative text, discourse

and narrative [13, p. 34, 128]. The structure of the narrative text, thus, can be conditionally described as follows:

$$\text{sign (narrative)} = \frac{\text{signifier}}{\text{signified}} = \frac{\text{expression plan}}{\text{content plan}} = \frac{\text{discourse ("how?")}}{\text{narration ("what?")}}$$

The scheme illustrates the concepts that need further explanation [26, p. 16, 20, 227, 233; 16, p. 533].<sup>1</sup>

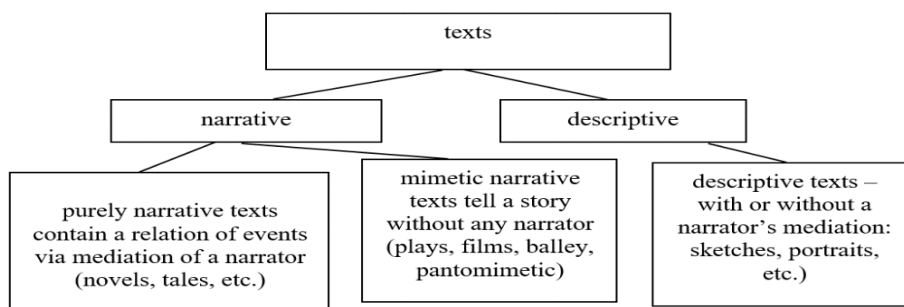
Discourse is an “expression plan of the narrative which is opposed to content or narration. While a story (diegesis) is “what”, i.e. what is told, the discourse is how it is told” [13, p. 34]. E. Benveniste in “Problems of General Linguistics” (1966) puts discourse as “each expression that previews the presence of a speaker and a listener, the intention of the first to impact the latter in some way” [17, p. 242].

Narration is a “content plan of the narrative as opposed to the expression plan”, it “always engages temporal sequence..., that turns to be its most characteristic treat”, involving at least one modification, a shift from one state existing in  $t_0$  to another one situated in  $t_n$  [13, p. 119, 84]; according to C. Bremont it is “a story told” as opposed to “discourse which tells” [1, p. 475].

Narration and discourse are both the components of the narrative playing the role of a sign, if one applies Saus-

sure’s formula to the text. The narrative is treated as a “telling (as an act and an object, a product and a process, a structure and a structuring) of one or more real or fictive events told by one, two or few narrators to one, two or few narratees” [13, p. 73]. The narrative may be represented in different environments (literature, music, theater, cinema, painting, etc.). The modern comprehension of the narrative has been formed by structuralists who distinguished narrative and descriptive texts. W. Schmid stresses the main treat of the narrative texts which he claims to be an eventuality [14, p. 10]. Y. Lotman defines an event as “a character’s shift outside the semantic field” [12, p. 272]. Thus, one can conclude that narrative texts must contain a relation of events, a shift from state A to state B, which are their main characteristics.

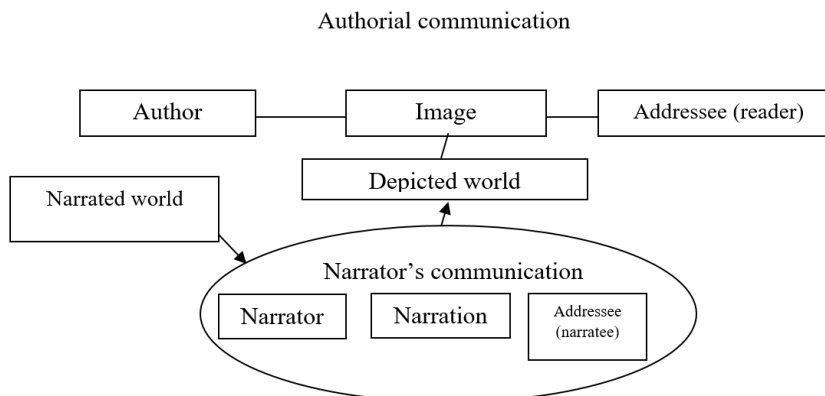
W. Schmid [15, p. 21] proposes the following classification of texts following S. Chatman:



Narrative texts are characterized by eventuality, and tell a story. The narrator is a key figure of communication in narrative texts – “he who narrates in the text” [13, p. 83]. According to M. Zubrycka, the narrator is “a voice, he who is responsible for the narration act, representing an action as a true story” [7, p. 799]. He belongs not to the real world, but to the textual one, and tells a story to the other part of the textual world, the narratee. The latter is an addressee of the narrator, to whom he appeals [20, p. 226].

The narratives contain a binary communication structure, for both narrator and narratee take part of the world

described in the text by the author, whose addressee is the reader. Unlike the narrator or narratee, the two instances in question exist in the real world: the author is a concrete person whose existence is not limited by the text. As O. Tkachuk puts it, “a real author is never to be confused with a narrator, for he is neither proper to the narrative nor is he deduced from it” [13, p. 6]. A reader, similarly to an author, is a person who receives the author’s message and, he too, exists outside the text [15, p. 41]. The binary communication structure which takes place in the narrative text can be described as follows [15, p. 35]:



<sup>1</sup> Kemezis 2014, 16, 20, 227, 233: to understand the ancient historiography, one must ask not “What is written?”, but “How is it written?”. The

discordance between the form and the content of the texts fits the fictional nature of the ancient historiography. See also Asirvatham 2017, 533.

As one can see, the narratorial communication is a part of the author's one; it is related to the world depicted by an author, for, as will follow, the narrator, his imaginary addressee and the message transmitted to him are imagined by the author.

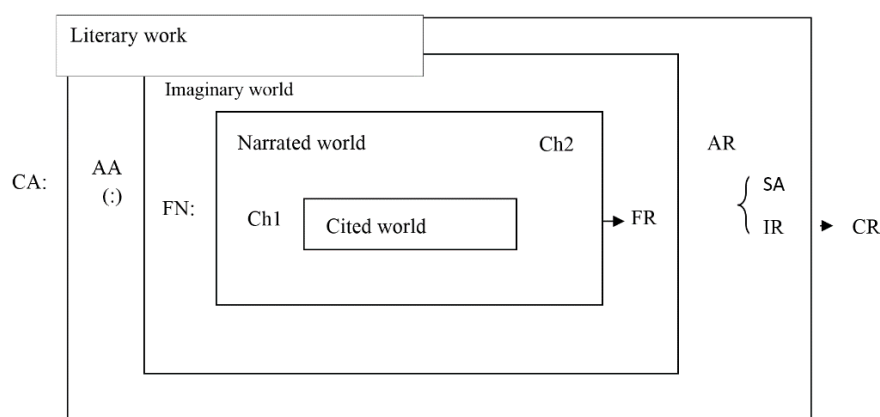
The model of the communication structure of the narrative text described above is two-leveled.<sup>2</sup> According to W. Schmid, "one can add the third level if the characters narrated are at the same time a narrating instance" [15, p. 39]. Thus, characters are a part of the world the narrator relates. At this point, a consideration of all the components of the triple structure of the narrative is desirable.

The Real author and the real reader exist outside the text as independent subjects. Nevertheless, they compose for themselves a kind of an image of each other: the author's imagination creates an image of the reader and vice versa. These two images cannot exist outside a literary work, for they emerge in the readers' thoughts through the text one writes or reads. The concept of the author's image was firstly elaborated by V. Vinogradov in his work "On the fiction" [2]. Later it was studied by B. Korman, J. Mukarovsky, M. Cervenka, J. Slawinski, A. Okopien-Slawinska. Western criticism admitted the term proposed by W. Booth – the implied author [18, p. 70–71]. According to W. Booth, it is an image of an author created by a reader, one of the most powerful impact factors on the reader [18, p. 70–71]. In terms of G. Genette, "the author one imagines (*auteur impliqué, idée de l'auteur*) is no more than what the text tells us about him" [21, p. 102]. We will accept the term of W. Schmid claiming that "the abstract author is a signified of all the indicative signs of the text that denote the addresser; ... an anthropomorphous source of all the acts of creation, an embodiment of intentionality in the text" [15, p. 73]. The abstract author may be distinguished via some characteristics: the fiction of events and situations, characters and actions, the algorithm of actions

grounded on some philosophy, the introduction of the narrator and his narration [15, p. 74]. Thus, all the textual symptoms expressing the authorial intent or giving an idea of the author's conception must be referred to the level of the abstract author.

The abstract reader is "an essential of the recipient's image that the concrete author meant, that is, the author's image of the recipient which is installed in the text via indicative signs" [15, p. 70]. W. Iser, the founder of reader-response criticism, calls him an "implied reader": "the implied reader is deprived of a real existence, for he embeds the integrity of the preliminary reference points the fiction provides to its readers as a condition of reception. It follows that the implicit reader is based not on a kind of empirical understratum, but on the text's structure itself" [24, p. 60]. W. Schmid divides the abstract reader into ideal recipient and supposed addressee. The first is an instance which comprehends completely the text via its facture. His values and aesthetic norms are pre-defined by the writing. The ideal recipient fully agrees with the author's conception. The supposed addressee is, on the contrary, the instance targeted by the abstract author. His ethical, aesthetic and moral orientations are taken into account by the author who structures the writing. It is preferred to distinguish the abstract reader and narratee, for the latter is a personality who is sensitive to ethical phenomena. The abstract reader has first of all a certain aesthetic point of view [15, p. 61–62].

The abstract reader and the abstract author take part of the communication structure of the narrative as a separate communication level studied within the whole literary work. It contains component levels such as an imaginary world, a narrated world, and a cited world (that of the characters). The categories described may be illustrated by the scheme which follows [15, p. 40]:



**Legend:**

CA – concrete author  
: – creates  
AA – abstract author  
FN – fictive narrator  
→ directed toward  
Ch1, Ch2 – characters

FR – fictive reader  
AR – abstract reader  
SA – supposed addressee  
IR – ideal recipient  
CR – concrete reader

To understand what the narrative strategy is, some basic concepts concerning it need to be clarified.

G. Genette in "Discours du récit" has elaborated the concept of focalization which is analogous to the "point of view" (O. Kovalov, though, rejects such an identification claiming that the focalization previews limitation of narrative information in accordance with a certain point of view [9, p. 73–74]. G. Genette considers the focalization as "a

<sup>2</sup> A. Kemezis [26, p. 11] speaks in fact about the necessity to distinguish authorial and narratorial communication in the ancient historiography.

limitation of the field, i.e. a choice of narrative information referred to as what is called an “omniscience” [20, p. 203]. The scholar postulates three degrees of focalization:

zero focalization	internal focalization	external focalization
A narrator possesses a more profound knowledge than a character, he knows more than any character.	A narrator speaks only about what a character also knows.	A narrator tells less than a character knows.
The narration is conducted from the omniscience narrator’s point of view.	The narration is conducted from the character’s point of view.	The narration is conducted from the point of view of an objective narrator who has not any access to the character’s consciousness.

In accordance with this scheme, G. Genette defined two possible status of narrator, i.e. the positions the narrator occupies relatively to his narration [20]:

1. External status is characterized by the use of the third person. In this way the external narrator is introduced.

external objective status: the narrator remains outside the story and does not utter any personal commentary during narration;

external subjective, implied status, where the narrator is not concerned with the story, but recurs to personal commentaries;

zero status (omniscient narrator).

2. Internal status causes the use of the first person and introduces the internal narrator into the narration.

The typology of the narrator as a structural component of communication in the narrative is not restricted to the status criterion. The analysis of narrator types interested plenty of scholars, namely P. Lubbock, N. Friedman and W. Fuger. W. Schmid systemized their achievements. In his scheme [15, p. 78], the typology of the narrator is put as follows:

Criteria	Types of a narrator
mode of expression	explicit-implicit
diegeticness	diegetic-non-diegetic
framing degree	primary-secondary-tertiary
presence degree	strongly present-hardly present
personality	personal-impersonal
anthropomorphism	anthropomorphic-non-anthropomorphic
homogeneity	homogeneous-heterogeneous
estimation expression	objective-subjective
awareness	omniscient- limited in knowledge
Space	omnipresent – limited in space
introspection	remains outside or inside
professionalism	professional-unprofessional
reliability	reliable-unreliable

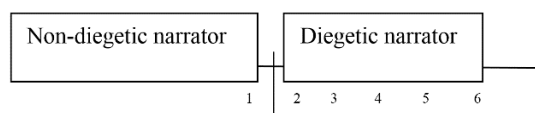
The first three criteria represented on the scheme need further explanation. The first one is the narrator’s mode of expression which can be explicit and implicit. L. Dolezel was one of the first to distinguish narrator’s and character’s text in the narrative [19]. The scholars paid attention to how two texts interfere and how the narrator is involved in the character’s speech and vice versa. In such cases, the narrator can express his own point of view via one of the characters using his language peculiarities or without changing the style of narration [15, p. 197]. Thus, the narrator can express his point of view explicitly or implicitly.

The degree of the narrator’s presence in the texts of Xenophon and Herodian will be also treated in the present article.

The terms of “primary narrator”, “secondary narrator” and “tertiary narrator” were proposed by B. Romberg [30, p. 63]. One of the characters can become a narrator while retelling a story. In this case he is called a secondary narrator. If this story includes itself an embedded narrative, its subject is a tertiary narrator as related to the main narrative.

The degree of diegeticness is one of the most important treats of the narrator. The concept of δῆγησις as a narration is mentioned in Plato [25, 45.3.396]. G. Genette [20, p. 278–279] means by “diegetic narrator” “he who is related to the story told”. According to W. Schmid, “the diegetic narrator is the one who narrates about himself as a figure in diegesis. The non-diegetic narrator tells about other figures” [15, p. 81]. The original meaning of the word ἔξηγησις (explanation, interpretation) is conserved in its narratological aspect: the exegesis is a narration plan which previews auxiliary commentaries, judgments, clarifications [15, p. 81]. Thus, diegeticness or non-diegeticness of the narrator is his immediate presence or absence as a character in the world he narrates.

The diegeticness of the narrator may be of various degrees. G. Genette [20, p. 253–254] proposes a classification of diegeticness degrees:



1. Narrator is absent from the story.
2. Uninvolved eyewitness.
3. Eyewitness-protagonist.
4. Secondary character.
5. One of the main characters.
6. The principal character (narrator-protagonist).

Let one consider the concept of the narrative strategy. As O. Kovalov puts it, “the concept of strategy as applied to the narrative means a certain organization of poetics (a system of expressive means of the narrative) in order to provide a kind of influence on a reader” [9, p. 55]. The scholar stresses in his other work that “the concept of narrative strategy came to linguistics from sociology and previews considering literature as a kind of social productive activity” [10, p. 7]. Thus, one will call the narrative strategy the means of influencing the reader. They are innumerable, but one can distinguish several of them which are typical. These are omniscience formulae, the “mind reading” device, “text-in-text” device, recurring narrative and some focusing devices [9, p. 77, 90, 93, 104, 111].

**The basics of the reader-response criticism.** As it has been shown in the previous section, narrative texts have a double structure of communication, i.e. the authorial and narrator’s one, and the latter is incorporated into the first as a part of the world depicted. Thus, the author’s stand is to be studied at the authorial communication level. The text is always a result of cooperation of an addresser and an addressee of the message, of the author and the reader [10, p. 168]. According to M. Kolchauer, the authorial stand is a construct created by a reader on the base of the text [11, p. 73]. The study of authorial stand and intents is impossible without applying theoretical achievements of the reader-response criticism.

Reader-response criticism or reception theory is a theoretical current founded and developed by the representatives of the Constance school, namely H.-R. Jauss and W. Iser, in the late 60s. Reader-response criticism stresses an active reader's role in the process of cognition and realization of a literary work. H.-R. Jauss elaborated the "horizon of expectations" concept, while W. Iser analyzed a phenomenological aspect of reading. The reader-response criticism considers the meaning as a cooperation of an author and a reader, as an "experience effect, but not as a codified information" [7, p. 804–805].

In his paper called "The reading process: a phenomenological approach", W. Iser claims the presence of two poles within a text: the artistic and the aesthetic. The first concerns a text created by an author, and the latter indicates its realization by a reader. This kind of realization makes the text "live" and turns it into a literary work. "The convergence of a text and a reader initiates the existence of a literary work" [8, p. 349]. According to R. Ingarden, the world represented in the literary work is built on the intentional phrase correlation: "The phrases are connected in different ways and create more complex unities of meaning which reveal various structures and result in an emergence of tales, novels, dialogues, plays, scientific theories... As a result one obtains a complex world possessing all the components conditioned in one way or another, with all the variations which can occur in these parts – these are purely intentional correlations of phrases". The totality of those intentional correlations is called by R. Ingarden "the world represented in the writing" [23, p. 29].

W. Iser also mentions E. Husserl's thesis about the pre-intents, that is, "expectations of what is to come" incorporated in separate phrases [8, p. 352]. Based on these presuppositions, W. Iser stresses the existence of the real dimension of the text formed by the text and the reader's imagination [8, p. 353]. Thus, the reading is a creative process which is far from a simple perception of the writing [8, p. 353].

If the following phrase does not correlate with that what the reader waited for, a blockade takes place in his consciousness. R. Ingarden called it a lacuna. The reader fills it out at his own option, and this act represents a dynamic of reading. Anticipation and retrospection are the phases of the text: the reader is constantly anticipating that what will be referred to in the text and recalls what is already read. Anticipation and retrospection call to living a real dimension of the text [8, p. 355]. The reality created by a reader is different from his own one. The author creates elements of uncertainty in the text, because the real image is not demonstrated to the reader. These elements, along with the textual lacunas, form the reader's imagination. A *Gestalt* of the text is created. It includes the following components: images created by the reader's imagination; anticipation and retrospection;<sup>3</sup> consistence – a process of grouping together all the aspects of the text [8, p. 356].

The gestalt is formed due to the reader's expectation and creation of illusions which help "the text experience to be read". The gestalt is not the very meaning of the text. In the

process of reading a configurative meaning of the text is formed being only a part of some integrity [8, p. 357]. The consistence shaped by a reader is in conflict with plenty of other possibilities to realize the text which it tries to exterminate. Thus, "the configurative meaning of the text is also accompanied by alien associations which do not coincide with preliminary illusions" [8, p. 357]. In the process of hesitation between illusions and alien associations the reader forms his own aesthetic experience. In such a case he is making an act of reproduction which is necessary to consider an object as a piece of art. In this way the relations between the reader and the text are formed. They include three aspects [8, p. 362]:

- the process of anticipation and retrospection;
- the sequence of development of the text as life events;
- the impressions invoked by the similarity of textual and life experience.

On the basis of the theoretical argumentation of the reader-response criticism cited above, one can conclude that there exists the line of author and the line of reader. At their crossing, the existence of a literary work takes place. It can be depicted on the schemes that follow:

the line of author (text)	intentional phrase correlation
	pre-intents
	lacunas
	uncertainty elements (unwritten text)
	reader's identification with that what he reads
the line of the reader (creative process)	filling out lacunas at one's own option = reading dynamics
	anticipation + retrospection = real dimension of the text – turning the text into a form of reader's experience
	Reader's aesthetic experience/reader's life experience (before filling the lacuna the reader thinks on the ground of his aesthetic experience proposed by the text)
	reader's aesthetic experience (imagination) is formed by: uncertainty elements; lacunas of the text
	forms of reader's activity: images created by imagination; anticipation and retrospection; consistence
	reader's completion of the choice act which forms a <i>Gestalt</i> (image) of the text = that is a configurative meaning of the text (individual meaning which is a result of reducing polysemic variations to the only possible interpretation)
	configurative meaning of the text is possible due to: reader's expectations; illusions building; accompaniment of the alien associations (hesitation between one's own illusions and alien associations forms finally the aesthetic experience of the reader

Theoretical achievements of the reader-response criticism are applicable in the case of narrative texts, for one

<sup>3</sup> H. Sidebottom [31, p. 2819–2820] postulates the multitude of such devices in Herodian. They enhance, on the one hand, the author's control over the plot, and, on the other hand, the reader's activity.

can try to understand the essentials of the authorial communication there as well as the ways of its interpretation by a reader preplanned in the text.

As one can observe, narratology and reader-response criticism give way to a comprehensive analysis of historiographical narratives which goes far beyond the Quellenforschung. They are the key for the understanding of messages laid out in historiographical writings, let them address the events' contemporaries or future generations. Nevertheless, practical studies [4, 5] show that, in the case of ancient historiographical biographies, the analysis in the frames of narratology and reader-response criticism is insufficient, for the level of authorial communication is latent in such works. Writings which focus on one concrete historical person will be structured in a way different from that of universal or local histories. Their epic structure, as our studies mentioned above argue, obeys the rules of constructing dramatic works. That is why it is appropriate to examine the theory of the ancient tragedy elaborated by Aristotle in his "Poetics" and to the Euclidian doctrine of the golden ratio. The studies of concrete historiographical biographies (that of Xenophon and Herodian [ibid.]) prove certainly that the moment of peripeteia in such text coincides with that of the golden ratio described in Euclidian theory, as it does in the ancient tragedy. This means that both theories (that of Aristotle and Euclid) treat the same problem and are mutually complementary.

**The peripeteia and the golden ratio.** The present analysis employs the term of peripeteia introduced by Aristotle. In a tragedy, peripeteia (a moment of the highest tension in the stage action, after which the events develop in a predetermined and irreversible direction) is always accompanied by that what has been called the "golden ratio" in mathematics, according to Euclid [22, 6. def.3]. It is an equal relation of the whole to its greater part and of the greater part to the lesser part. One can compare some characteristic utterances from Aristotle's "Poetics":

ἐπει δὲ οὐ μόνον τελείας ἐστὶ πράξεως ἢ μίμησις ἀλλὰ καὶ φοβερῶν καὶ ἐλεεινῶν, ταῦτα δὲ γίνεται καὶ μάλιστα [καὶ μᾶλλον] ὅταν γένηται παρὰ τὴν δόξαν δι' ἄλληλα: τὸ γὰρ θαυμαστὸν οὕτως ἐξεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ εἰ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου καὶ τῆς τύχης, ἐπει καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τύχης ταῦτα θαυμασιώτατα δοκεῖ ὅσα ὡσπερ ἐπίτηδες φαίνεται γεγονέναι [28, 1452a].

Thus, the tragedy achieves its purpose when an unexpected action instills sympathy and fear, when something turns unexpectedly to be the consequence of another.

κεῖται δὲ ἡμῖν τὴν τραγωδίαν τελείας καὶ ὅλης πράξεως εἶναι μίμησιν ἐχούσης τι μέγεθος: ἔστιν γὰρ ὅλον καὶ μηδὲν ἔχον μέγεθος, ὅλον δὲ ἐστὶν τὸ ἔχον ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτήν. ἀρχὴ δὲ ἐστὶν ὃ αὐτὸ μὲν μὴ ἐξ ἀνάγκης μετ' ἄλλο ἐστίν, μετ' ἐκεῖνο δ' ἕτερον πέφυκεν εἶναι ἢ γίνεσθαι: τελευτὴ δὲ τὸναντίον ὃ αὐτὸ μὲν μετ' ἄλλο πέφυκεν εἶναι ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἄλλο οὐδέν: μέσον δὲ ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ μετ' ἄλλο καὶ μετ' ἐκεῖνο ἕτερον. δεῖ ἄρα τοὺς συνεστῶτας εἶ μύθους μῆθ' ὁπόθεν ἔτυχεν ἄρχεσθαι μῆθ' ὅπου ἔτυχε τελευτᾶν, ἀλλὰ κεκρηθῆσθαι ταῖς εἰρημέναις ιδέαις [28, 1450b].

The ancient tragedy is a complete and integral action and consists of the beginning, the middle part and the end (the node, the development of the action, and the denouement).

λέγω δὲ ἀπλῆν μὲν πρᾶξιν ἧς γινομένης ὡσπερ ὄριστα συνεχοῦς καὶ μιᾶς ἄνευ περιπετείας ἢ ἀναγνωρισμοῦ ἢ μετάβασις γίνεται, πεπλεγμένην δὲ ἐξ ἧς μετὰ ἀναγνωρισμοῦ ἢ περιπετείας ἢ ἀμφοῖν ἢ μετάβασις ἐστίν. ταῦτα δὲ δεῖ γίνεσθαι ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ μύθου, ὥστε ἐκ τῶν προγεγενημένων συμβαίνειν ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἢ κατὰ τὸ εἶκος γίνεσθαι ταῦτα: διαφέρει γὰρ πολὺ τὸ γίνεσθαι τάδε διὰ τάδε ἢ μετὰ τάδε. ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἢ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολὴ καθάπερ εἴρηται, καὶ τοῦτο δὲ ὡσπερ λέγομεν κατὰ τὸ εἶκος ἢ ἀναγκαῖον [28, 1452a].

In this fragment, Aristotle introduces the concept of peripeteia, i.e. the action's change into its opposite. The three conditions, as Aristotle puts it, are necessary for the tragedy to achieve its goal (to impress spectators). If one unites these statements, one can deduce that the tragedy is divided into three parts (the beginning, the middle part and the end). The peripeteia must come between the middle and the end (that is, between the moments where something is still happening and where nothing happens) and is a critical moment after which the action turns into its opposite.

These treats of the ancient tragedy are also present in historical biographies, in particular, that of Xenophon and Herodian, as is shown in [4, 5]. Introducing the elements of the tragedy into a history belongs to the sphere of the authorial communication and may thus be studied in the frames of narratology.

Considering the above, one can make certain **conclusions** which concern the study of the ancient historical biography:

1. The current state of narratology allows the scholars to engage its theoretical achievements within the analysis of ancient historiographical texts. In this respect, the detection and distinction of the authorial and narratorial communication is the most precious discovery.

2. The study of the narrative strategy necessitates modeling and the distinction between authorial and narratorial communication.

3. The method of reader-response criticism is crucially useful while studying the structure and the strategy of the narrative. A distinction between the line of the author and the line of the reader helps to determine potential possibilities of realization of pre-intents declared in the text.

4. The present article postulates the structural similarities between the ancient tragedy and historiographical biography and proposes to engage the theoretical achievements of the studies of ancient drama, namely the concepts of peripeteia and golden ratio, into the analysis of the ancient biographies. Thus, one can study the ancient historiography considering its eclectic narrative structure.

5. As practical studies show, a latent level of authorial communication exists potentially in ancient historiographical biographies. It seems to be detectable through the collision of the levels of narratorial and authorial communications at the very moment of the golden ratio. This collision coincides with the moment of peripeteia in the text.

6. As a result, the procedure of studying historiographical biographies which aims at revealing and adequate interpretation of their hidden content must be based on four piles: the narratological theory, the ideas of the reader-response criticism, Aristotelian concept of peripeteia and Euclidian theory of the golden ratio.

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