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THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE NARRATOR PERSONA IN HISTORIOGRAPHY – THE CASE OF SALLUST'S *BELLUM CATILINAE*

Abstract

This paper explores the complex persona of the narrator in historiographic texts. It would seem that in historiography, the narrator should be a rather straightforward notion, since it is generally assumed that historiographic texts ideally represent something that actually happened in the past. A historiographic narrator should be, according to the prevailing doctrines, a reliable and coherent intratextual function that must always stay outside the reported story, which bestows on him/her a cloak of omniscience. Yet in some of the most important historical works, the narrator proves to be less than a stable and reliable instance.

Keywords: narratology, narrator, narratee, narrative text, story, fabula, historiography, Thucydides, Sallust

Wherever and whenever something is told, whenever something is *narrated*, even if it is but a single uttered line, a narrating agent must be present. It is easy to confuse or

conflate this agent with the *author* (or at least the "implied author", to which instance this paper will pay some attention), which inevitably leads to forced and, indeed, naïve biographic readings of (historiographic) texts. Even though narratology has taught us to emancipate the narrator persona from the author (a number of *fictional* works teach a good lesson), this becomes somewhat more difficult in the case of historiography. Conflating the historiographic *narrator* with the *author* may have tainted the occupation of historians for good: surely, they must know *all* of history by heart. But joking aside, the narrating agent in works of historiography is a somewhat special case.

Several more or less satisfying attempts have been made at classifying different types of narrators; whereas Booth (*The Rhetoric of Fiction*) distinguishes between a *reliable* and *unreliable* narrator, Stanzel (*A Theory of Narrative*; *Typische Formen des Romans*) suggests three different types. The most general division was probably suggested by Genette (*Narrative discourse*), whose distinction of narrating agent lies upon their position to the contents of the narrative, therefore ranging from extradiegetic to intradiegetic and from heterodiegetic to homodiegetic. M. Bal (*Narratology. Introduction to the theory of narrative*) substituted these instances for internal and external focalizers etc.

Be that as it may, none of these models is fully satisfying when approaching works of historiography (or, for that matter, works of fiction as well). Here, the external position of the narrator is inevitable: it gives the narrating agent the all-knowing quality, whereby they are not spatially and/or temporally limited, knowing more than the protagonists of the (hi)story.

In fiction, these intraliterary instances have a wide latitude: regardless the author, a story can be told by a boy (even if the author is an old man – e.g. Mark Twain's narrator Huckleberry Finn in *Tom Sawyer*), a female narrator (even if the actual author is a man – or vice versa), a dead man (when the author

was evidently alive – as in the case of Villon's *Ballade des pendus*), or an animal (the author evidently being a human, as in the case of Branko Čopić's *Adventures of Tosha the Cat*) and so on. In history, there is almost no such latitude: a (*reliable and authorial*?) historical narrator (presumably a he or a she) is necessarily outside the narrated story: an *extradiegetic*, *heterodiegetic* one.

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The narrator is an imaginary figure or – in less anthropomorphic terms – an *agent* who transmits everything to a *narratee*: the realia, conditions, events, statements, etc. Therefore, it is a *function* that transforms the extraliterary reality into the intraliterary one. The task of the narrator, who remains present throughout the narrative (even when there is an effort to make the narrator *appear* absent, due to which the narrative appears as not being narrated[1]), is to observe (or simply know) and relay what is observed (or known) to the narratee. The continuous presence of the narrator is undisputed by almost all narratology theorists.[2] Even in the case of a "non-narrated narrative" we are, in fact, faced with a narrative not *explicitly* narrated, which is not an argument against the presence of the narrator. Identifying a specific type of the narrator in a particular part of the narrative presents us with a certain difficulty, not least because the narrator is an imaginary figure with whom the narratee comes into contact only when they begin to pursuit the intraliterary developments, and not before. The narrator belongs to an intangible world that even in historiographical works remains only an *impression* of a certain reality (the reader or the narratee being a co-creator of the narrative process).

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[1] CHATMAN 1980, 34.
[2] E.g. GENETTE 1983; PRINCE 1982; STANZEL 1984; RIMMON-KENAN 2002.

The idea that in works of fiction the narrator fabricates the narration (to put it in rather over-simplified terms) *as* he or she is reporting it,[3] makes the need to identify the type of the narrator pointless, if not quite problematic.[4] Not so in historiographical texts, where the narrator is limited by specific restrictions (let us refer to them as "technical"), the most important certainly being a specific narrative perspective that the narrator has to assume in a (historical) narrative, i.e. a (narrative) viewpoint (focus), which gives the narrator an overview of (hi)story as a whole.[5]

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Before we examine basic models of the narrator typology, we need to pause at the concept of the implied author,[6] which can be directly equated with neither the author nor the narrator, but is, nevertheless, a narrative function. The inner structure of a particular work is a communication structure that can also be regarded as a seeming communication situation between the implied author on one side of the narrative structure and the implied reader on the other. The textual, implied author is a virtual sum of the author's ideological traits (his/her *Weltanschauung*), the textual, therefore implied reader being the virtual receiver of the narrative – his/her ideological outline being an important factor in the process as well.

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[3] GENETTE 1990, 15. The idea that the narrator makes up the contents of the narrative also makes the idea of a *fabula* (or a *sujet*) – the innermost, most basic frame of the story which cannot be chronologically altered and cannot be (further) reduced without compromising the contents – somewhat redundant.

[4] The process of guessing the identity of the narrator or his/her "style" must be turned upside down: only at the conclusion of the narrative, when the complete retrospective over the intraliterary panorama is available, can the narratee sum up an impression about the imaginary person who narrated, and who is indeed perceived only through the sum of the narrator's actions that belong to the chosen narrative strategy.

[5] MUNSLOW 2007, 48.

[6] BOOTH 1961.

The implied author is the central leading consciousness of any work and is (to some extent) created by the author, when he/she composes the text. The implied author is the author's implied image that differs from his or her physical person and from any specific life circumstances. The implied author is a virtual appearance of the author's *Weltanschauung* and represents his or her "other self"; the author's textual, therefore implied author, and the implied author as perceived by the reader do not necessarily correspond in their entirety, perhaps even only as far as to agree about the content of the text. The "alter ego" of the author can significantly differ from his or her real physical person, which has to submit to all inconsistencies and imperfections of the ever-present reality. Therefore, the author is not a simple incarnation of the implied author; more so, the implied author is not a fixed literary alternative of the author, but can vary from one work to another.[7]

The difference between the narrator and the implied author is a sensitive issue, because the (implied) reader – trapped between the (implied) author and the text, as well as the intertextual functions – is inclined to attribute the "ownership" over the words to the (implied) author rather than to the narrator or even a character in the story.[8] The phenomenon is quite pressing in a historiographical narrative, where the (implied) reader is especially keen to equate the (implied) author with the narrator;[9] in this case, the conflating of the narrator with the (implied) author is that much more of an issue due to the reader's presumption that the content of the narrator's report *actually took place*.

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[7] The (implied) reader is instrumental in deciding the "identity" of the implied author but it would be wrong to think that the implied author is entirely constructed by the reader (RIMMON-KENAN 2002, 87–88); instead, it seems more acceptable to say that this "artificial intelligence" is a product of reports between the intraliterary and extraliterary worlds (DARBY 2001, 839; KINDT 2003, 418).

[8] MAY 1994, 33.

[9] GENETTE 1990, 764.

As stated before, the implied reader, too, seems like a figure with a position in the communication scheme: the author created the implied reader in the process of predicting his/her target audience with predicted specific ideological or even esthetical positions. It seems that the implied reader is mainly a specific narrative strategy. The implied reader may differ completely from the author's "predictions", if we may say so, yet regardless of the reader's acceptance or rejection of the given position, the act nevertheless leads to an intertextual communication.

Where is the main difference between the implied author and the narrator, who carries the focus of our attention? The textual, i.e. implied author is responsible for the literary statement in its entirety (*per analogiam*, the author remains responsible for the physical object of the literary work, including the paratextual elements), while the narrator bears the responsibility for the narrative without the communication in the form of direct speech. In the view of responsibility for individual textual categories, we can compose the following scheme:

figure	activity	object of activity	addressee
author	writing	literary work	reader
implied author	literary statement	(literary) text	implied reader
narrator	narration	narration	narratee
focalizer	focalization	viewpoint	observer
agent	activity	action	

Given the reasonable hierarchy of "responsibilities" for the text or within the text, it is the author who "creates" the implied author (though it would be safe to say that this is seldom intentional), who in turn creates the narrator, and that figure addresses the narratee. Therefore, the real author communicates with the real reader through a series of filters – the seeming

categories. The diagram proposed by Chatman[10] clearly distinguishes between the intertextual and extratextual categories, however, we must reiterate the warning about the correction that the implied author is really a borderline category – it belongs to the intertextual, as well as the extratextual world.[11]

<div style="text-align:center">

author

$\downarrow$

implied author → narrator → narratee → implied reader

$\downarrow$

reader

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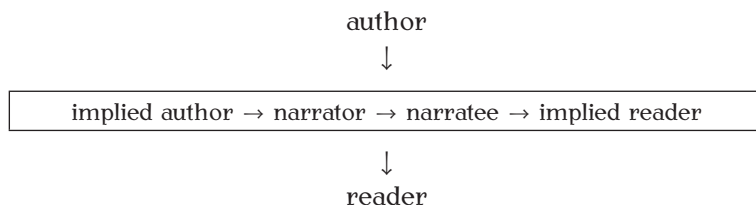
Wherever we encounter a narrative, we inevitably come into contact with a narrator: "someone" (or something) has to narrate it. The narrator is characterized by the frequency of his/her/its interventions and self-awareness, but above all the distance from the narrative, in other words, from the world articulated.[12]

Booth's distinction between a *reliable* and an *unreliable* narrator is defined by the idea that the reliable narrator makes his/her report according to the norms underpinning the narrative text, i.e. the norms of the implied author.[13] The unreliable narrator, however, veers off from the norms of the implied author or even from his/her own norms or expressed intentions, directing the narratee's attention from the level of the story (*fabula*) towards the level of the narrative, which

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[10] CHATMAN 1980, 267.

[11] I am indebted to prof. David Elmer for his observation about the category of the implied author in oratorial situations where it would seem that the implied author equals author (speaker). However, at least in the case of speeches written by *logopoioi*, e.g. Lysias, which were commissioned and delivered by other people, seem to be a good case *for* the implied author as a distinct category in such situations.

[12] PRINCE 1982, 13; STANZEL 1984, 17.

[13] BOOTH 1961, 158–159.

he/she occupies with all intentions and strategies that could be motivated by various reasons (limited knowledge, for example[14]). An example of an unreliable narrator is, say, that of Tacitus, who makes a pledge at the beginning of the narrative to report *sine ira et studio* (no doubt in accordance with the convictions of the implied author), however, that pledge quite evidently wears off later in the text: to an educated reader, bias and partisanship appear to be present on almost every page.[15] The weak point of the reliable–unreliable distinction (if it really is of any consequence in historiography) is, that one is perhaps tempted to argue that *all* narrators in historiography are unreliable since a) there is no knowing the extent of what the narrator possibly does not know (but here we are conflating the narrator with the actual (implied) author) and b) it could always be argued that the untold parts of the story were deliberately omitted by the narrator, which raises the question *why* would the narrator want to keep the narratee in the dark.[16]

Stanzel articulated the typology of the three narrators,[17] the authorial, the first-person, and the personal narrator. The authorial and the first-person narrators belong to the superficial structure of the narrative, therefore they are not involved in the *production* of a narrated work (with all its elements, including the narrator). Their task is to present a (fictional)

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[14] RIMMON-KENAN 2002, 10.

[15] RAAFLAUB 2008, 255. This is not to say that Tacitus did not have good cause to say (or, rather, have his narrator say) that his account would be an unbiased one and then fail to deliver just that. However, the *why* is irrelevant here: no matter the circumstances that caused the specific intratextual strategies (Id. 257–267), in strict narratological terms (as laid out by Booth), the narrator is choosing a specific strategy other than that laid out in the prologue. Sallust's narrator, in turn, is not scathed by the similar passage in the prologue hinting at the lack of partisanship (*mihi a spe metu partibus rei publicae animus liber erat*): unlike Sallust, the author, who may well have been afraid of political consequences, the narrator was indeed free of such feelings.

[16] A lengthy digression or even a separate discussion on the topic of truth–untruth in historiography would be in order here; we shall revisit this issue very briefly in the introductory remarks to the conclusion.

[17] STANZEL 1993, 16–17.

narrated work as actual and real.[18] The essential difference between the (third-person) authorial and the first-person narrators lies in their presence in the world articulated: the first-person narrator is a part of it, while the authorial is not.[19] The *omniscience* of the authorial narrator is self-understood (when necessary, the authorial author knows more that the (implied) author[20]), since he/she analytically approaches the intimate world of the characters (who, unlike the authorial narrator, are a part of the world articulated); on the contrary, the first-person narrator is forced to underpin his/her knowledge about the intimate world of the characters with allusions to communication with them.[21]

As shown by G. Genette,[22] the major downside of the grammatically conditioned differentiation between the third-person (authorial) and the first-person narrator lies in the fact that the alleged third-person authorial narrator actually speaks in the first person – as soon as "someone" (or something) speaks, a first-person act is witnessed (I say …). Thus, the author does not choose between the two grammatical positions, but he or she decides what is the viewpoint of the narrative: is it the viewpoint of a character within the story or the viewpoint of a narrator outside it.[23]

By pointing out that any narrator can say "I", M. Bal similarly refuted the grammatically conditioned differentiation

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[18] STANZEL 1984, 17.

[19] As for Stanzel's "personal narrator", where the narrative flows through the consciousness of a person (or persons), we can agree that the typological instance of such narrator becomes obsolete with the articulation of the inner narrative focus, because the difference between narrative instances – especially between the authorial and the personal narrator – is basically the difference between the narrator and the focalizer. Therefore, the change in the narrative does not represent a change from the authorial to the personal narration, but the shift of focus from the outer to the inner one.

[20] STANZEL 1993, 16; 1984, xvi.

[21] STANZEL 1984, 127.

[22] GENETTE 1983.

[23] GENETTE 1983, 244.

between categories of the narrator.[24] Instead, she distinguishes the *external narrator*, who *can* speak in the first person (but not explicitly about him or herself, which excludes him/her from the *fabula*), and the *character-bound narrator* who belongs to the fabula.[25] An important difference between the two narrative instances is that the character-bound narrator must be personified and seems to report a "true" (autobiographic) narrative, using the argument of experience to legitimize the report. The character-bound narrator thus seemingly delivers a true story (experienced by him or her), as unbelievable as it may seem, which is the case of the Apuleius' narrator, who belongs to the category of the character-bound narrator (the first-person narrator according to Stanzel) and reports about his own experience. The external narrator lacks the ability to add legitimacy to his or her narrative by the reality of personal experience. Instead, he/she has to apply another, stronger tool – omniscience, which extends far beyond the limits of knowledge of the (implied) author, and which allows the external narrator to explore the inner world of the characters. For example, Caesar's narrator is the external narrator (the authorial narrator according to Stanzel), who reports about his own author – a character in the story – and therefore knows more than the character (the author) himself.

In an insufficiently articulated scheme[26] Genette articulated four types of narrative (and narrator) according to the narrator's relation to the narrative.[27] A narrator telling *their own* story (as in the case of Apuleius) is necessarily and intradiegetic, homodiegetic instance, while Homer's narrator, being outside the story, is necessarily an extradiegetic, heterodiegetic agent:

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[24] A narrator could indeed say "I" at any given moment; for the "I" in historiography cf. PELLING 2013 and LONGLEY 2013; see also ROOD 2004 for the "I" in Thucydides.
[25] BAL 1997.
[26] Cf. WALSH 1997; NIERAGDEN 2002.
[27] GENETTE 1983, 248.

NARRATIVE LEVEL narrator is	RELATION TO THE NARRATIVE narrator tells	
	their own story	someone else's story
part of the story	intradiegetic, *homodiegetic*	intradiegetic, *heterodiegetic*
outside the story	extradiegetic, *homodiegetic*	extradiegetic, *heterodiegetic*

What kind of a narrator is present in the oeuvres of historiography? According to Stanzel, it is an authorial narrator who necessarily knows more than the characters in the story. If, however, we put aside the rather rigid distinction of narrative situations according to the first-person/third-person narrator criteria, and adopt Genette's model, a historiographic narrator is *ideally* an extradiegetic, heterodiegetic one: a homodiegetic narrator would, loosely put, tell an autobiographical story (in a historiographical narrative). Taking into account that the extradiegetic narrative position presupposes narrator's omniscience[28] and his/her ubiquitous presence in the narrative,[29] it makes sense to apply Genette's terminology and define the historiographic narrator as an *extradiegetic, heterodiegetic* – and the narrative situation in historiography as one "with a dispersed or non-bound narrative focus, the narrator being an external focalizer".

In the historiographical ("factual"[30]) narrative, the external position of the narrator is necessary, as he/she must take a position from which a past reality can be viewed as a whole and where the narrator, an external instance, is not limited in real-time and space whereby he/she is omniscient and ubiquitous. The difficult (but privileged) position of history lies in readers' *expectation* that they are witnessing a narrative about something that *really happened*, which distinctively

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[28] SIMPSON 1993, 34.
[29] CHATMAN 1980, 212.
[30] GENETTE 1993, 55.

separates history from fiction. In terms of narratology, the distinction between fiction and factual (historical) narrative is rather straightforward: whereas the *fabula*[31] of a given fictional work *may* be nested in some reality (say, in historical novels), it can be – and usually is – "made up". Ideally, the *fabula* of a historical oeuvre equals a (undefinably incomplete) fragment of the past.

This, of course, does not necessarily mean that the narrator literally "knows everything" but simply that he/she "knows more than the characters in the story",[32] while his/her "omniscient and ubiquitous" quality means that he/she is not spatially and temporally limited or character-bound. The omniscient, ubiquitous historiographic narrator conveys to the narratee the story of all the persons, events and states, visible and invisible objects, freely accessing the thoughts of story characters by shifting the narrative focus.

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The (rather lengthy) theoretical discussion of the narratological models and narrator typology will serve as a frame for the following discussion of two or three textual instances in Thucydides and Sallust (all part of their prologues),[33] which

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[31] For the purpose of this paper, we shall stick to the terminology developed by G. Genette (cf. GENETTE 1972; GENETTE 1983) and revised by M. Bal (cf. BAL 1977; BAL 1997), i.e. the multi-level analysis of a narrative text, referring to the levels as *fabula – story – narrative text*, *fabula* meaning the simplest scheme of events, completely devoid of any additional embellishments or any temporal shifting of events, variations of point of view etc. *Fabula* is therefore the most minimalistic data abstract, the scheme of which cannot be changed in any way.

[32] NELLES 1990, 371.

[33] Both passages have been selected to illustrate the same inconsistency in the narrator figure; there are other cases of the "I" expressed in both authors (cf. e.g. BRATU 2019, 76ff. and 88ff., respectively), but the text bits selected here bare, I think, some resemblance in the shift of the narrator persona as shown below.

feature something of an anomaly regarding the textual figures explained above.

A historical narrator, as we've already pointed out above, should be ideally *reliable* (Booth) and/or *authorial* (Stanzel); according to Genette, we are dealing with an *extradiegetic*, *heterodiegetic* instance. According to Bal's distinction, the historiographic narrator would be *ideally* an external focalizer. In this paper, we shall refrain from arguing against these classifications[34] and shall, instead, try to add a correction to the idea of the historiographic narrator as an external focalizer. As we shall try to argue, historiographic narrators *can* get involved on a deeper focal level, which suggests we must refine the models for distinguishing between different types even further.

In the so called "second prologue", i.e. chapter 5,26 of his *Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides informs us about the events after Athenians lost Amphipolis, the ensuing 50-year peace (and breaching thereof) and renewed hostilities. The narrative is *de nouveau* introduced in an introductory fashion:

> γέγραφε δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ὁ αὐτὸς Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ἑξῆς, ὡς ἕκαστα ἐγένετο, κατὰ θέρη καὶ χειμῶνας, μέχρι οὗ τήν τε ἀρχὴν κατέπαυσαν τῶν Ἀθηναίων Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ ξύμμαχοι, καὶ τὰ μακρὰ τείχη καὶ τὸν Πειραιᾶ κατέλαβον. ἔτη δὲ ἐς τοῦτο τὰ ξύμπαντα ἐγένετο τῷ πολέμῳ ἑπτὰ καὶ εἴκοσι. καὶ τὴν διὰ μέσου ξύμβασιν εἴ τις μὴ ἀξιώσει πόλεμον νομίζειν, οὐκ ὀρθῶς δικαιώσει. τοῖς [τε] γὰρ ἔργοις ὡς διῄρηται ἀθρείτω, καὶ εὑρήσει οὐκ εἰκὸς ὂν εἰρήνην αὐτὴν κριθῆναι, ἐν ᾗ οὔτε ἀπέδοσαν πάντα οὔτ᾽ ἀπεδέξαντο ἃ ξυνέθεντο, ἔξω τε τούτων πρὸς τὸν Μαντινικὸν καὶ Ἐπιδαύριον πόλεμον καὶ ἐς ἄλλα ἀμφοτέροις ἁμαρτήματα ἐγένοντο καὶ οἱ ἐπὶ Θρᾴκης ξύμμαχοι οὐδὲν ἧσσον πολέμιοι ἦσαν Βοιωτοί τε ἐκεχειρίαν δεχήμερον ἦγον. […] *αἰεὶ*

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[34] It was pointed out by many distinguished scholars that a historical narrator is actually far from a reliable one (perhaps most notably by N. LORAUX in her acclaimed article *Thucydide n'est pas un collegue*; at least in the case of Thucydides, the scholar tradition was impossibly productive, but on Thucydides and narrative cf. ROOD 2009 and RENGAKOS 2011).

γὰρ ἔγωγε μέμνημαι, καὶ ἀρχομένου τοῦ πολέμου καὶ μέχρι οὗ
ἐτελεύτησε, προφερόμενον ὑπὸ πολλῶν ὅτι τρὶς ἐννέα ἔτη δέοι
γενέσθαι αὐτόν. <u>ἐπεβίων δὲ διὰ παντὸς αὐτοῦ αἰσθανόμενός τε</u>
<u>τῇ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ προσέχων τὴν γνώμην, ὅπως ἀκριβές τι εἴσομαι·</u>
<u>καὶ ξυνέβη μοι φεύγειν τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ ἔτη εἴκοσι μετὰ τὴν ἐς</u>
<u>Ἀμφίπολιν στρατηγίαν, καὶ γενομένῳ παρ᾽ ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς</u>
<u>πράγμασι, καὶ οὐχ ἧσσον τοῖς Πελοποννησίων διὰ τὴν φυγήν,</u>
<u>καθ᾽ ἡσυχίαν τι αὐτῶν μᾶλλον αἰσθέσθαι.</u> τὴν οὖν μετὰ τὰ δέκα
ἔτη διαφοράν τε καὶ ξύγχυσιν τῶν σπονδῶν καὶ τὰ ἔπειτα ὡς
ἐπολεμήθη <u>ἐξηγήσομαι</u>.[35]

What we have here is noticeable meandering between the
seemingly neutral "third-person" (deceptively masqueraded by
the narrator speaking about Thucydides of Athens) and the
highly engaged first-person narrative; according to Stanzel,
the narrator persona swings from the authorial to the per-
sonal one – or, to reiterate the above-mentioned distinctions

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[35] "*The same Thucydides of Athens has written down these events too,*
setting them out in sequence by winters and summers, down to the time
when the Spartans and their allies put an end to Athenian rule and cap-
tured the long walls and the Peiraeus. At that point the war had lasted a to-
tal of twenty-seven years. As for the agreement that intervened in the middle,
one would be quite wrong to think that this period did not count as a state of
war. For looked at carefully in the light of the relevant facts it will be seen
that one cannot describe as 'peace' a situation in which the two sides neither
restored nor received back everything that had been agreed by treaty; and
quite apart from that, there were violations of the treaty on both sides in
the Mantinean and Epidaurian conflicts among others, the allies in Thrace
remained just as hostile to Athens, and the Boeotians were observing a truce
which only lasted ten days at a time. […]
I always remember that from the very start of the war right up to its
end there were many who prophesied that it would last 'thrice nine years'.
I lived through the whole of it when I was of an age to appreciate
what was going on and could apply my mind to an exact understand-
ing of things. It so turned out that I was banished from my own country
for twenty years after the Amphipolis campaign and thus had the time
to study matters more closely; and as consequence of my exile I had ac-
cess to activities on both sides, not least to those of the Peloponnesians.
I will therefore now relate the differences that arose after the ten-year war
and the collapse of the treaty, and then the subsequent course of the
war." (Translation used: THUCYDIDES, MYNOTT 2013)

from other theories, it seems (at first glance) that the narrator swings from telling someone else's story (*heterodiegetic*) to telling his own story (*homodiegetic*) or that the external focus shifts towards the internal one. But does it?

Another such instance occurs in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* where we come across an almost identical manoeuvre (*C* 3–4):

> *pulchrum est bene facere rei publicae, etiam bene dicere haud absurdum est; vel pace vel bello clarum fieri licet; et qui fecere et qui facta aliorum scripsere, multi laudantur. ac mihi quidem, tametsi haudquaquam par gloria sequitur scriptorem et auctorem rerum, tamen in primis arduom videtur res gestas scribere*: primum quod facta dictis exaequanda sunt; dehinc quia plerique quae delicta reprehenderis malevolentia et invidia dicta putant, ubi de magna virtute atque gloria bonorum memores, quae sibi quisque facilia factu putat, aequo animo accipit, supra ea veluti ficta pro falsis ducit.
>
> **Sed ego adulescentulus initio sicuti plerique studio ad rem publicam latus sum, ibique mihi multa advorsa fuere. nam pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro virtute audacia largitio avaritia vigebant.** […]
>
> **Igitur ubi animus ex multis miseriis atque periculis requievit et mihi reliquam aetatem a re publica procul habendam decrevi, non fuit consilium socordia atque desidia bonum otium conterere**, neque vero agrum colundo aut venando, servilibus officiis, intentum aetatem agere; sed a quo incepto studioque me ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus statui res gestas populi Romani carptim, ut quaeque memoria digna videbantur, perscribere, eo magis quod mihi a spe metu partibus rei publicae animus liber erat. *Igitur de Catilinae coniuratione quam verissume potero paucis absolvam; nam id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo sceleris atque periculi novitate. de quoius hominis moribus pauca prius explananda sunt, quam initium narrandi faciam.*[36]

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[36] *It is a beautiful thing to serve the Republic with good deeds; but to speak well is also not without importance. One can achieve brilliance either in peacetime or in war. And many win the praise of others, both those*

In the case of Sallust there even seems to be a pattern here since the same technique was employed in both of his extant prologues (*Iug.* 4–5):

> *Ceterum ex aliis negotiis, quae ingenio exercentur, in primis magno usui est memoria rerum gestarum. Cuius de virtute quia multi dixere, praetereundum puto,* simul ne per insolentiam quis existimet memet studium meum laudando extollere. **Atque ego credo fore qui, quia decrevi procul a re publica aetatem agere, tanto tamque utili labori meo nomen inertiae imponant** […] **Qui si reputauerint, et quibus ego temporibus magistratus adeptus sum** […] **profecto existimabunt me magis merito quam ignavia iudicium animi mei mutavisse maiusque commodum ex otio meo quam ex aliorum negotiis rei publicae venturum.** *Nam saepe ego audivi …* […] *Verum ego liberius altiusque processi, dum me civitatis morum*

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who act and those who write up their actions. As for me, although the glory that comes to the writer is not equal to the glory that comes to the author of deeds, still it seems especially difficult to write history: First of all, deeds must find an equivalence in words. Then, there are readers: many will think that what you castigate as offences are mentioned because of hatred and envy; but, when you speak of the great virtue and glory of good men, what each one thinks is easy for himself to do, he accepts with equanimity; what goes beyond that he construes like fictions made up for lies.

But in my own case, as a young man I was at first attracted like many others to politics, and in politics I was thwarted by many obstacles. In place of shame, self-restraint, and virtue, arrogance thrived and graft and greed. […]

Consequently, when my mind found peace after a multitude of miseries and dangers, I decided to pass what remained of my life far from the public world. But, it was not my plan to waste the benefits of leisure in idleness and indolence, nor to pass my time engaged in the slavish occupations of farming or hunting. Rather, I decided to return to the very study from which my failed ambition had diverted me at the beginning: to write out the history of the Roman people, selecting the parts that seemed worthy of memory. I was encouraged all the more to do this because my mind was free from political hopes, fears, and partisanship. *I will, therefore, give an account of Catiline's conspiracy in a few words and as accurately as I can. I consider this event especially memorable because of the unprecedented nature of the crime and the danger it caused. But, first, before I begin my narrative, a few things must be said about that man's character.* (Translation used: SALLUST, BATSTONE 2010)

piget taedetque. Nunc ad inceptum redeo. Bellum scripturus sum, quod populus Romanus cum Iugurtha rege Numidarum gessit ...[37]

Who speaks here exactly? If it was a character in the story speaking, the highlighted text bits could be regarded as a sequence of internal narrative focus, however, despite the significantly different mode of speech, it is still the narrator who speaks here, except in a completely different – highly personalised and experiential – paradigm. The break in the narrative flow is almost imperceptible, yet clearly marked by discourse segmentations:[38] in Thucydides by part. γάρ (αἰεὶ γὰρ ἔγωγε μέμνημαι ... καὶ ξυνέβη μοι φεύγειν) and in Sallust by the part. *sed* (*sed ego adulescentulus initio ...*) or *atque* (*atque ego credo fore ...*). Changes in Sallust's narrative are further signalled by important internal signals, one of which is the choice of tense; unlike the rest of prologue 1.1–4.5, the passage 3.3–4 is entirely in the past tense, and in clear contrast to previous sections in the predominantly present narrative time, except of course section 2.1–2.2 where logical time prevails (*Igitur initio*

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[37] *But there are other activities that employ one's innate intellectual abilities, and pre-eminent among these is the recording of historical events. I think I will be silent about its value because others have written of that and because I do not want anyone to think that out of vanity I am extolling and praising my own endeavour.* **I also**
believe that, although my work is difficult and useful, there will still be those who will stigmatize it with the name of idleness, because I have decided not to participate in politics. [...] But I ask them to reconsider the circumstances in which I attained political office, the kind of men who could not achieve the same thing, and the class of men who entered the Senate afterwards. If they do, then I am sure that they will conclude that I changed my mind for good reason, not out of idleness, and that the outcome of my retirement will benefit the state more than the busy participation of others will.
*/****The following supports my claim:****/ **I have often heard that [...] But I have digressed too far and freely in expressing my contempt and disgust for our political morality.** I now turn to my project. I am going to write about the war which the Roman people waged with the Numidian king Iugurtha ...*
[38] Cf. BONIFAZI, DRUMMEN, de KREIJ 2016, 1.4 and 1.5.

reges – nam in terris nomen imperi id primum fuit – divorsi pars ingenium, alii corpus exercebant). The shift in the narrative focus is also clearly indicated by the specific expressions: the choice of the term *adulescentulus* in 3.3 instead of the simpler *adulescens* (used five times in Catiline's conspiracy) or the phrase *ab adulescentia*[39] clearly indicates that it is not the historical narrator speaking here but another (although not completely different) type of figure. The parallelism in 3.3 has a similar effect: *… pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro virtute audacia, largitio, avaritia vigebant.*

What is the relationship between the two paradigms of the narrator in these particular instances? Certainly, we're not dealing with the purely *historiographical* narrator who speaks – various signals discussed above point that out, most notably the change in narrative time and the choice of emotional pathetic terminology. Could it be, instead, another manifestation of the (same) narrator? Holding that thought, let us come up, at least for the purposes of this discussion, with a suitable term for this potential new figure; because of the evident self-reflection we shall refer to it as the "experiential narrator".[40] This new figure is not the focalized object of the historiographical narrator – in this respect, he/she is on the same narrative level; it is almost as if the historical narrator quietly relinquishes speech time to this other narrative paradigm – but only briefly. If this figure (the experiential narrator) is not focalized by the historical narrator (which clearly isn't the case), what kind of a relationship between narrating instances are we dealing with here?

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[39] The term *adulescentulus* is used two more times: in 49.2 where it applies to Caesar and 52.26 – Cato's speech. The term *adulescens* is used five times: 14.5, 15.1, 18.4, 38.1, 52.31, while the term *ab adulecentia* appears in 5.2.

[40] For the lack of a better term, we shall make distinction between two paradigms of (the same) narrator, which makes sense in historiography only, i.e. the historical narrator and the narrator who makes allusions to his/her own experience – experiential narrator.

Let us introduce, for further orientation, a short digression about different narrative levels. In the beginning of Fran Levstik's tale *Martin Krpan*, the reader (narratee) is addressed by two narrators: the primary, extradiegetic narrator and the secondary, intradiegetic narrator:

> "A man by the name of Močilar used to tell me stories about the olden days, about how people lived and what kind of things they kept by them. One Sunday afternoon, as we sat on a bench in the shade of a great linden tree, he related the following tale to me:
>
> 'In the region of Notranjska there once stood a village called Vrh. A very long time ago, a strong and powerful man named Krpan lived in the village. He was the kind of man the likes of which don't come along very often. He cared little for work, yet nevertheless led his mare all the way from the sea and over the mountains loaded with cargoes of English salt, a commodity that in those days was strictly forbidden.' …"[41]

In this case, the secondary, intradiegetic narrator is focalized by the focalizer – the primary extradiegetic narrator who makes no part of the whole story. But then again, so does the secondary narrator (Močilar) who is not involved in the (third) story told. The problem of this classification along Genette's levels of the narrative is its messy structure. Močilar is both: intradiegetic and extradiegetic, the focalizer and the focalized object. In any case, this is not the same situation as in both quoted instances from the *Peloponnesian War* and the *Catilinarian Conspiracy* or the *Jugurthine War*.

It seems much better to adopt Mike Bal's term "embedded narrative", which applies to structurally lower levels of narrative (delivered by the narrator). M. Bal's term "primary narrative" applies to the outermost perimeter of the narrative (the "diegetic level" according to Genette),[42] within which

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[41] LEVSTIK 2004.
[42] BAL 1997, 52.

new narratives can take place on a structurally lower, "hypo-diegetic" level.[43] This new narrative can share the same fabula with the primary narrative, it can introduce an entirely new fabula (as in the case of *Martin Krpan*), or it can perform an explicative function to elucidate on the fabula of the primary narrative.[44] However, this particular line of reasoning isn't without its own problems here so we shall discuss them in the conclusion.

Narratologically speaking, both quoted instances from Thucydides and Sallust can be broken down to the sequence of very similar elements:

γέγραφε δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ὁ αὐτὸς Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ἑξῆς, ὡς ἕκαστα ἐγένετο, κατὰ θέρη καὶ χειμῶνας …	pulchrum est bene facere rei publicae, etiam bene dicere haud absurdum est; vel pace vel bello clarum fieri licet; et qui fecere et qui facta aliorum scripsere, multi laudantur	**diegetic level/ primary narrative – (historical) narrator**
αἰεὶ γὰρ ἔγωγε μέμνημαι […] καὶ ξυνέβη μοι φεύγειν τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ ἔτη εἴκοσι μετὰ τὴν ἐς Ἀμφίπολιν στρατηγίαν	**Sed** ego adulescentulus initio sicuti plerique studio ad rem publicam latus sum, ibique mihi multa advorsa fuere. nam pro pudore, pro abstinentia, pro virtute audacia largitio avaritia vigebant.	**hypodigetic/ embedded narrative – experiential narrator**
τὴν οὖν μετὰ τὰ δέκα ἔτη διαφορὰν τε καὶ ξύγχυσιν τῶν σπονδῶν καὶ τὰ ἔπειτα ὡς ἐπολεμήθη ἐξηγήσομαι	**Igitur** de Catilinae coniuratione quam verissume potero paucis absolvam; nam id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo sceleris atque periculi novitate.	**diegetic level/ primary narrative – historical narrator**

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[43] RIMMON-KENAN 2008, 93.
[44] BAL 1997, 53–54.

It would seem that there is no place in historiography *proper* for such narrative effects, since the historiographic narrator should be a stable, coherent figure, which invested some effort into building up its authority.[45]

As we've already noted above, this particular situation raises the question of truth/untruth in ancient historiography (or rather its factual/fictional character) towards which we pointed by implying (rather roguishly) that Tacitus' narrator is an *unreliable* one. Even though this is not the issue here, it deserves a short digression before we move on to the conclusion. No (ancient) historian has ever said that they would be giving their readers anything other than historical "truth" even if it turned out to be little more than tradition. However, even if no one was naïve enough (or cynical enough as in our day) to believe they actually were reading a historically correct account – and even the objectiveness was never really the primary goal,[46] historians were nevertheless *ideally* bound by constraints of the historical realities (at least to some extent); therefore, they were (and are) not able to simply *make things up*[47] on the level of what we shall refer to as the narrative *fabula*. The relationship between "literature and life"[48] – the "ἔργα/*res gestae* and λόγοι" – is tighter. But the debate about truth and untruth or even mendacity in ancient historians is oversimplified: as it turns out, mediating between "literary" and "historical" makes all the sense.[49]

It is precisely the vessel borrowed from epic poets,[50] the *narrative*, which is the greatest impediment to the "objective truthfulness" of historians' accounts. It pushes historiography through the employment of (some) inherited narrative techniques into the same literary genre as fiction, thereby

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[45] Cf. POBEŽIN 2018.
[46] RAAFLAUB 2008, 268.
[47] GENETTE 1990, 15.
[48] MOLES 1993, 89.
[49] MOLES 1993, 90.
[50] See NICOLAI 2007, 16ff.

bestowing one's subjective moral and aesthetic convictions onto the past.[51]

The question of the relationship between "life and literature" is of particular importance in the historiographical text: what the reader reads *here* and *now*, signifies something that has happened *there* and *once upon a time*. Fictional and historiographical texts may therefore differ in the chosen subject, but this statement holds only to the extent that the *verbatim* reality can be identified. Complex narratives such as historical texts do not signify some non-complex reality alone; as much as such narratives signify an object, they also make statements about themselves – and, of course, about the intratextual instances; questions as to *what* is signified and *how* this is done become inextricably linked.[52] A historical text is not merely a recapitulation of events in their actual order; interpretations are inevitably a part of any narrative text – the perpetual question being, how much of "history" is left when a narrative text is stripped of all its literary worth; the claim that it is precious little,[53] seems in sync with the idea that histories are not much more than "fictions of factual representation" and therefore fictional,[54] meaning any type of discourse may be as much of an impediment to *real* understanding as it is of any help. But let us move on to the conclusion.

What are we to make from the two (three) quoted bits of text? Or better yet, what type of a question do we need to ask here? Instead of asking what is the (implied) author's *intent* here, I would suggest asking what is the *effect* of the two (or three) quoted passages. They both occur in the prologue (in Thucydides' case the so-called second prologue) where, one could argue, is the *only* place where they can occur without

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[51] ANKERSMIT 2009, 165.
[52] CARRIER 1984, 32.
[53] WOODMAN 1998, 18. For details on the intensive debate about (non) factuality of Greek and Roman historiography, cf. MOLES 1993, 114–121.
[54] WHITE 1986, 121.

damaging the narrator's integrity. Prologues are not, *per se*, a part of the narrative corpus and could be omitted without too much structural damage to the *fabula*. They are, however, of crucial importance for the constructing of the narrator figure: it takes shape in the prologue (possibly with a non-varying narrative focus) and then slips into the background, ideally never to be felt again too directly (though in Thucydides, the presence of the narrator is directly felt in several instances[55]). But if omitting the prologues meant the whole work would be poorer for the clearly enunciated narrator figure if not anything else, the quoted passages could be omitted altogether since they contribute nothing of consequence to the narrative. In the Thucydides' case, we are told that *he was there and had time to investigate* – surely a pleonasm, since we are dealing with an omniscient narrator; in Sallust's case, we are told that *he was drawn away from beaux arts in his corrupt youth* – again, a redundant manoeuvre since by now, the narrator has already established his moral authority, to which end the whole first part of the prologue was dedicated.[56]

What, then is the effect of these text bits? We are initially tempted to categorize them in terms of the above-listed narratological instances; however, none of the models really fit here. Unlike in the rest of both works, the narrator in this little bubble is not, in terms of Genette's distinctions, a heterodiegetic, extradiegetic instance here, nor authorial according to Stanzel's typology: if anything, he tells his own micro-story, making him a personal narrator. He does not focalize anyone nor is he focalized in turn. Although we have already shown that the third person/first person distinction is immaterial here, the shift that occurs in this case is very perceptible, because the narrating agent speaks about *himself* now – but not in the external function as he does otherwise in the *Peloponnesian War*, where

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[55] GRIBBLE 1998, 48–49.
[56] This issue discussed at length in POBEŽIN 2018.

he speaks of *Thucydides of Athens [who] wrote the history of war* (1,1) or *Thucydides the son of Olorus, the author of this history* … (4,104) This suggests that the narrator of the Peloponnesian War cannot be simply conflated with Thucydides the author, so that it cannot hold true that Thucydides is both external and internal narrator,[57] but rather that Thucydides of Athens is, where his name occurs, a character focalized by the external narrator, as is the case in 5,26.

Wrapping our minds around Thuc. 5,26 and Sall. *C.* 3–4 (or. *Iug.* 4–5) will require a combined narratological model, offering perhaps the following solution: in both cases one and the same narrator speaks, introducing a new (hypodiegetic) level of narrative with an explicative function (i.e. without its own fabula or with a very simple one). In this bit of embedded narrative, which could easily be omitted, the narrator establishes a new (experiential) paradigm for him/herself, in which two intratextual functions i.e. the implied author and the narrator almost collapse into one, the experiential narrator being asymptotic to the implied author.

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[57] ROOD 2004, 116; see also DE JONG 2014.

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