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Narratology as a narrative philosophy

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Abstract

The article is dedicated to the phenomenon of narratology as one of the important modern schools of cross-disciplinary character. Having denoted one of the sides of anthropological turn in philosophical studies of the 20th century, narratology is a relative of semiotics, literary studies, mythocriticism, and linguistics. The author thinks that narratology as a general aesthetic discipline is appealed for sorting out the relations between eventful ranges of narrative and narrating, for investigating not only the character of the phenomenon but also its communicative characteristics. The main concept of narratology as a branch of philosophical knowledge is the confirmation of the narrative as a prototype of the epistemological matrix. The current state of narratology makes it possible to talk about formation of a science where the distinctive feature of its cognition object is the presence of the two eventful ranges – referential and discursive. The author considers the history of the science, detaches the periods of literary and humanitarian understanding and perception of narratology as the analysis methodology. The author also considers narrative in the context of rhetorical approach, in the case of eventfulness, chronotopical line-up and focalization.

Keywords

Narrative, narrative turn, narration, event, double eventfulness, plot (subject), structuralism, axiology, rhetorical modality, chronotope, diegesis, focalization.

Introduction

Development of humane sciences in the 20th century, their division and branching led to the search of some new theoretical approach which would combine with achievements of traditional knowledge and could be used for exploration of various cultural objects. One of the attempts to solve the problem was narratology – a branch of humanitarian science, studying various cultural phenomena, whether it be artistic or documentary text, a motion picture or an everyday conversation, – as the results of a narration construction.

Narration or narrative (from Latin *narrare* – to tell, to speak, to devote), being understood in linguistics as one of the types of speech, prior to the beginning of structuralist era was the object of study of western narratology and was defined as "presence of the voice of mediated instance in a text"¹ – a narrator. Formal literary studies, structuralism and post-structuralist researches expanded the concept of *narrative*, enriched its content, so that narratology became a basic humanitarian branch of science.

Extension of narrative problematics in some sense corresponds to the

semantic richness of the inner form of the Latin word *narrare* related to *gnarus* ("learned, well-known"), which ascends to the Indo-European root **gno-*. Etymology clarifies the connection of the term *narratio* with such words as *cognitive*, *diagnosis*, *gnosis*, *norm* etc. These shades of meaning form the semantic field of the concept *narrative*, actualized as part of narratology in the 20th century.

Narratology in the bosom of sciences

The phenomena, which entered in the field of narratology research, have been studied earlier within the scope of literary studies, linguistics, psychology, myth and movie critics and aesthetics in general. Narratology coming out of formal and structural literary studies hereafter obtained a cross-disciplinary status.

Like semiotics, narratology deals with sign-oriented units; it owes to Saussure's linguistics through separation of two-dimensional units – significative (denotative) and signified. But, as distinct from semiotic objects, the subjects of narratology researches are not directly associated with their signified (designatum), but organize their conceptual and formal structure according to some pre-

1 Schmid, W. (2003), *Narratology* [*Narratologiya*], Moscow, p. 10.

determined scheme. Researches in narratology relate to semiotics in their zeal to detach distinct correlations (balance) between sign and sense; many narratologists widely use the semiotic approach (R. Barthes, B. Uspenskii, Yu. Lotman).

Literary studies is the field most close to narratology, as the first and the most significant researches of narrative texts were carried out by theorists of literature. Narratology owes to literary studies due to the fact that it is armed with the theory of the plot and its research became one of the principle directions of narrative study. Another important borrowing is the theory of points of view (voices) in works of fiction.

Mythocriticism with its confirmation of typological uniformity of plots in the world literature also became one of the sources of narratology. Constructions made by researchers of myth structures, such as V. Propp, C. Levi-Strauss, A.-J. Greimas, V. Meletinskii, were an input of great significance into narratology schemes as well as methods of the research of the mythological basis in works of literature: these are heroes' typologies, functional approach and episodic analysis.

The linguistic turn of philosophy of the 20th century was essential for narratology, because of the fact that

narration – one of the forms of speech – became the definition for the object analyzed by narratology. The linguistic nature of the object under study is motivated by narratologists' statement that the total volume of the fable content of a narrative composition can be summed up in one sentence. And if a sentence is the subject of the research of linguistics then a narrative discourse, which is more complex in structure, should be examined in terms of linguistic regularities on a new level.

Definition of the main feature of a narrative as availability of two eventful ranges – referential and discursive – made it possible for narration theorists to expand the narrative concept to verbal and non-verbal cultural phenomena: all genres of literary and folklore, historiography, cinema art, pictorial art etc. In such a manner narratology as a general aesthetic discipline is to sort out the relations between eventful ranges of narrative and narrating, to explore not only the character of the phenomenon but its communicative characteristics as well.

Narrative turn in philosophy

The main concept of narratology as a branch of philosophical science is the confirmation of a narrative as the

prototype of epistemological matrix. According to narratology philosophers for cognition of the social realm we use the same mechanism as for construction of a narrative: we mark the separate facts out of phenomena continuum, invest them with the event status and then draw up determination ties between them which at the same time set the time characteristic of examinable. The events drawn up in such a manner become the plot as they comply with narrative regularities. The plot, named briefly, becomes the concept of thought and the word of speech: for example, "war", "love", "revolution", "soul" etc. In the language perception each of them is related to a particular plot, a set of characters with the same mythological and historical roots.

In such a manner the current state of narratology makes it possible to speak of formation of a science in which the distinctive feature of the perception objective lies in the availability of the two eventful ranges – referent and discursive. While combining methods and approaches of literary studies, linguistics, mythocriticism narratology extends influence on aesthetics and epistemology, acting as a contender to the role of the general humane science. Herein the key factor is the acknowledgment of the meta-cultural basis of a narra-

tive: "a narrative form ... constitutes the fundamental, psychological, linguistic, culturological and philosophical basis for our attempts to come to terms with nature and the living conditions", which in turn makes it possible "to understand and create senses"² When stressing the polycultural character of narrativeness P. Ricœur notices: " we cannot imagine a culture where people no longer know what it means to *narrate*"³.

As narratology theorists admit, atomism of narratology methods and terminology yet doesn't allow speaking of this scholarship as of a fully developed and integral science. But it is just in the tideway of narratology that the positions of structural literary studies are held, enriched in the wideness of poststructuralist literary theory which makes narratology, by virtue of approach complexity, one of the most convenient methodological attitudes when examining a literary work as a single and integral phenomenon.

2 Brockmeier, J., Harre, R. (2000), "Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm" ["Narrativ: problemy i obeshchaniya odnoi al'ternativy"], *Voprosy filosofii*, No 3, p. 30.

3 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative [Vremya i rasskaz]*: in 2 vol., Vol. 2, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 36.

Formation (origin) of narratological problematics: formalism and structuralism

Among the predecessors of narratological approach there are many scholars and schools of humanities. Long before the term appeared, various aspects of narratological problematics had been considered in the context of literary studies and the theory of narrations. German scientists (O. Ludwig, K. Friedemann, K. Hamburger, F.K. Stanzel, and G. Muller) and English-speaking researches (P. Lubbock, N. Friedman, K. Brooks, R.P. Warren etc.) made their contribution to the development of narration theory.

However, the fundamental problems of oncoming narratology were formulated in works of Russian theorists of literature. As a German theorist of literature W.Schmid notices, "all international narratology ... got vital impulses just on the part of Russian literary theory"⁴. Thus formalists developed opposition of the fable and the plot (V. Eikhenbaum, Yu. Tynyanov, V. Shklovskii), V. Propp

instituted the functional approach to literary texts and distinguished the characters according to their functional roles; B.Uspenskii closely examined the point of view in art; M. Bakhtin took up the problem of "voices" in compositions, delimitation of speech genres and philosophy events. This list can be continued; but it just the denoted ideas ringed in the narratological problematics.

One of the most significant works for narratology was "Morphology of a Fairy-tale" by V. Propp. Although the book, which was published in 1928, was translated into English just 30 years after, the ideas, expressed in the book, to a large extent influenced the development of structuralism. While accusing Propp of formalism (Levi-Strauss) or of attachment to narrative progression (Greimas), western researches developed his method and built their own models upon it. According to K. Bremond "most of the works which are considered to be the structural examinations of narrative texts were created on the basis of "Morphology of a Fairy-tale"⁵.

4 Levchenko, Ya., Roginskaya, O. "Narratology – c'est moi?: Wolf Schmid and his Russian colleagues about approximate" ["Narratologiya – c'est moi?: Vol'f Shmid i ego rossiiskie kollegi o blizkom"], available at: www.russ.ru/krug/20030717_narrat.html

5 Bremond, C. (2000) "Structural examination of narratives after V. Propp" ["Strukturnoe izuchenie povestvovatel'nykh tekstov posle V. Proppa"], in Kosikov, G.K. *French semiotics: From structuralism to post-structuralism* [*Frantsuzskaya semiotika:*

The concept *narratology* itself came into active use after the works by French structuralists – R. Barthes, C. Bremond, C. Levi-Strauss, as well as by Ts. Todorov. In the 70s of the 20th century there appeared works by G. Genette, G. Prince, W. Schmid which later became classical.

Narratology itself was formed in the bosom of structuralism, and it was stamped on the character of its methodology. Preciseness and specificity of structural analysis conclusions met with support in considering the two layers of a work of fiction – "internal" and "external" (B. Uspenskii), the field of syntagmatics and the field of pragmatics, and at their intersection the kernel of narratology was found. As a literary theory researcher and a translator of structuralists' works S. Zenkin notices, "the rational designs of rhetoric and narratology are performing the same task which he discovered in Roland Barthes's semiology – "to stop dizziness of sense"⁶.

Clearness and uniqueness of literary expositions should have been probably

Ot strukturalizma k poststrukturalizmu], Moscow, p. 239.

6 Zenkin, S. (1998), "Overpassed dizziness: G. Genette and the fate of structuralism" ["Proedolennoe golovokruzhenie: Zherar Zhenet i sud'ba strukturalizma"], in Genette G. *Figures [Figury]*: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, p. 20

promoted by the conceptual system found by structuralists – the exact system of linguistics: so R. Barthes sees right to "lay the model of linguistics itself into the basis of structural analysis of narrative texts"⁷. When reducing a narrative to a sentence ("from the structural point of view all narrative texts are constructed in accord with the model of a sentence"⁸), structuralists propose examining of narrations under the notions of a sentence as well, and to be more precise – of a verb: Genette "formulates the problem of the analysis of a narrative discourse in accord with the categories taken from verb grammar"⁹; Barthes maintains that in a narrative text one can find the availability of all the basic categories of a verb"¹⁰. The principle of transfer of

7 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays [Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse]*, Moscow, p. 389.

8 Ib, p. 390.

9 Genette, G. (1998), *Figures [Figury]*: in 2 vol., Vol. 2., Moscow, p. 68.

10 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays [Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya*

phrasal roles to plotlines is vividly shown in Greimas's models.

In such a way the purpose of a structural, classical consumption of the science dealing with narrative texts was the multilevel analysis of fiction works based on the linguistic categories and falling into two major parts – the analysis of narrating and the analysis of a narration itself, which, providing all possible parameters are properly accounted, could give the maximum defined and structured result.

The achievement of structuralism narratology is the development of the main subject areas of the school: modification of functional analysis (R. Barthes, C. Bremond), definition of correlation of actants in a narrative text (C. Bremond, A.-J. Greimas), application of the linguistic categories of tense, mode and voice (G. Genette), aspect, mood, person (R. Barthes) to the narrative analysis, development of typological classification of the point of view (B. Uspenskii). Models and schemes of narratological analysis in structuralists' works were applied both to fairy-tales and myths and to the works of newer literature: the complex analysis of Balzac's novel "Sarrazin" formed the basis of R. Barthes's work "S/Z", Prust's

literary XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse], Moscow, p. 391.

"In Search of Lost Time" was examined by G. Genette in his book "The Narrative Discourse".

One of the major problems of narratology turned out to be the outlining of the boundaries of the subject, definition of narrativeness itself. G. Genette recommends to resist the illusion "that narration *goes without saying*"¹¹; R. Barthes observes that "starting from Aristotle researches ... incidentally came back to the problem of the narrative form"¹². J. Brockmeier and R. Harre denote that the difficulty in definition of the essence of a narrative can be explained by the fact that "from early childhood we grew in historifying repertory of our language and our culture" from whence the narrative "cleared"¹³ for perception and definition.

When analyzing the structural definitions of narrativeness G. Prince

11 Genette, G. (1998), *Figures [Figury]*: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, p. 283.

12 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays [Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse]*, Moscow, p. 387.

13 Brockmeier, J., Harre, R. (2000), "Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm" ["Narrativ: problemy i obeshchaniya odnoi al'ternativy"], *Voprosy filosofii*, No 3, p. 33.

draws up the narrative characteristics list: eventfulness (narrative eventfulness if taking into account the "double eventfulness" of a narrative, described in Russian tradition) and correlation of the two layers of a narration – discourse and story; existence of no less than two events; narrative integrity; action complexity. The structuralist definitions of a narratological text follow the etymology of literary studies of the concept.

Delimitation of the two levels of an existential narration – referential and discursive – as the critical characteristic of a narrative – led to considerable enlarging of the narrative area. Thus, according to R. Barthes, the research area for narratologists is a narrative text taken as a whole, and the examples are "a myth, a legend, a fable, a fairy-tale, a comedy, a pantomime, a pictorial canvas ... a comic paper, a news chronicle, an everyday conversation"¹⁴. B. Uspenskii analyzes the problem of perspective in art expressed in the term of point of view both in literature and pictorial art. A.-J.

Greimas and J. Courtes (in their work "Semiotics", 1979) suggest considering narrativeness as an organizing feature of any discourse.

In such a manner the definition of the two-planned nature as the outstanding feature of a narrative resulted in overextension of a narrative: a narration, traditionally defined as a type of speech, came with a group of literature genres and then started claiming the rank of the principle of constitutive structuring of the majority of cultural objects. This overextension coincided with the decline of structuralism: a narrative became the subject matter of post-modern philosophy. According to V. Markovich, narratology is "the only component of structuralism, which entered the 21st century as a developing discipline"¹⁵.

Enlarging the area of the research: narratology as a field humanitarian knowledge

The literature and art history characteristics of a narration (which are

14 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays [Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse]*, Moscow, p. 391.

15 Markovich, V.M. (2004), "Narratology as a general human science. Interview with V.M. Markovich" ["Narratologiya kak obshchegumanitarnaya nauka. Interv'yu s V.M. Markovichem"], *Mir russkogo slova*, No 1, p. 59.

further developed in works by V. Tyupa, E. Meletinskii, W. Schmid) thereafter gave a dominating place to another problematics of narrativeness. A metaphoric transfer of properties and qualities of a narrative text to the new branches of human mental activity made it possible to widen and enrich the concept of *narrativeness*.

Consideration of historical works in the narrative perspective marked a significant point: history as a science least of all apt to frequentative statements represented a productive soil for that. F. Ankersmit, H. White, A. Danto, U. Halley proved the direction of narrative historiography. Examination of the narrative nature of the established historical concepts (such as Renaissance, Enlightenment etc.) leads to understanding of the meta-cultural essence of narration and that in its turn resulted in the cause of philosophical resorting to a narrative. According to J. Brockmeier and R. Harre the "Narrative turn" must be considered as 'a part of more significant tectonic shifts in culturological architecture of knowledge which accompany the crisis of modernistic episteme'¹⁶.

16 Brockmeier, J., Harre, R. (2000), "Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm" ["Narrativ: problemy i obeshchaniya odnoi al'ternativy"], *Voprosy filosofii*, No 3, p. 29.

Enlargement of the narrative area corresponded with the perception of the complex structure of a narration as a significant object. The distinct semiotic descriptions were substituted with the realization of ambiguousness of a narrative structure, anticipating the deconstruction method. The phenomenon of narrativeness itself turned out to be determined by structural disturbances: "while incessantly playing with various potential possibilities the structure kind of "hobbles" and depending on realization of these possibilities gives the narrative its specific "tone", its energy"¹⁷.

In the foreword to his book "Narrative logic: Semantic analysis of historians' language" F. Ankersmit determines the cause of the narrative turn. Though the philosophy of the 20th century was mainly the philosophy of language, in its spotlight there still was expression (assessment), i.e. the form of sense composition with the criterion of truth as the main one. The assessment philosophy ignored the fact that world perception is created

17 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays* [*Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse*], Moscow, p. 420.

on the basis of more massive, more complex linguistic units than a statement or an expression – narratives, stories where the criterion of truth is not applicable. Ankersmit clarifies the statement in terms of metaphor: like a narrative it is a representation of a subject, an overlapping of some kind of structure on it, but it is not an assessment. Therefore philosophy faces a new problematic, "narrative representation apposes us a range of philosophical problems ... irreducible to those, the epistemological analysis of the true unit statement is pointed at"¹⁸.

Such a turn-out in narrative examination (taken up by philosophers, historians, linguists) in some way sent narratology to back in its classic function of literary studies. And though Ankersmit misspeaks that historical narration can be considered as the progenitor of other narrative genres, his resort to logical structure of a narrative results in his giving up structuralist tradition: "I will ignore all that was written about narratives ... by French structuralists which are trying to find out empirical laws that control the condition of existing narratives"¹⁹.

18 Ankersmit, F.R. (2003) *Narrative logic: a semantic analysis of the historian's language* [*Narrativnaya logika. Semanticheskii analiz yazyka istorikov*], Moscow, p. 10.

19 *Ib.*, p. 37.

The first-rate theorist of the epoch P. Ricœur describes the conflict between two schools of narratological study like that: "Epistemological problem mostly lies in conjunction of *explanation* carried out by semiotic and linguistic sciences, with preliminary *understanding* which falls within the domain of language practice adoption"²⁰.

In such a manner a new status of a narrative set new questions. From the structure of a narrative the researches referred to pragmatic aspects, correlation between described and represented, to the very logic of a narrative, recognized as a sort of meta-language of culture. This expandability made a narrative rather interesting for psycholinguists, psychologists, sociologists. From that aspect a narration obtained new features and came under review as a universal structure of forming-up the temporal, dimensional and logical field of cogitation. The ontological status of a narrative allowed considering it as a tool of social impact (interaction), as a legal provision for future politics.

With the aim of determining a narration as a polycultural rule of sense construction a step over its bounds was

20 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative* [*Vremya i rasskaz*]: in 2 vol., Vol. 2, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 8.

needed; at determining the area of narrative it was found out that narrative "scenarios" of European thought and literature proved to be not so universal under the postmodern nihilism. Lyotard gives his definition of the epoch: "we consider "postmodern" to be distrust in reference to meta-narratives"²¹.

Having dispensed with the oppression of meta-narratives the culture appears to be broken into pieces, indefinite, indefinable. Destruction of total significance of the concepts of the beginning and the end of events led to polymorphs, uncertainty and plurality of treatments of everyday, historical and literature events, in fact "the narrative function loses its functors: a great hero, big dangers, a great around-the-world cruise and great objectives"²². Thus Ricœur is concerned that we "are the witnesses – and allies – of a particular mode of death, death of the ability to tell stories whereof arises the art of narration in all its forms"²³.

Probably the circumstance that postmodern literary narratology did not form an integral school with variants of

profitable analysis of narrative cultural phenomena can be considered as regular. The clearness of narrative coordinates – eventful, actant, chronological and axiological – in some sense stands against the basic principles of post-modern.

Nevertheless, together with Ricœur we'd like "*this notwithstanding* to trust the demand for consent still structuring the readers' expectations and believe that along come up new narrative forms which we cannot yet name"²⁴.

We can consider the definition of its ontological status as a means of sense construction to be the crowning achievement of the post-structuralist epoch of narrative examination. In this aspect the critical characteristics of a narrative should be considered in order to clarify the structure of the aesthetic influence of a narrative.

Structure and ontological status of a narration

One of the basic problems of narratology is the definition of the key feature of a narrative, a necessary and obligatory difference of a narration from other linguistic, literary and cultural phenomena. Among the other properties, to our opin-

²⁴ Ib.

21 Lyotard, J. (1998), *The Postmodern Condition [Sostoyanie postmoderna]*, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 10.

22 Ib.

23 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative [Vremya i rasskaz]*: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 36.

ion, there is the double eventfulness (M. Bakhtin), formation of chronology and topology (P. Ricœur, G. Genette), communicativeness, axiologism (J. Lyotard). These qualities eventually allow defining the borders of ontological status of narrative perception. In order to separate a narrative from allied cultural phenomena we should define the features of a narrative as a common rhetorical modality (V. Tyupa).

Resorting to rhetoric became one of the distinctive features of literary studies in the 20th century. Russian formalists insist on the necessity to rehabilitate this classical approach of examination of linguistic manipulation. M. Bakhtin considers reference to rhetoric as a sign of helplessness of traditional poetics in front of fiction. Indeed G.G. Shpet²⁵ attributes the novel (along with other narrative literature) to purely rhetorical forms; V.V. Vinogradov²⁶ also refers the problem of narrative literature to rhetoric, though does not deny that a novel has some poetry.

This "inadequacy of all modern stylistics ... to specific features of novel

25 Shpet, G.G. (1927), *Inner form of the word* [*Vnutrennyaya forma slova*], Moscow, p. 214.

26 Vinogradov, V.V. (1930), *On a literary prose* [*O khudozhestvennoi proze*], Moscow, Leningrad, pp. 75 – 106.

prose"²⁷ can be purely referred to narrativeness in general. Resorting to rhetoric helps in designing "the inner interlocutory features" of novel words, in other words – in description of its communicative trend.

It is just the communicative basis motivated the spread of "discourse linguistics" (R. Barthes) in the 20th century as a general-theoretical discipline which studies the communicative influence of various types of discourse. In this respect V. Tyupa's remark that "neo-rhetoric ... pretends to the role of the basic discipline of methodological character for the whole complex of human sciences in either case dealing with various expression texts" appears to be true²⁸.

By now M. Bakhtin, who examined the objective "conflict" between poetics and rhetoric, reasoned that as opposed to classical rhetoric "meta-linguistics" (new rhetoric) must examine the rhetorical features not only of the genres of declamatory speech but also of classical poetical genres²⁹. It is evident

27 Bakhtin, M.M. (1975), *Questions of literature and aesthetics* [*Voprosy literatury i estetiki*], Moscow, p. 82.

28 Tyupa, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 6.

29 Bakhtin, M.M. (1996), *Collected works* [*Sobranie sochinenii*]: in 7 vol., Vol. 5, Moscow, p. 159.

that while studying the literary genres as types of discourse distinct from rhetorical and scientific but still having the common nature with them, poetics is inevitably an integral part of general theory of expression (new rhetoric)"³⁰.

Narrative as a determinant attribute of the narrative literature (as well as other areas traditionally kept out of the field of poetics studies, – legendaries, everyday speech etc.), must be evidently characterized rhetorically. It results from the marked communicative trend of a narration. V. Tyupa suggests examining a narrative as a general-rhetorical modality, i.e. a certain type of discourse which stands against frequentative and performative types.

V. Tyupa defines the narrative rhetorical modality as a "text-generating configuration of the two ranges of eventfulness: referent and communicative"³¹. This definition makes it possible to consider not only verbal but also visualized objects (if they are capable of "text-generating") as narrative ones. Two dimensions of a narrative message distinguish it from other types of discourse.

30 Tyupa, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 7.

31 *Ib.*, p. 8.

The two narrative modalities, performative and iterative, are chiefly noted for their auto-communicativeness. J. Lyotard characterizes performative (from Latin *performare* – to generate, to create) like that: "its action on a referent aligns with its expression"³². The examples of performative genres of speech are prayers, orders, appellations, swears, quarrels, instructions etc. It is not an action message but an immediate speech action which therefore does not refer to another significatum, except itself.

Iterative rhetorical modality (from the Latin word *iteratio* – repetition), which fixes invariable, non-eventful conditions is aimed at description of constant rules of natural and human world. The examples of iterative modality are the scientific, philosophical and mythological discourse. Like a narrative they describe the world in accord with the predetermined scheme; yet the necessity for legitimization (scientific knowledge) or belief (in mythological) severely mines the positions of a repetitive discourse as a method of world description. It is a natural phenomenon that between the methods of world description there is a certain contest: according

32 Lyotard, J. (1998), *The Postmodern Condition* [*Sostoyanie postmoderna*], Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 31.

to Lyotard the scientific knowledge is in "a state of competition with the other sort of knowledge which we will qualify ... as a narrative"³³.

As distinct from the narrative a iterative modality in a general sense can be described as description. And though as a variant of a discourse an iterative expression assumes communicative expectations, this function, in presentation of everlasting processes and states, is rather optional. In point of the fact a scientific or mythological discourse are auto-communicative as they just "make internal processes of some subject's mental activity more external"³⁴.

The subject of iterativeness degree of mythological knowledge may seem to be disputable, since the mythological scenarios are the admitted models of plot construction. Nevertheless the myth researchers such as O.M. Freidenberg, M. Eliade claim non-narrativeness of pre-declarative forms of a myth. Such a claim looks more reasonable if we recall the epistemic function of a primitive myth: like modern scientific knowledge it was aimed at description of the world and its rules. The action in a myth was

33 *Ib.*, p. 26.

34 Тыупа, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 9.

not momentary; it was a periodical everlasting pre-action. The description of the world narrowed down to "repetition of archetypical situations, i.e. to *categories*, but not *events*"³⁵ in such a manner was not narrative, as a matter of fact "the narrative succession is something integral and no repetitions are possible inside"³⁶.

O.M. Freidenberg's conclusion seems to be rather fair. She concludes that a narrative "having preserved the entire former myth inventory", made it "a character, a scenario, a plot, but not an "objective" (extended) and "viewable" nature which is indissoluble from a human itself"³⁷. The narrative description of mythological world assumed not only the definition of a narrator's position, but also separation of instances from the process of life and endowing them with the status of an event. According to Bar-

35 Eliade, M. (1998), *The Myth of the Eternal Return* [*Mif o vechnom vozvrashchenii*], St. Petersburg, p. 133.

36 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays* [*Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse*], Moscow, p. 422

37 Freidenberg, O.M. (1978), *Myth and ancient literature* [*Mif i literatura drevnosti*], Moscow, p. 227–228.

thes the narrative form of experimental description "made a mash on the principle of repetition and sealed the model of becoming objective reality"³⁸.

In such a manner, having escaped from the myth "on account of crystallization of the personal experience"³⁹, a narrative (as an event of narration about an event) found "a double eventfulness" (M. Bakhtin), which became a distinctive feature of a narrative discourse in the Russian theory of narrativeness.

Double eventfulness of a narrative

One of the constitutive features of a narrative is its structural duality. The plot construction assumes revelation of eventfulness in the narration, while a narrative discourse itself is presented as a narration event. It specifies the claim of the double eventfulness of a narrative.

38 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays* [*Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse*], Moscow, p. 422

39 Tyupa, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 9.

Overlapping of two ranges of events is the most important feature of a narrative. Each of the narratology concepts is a kind of mediator between these ranges. Thus a point of view, or focalization, is a method of consideration of a narration event depending on the position of the subject of a narration; chronological order of narration is an example of forming-up the eventful range in accordance with the narration objectives; a genre became a historically formed productive aspect of combination of a typological eventful range and a typological narrator.

The event as a text and discursion formatting phenomenon most closely corresponds to the subject of narrative perception. At the same time it is rather difficult to define the constitutive features of eventfulness. Thus, G. Prince determines the event as "transition of a state, detected in the discourse through procedural confirmation in the form (modality) to *Do* or to *Happen*"⁴⁰. Such a definition focused on formal matters is at one time too wide (i.e. may fail to embrace some sorts of events: for example, *the prayer was heard* or *it changed as years went by*), and too restricted (i.e. relates

40 Prince, G. (1988), *A Dictionary of Narratology*, University of Nebraska Press, p. 28.

to non-eventful transitions of a state: for example, *the sun was risen* or *winter has come*). The same disadvantage is typical for A. Danto's classic model, according to which the condition t-2 may be considered as an event if the conditions t-1 and t-3 cannot be identified⁴¹.

Therefore, in order to clear up the eventful status of narrativeness we need to consider the ontological status of the event itself, and not turn to it as to some "pre-reflective evidence" (V. Tyupa).

It is beyond doubt that in an artistic narrative "even monotony, repetitions and demonstrative lack of events are artistically eventful"⁴², but this aspect is realized only in the narration event and does not characterize the narration event itself. In such a manner in order to determine the possible eventfulness of a fact we need to define the phenomenon of eventfulness as such.

Hegel was among the first researchers who defined the event status and differentiated it from incidents or natural behavior. He thinks that an incident is "any external change in the appearance and occurrence of the thing that

exists"; an event amounts to "something more, namely, execution of the intended objective", "when the entire inside world in its entirety, in which's complex sphere wends the action"⁴³, becomes obvious.

While widening Hegel's definition, N.D. Tamarchenko regards an event as a "transition from one situation to another ... in the result ... of intrinsic activity [of the character] (travelling, new valuation of the world) or "activity" of circumstances (biological changes, antagonists' activity, natural or historical changes)"⁴⁴. Though this definition confirms the eventfulness of accidental, it does not determine the specificity of eventful: thus both the travelling and natural changes may be lack of the eventful core and be just mechanical changes of circumstances.

The definition formulated by Lotman is considered to be the most perspective for identification of the boundaries of the eventfulness phenomenon: "An event is thought to be something that happened though it may not have

41 Danto, A.C. (1965), *Analytical Philosophy of History*, Cambridge, p. 236.

42 Tyupa, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 21.

43 Hegel, G.W.F. (1971), *Aesthetics* [*Estetika*]: in 4 vol., Vol.3., Moscow, p. 470 – 472.

44 Tamarchenko, N.D. (1999), "Event" ["Sobytie"], in Tamarchenko, N.D. *Literary studies terms (materials for a dictionary)* [*Literaturovedcheskie terminy (materialy k slovaryu)*], Vol. 2, Kolomna, p. 80.

happened", "divergence", "violation of some taboo", "and intercrossing of a prohibitory border"⁴⁵. Ricœur formulates the definition in a like manner: "An event is something that could have happened in a different way"⁴⁶.

This feature of eventfulness is considered in detail by theorists of a narrative who draws up lists of characteristics of eventfulness. Thus, Schmid, when determining an event as "some departure from legal, normative in this world, violation of one of the rules, which we should obey in order to preserve the order and arrangement of this world", endue it with the following essential features: *relevancy of change* (essentiality, non-triviality), *accidentalness*, *consecutiveness* (need for consequences), *inconvertibility*, and *non-recurrence*⁴⁷.

While criticizing W. Schmid for his maximalism (there may be no consequences or the event may be predicted), V. Tyupa marks the main feature of eventfulness – *intelligibleness*, realization only in the subject's presence.

45 Lotman, Yu.M. (1970), *Structure of a literary text* [*Struktura khudozhestvennogo teksta*], Moscow, p. 283 – 288.

46 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative* [*Vremya i rasskaz*]: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 212.

47 Schmid, W. (2003), *Narratology* [*Narratologiya*], Moscow, p. 16 – 19.

This aspect of eventfulness seems to be of maximal significance as the separation of the fact from continuity of the process of life and its endowment with the status of an event primarily depends on cultural norms and perceptive consciousness; an event "immanently directed towards some potentially possible mentality, which can comprehend it"⁴⁸.

This specification of the conceptual aspect of eventfulness makes it possible for Tyupa to fetch out the basic minimum of features for the event property (both referent and communicative): it is *heterogeneous* (discontinuous, fragmentary), *chronotopical* ("first of all there is occurrence of some factors *in time* and *in space*"), *intelligible*. On the assumption of the denoted facts V. Tyupa defines an event as an "actual occurrence of factors", and three of them are obligatory: "actant factor of action, passient factor of rest (or reluctance) and mental factor of sense forming attesting ... of which the first two are tied with chronotopical similarity and the third is more or less chronotopically distanced"⁴⁹.

48 Tyupa, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 23 – 24.

49 *Ib.*, p. 25 – 26.

One more primary property of an event, mentioned by Tyupa as a minor attribute, is the *fractality* (from the Latin word *frangere* – to break): "by dint of a narrative act any event can be expanded to the nexus of micro-events or, to the contrary, be scaled down to a macro-event episode – up to the last hyper-event"⁵⁰.

The given theory of events, while taking into account the central conceptual constituents of eventfulness, after all is not sufficiently detailed attribute list of an event as a text-forming phenomenon; it does not give the precise value of the word definition; there is no precise definition of the borders of textual eventfulness. To our opinion the most efficient definition for practical specification of the fact eventfulness can be the combination of characteristics mentioned by V. Tyupa and W. Schmid:

- 1) *intelligibleness*;
- 2) *fractality*;
- 3) *relevancy of a change*.

The intelligibleness of an event is a supposition for its extraction from continuity of existence: thus, if nobody sees a miracle it won't bring any changes. Yet separation of an event itself through contemplating consciousness already is a confirmation of its status: while allot-

50 *Ib.*, p. 27.

ting the fact with eventfulness a narrative implicitly postulates its significance. It is just intelligibleness of an event makes it possible to define it as a coexistence in the world (Heidegger).

Multidimensionality, fractality of an event is one of the features of a myth transferred to the narrative discourse. It just provides deviation of a narrative from strict logic rules, and represent the sample of "creative conception" (Ricoeur) of life instead. Fractality provides a means for the fact to become an Event, notional not only for observing consciousness but for the whole universum of a literary text. Chronotopicity limits the interativity of mythological phenomena in an artistic narrative.

Relevancy of a change is a formal characteristic of an event necessary for recognition of its status, but it can determine an event only with an allowance for other factors. "Border crossing" – perception, morality, public opinion, probability etc. – necessarily includes such characteristics as *non-recurrence* and *inconvertibility*. It is easy to determine that other eventful criteria mentioned by W. Schmid (*unpredictability*, *consecutivity*) comply with the first one.

The examined characteristics allow us to conclude that an event as an axiologically defined change of state

with conceptual creative multidimensionality comes into being in a narrative. "The specificity of a narrative discourse ... lies in the fact that it allots a fact or some collection of facts with an event status"⁵¹.

The double eventfulness of a narrative at the same time makes the subject matter of narratology multidimensional and clearly structural one. According to V. Tyupa, narratology, being today the only functioning kind of structuralism, "enjoys some mobility and at the same time has some attributes of a severe discipline"⁵². It is these qualities make conditions for narratology to become an integral branch of analysis of an artistic discourse, which could combine with the subject matter of literary studies and accurate linguistic methods, being, in such a manner, the discipline of general philology.

Chronological and topological alignment in a narrative

As far as the plot exists in temporal and dimensional development, a

51 *Ib.*, p. 23.

52 Levchenko, Ya., Roginskaya, O. "Narratology – c'est moi?: Wolf Schmid and his Russian colleagues about approximate" ["Narratologiya – c'est moi?: Vol'f Shmid i ego rossiiskie kollegi o blizkom"], available at: www.russ.ru/krug/20030717_narrat.html

narration is a chronologically and dimensionally defined chain of events, their consequential (and/or determined) association.

The problem of artistic time and space in narratology can be seen in a different way if we take into consideration the epistemological role of a narrative. Examination of reconfiguration of time sequence in a literary text in narratology turns out to be examination of rules of adaptation of the continuum by human consciousness themselves.

According to P. Ricœur the temporal alignment is the main essential feature of narrativeness: "the time becomes a human time inasmuch as it accumulates through narrative method, and vice versa a narration is significant inasmuch as it outlines the features of temporal experience"⁵³.

In fact if a narrative rhetorical modality is considered as a negotiation, "crossing the border" of interactive mythological constancy, then the conclusion that just in a narrative arises "a chronological illusion" (R. Barthes), idea of time sequence, which is expressed through the linear rather than cycle sequence of events and conditions, is logical.

53 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative* [*Vremya i rasskaz*]: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 13.

The description of temporal experience is closely related to the phenomenon of eventfulness as a change of the world, and that provides the ontological function of the plot – time formation. P. Ricœur compares Aristotle's *mythos* (interpreted as *an intrigue*) and Augustine's time just on grounds of activity. Such a feature of a narrative eventful succession like determinacy is one of the prototypes of time sequence: "the narrative time must be brought out of the narrative logic"⁵⁴.

The temporal alignment of human experience turns out to be directly determined by the features of narrative description of an experience. In such a manner the temporal structure of a narrative has a direct bearing on conception of time by the culture. According to P. Ricœur "there is a correlation between narration activity and temporality of human experience, which ... represents the form of trans-cultural necessity"⁵⁵.

54 Barthes, R. (1987), "Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives" ["Vvedenie v strukturnyi analiz povestvovatel'nykh tekstov"], in Kosikov, G.K. *Foreign aesthetics and literary theory XIX–XX cc. Tractates, articles, essays* [Zarubezhnaya estetika i teoriya literatury XIX–XX vv. Traktaty, stat'i, esse], Moscow, p. 402.

55 Ricœur, P. (2000), *Time and narrative* [Vremya i rasskaz]: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, St. Petersburg, . 65.

In such a manner revelation of "temporal and spatial relations artistically assimilated in literature"⁵⁶, or chronotopes can help in realization of regularities of time conception.

Presence of spatial aspect in terms of chronotope more likely correlates with description rather than narration: if a narrative assimilates the events then a description assimilates objects, which is equivalent of narrative and descriptive "meanings" of chronotopes⁵⁷.

Descriptiveness, representation of space, has its own diegetic functions. Genette points out the two main ones: speech adornment (description of Achilles' shield in "Iliad") and explanatory symbolical, in genre tradition of a novel, when "the description of characters' appearance, their clothes and household furniture ... are at the same time a sign, a cause and effect"⁵⁸ of their psychological world. This division of description functions seems to be not exactly reasoned, as the revelation of any given psychological marks of descriptiveness to a large extent depends on the position

56 Bakhtin, M.M. (1975), *Questions of literature and aesthetics* [Voprosy literatury i estetiki], Moscow, p. 234.

57 *Ib.*, p. 398.

58 Genette, G. (1998), *Figures* [Figury]: in 2 vol., Vol. 1, Moscow, p. 290 – 291.

of a reader (a critic), and significance is typical for descriptiveness in general.

Nevertheless Genette's conclusion that description and narration are not as much different in the object or construction so that there is a need for "the division of this narrative-descriptive unity which was identified as a narration by Plato and Aristotle"⁵⁹ seems to be reasonable.

In such a manner association of spatial and time characteristic of a fiction in the term of chronotope corresponds to the fundamental characteristics of a narrative – chronological and topological "ruling" of the world that forms the basis of perception in general: "any entry to the sphere of senses is carried out only through the gate of chronotopes"⁶⁰.

Communicative basis of focalization and narrative axiology

As a means of allotting the facts with meanings of events, alignment of temporal and spatial field a narrative enjoys polycultural significance. At the

59 *Ib.*, p. 292.

60 Bakhtin, M.M. (1975), *Questions of literature and aesthetics* [*Voprosy literatury i estetiki*], Moscow, p. 406.

same time, as one of most important means of communication it enjoys one more important feature which motivates the cultural belonging of a narration as such.

If, according to Lotman, an event, a central content of narration is a crossing of a prohibitive border, then this border is defined by culture wherein a narrative is created and which determine the possibility of eventfulness for a particular fact: "a relevant divergence ... depends on the conception of a norm"⁶¹.

Rootedness of a narrative as a type of perception in culture is expressed in the fact that it always executes evaluation function (as distinct from repetitive knowledge). The narrative perception, which renders customs and keeps up the traditions in culture, proves to be axiological as well; the traditional knowledge rendered by a narrative is not just a truth, but is "measured in accord with criteria ... fairness and/or good"; "the tradition of narratives at the same time is the tradition of criteria"⁶².

So far the plot structure of a narrative represents an implicit system of

61 Lotman, Yu.M. (1970), *Structure of a literary text* [*Struktura khudozhestvennogo teksta*], Moscow, p. 283.

62 Lyotard, J. (1998), *The Postmodern Condition* [*Sostoyanie postmoderna*], Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 52, 58.

values and expectations: as a rule, a protagonist in a classical narrative carries good-hearted values and must, when difficulties are overcome, attain success (in all challenges).

This estimation at the level of separate narratives is expressed in the point of view selected by a narrator. As early as in the selection itself and in the positioning of narration objects lies a certain value system: "when dividing the eventful dynamics into episodes and binding them into a narrative chain, a narrator discovers some *axiological horizon*"⁶³.

Focalization (from Latin word *focus* – fireplace, fire) represents not only the axiological but the communicative determination of a narrative as well; a narrator's position with respect to space, time, and language of the story is directed towards readers' perception. It is just by virtue of focalization as "the adjustment of narrative information", "one or another *perspective*"⁶⁴ a narrative becomes a communicative event.

Conclusion. Narrative as a means of world perception

When summarizing the description of a narrative as type of perception one may conclude that the main epistemologically significant features are the double eventfulness (determined by the communicative trend of a narrative), chronological and topological alignment, as well as availability and postulation of the system of values, axiologism. Being a carrier and a keeper of "traditional knowledge"⁶⁵, a narrative represents a kind of perception matrix which is differently realized in concrete texts, but is always communicatively active and exposed to readers' perception. Narratives "represent the forms inherent in our ways of getting knowledge, which structures our perception of the world and ourselves"⁶⁶.

The peculiarity of epistemological functionality of narrativeness is determined by the fact that "a narrative in a certain degree is an open and flexible structure, which makes it possible to

63 Тура, V.V. (2001), *Narratology as analytics of narrative discourse* [*Narratologiya kak analitika povestvovatel'nogo diskursa*], Tver', p. 47 – 48.

64 Genette, G. (1998), *Figures* [*Figury*]: in 2 vol., Vol. 2., Moscow, p. 180 – 181.

65 Lyotard, J. (1998), *The Postmodern Condition* [*Sostoyanie postmoderna*], Moscow, St. Petersburg, p. 54.

66 Brockmeier, J., Harre, R. (2000), "Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm" ["Narrativ: problemy i obeshchaniya odnoi al'ternativy"], *Voprosy filosofii*, No 3, p. 36.

examine sufficiently such fundamental aspects of human experience as patency and flexibility"⁶⁷.

Clarification of characteristics of a narrative as a meta-cultural method of perception makes it possible to fundamentally complement the description of the structure of narrative works of fiction. Each of them represents its own structure of eventfulness, lines up its own topology and chronology, system of values. It renders possible to name the field of narration "an artistic world", which is perceived by a reader. We may conclude that success and novelty of a narrative work lies not so much in the novelty of a eventful range (as a narrative structure consolidated, and that results in repetition of the plots), as in finding a new point of view, creation of a new artistic world.

The given feature of a narrative reveals the ability of literature, the art of narration, like no other branch of human activity, to "break through the horizon inserted in our everyday life by habits, everydayness, ignorance and weariness"⁶⁸.

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67 *Ib.*, p. 39.

68 *Ib.*, p. 41.

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Нарратология как философия повествования

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена феномену нарратологии как одного из важных научных направлений современности, имеющего междисциплинарный характер. Нарратология, обозначив одну из сторон антропологического поворота в философии XX века, имеет родство с семиотикой, литературоведением, мифокритикой, лингвистикой. Автор считает, что нарратология как общеэстетическая дисциплина призвана выяснять отношения между событийными рядами рассказываемого и рассказывания, исследовать не только природу явления, но и его коммуникативные характеристики. Главной концепцией нарратологии как отрасли философского знания стало утверждение нарратива как прообраза гносеологической матрицы. Современное состояние нарратологии позволяет говорить о становлении науки, которая отличительной чертой своего объекта познания считает наличие двух событийных рядов – референтного и дискурсивного. Автор рассматривает историю науки, выделяет периоды литературоведческого и общегуманитарного понимания и восприятия нарратологии как методологии анализа. Автор рассматривает нарратив в контексте риторического подхода, в отношении к событийности, к хронологическому выстраиванию, к фокализации.

Ключевые слова

Нарратив, нарративный поворот, повествование, событие, двойная событийность, сюжет, структурализм, аксиология, риторическая модальность, хронотоп, диегезис, фокализация.