

Mihály Babits: *Az európai irodalom története*

– the signs of narration, narrative constructions in the literary history of Babits

The viewpoints of the interpretation of the Babits-oeuvre date from that duality, which implicit recognitions are present in the reception from the appearance of the volume. This duality comes from the fact that the work of Babits breaks open the limits of the average literary history as a scientific work as it interlocks to the narrative and poetic methods of the literary works of arts more closely than the average. At the same time the anticipation arisen by the title and fulfilled in the course of reading in many ways, the referentiality of the story (indeed authors, works, literary events) history principled narration of literary phenomena, the work's use of notions detains the receiver as a literary history, (too).

The partial dissolution of this tension can be done on the grounds of the crossings of the observation of the narrative history writing (Hayden White, Ankersmit) and the conclusions of Ricoeur on the intersections of history writing and fiction. The approaches of theory call attention to the closer and more tangled relationship of history writing and fiction, referentiality and representation. Nevertheless, the narrato-poetic procedures of the work connect the literary history of Babits to narrative structures of fiction closer than average.

In our dissertation we subject the *Az európai irodalom története* to „traditional” narrative aspects of the space and time structure, the narrative tone and viewpoint and the description of the main and other characters. The varying process, dynamism of time giving the philosophical and literary basis of the work is built on the stability of space structure, which is designated in the title and the introductory chapters. In addition to temporality indicating the continuity and flow of the story another time dimension is evolving, which is independent of the course of time, which justifies eternal values and timelessness of authors.

Examining the narrator of the *Az európai irodalom története* we can talk about a subjective narrator, articulating his subjectiveness in many different ways (the dynamism of first person singular and third person singular, declaring or making his value judgements relative, exposing his cross-talks about literary history), not omniscient, keeping the notion of world literature, his scale of values and the associations of the readers within the scope, dominating the story in different ways, taking shape in an emphatic way.

Not only the work of Babits can be described with the general narrational signs and can be interpreted as a literary history, as it is the case with any other literary history, but stepping out temporarily from this category as a grand récit, heroic poem, novel, confession. With the help of the examinations towards different epic configuration those poetic, rhetorical signs can be revealed, which “disturb” sheer literary historian interpretation and can indicate more clearly the shaping of the narrator's explicit and implicit intentions, the more complex metaforic-symbolic layers of meaning of the whole work that are implied by the epic genres connected to it and which put the protagonist(s) in diverse casting. With the simultaneous maintenance of different readings and with the experiment of putting readings beside each other, thus with the “game” of continuous building and destroying our work tries to avoid the unilateral interpretation, in which the work's literary historian and essayist character is involved additionally.

The disciplinary character of the work cannot be disregarded, the critical and epistemological questions of this discourse embeds into the primary course of poetic examination. The “narrative” approach of the literary history of the poet of the paper Nyugat explores the work's unknown areas, which can complete the results of the reception so far and show the theoretically itemised trends of the interpretation and this genre that a literary history can be read in a different way, especially if it is an outstanding “outdated” venture like the work of Mihály Babits.