CHAPTER VI  
THE NATURE OF NARRATIVE SUBSTANCES

In the preceding chapter the concept “narrative substance” was introduced and an attempt was made to demonstrate both the consistency and the utility of this “new” logical entity. We learned that Nss differ most conspicuously from the things that our universe does or might contain in that the former, in contrast to the latter require for their individuation a complete enumeration of all their properties. I emphasize that even if we allow for “possible worlds” in a currently accepted sense (e.g. Kripke)\(^1\), identification in these other possible worlds would be similar to what it is in our own and thus be different from the individuation of the Nss contained \textit{in} the narrativist universe (for the notion of the “narrativist universe” I refer to p. 118 ff.). So the particular character of individuation in the narrativist universe does not vanish even if we compare this universe to the sum of all possible worlds. Thus the difficulties in the individuation of Nss cannot be explained away by asserting that they arise from suggesting an improper and misleading parallel between a) all \textit{possible} Nss and b) \textit{actually} existing things in our universe.

As we have seen it is necessary for the individuation of Nss to read the relevant statements of a narratio, p, q, r, etc. as “\(N_1\) is p”, “\(N_1\) is q”, “\(N_1\) is r” etc.. From the narrativist point of view these relevant statements of the narratio \textit{are statements on Nss}. In the first section of this Chapter I will discuss the nature of these statements on Nss that embody the narrative meaning of the narratio. In the other sections the logical character of Nss themselves will be scrutinized.

\textbf{(1) Leibniz and narrativist philosophy.} Many historians have emphasized the significance of Leibniz as a precursor of historism (e.g. Meinecke, Cassirer and Reill)\(^2\). In this section I shall demonstrate the

\begin{enumerate}
\item See Kripke; p. 267: "a possible world isn't a distant country that we are coming across, or viewing through a telescope. (...) A possible world is \textit{given by the descriptive conditions we associate with it}. (...) 'Possible worlds' are \textit{stipulated}, not \textit{discovered} by powerful telescopes".
\item Cf. Meinecke (p. 30): "in ihr [i.e. Leibniz's concept of the monad] steckte ein epochemachender und entwicklungsfähiger, über alles naturrechtliche Denken hmausführender Keim, der später im Historismus aufgehen sollte: die Idee der eigenartigen, spontan nach eigenem Gesetze wirkenden und sich entwickelnden Individualität, die noch dabei die Abwandlung einer universalen Gesetzlichkeit ist". Cassirer writes (p. 229): "Leibniz bases the nature of the monad on its identity but he includes in this identity the idea of continuity. Identity and continuity combined are the basis of the totality of the monad, and they constitute its completeness and characteristic wholeness. This fundamental conception of Leibniz's metaphysics signified a new and promising step toward the understanding and conquest of the historical world". See also Reill; pp. 38-39.
\end{enumerate}
resemblance between Leibniz’s logic and the historist philosophy of history defended in this book. First of all, an insight into the nature of the statements on Nss can be gained more easily when it is recognized that Leibniz’s theory of the proposition is admirably suited to describing them. Leibniz’s central thesis is the so-called “predicate in notion principle” (“my greatest principle” as Leibniz himself professed), which is the idea that in true propositions the predicate is always included in the notion (“complete notion”) of the subject of the proposition. In the case of logical or mathematical propositions (“vérités de raison”), which are often said to be tautologies, this seems a tenable way of speaking. But as soon as we think of statements expressing a state of affairs in our world (“vérités de fait”), Leibniz’s greatest principle appears a good deal less plausible. Thus Arnauld objected in a letter to Leibniz that one can or cannot make a journey to Paris without ceasing to be the person one is. Consequently, the predicate “... has made is making will make a journey to Paris” cannot be part of the meaning of the subject-term in propositions on a person. Leibniz admitted that this was a difficulty and that is why he had actually proposed the distinction between “vérités de raison” and “vérités de fait”. However, Leibniz argued as follows. God has chosen to realize the best of all possible worlds; moreover He possessed the immense amount of knowledge required for achieving this ideal. Therefore He could “figure out”, as it were, exactly what each individual being had to be, up to the most insignificant detail (as, for instance, the making or not making of journeys to Paris), if the best of all worlds was to be realized. Consequently, if a person has at his disposal the same infinite knowledge as God possesses and is also aware of the fact that God has created the best of all possible worlds, he can “rethink” God’s thought-processes and thus establish that it is part of the “complete notion” of the concept “Arnauld” that he will or will not make a journey to Paris. So in the end even “vérités de fait” are analytical truths in which the predicate is part of the meaning or of the “complete notion” of the subject-term.

We can safely disregard Leibniz’s theological speculations and still maintain that his theory of the proposition is a fundamental theorem on statements that have Nss as their subjects. Let us first come to an agreement regarding notations: “N (“N” refers to a specific Ns) is not p” will be equivalent to “N does not contain p”; whereas “N is (not-p)” will be equivalent to “N contains not-p”. It will be noted that statements like “N is not p” (and not statements like “N is (not-p)”) are the analogues of statements on “ordinary” things, like “a is not ø”: in both cases it is asserted that a certain thing does not possess a certain property and not that it does possess a “negative” property (like “not-p” or “not-ø”). With regard to the “ordinary” things that fill our universe it is (mostly) true that both “x is ø” and “x is not ø” are compatible with x being the thing it is. If, for instance, we reject Leibniz’s theological speculations, we may agree with Arnauld that Arnauld’s

3. See for Leibniz’s discussion of this objection: Leibniz (2); pp. 334 ff..
identity is not at stake when one considers whether he does or does not make his journey to Paris. The things in our universe may change drastically without ceasing to be the things they are. However, the situation Leibniz apparently had in mind really does obtain when we are dealing with Nss. For if we have a Ns “N₁” “the complete notion of N₁ either does contain p or does not contain p. So the identity of Nss is at stake with every statement that is made on its properties. The reason for this is, to put it in Leibnizian terms, that in the case of a Ns all its properties are included in the notion of the subject-term and can be analytically derived from it. We may conclude, therefore, that out of two contradictory statements on a particular Ns, one always has to be true, while the other is self-contradictory.

From this Leibnizian rule on statements on Nss, a thesis can be derived which I propose to call “the thesis of the harmonious constitution of the narrativist univers”. But before elaborating this thesis I must make some comment on negative statements on Nss, e.g. “N is not q” (1). Statement (1) can be read as either “it is not the case that N is q” (2) or as “it is the case that N is not q” (3). It will be obvious that in both (2) and (3) the subject-term of the statement refers to a Ns not containing q; otherwise, these statements are self-contradictory. The situation is somewhat more complicated when statement (1) is read as a meta-statement. It may then express either the falsity of the statement “N is q” (4) or the truth of the statement “N is not q” (5). In contrast to (2) and (3), statements (4) and (5) have different subjects. The subject-term of (4) refers to a Ns containing q, while the subject-term of (5) refers to a subject-term not containing q. It will be observed that (4) is self-contradictory because it negates an analytical truth, whereas (5) affirms an analytical truth. This is why interpretation (4) of statement (1), in contrast to interpretation (5), has to be rejected. We must conclude that each permissible interpretation of statement (1) is a statement in which the subject-term refers to a Ns not containing q.

Consider now the following three statements on Nss: “N is p” (6), “N is q” (7) and “N is not q” (1). Bearing in mind what has been said in the preceding paragraph and that a Ns is either q or not q, we may claim that either statement (6) and statement (7) or statement (6) and statement (1) belong together as statements on the same subject. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. Firstly, that it is impossible to contrive mutually incompatible statements on the things contained in the narrativist universe: each pair of statements that seem to be so, describe different Nss and are, therefore, completely compatible. If we were to try to force the issue with the statements “N₁ is q” and “N₁ is not q”, we would be faced with one self-contradictory statement and a statement that is analytically true. But such statements can no longer be said to be incompatible, because one of the two statements can never be true, whereas, as we saw in Chapter III section (4), for two statements to be incompatible it is a necessary condition that both could be true (or untrue). Because all the meaningful statements that can possibly be made on the
things in the narrativist universe are compatible and in perfect harmony with one another, we can with good reason speak of “the harmonious constitution of the narrativist universe”. Harmony reigns supreme in this universe.

The other conclusion in this. A certain looseness is permissible when we speak of the ordinary things in our universe; this looseness is an essential condition for the sciences to function and is absent when Ns are discussed. Saying that 1) a piece of paper burns is \textit{a priori} compatible with both the statements; 2) the paper is being oxidized and 3) the paper is not being oxidized. Thanks to this \textit{a priori} compatibility science can make its discoveries and establish \textit{a posteriori} which two statements out of the three belong together. Thus, the sciences are in fact made possible by the “disconnectedness” of statements like 1) on the one hand, and statements like 2) and 3) on the other. However, as we have seen, this “disconnectedness” no longer exists in the narrativist universe. We have the certainty that either “N is p” and “N is q”, or “N is p” and “N is not q” belong together as statements on the same Ns. But no scientific discoveries \textit{a posteriori} can be made here, because the complete notion of N decides \textit{a priori} which of the two possibilities is the case. Consequently, as long as historical and social reality are described in terms of Ns - and it seems to me fairly sure that even the social sciences are heavily infected with Ns (cf. concepts like “power”, “class”, “capitalist society” or “social structure”) - scientific discoveries as we find them in the exact sciences can never be expected. I do not hesitate to admit that when such terms are used it may often \textit{seem} that some “regularities” obtaining in social reality can be “observed” or “discovered”. But we should never forget what the nature and the source of such regularities are: they are not regularities that can be found in the past or in social reality itself, but only in Ns (e.g. all N have in common the properties p,\ldots p). It could be argued that similarities in actual reality must necessarily correspond to similarities in Ns. But we shall find in the next section that similarities between Ns indicate either that a specific topic (e.g. “the industrialization of Germany”, “the scramble for Africa”) is discussed in several narratio, or that the histories of certain \textit{kinds} of things (e.g. convents, cities) are described, whereas in both cases no relevant regularities can be claimed for the properties of these topics or things. In short, similarity between Ns corresponds to a similarity of subjects, but not of properties of subjects beyond those properties that make them the same subjects — and the latter is what science is so much interested in. Or, similarities between Ns reflect only similarities in our narrativization of the world in terms of complete statements, but no scientifically, \textit{a posteriori}, discoverable similarities between things in the world. And this remains true as long as the \textit{general} knowledge resulting from research in the social sciences is expressed in terms of Ns. Regularities “discovered” when socio-his-torical reality is described in terms of Ns are always truths \textit{de dicto} and not \textit{de re}. Although these truths at first sight \textit{seem} to be a \textit{a posteriori} truths, they always \textit{are} necessary truths. This is the
narrativist analogue of Leibniz’s idea that every truth has a proof a priori drawn from the notion of its terms.

If, then, the statements on Nss are all compatible, we might also ask whether Nss themselves can never be incompatible. It will immediately be obvious that only the narrative reductionist can speak of incompatible Nss: according to him the statement “N₁ is p” is incompatible with the statement “N₂ is (not-p)”, because p and not-p are incompatible. As a consequence, N₁ and N₂ can be said to be incompatible Nss. But when the narrativist point of view is preferred we are not allowed to speak of an incompatibility in such a situation: as we saw in the preceding chapter, we can even conceive of Ns N₁ which is “narratively” perfectly in order, while both statements “N₁ is p” and “N₁ is (not-p)” are true. Thus, the narrativist can never speak of an incompatibility of Nss. And that is what we might have expected already, because from the narrativist point of view Nss are a kind of thing and things are never incompatible with one another: we have no “negative” things. This adds of course yet another dimension to our thesis of the harmonious constitution of the narrativist universe.

It must be emphasized that this thesis does not imply that in historiography we would not be able to give reasons as to why one analysis of the past is preferable to another. But this is a problem that belongs to what one might call the realm of narrative pragmatics (i.e. the application of the rules of narrative logic) and not to narrative logic itself. Although it will be pointed out in Chapters VII and VIII, where narrative pragmatics is studied, that at least a number of the reasons for our historiographical preferences are closely tied up with the logical issues considered in Chapter VI and in the present chapter, narrative logic itself should not be confused with the problems its application gives rise to. For the logical characteristics of the narratio being studied here are to be found in every intelligible sample of narrative historiography, and precisely for that reason these characteristics cannot show us how to distinguish between good and bad historiography (i.e. the problem of the best application of the narrativist rules).

Does the narrativist universe leave room for ambiguities: will it be possible to identify and describe unambiguously and with precision each object in this universe? We cannot but be certain that this is the case: if something (that is: a statement) can be a property of a Ns, it is also, so to speak, a “dimension” of the narrativist universe. Thus, by ascertaining what its dimensions are, we can individuate and describe with absolute precision any given object in the narrativist universe in such a way that it can be distinguished from every other object in this universe. Yet, one may ask, are there no “holes” in the narrativist universe which owe their existence to possible states of affairs that have not “materialized” in our actual world? This question can be answered by stipulating a narrativist universe corresponding to each possible world.

Even then, two peculiarities remain. The dimensions of the narrativist universe differ fundamentally from e.g. the four dimensions
of the spatio-temporal continuum. These four dimensions are each a kind of scale, and each point in the spatiotemporal world can be identified unambiguously by enumerating four numbers corresponding to certain places on the scales. The dimensions of the narrativist universe cannot serve as such scales for obvious reasons; an object does or does not have a certain dimension - “tertium non datur”. So the narrativist universe seems to be a peculiarly “flat” thing: i.e. an infinitely long list of statements that can be made on historical reality and each object is individuated by pointing out which statements it contains. Within such a “linear” narrativist universe we can give no significance to the assertion that by the dimensions of the narrativist universe certain objects (i.e. points in the narrativist universe) are individuated. So we ought to reorganize the “linear” model. We should visualize the narrativist universe as a coordinate system with as many axes (dimensions) as possible statements on (historical) reality. I shall not enter into a discussion of the nature of these statements; we should simply think of the kind of singular constative statements occurring in normal narrative historiography. On each axis we find only the values 0 and 1; we give a Ns the value 1 on a certain axis if it does contain the statement that corresponds to the axis and the value 0 if it does not contain this statement or some equivalent. If this visualization of the narrativist universe is accepted, we can effectively maintain that this multi-dimensional universe consists of identifiable “points”, each of which is a certain Ns (i.e. not merely a “portrayal” of these Nss themselves). Only sets of numbers 0 and 1, indicating the coordinates of Nss, could be said to embody such “portrayals”. But there is a second, more embarrassing difficulty with the narrativist universe. Each set of statements on our world can be expanded ad libitum; consequently, a narrativist universe has no fixed number of dimensions (because history is a finite affair, we need not speak of the infinity of dimensions of the narrativist universe). This unfortunately implies that the narrativist universe has no concept analogous to that of “distance” in the spatiotemporal continuum. Therefore, what exactly the difference is between two Nss cannot be indicated, for instance, by tracing what set of Nss lies between them (of course, for the narrative reductionist the problem of the difference between two Nss is solved in no time, viz. by simply pointing out the differences between two sets of statements). I am afraid it will be impossible to find an acceptable remedy for this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

A note of warning about two traps is due here. First, it might be argued that in order to know the distance between two points in the spatiotemporal continuum we do not need to be able to enumerate in some way or another all the points with their exact coordinates on the line connecting the two points. What precisely lies between two points is irrelevant to the question of the distance between them. Thus it might also appear that if we know where two Nss are in the narrativist universe we can establish the “distance” between them. However, this analogy is misleading. The concept of such a line only makes sense if this line runs
through the same space as the one defined by the dimensions by means of which the two points connected by the line can be localized. And because the number of dimensions of the narrativist universe can be increased at will, this condition is impossible to satisfy. Secondly, the fact that we can never tell precisely what the difference or distance between two Nss is does not imply that we should abandon the whole notion of “difference(s) between two Nss”. Just for the very reason that the set of dimensions in the narrativist universe is expandable at will, can we be sure that there is a narrativist “space” that separates even two Nss that are alike except for only one statement.

But, once more, precision cannot be attained here. Probably, the foregoing argument can be said to explain the lack of precision in historical discussion that has been regretted by so many historians and philosophers of history alike. Nss do not all share a common background (i.e. set of shared dimensions) in terms of which their differences can be stated with absolute accuracy.

Finally, we may be relieved to find that our inability to ascertain exactly the difference(s) or distance(s) between Nss does not affect our ability to locate with precision Nss in the narrativist universe. Adding x dimensions to a p-dimensional space does not change the position of the points whose position can be fixed by means of the dimensions 1 to p. The position of a Ns in the narrativist universe can thus be fixed once and for all by means of those dimensions for which the Ns yields the value 1; if this were not the case, the whole “narrativist building” we have erected would collapse.

In this section an attempt is made to assimilate Leibniz’s prepositional theory to narrative philosophy. I am very much aware of the fact that despite striking resemblances a number of disparities do remain. It stands to reason that one should be very reluctant to propose emendations in the oeuvre of so eminent a philosopher as Leibniz; the more so as Leibniz’s philosophy was meant to serve purposes quite different from that which is under discussion in this study. Yet I am convinced that some of the difficulties given rise to by Leibniz’s logic could be solved if it is interpreted from a narrativist point of view. This may be illustrated by an anomaly in Leibniz’s position that has already been hinted at by Russell4. Essential to Leibniz’s philosophical position are two principles: 1) all monads contain their life-program from creation, 2) there is a so-called “pre-established harmony” between all the life-programs of all the monads so that what happens outside a particular monad A - for instance, in some other monad B — is correctly perceived at the right time by monad A. However, on Leibniz’s terms it is not in the least clear why this pre-established harmony should be requisite nor what this concept could mean in a universe that is structured in conformity with Leibniz’s ontology. Suppose that one and the same event should occur in your monadic life-program at t₁ and in mine at t₂; what could be wrong with

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that? There could only be something wrong if we both had at our disposal the same objective time-scale with regard to which we could establish whether \( t_1 \) and \( t_2 \) were the same objective points of time or not. And, of course, if there were to be such an objective time-scale and \( t_1 \) and \( t_2 \) could be different according to a metaphysical description of the world, such a description would have little to recommend it. I think this is what induced Leibniz to postulate his doctrine of the pre-established harmony.

However, the whole drift of Leibniz’s speculations is precisely to eliminate the very idea of such an objective, inter- or extramonadic time scale. So Leibniz’s dilemma is this. On the one hand he might adhere to a completely monadistic universe; and in that case all the monads have their own (picture of a) universe in themselves — inconsistencies between the life-programmes can not occur for the simple reason that they cannot be perceived and are even inconceivable. For what language could express such inconsistencies? Here the monads are truly “without windows”, as Leibniz liked to say. I “live” my universe and you “live” yours. On the other hand, Leibniz might choose to stick to his pre-established harmony, but in that case the consistency between the life-programmes of the monads could not possibly be expressed in purely “monadic-bound” language, for there is no common ground between the perceptions of the perceptions of the monads. In order to speak meaningfully of this pre-established harmony, we shall have to rely on a more fundamental language than just monadic language: in this case, spatiotemporal language. And that will be tantamount to relinquishing monadic metaphysics. Thus, Leibniz has to choose between either abandoning his doctrine of pre-established harmony as irrelevant (but that would leave him with a very implausible account of our world) or a defence of this doctrine (but for this defence he will ultimately have to fall back on spatiotemporal language).

This Leibnizian dilemma will not face us when we are dealing with narrativist universes (in which Nss play a role analogous to that of Leibniz’s monads). For according to the thesis of the harmonious constitution of the narrativist universe, no incompatible statements can be made on the things contained in such a universe and we may, therefore, rightly claim for the narrativist universe the “pre-established harmony” which Leibniz claimed for his. And for an explanation of this “pre-established harmony” we will not have to rely on non-narrativist, e.g. spatiotemporal language. Because Leibniz was not radical enough in his ontology he created for himself the dilemma sketched above. His idea of the monads and their life-programmes is evidence of his wish to conceptualize (or, to use a term characteristic of our approach: to narrativize) reality completely. However, his hesitating to eliminate entirely the special position of spatiotemporal notions in his ontology caused him to stop prematurely. Narrative philosophy is more consistent in this respect: of course it does not reject spatiotemporal determinations but it takes away their privileged status. In narrativist philosophy,
spatiotemporal predicates have exactly the same status as less conspicuous ones: only statements and not parts of statements (expressing e.g. spatiotemporal determinations) are the dimensions of the narrativist world. This also demonstrates that the difference between the so-called “cross-sectional” historical studies and those that describe the historical evolution through time of a particular historical entity is of no consequence for narrativist philosophy (see Chapter I, section (1)). The dilemma structure-process no longer presents itself in the narrativist approach to historiography.

A more traditional problem in the literature on Leibniz concerns the correct interpretation of Leibniz’s Law of the Identity of Indiscernibles. This law states that there cannot be two individuals which are exactly alike in all that can be qualitatively predicated of them; or as the law is often formulated “eadem sunt quorum unum in alterius locum substitui potest, salva veritate”\(^5\). Whether the law does actually follow from the predicate in notion principle, as Leibniz himself was sometimes inclined to believe\(^6\), is a question I will not go into in this discussion. In recent literature there has been much controversy as to the exact meaning of Leibniz’s law. Was it Leibniz’s intention to say that the very idea of two identical substances is self-contradictory, or was it his purpose to claim that it is a factual truth that no two identical substances can be found?\(^7\) Or, to mention a third possibility, was Leibniz only attempting to define “identity” by means of his law?\(^8\)

Anyway, whatever interpretation we give to Leibniz’s law it will yield no acceptable results. This can be argued as follows. We can write the law in the subjoineded manner:

\[(Vx)(Vy)[x = y \equiv (V\varnothing)(\varnothing(x) = \varnothing(y))]\]

or, to express it in “prose”: x and y are identical if and only if they are identical under each description that can be given of them. However, when x and/or y are described in terms of non-extensional predicates Leibniz’s law can be falsified. Thus the number “9” can be described as a) the number of the planets (extensionally) and b) the number necessarily lying between 8 and 10 (intensionally). According to Leibniz’s law the number under description a) should be identical with the number “9” under description b), but that is not the case because the number of the planets does not necessarily lie between 8 and 10. Another hackneyed example that clashes with Leibniz’s law is furnished by the Needle of Cleopatra in New York’s Central Park. Suppose erosion were to necessitate the continual replacement of old granite by new. We would not hesitate to say that it was still Cleopatra’s Needle we saw in

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5. Rescher (1); p. 48. See also theorem (9) of The Monadology: Leibniz (2); p. 643.
6. Parkinson; p. 131.
7. Parkinson; p. 130.
Central Park. And, of course, personal identity is an even more telling example. Although provisory solutions to the problems entailed in these counter-examples of Leibniz’s law can be conceived of, it appears that such solutions always give rise to new difficulties. Therefore, Griffin concludes “it may seem puzzling that the absolute theory [i.e. Leibniz’s law] ever commanded any respect at all, let alone the all but universal assent that has, in fact, been accorded to it”9.

Leibniz’s law is, however, quite unexceptionable when it is applied exclusively to a narrativist universe. In a narrativist universe Nss can only be described in terms of the statements contained in the Nss (cf. pp. 136 ff.). Nss have just been circumscribed as points in a narrativist universe. No description of these points makes sense unless it is formulated in statements that may or may not be contained in Nss. Thus the statements Nss contain are the only properties that they can meaningfully be said to possess. Within such a context, disparities between extensional and intensional descriptions of a thing cannot arise. Here we can simply say that two Nss are identical if and only if all their properties (i.e. the statements they contain) are alike. Therefore, when Leibniz’s law is applied to Nss, it cannot be falsified by ambiguities. And that which was absurd in our example of the number “9” can even be accepted here as a universal truth, viz. the thesis that when a and b are both identifying descriptions of the same thing it is a necessary truth that both a and b refer to the same thing. Here is an interesting parallel between the objects in a mathematical universe and those in the narrativist universe: referential opacity is entirely absent for all the purely mathematical or narrativist descriptions that can be given of each object in either of these universe. “Les extrêmes se touchent”.

The source of this difficulty and others lies in the fact that Leibniz did not always distinguish clearly between things and their properties on the one hand, and subjects and predicates on the other. Leibniz’s tendency — typical of rationalism — to get these matters confused has been noted by several of his modern commentators. This may be illustrated by an inconsistency in Leibniz’s system pointed out by Strawson. According to Leibniz’s monadic system the identity of monads or substances depends on the “point of view” from which the universe is perceived by them. Together with Strawson, we might ask Leibniz why there should be only one monad or substance for each point of view. Leibniz’s apparent inability to counter this objection effectively is, of course, fatal to his doctrine of the identity of indiscernibles10. Leibniz could only have saved his position, Strawson writes, if he had identified monads with their complete notions (subjects). In that case monads or substances can be individuated unambiguously with the help of the general concepts mentioned in the predicates by means of which the life histories of the

10. Strawson (1); pp. 124 ff.
monads or substances are described. Of course, Strawson’s suggestion is essentially the same as the interpretation of Leibniz advocated at the beginning of this section. The only difference is that in Strawson’s emendation of Leibniz’s monadism, individuation takes place with the help of general concepts, while in narrativist philosophy monads or substances (i.e. Nss) are individuated by means of statements. It should be added, by the way, that other commentators of Leibniz have proposed interpretations of Leibniz that are very similar to Strawson’s.

Two other elements of Leibniz’s monadism can be transposed without essential corrections to the domain of narrativist philosophy. Firstly, in both Leibnizian and narrative logic the subject of a statement is in a much more prominent position than in more traditional theories on the proposition. In both cases an enumeration of the predicates that can be truly predicated of the subject is merely an explication of what is already in the subject (monad, substance or Ns). And such an explication procedure never yields anything really new. When I suggest a difference between Leibnizian/narrativist and current analyses of the proposition I must warn against a possible misinterpretation of this suggestion. I do not doubt the validity of the general idea behind traditional analyses of the proposition as long as we are dealing with propositions on ordinary things. However, when we are dealing with propositions on Nss (the narrativist analogue of Leibniz’s monads or substances) this general idea is no longer correct, which may be clarified as follows.

Current theories of the proposition have a strong tendency to translate the subject-term in a proposition into another set of predicates. Since Russell we have learned to read propositions like “Fa” as “\(\exists x\) (uniquely \(a = x\) and \(Fx\))”, where “\(a\)” is not a logical proper name.

This strategy has ultimately led to the position (adopted e.g. by Quine) that subject-terms in propositions should be reduced to variables of quantification. Quine’s position, which is so characteristic of the general drift of all contemporary analyses of the proposition has been summarized by Strawson in the following way: “The relevant part of Quine’s programme of paraphrase can most simply be summed up as follows. All terms other than the variables of quantification will be found, in canonical notation, to be general terms in predicative position. The position of singular terms is reserved for the quantifiers and the variables of quantification; and since quantifiers themselves cannot count as terms, the only singular terms left are the variables of quantification”\(^\text{12}\). Thus, in Quine’s view of the proposition the subject of the proposition has almost completely “evaporated”; the only things that still remind us of its once

\(^{11}\) Cf. Lorenz; p. 319: “die Pointe des von mir zu begründenden Interpretationsvorschlags lautet, dass konsequent die Monade mit der ihrem vollständigen Begriff zugeordneten vollständigen Kennzeichnung, gleichsam einem voll entfalteten Namen, zu identifizieren ist”. So just like Strawson Lorenz identifies monads not with things (as Leibniz did) but with concepts.

\(^{12}\) Strawson (2); p. 79.
having been there are the variables of quantification. And even proper
names, which one might suppose to be relatively immune to this attack on
the subject-term, have had to surrender and should be dissolved,
according to many philosophers into a number of predicates. Since Frege
it has often been argued that proper names have a connotation which is
embodied in a set of identifying descriptions and it will be obvious that
this connotation also will ultimately be "pushed back" into the predicate-
terms of propositions containing proper names. Once more, it is not my
intention to pronounce upon the acceptability of current theories on
"normal" propositions: I only want to point out that in these theories the
subject-terms are often stripped of content and function, while the rôle of
the predicate-term is heavily emphasized\textsuperscript{13}. In narrative logic, however,
this "evaporation" of the subject-term is not permitted, because it would
yield false statements. Suppose we transform the statement 1) "N\textsubscript{1} is p"
into the statement 2) there is an x such that x uniquely has the properties
that individuate N\textsubscript{1} and the property p. Then statement 2) is false
because there are many more x’s which have these properties, taking into
account that N\textsubscript{s} are only individuated by the properties they possess
(i.e. the statements they do contain) and not by those which they do not
possess. Therefore, the subject-term in statements on N\textsubscript{s} is inviolable.

Thus we should distinguish between two kinds of propositions, 1)
propositions on N\textsubscript{s} and 2) propositions on other things, e.g. those
contained by our universe. And corresponding to the two kinds of
propositions distinguished, there are two theories of the proposition. This
difference between the characteristics of "normal" propositions and
propositions on N\textsubscript{s} has an important implication. In history and in
(some of) the social sciences the absence of well-confirmed formalized
theories is nowadays often regretted. It is a peculiarity of historiography

\textsuperscript{13}. Some ten years ago Kripke rejected this view of proper names; since then many
logicians have been convinced by his arguments. According to the traditional
view of proper names sense determines reference, whereas Kripke reverses this
relationship. He argues that proper names cannot have a sense because what
the sense attributes to the referent of a proper name might not have been true
of it. (Kripke; pp. 265 ff.). We can conceive of a possible world in which
Aristotle was not the teacher of Alexander. The difficulty with Kripke's theory
is, in my opinion, that the phrase "possible world" is ambiguous. Firstly, we
could think of a possible world in the sense that our actual world might have
been different from what we (mistakenly) think it is or was. An adherent of the
traditional view of proper names could plausibly argue that in such a case our
corrected factual knowledge of e.g. Aristotle should determine the sense of the
proper name Aristotle. Secondly, the phrase "possible world" might be
taken to refer to a world different from our actual world. We can discover that
Aristotle never was Alexander's teacher and we can conceive of a world in which
Aristotle was never asked for this job. But in the latter case we are no longer
warranted to use the proper name Aristotle and should speak of e.g. "Aristotle\textsuperscript{2}".
Proper names identify individual things and not classes of individuals (real and
imaginary). And this no longer presents a challenge to the traditional view of
proper names. Disregarding the ambiguity of the phrase "possible world" caused
Kripke to violate the logical nature of proper names.
and (parts of) sociology and psychology that concept-formation takes place without a corresponding theory-formation being possible. Concepts such as “the Renaissance”, “political power” or “social class” — which all denote (sets of) Nss — are often introduced while no formalized theories can be or have been developed in which the exact properties of these “things” are defined. The result is that when in the social sciences attempts are made to establish formal theories on things or phenomena in socio-historical reality these theories hardly ever succeed in isolating those and only those variables (i.e. properties of socio-historical phenomena) in terms of which these phenomena can be accurately described. Aspects of these phenomena which the theory does not mention may always influence the phenomena which the theory purports to describe. In the exact sciences such uncertainties are un-typical. For example, the time of oscillation of a bar with the length 1 is proportional to $\sqrt{g}$ (where “g” refers to the gravitational constant); the characteristics of a bar not mentioned in the law or not necessary for a correct understanding of it (like the colour, the weight or the history of a particular bar), are irrelevant when the law is applied to special cases. This is not hard to explain. We should be aware of the fact that current theories of the proposition are very well suited to a representation of the assertions made in the exact sciences: laws of nature can always, or most often, be read as follows: for every x, if x is A then x is B. Here, as in Quine’s “canonical notation”, the tendency is manifest to “evaporate” the subject-term so that only relations between predicates are left. However, when narrative concepts come into play a different analysis of the proposition no longer warrants the kind of assertions that are made in the exact sciences: now the predicate-term shows a tendency to “evaporate”. Every statement of the form “for every x, if x is A then x is B”, when made on the objects in the narrativist universe is immediately falsifiable, because we can conceive of many Nss that satisfy the antecedent but not the consequence of the implication. And in the narrativist universe what is conceivable is real.

There is a second affinity between Leibnizian and narrative logic that should be mentioned in this connection. In Leibniz’s system there is no place for causality because any “real” influence (or — as he called it himself “transeunt” causality) between monads is rejected by him. Each monad or substance has its own life-programme, unchangeable and true for all time, that accounts completely for all the states which a monad or substance goes through during its history. When things do not exert “real” influence upon each other so that it makes a difference to their history, causality is out of the question. A similar story can be told with regard to the Nss in the narrativist universe. It would, of course, be absurd to say that Nss, i.e. systems of statements, should exert a causal influence upon one another. Concepts, notions or statements cannot properly be said to have a causal influence upon one another, even if they could be deduced from each other analytically or with the help of
empirical laws. In the case of the oscillating bar mentioned above there is no relation of causality between the concept of the length of a bar and the concept of the oscillation time of a pendulum. For the same reason it does not make sense to speak of “the cause of the Renaissance” or “the cause of the French Revolution”. Very convincing stories may be told about Italian culture from Dante to Machiavelli or about the domestic problems of France from, say, 1774 to 1794, but even in such narratives (complexes of) events are not connected in the same way as in causal explanations. For, as we shall see in section (3), (parts of) Ns do not refer to (complexes of) events or aspects of them. Therefore, when historians say that they are trying to find out what “the cause of the French Revolution” was, this means that they want to give a convincing account of French history from, say, 1774 to 1794 and not that they wish to relate causally two (sets of) events. Historical understanding is achieved by describing the past with the help of a strong and vigorous Ns and not by the discovery of causal relationships. Similarly, the development of modern science since the 17th century only became possible after Aristotelian “why-questions” had been discarded for “how-questions”. “Der denkende Mensch irrt besonders, wenn er sich nach Ursache und Wirkung erkundigt, die beide zusammen machen das unteilbare Phänomen” (Goethe).

(2) Types. Is it possible to discern types of Ns? Daily reality contains many types or classes of things such as dogs, chairs, human beings and so on, all denoted by their sortal concepts. Admittedly, we can say that the narrativist universe contains at least one type of thing, that is, “narrative substances”, but it may be asked whether this total set could not be divided into sub-classes or sub-types. Before we can give a satisfactory answer to this question and derive some important conclusions from it, it will be necessary to make a small detour. Let us return to a primordial stage in our perception of reality: a stage, that is, in which no individuals and certainly no types of individuals are as yet recognized in reality. We could think of the way in which a newborn baby perceives reality. He has not yet learned to discern the “Gestalt” of individual things from their background. Reality is to him a “buzzing confusion” of moving and motionless colour spots, of noises, of rough and smooth surfaces and so on. He does not separate trees from the soil they are rooted in, nor the claws of a cock from the dunghill it stands upon: he only perceives what I propose to call the qualities of a diffuse and structured reality. These qualities correspond to predicates like red, hard, round etc. which I shall suppose the newborn baby to be acquainted with. No sortal predicates will be allowed. If we want to trace the route from our present perception of reality back to this primeval state of affairs in which these qualities are still “running free from their subjects”, current analyses of the proposition are very helpful. Dissolving the individual things of our universe into their constituent properties is a procedure that runs parallel to the proposal to transform all propositions of the form “Fa” into propositions of the
form: \( \exists x \) (uniquely \( a = x \) and \( Fx \)). In the remainder of this section we shall follow the same route but in the opposite direction: starting with qualities, we shall attempt to reconstruct from them our world and the individual things it contains. The former route is analytical: ours will be synthetical. Lastly, in this section - as in the whole of this book — we will reason from a logical and not from an epistemological point of view.

We may describe socio-historical reality in accordance with the “baby-view” of reality; by doing so we have not committed ourselves to any view whatsoever as to what (types of) individuals the world contains. Consequently, we find ourselves here at the ultimate level from which we can explain our recognition of specific (types of) individuals. In the preceding chapters of this book we have seen that Nss can be constituted out of statements, and because the logical form of these statements on reality — i.e. statements which are the properties of Nss — is irrelevant to narrativist philosophy, we may be sure that if Nss can be formed out of conventional statements, Nss can also be built of statements formulated in accordance with the “baby-view” of reality. So we can conceive of Nss without having to recognize the presence of (types of) individuals in reality. One of the most important tasks of narrativist philosophy is to explain how and why certain (types of) individuals are discerned in preference to others. Here we have to face two problems: a) what is logically at stake whenever (types of) individuals are recognized in reality (i.e. certain sets of statements formulated in consonance with the baby-view of reality are connected within Nss), and b) why is the connection of specific sets of statements preferred to other alternatives (for instance, why are certain sets of statements collected in two types of individual things such as “cups” and “saucers” and not in only one type of individual thing)? The former question is in conformity with the logical approach we have followed in this and the preceding chapter; the second raises the problem as to what rules we actually apply, by what pragmatic considerations we are guided, when we decide on the recognition of specific (types of) individuals in reality. The science that answers this second question is, perhaps, the most fundamental propaedeutics to history and parts of psychology and sociology. But let us suppose that we already have these rules at our disposal and, furthermore, that these rules have been consistently applied. Or, to be a little more precise, when specific parts of reality show relevant similarities (in order to avoid circular reasoning this should not and need not be defined in terms of individual things), the result of the application of these rules actually displays significant resemblances. For instance, statements that express perceptions of what we call “trees” and “the soil in which a tree is planted” should not be collected at one time with the help of individual things “this tree” and “this soil” and at another time by the individual thing “this tree-soil” (which refers to both what we call “tree” and “soil”).
If, then, narrativization - i.e. the collection of statements within Nss - has taken place in accordance with the pragmatical rules I have just mentioned, we can draw up the following diagram. On a horizontal axis we peg out the statements that can be made on our socio-historical world. Because historiography never pretends or attempts to represent all of the past, the number of these statements need not be infinite. We will say, therefore, that the statements indicated on the horizontal axis initially embrace all the statements actually mentioned in existing and future narratios and, next, that any number of further statements may be added. All statements are formulated in accordance with the “baby-view” of reality, so that the presence of certain (types of) individual things is not presupposed. On the vertical axis the Nss are indicated that have been or will be constructed with the help of the statements on the horizontal axis. This can only be done, of course, after the narrativization or the historicization of our world has taken place. It should be noted once more that we are still at a very elementary stage of our conceptual ordering of the world: although certain linguistic things (i.e. Nss) have been individuated, no types of things have already been identified with them.

In order to be aware of the elementariness of this conceptual ordering of reality we should realize that at this stage normal things like chairs and dogs are still conceptualized in a way reminiscent of how historians conceptualize the past with the help of terms like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War”. Here we still find a looseness that is quite appropriate when we write history on a larger scale, but entirely a-typical of our speaking about normal things. It follows — and this is a momentous conclusion — that concepts like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War” are of a logically “lower”, more fundamental type than the terms we use for referring to normal things. (Parts of) Nss are the ultimate elements out of which our notions of individual things are built up and it is not the other way round. This may cause astonishment, because at first in sight we are inclined to believe that a term like “the Renaissance” should, logically, have a much more complicated and much more abstract status than a term like “this chair”. But as we shall see, terms referring to normal things are of more “abstract” nature, because their use presupposes a typification-procedure that has not yet been applied as long as we speak in terms of Nss (like “the Renaissance”). Or, in other words, “historicity” (i.e. Nss) precedes “individuality” (i.e. the recognition of individual things). This enables us to draw the following line of demarcation between history and the sciences: history logically precedes our ordinary experience of daily reality, the sciences go beyond it. This logical order was expressed by Leibniz in temporal terms: “Les langues ont été; formées avant les sciences et le peuple ignorant et sans lettres a réduit les choses à certaines espèces”\(^\text{14}\). And I think that Hegel made a similar point when he criticized empiricism for its tendency to deal with the abstract (i.e. empirical reality) as if it were the concretely

given.

We can now complete our diagram by placing in a horizontal row behind each narrative substance a “1” or a “0” indicating whether this Ns does or does not contain a specific statement pegged out on the horizontal axis. When we have completed our diagram in this way, we may ask whether types of Nss can be discerned. It is essential to realize that two typification procedures can be conceived of. This may be clarified by the following example. Imagine we are given a large number of nails and we are asked to sort them according to length. We could measure all the nails, write down the length of each of them and see if certain classes appear more or less spontaneously. For instance the smallest nails may happen to be between 1.24 cm and 1.26 cm, next there is a set of 1.74 to 1.76 cm and so on. But we may equally well prefer a different classification: we may collect the nails of 0.50 cm (if there are any), next those of 0.51 cm, of 0.52 cm and so on. The distribution of the lengths of the nails and the aim of our classifying them will decide which procedure will be most convenient. For reasons that will shortly become clear we could speak here of an “extensional” versus an “intensional” typification procedure.

Accordingly, we can typify Nss in two ways. Firstly, we can follow the extensional approach by looking at the Nss as such and attempting to form classes of Nss that share some significant resemblances in the way “1’s” and “0’s” are distributed in the diagram. By means of this extensional approach we may discover the class of Nss “on the Renaissance” or the class of Nss that deal with the history of social classes or of states. Of course, when collecting Nss on social classes or states typification will be different from when collecting Nss on the Renaissance or the Cold War. In the former case we will pay a lot of attention to structural resemblances between the Nss and disregard those statements in the Nss that refer to specific times and circumstances, whereas in the second case it will be just the other way round. But in both cases, historiography being what it is and what it will presumably be in the future, we are dealing with classes of Nss that appear more or less spontaneously. When we look at what historiography has produced in this and the last few centuries, we find that the above mentioned types of Nss occur frequently. Moreover, Nss are not constructed at random. It is therefore to be expected that a large number of Nss that can in principle be conceived of will not actually be constructed by historians. Consequently, it seems likely that under the influence of these rules Nss are constructed in such a way that certain classificatory patterns automatically appear. And, of course, when we look at historiography we find this to be the case: actual Nss have a strong tendency to coagulate in clusters while between the clusters “narrative space” is more or less empty (for an explanation of this fact see p. 235).

We could call the corresponding typification procedure an “extensional” one, because actual sets of complete Nss are classified by it. What narrative things and not what concepts of types of narrative
things we have will determine classification in the approach under discussion here. It may be wondered how reliable this way of classifying Nss will be; that is, will this extensional typification of Nss really succeed in defining types of Nss so that no ambiguities with regard to the typification of Nss can arise?

In order to answer this question it may be illuminating to make a remark on extensional typification in general. Suppose we are dealing with a set of things that either are already very similar to each other, or, if this is not the case, always could be expanded in such a way that the resulting set consists of things that are very much alike. To be a little more precise: for each two things $a$ and $b$ from of this set, a third thing $c$ can be found (now or in the future) so that $a$ and $c$, and $b$ and $c$ are more similar to each other than $a$ and $b$ mutually are. Whenever this is the case, ambiguities with regard to typification cannot be avoided. The reason is that every attempt to demarcate those things belonging to a specific class from all the other things not belonging to it will fail in the case of those things that are nearer to $a$ and $b$ (where “$a$” and “$b$” refer to things within and outside the class that are supposed to be nearest to each other respectively) than $a$ and $b$ mutually are.

Let us try to translate this insight into our problem of the typification of Nss. We may have some intuition as to what Nss tend to join each other in clusters and try to classify them accordingly. This may seem an easy and obvious thing to do. However, the situation I sketched in the previous paragraph does obtain here as well: for each two Nss $N_1$ and $N_2$, whether they are on the same side of the “border” of a cluster or not, a third Ns $N_3$ can be found (now or in the future) that is closer to $N_1$ and $N_2$ than $N_1$ and $N_2$ mutually are. And whether $N_3$ does or does not belong to a specific cluster is not a matter we can ascertain, but can only decide upon. Take the following very extreme example. Suppose $N_1$ contains the statements 1 … ..p, and $N_2$ … ..the statements 1 … ..p,q; then we can conceive of a Ns $N_3$ containing 1…..p,r and upon whose class-partnership we can only decide. Thus, for each attempt to delineate a certain class of Nss, a statement (i.e. a possible property of Nss), corresponding to that specific attempt, can be conceived of, so that we can only decide whether Nss containing that statement do or do not belong to the class in question. Every extensionalist attempt to classify Nss, therefore, generates its own specific ambiguities. And because, when classifying Nss, “the borders” of a certain class can reasonably be said to be anywhere (in contrast to, for instance, the borders of a country or a plot of land), a very wide variety of unclassifiable Nss can be expected for every attempt at classification. In summary, an extensionalist typification of Nss can never be precise. We may have some intuitions as to how specific Nss (on, e.g. “the Renaissance” or on national states) tend to form clusters, and for practical reasons recognizing certain clusters may be preferable to recognizing others, but every endeavour to attain precision can always be thwarted. The conclusion to be drawn from the above discussion is that as long as socio-historical reality is studied
exclusively in terms of complete Nss, generalizations do not express any truths on the nature of (socio-historical) reality; they only reflect regularities in how we have actually decided to conceptualize reality (in terms of complete Nss).

Next, we can classify Nss intensionally. That is, we may form or postulate the concept of a type of Nss and collect Nss accordingly. In the same way, in the example of the nails, we could divide a decimetre into equal units (e.g., from 0.50 to 1.49 cm, from 1.50 to 2.49 cm and so on). The classification of the nails will present no difficulties: a nail not belonging to a certain class is bound to belong to another, and we know which. In the same vein we could note the recurrence of a specific set of properties of Nss, e.g. “\(p_1...p_n\)”, in the Nss included in the diagram. Consequently, we could define a certain type of Ns as those Nss for which the statements “\(N_i \text{ is } p_1...p_n\)” (where “\(i\)” covers all the indices of the Nss in the narrativist universe) are true. Again, no ambiguities can arise here. For each Ns we can ascertain with absolute accuracy whether it does or does not belong to a particular type (class) of Nss. Even when new statements and Nss are added to the original sets of our diagram, the original typification does not get entangled in ambiguities. Indeed, it can be maintained without emendations.

How should we interpret the fact that an extensional typification of Nss will never be completely successful, while an intensional typification presents no difficulties at all? We found that each extensional typification of Nss generates a set of statement(s) so that the class partnership of those Nss of which this set of statement(s) forms a part is a matter we can only decide upon. Decisions will have to be made here. Thus, in the case of extensional typification, it is impossible to enumerate a set of statement(s) (i.e. properties of Nss), the possession of which would be a sufficient and necessary condition for a Ns to belong to a certain class of Ns. Intensional typification, on the other hand, does offer such conditions. Once a decision has been made on the nature of the Nss of a certain intensional type, it can be unambiguously established whether a given Ns does or does not belong to that type. Consequently - and that is a very momentous transition - intensional typification of Nss provides us with the basis for the typification of things in our world, while extensional typification can never do so. To assert that we can discern certain intensional types of Nss all sharing a fixed number of properties (i.e. statements) is tantamount to saying that, apparently, in our narrativist perceptions of reality certain conjunctions of statements expressing specific perceptions of reality tend to recur. And, certainly, the fact that our world contains types of things such as chairs, dogs, snowflakes, heaps of old iron etc. can be expressed by the assertion that our world is such that fixed sets of statements expressing the presence of certain qualities in reality are sometimes all true at the same time, whereas it never happens that a very substantial part of this set of statements is true while the rest is false. Thus, the types of things we recognize in reality are the result of an intensional typification of Nss.
And the “types of things” meant here can reasonably be said to include both the things we refer to with the help of sortal terms as well as those things referred to by mass terms. Of course, the kinds of qualities perceived in reality to typify e.g. “heaps of old iron” (a mass term) will largely differ from the qualities taken into account for the typification of e.g. “dogs” (a sortal term). Yet this need not give rise to complications at the present level of our discussion. That the proposed analysis of how (types of) individual things come to be discerned in reality is immaterial to the problem as to how either sortal or mass terms are introduced into language suggests the very elementary nature of the present discussion.

It would be too complicated to elaborate the very simple scheme given just now into a more complete one that accounts more fully for how and what (types of) individual things are recognized in reality. As a matter of fact this would require a thorough investigation of a large number of rather intractable “pragmatic” considerations, reflecting how we tend to react to the contingent nature of our universe. In his *The Order of Things* Michel Foucault has brilliantly shown that this “order of things”, apparently so stable, has been subject to the most radical changes over the past four hundred years. Moreover, to these “pragmatic” culture-determined considerations should also be added the sort of argument used in the sciences to claim the existence of e.g. subatomic particles. When (types of) individual things are recognized in reality, we are dealing with a long and complicated chain or hierarchy of types of individual things that ranges from the very elementary level of the typification of Nss to the individual things discovered e.g. in the exact sciences. But this elementary level of the typification of Nss is bedrock in the course of the process of dividing our world into (types of) individual things. From that elementary level onwards we may abstract from, and manipulate in many different ways, the qualities that have already been tied together into (types of) individual things, in order to produce new

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15. Foucault’s book demonstrates that the way in which we order things or individualities is not at all as obvious as we like to think. “When we establish a considered classification, when we say that a cat and a dog resemble each other less than two greyhounds do, even if both are tame or embalmed, even if both are frenzied, even if both have just broken the water pitcher, what is the ground on which we are able to establish the validity of this classification with complete certainty? On what “table”, according to what grid of identities, simulitudes, analogies, have we become accustomed to sort out so many different and similar things? What is this coherence - which, as is immediately apparent, is neither determined by an a priori and necessary concatenation, nor imposed on us by immediately perceptible contents? For it is not a question of linking consequences, but of grouping and isolating, of analysing, of matching and pigeon-holing concrete contents; there is nothing more tentative, nothing more empirical (superficially, at least) than the process of establishing an order among things; nothing that demands a sharper eye or a surer better-articulated language; nothing that more insistently requires that one allow oneself to be carried along by the proliferation of qualities and forms”. See M. Foucault, *The order of things*, New York 1973; p. xix.
There is thus a relation of transitivity between our recognizing one type of individual thing on one level of abstraction — from the perception of the qualities of our world — and a higher or lower level: the capacity to individuate individual things is handed over from one type of individual thing to a newly constituted type. Having recognized one type of individual thing is like a mapping out of our world, and this is often a stage preliminary to a more detailed typification of reality. Therefore, being an individual thing is not an intrinsic property of things; it is always based upon a property which a certain type-concept may have in relation to another type-concept. Nevertheless, type-concepts are the islands in the unruly and ever restless sea of our experience. The (types of) individual things we discern in reality are not simply given to us along with reality itself: types form together an intricate, constructed, relational network that has as its ultimate foundation the typification of Nss. This network is constructed in accordance with numerous decisions we have made to that effect. To give even an approximate account of how such decisions are reached would require not only a complicated description of the socio-cultural habits responsible for our orientation in reality but also an exposition of part of the procedures followed in the sciences. And even then there may remain inconsistencies and imprecisions that hardly allow of rational explanation. For instance, am I sitting in (on) a chair or on a cushion and a chair? Is the receiver of a telephone part of the telephone or is it a separate thing? And what about a lamp and a lampshade or a car and its engine? Because these pairs of things always go together we don’t worry about imprecisions or contradictions (e.g. “it bought a lamp; the lamp is nice, but the lampshade is ugly”). Here we find ourselves, so to speak, in the eye of the hurricane of our partitioning the world into individual things.

Up to now I have always spoken of types of individual things. It may be argued that we often seem to recognize individual things without knowing as yet to what type they belong. It should be noted, however, that in essence the typification of individual things is similar to such regulative ideas as “every event has a cause”. We wouldn’t accept the statement that a particular individual thing does not belong to any type — if we understood at all what such a statement could possibly mean - so we shall always interpret such a state of affairs as an indication that our knowledge is insufficient and that the individual thing ought to be subjected to a closer (scientific) investigation.

The two ways in which Nss can be collected help us to explain a conspicuous difference between terms like “the Renaissance” or “the (a) state”, on the one hand, and terms referring to normal things like dogs and snowflakes on the other hand. It should be observed that when, e.g. thanks to biological or psychological research new properties of the human being are discovered (i.e. when new statements are added to the relevant Nss formulated according to the “baby-view” of the world) the meaning of the term “human being” may remain unchanged. What is or
is not a human being is essentially immune to what biologists and psychologists may one day discover about human beings (obviously, it is not the rather un-problematic referential capacity of the term “human being” but its meaning that is at stake here). On the other hand, terms like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War” do not have such a fixed meaning: each history of the Renaissance adds different connotations to the term. Admittedly, there is a weak core that tends to recur: the term “the Renaissance” will mostly be associated with a revival of an interest in Antiquity. But even such a “core” has no immutable stability. Future historians may play down or possibly even deny this classical revival of the Renaissance, or argue that “the essence” of the Renaissance should be looked for elsewhere, whereas they may retain the term “the Renaissance”. One might even hazard the opinion that the “pictures” historians present of such cultural phenomena as the Renaissance can never have an element that is common to all, because if such an element existed it could not properly be said to be part of a narrative “picture” of the past. What is common to all persons doing D, cannot be part of “the way” in which a does D, of “the way” in which b does D, and Ns are ways of looking at the past. However, we need not commit ourselves to such a risky view and may be content with stating that with respect to a great portion, and historiographically certainly the most significant portion, of the statements made in a study on the Renaissance it can always be meaningfully asked: is this really part of the meaning of the term “the Renaissance”? Although a considerable number of statements on the Renaissance are acceptable to anybody (for instance, that the Renaissance did not take place during the reign of Charlemagne, nor during that of Louis XV, that the Renaissance was not a King of England etc.) this class of statement - if the statements are assumed to be meaningful — can never add up to a “negative” definition of the Renaissance that is satisfactory both for historians and for narrative philosophy. For (types of) Ns cannot be defined by an enumeration of the properties they do not have.

The meaning of the term “the Renaissance” is in permanent flux; in the future the whole concept may even be eliminated altogether. Such a thing is, of course, inconceivable when we think of normal things and their concepts. Biological research (in contrast to historical research) will never result in the elimination of the concepts denoting its subject-matter (such as the concept “cow” or “human being”). And it is interesting to note that the only occasion on which a tendency in this direction could be observed was brought about by a historical analysis of the genus “human being” (i.e. the evolution theory). The explanation of this difference is that an extensional collection of Ns does not permit of the enumeration of a fixed conjunction of properties of Ns that define at the same time a specific kind of “normal” things, whereas this actually can be done when Ns are collected intensionally. Extensional typification prevents us from separating form and content. Each individual state, religion, cultural movement etc. — or, rather, the idea of such a state etc. — is a world in
itself and cannot be split up into 1) a general form and 2) a particular content. Hegel’s revolt against formalism is quite to the point in this connection\textsuperscript{16}.

The fact that we can always meaningfully discuss what is and what is not the Renaissance distinguishes terms like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War” from terms referring to normal things like dogs and snowflakes. It is always possible to write the history of such “normal” things as Louis XIV or the Château de Versailles; because parts of Nss collected intensionally and denoting specific types of things can always be expanded (in several ways) so as to develop into complete Nss (e.g. histories on Louis XIV or the Château de Versailles). On the other hand we cannot write a history of the Renaissance or of a state however much appearances may suggest the contrary: terms like “the Renaissance” or “the (a) state S” always refer to complete Nss which can only be typified extensionally and it would be absurd to write the history of a Ns, for Nss have no history. Historiographical studies that are misleadingly called A History of the Cold War or A History of the Renaissance are not histories on “things” that existed in the past in the way Louis XIV did; they are accounts of certain aspects of the European past, presenting a certain “picture”, or Ns, on that past. And to these pictures or Nss we can refer with the help of terms like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War” (although we should remember the ambiguity of these proper names of Nss). Hence we can say that there are many Renaissances and many Cold Wars; likewise we have many “revolutions”, not only because there is a French, an American, a Russian Revolution but also because many Nss have been constructed to account for each of these revolutions. And when we say this we are always referring to a large number of complete Nss. Thus, the fact that we speak of “revolutions” (in the plural), of “states” (in the plural) and so on, whereas there seems to have been only one Renaissance and only one Cold War, does not imply that “things” like “revolutions” and “States” should be put in the same class with normal things like human beings or chateaux. Whoever speaks of “revolutions” or of “states” in the plural collects complete Nss extensionally and does not refer to a type of things corresponding to an intensional abstraction from complete Nss.

Of course we can propose intensional typifications of such entities,

\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Hegel (1); p. 175: "Gleicherweise kann chinesische, indische Philosophie und eleatische, pythagoreische, ferner spinozistische, oder sogar alle moderne Metaphysik parallelisiert werden, insofern allerdings alle das Eine oder die Einheit, das ganz abstrakt Allgemeine zugrundelegen; aber solche Vergleichung [i.e. formalism] oder sogar Gleichstellung ist höchst oberflächlich. In ihr wird gerade das übersehen, worauf es allein ankommt, auf die Bestimmtheit solcher Einheit; und den wesentlichen Unterschied macht gerade dies aus, ob jene Einheit abstrakt oder aber konkret, - konkret bis zur Einheit in sich, die Geist ist, - gefasst wird. Jenes Gleichstellen [i.e. formalism] aber beweist eben, dass er nur die abstrakte Einheit kennt, und indem es über Philosophien urteilt, in demjenigen unwissend ist, was das Interesse der Philosophie ausmacht".
e.g. a group of people is organized within a “state” when they have an authority that enables them “de faire et casser la loi” (Bodin), but such intensional typifications can always be questioned. Thus Bodin’s typification has been rejected by Romantic theories of the state. Similarly, we can always meaningfully ask “was the American Revolution really a revolution?” (Brinton answered this question in the affirmative and Barrington Moore in the negative). On the other hand one could claim with Ranke and Bakhuizen van den Brink that the Dutch Revolt really was a revolution. Although until now historians have rarely done so, they could not settle the matter by simply declaring anyone who calls the Dutch Revolt a revolution to be a fool who does not even know what a revolution is. Therefore they will wait with sceptical interest for the arguments in favour of such an unconventional position. Such disputes cannot be solved by resorting to conceptual knowledge. But who would have the patience to wait for arguments when someone calls a horse a cow? As a consequence, we can find here the criterion permitting us to distinguish between intensionally and extensionally typified collections of Nss. Is it meaningful to ask “is this really an x?” If so, x corresponds to a set of Nss that can only be typified extensionally; if not, the corresponding Nss can be typified intensionally.

In the complexity of our historical past certain patterns occasionally seem to recur in a vague and ill-defined way; whenever this is the case we may feel inclined to speak of “revolutions” or “states” in the plural, because narrativization-procedures will tend to show corresponding similarities. But such occasions can never be interpreted as if a new type of normal things had been discovered in historical reality in the way explorers discovered unknown species of animals; every attempt to define with precision this alleged “type of things” can be successfully challenged and every attempt to circumscribe these recurring patterns is subject to reasonable doubt. An extensional typification is all one can achieve here. Terms like “revolution” or “state” are not ordinary sortal concepts like “chair” or “dog”; being the result of an extensional typification of Nss no nominalist definition of them can be given of them. Neither can the reference of these terms be “fixed” in the way suggested by Kripke and

18. Ranke wrote: "noch einmal machte sich das lokale Interesse gegen alle Eingriffe oberherrlicher Gewalt geltend. Die Revolution der Niederlande besteht darin, dass dies den Sieg davon trägt. Tyrannie hatte einmal die Freiheit zu Folge". Quoted in G. Berg, Leopold von Ranke als akademischer Lehrer, Göttingen 1968; pp. 153-4. See also R.C. Bakhuizen van den Brink, Studiën en schetsen over vaderlandsche geschiedenis en letteren Vol I, Amsterdam 1863; Bakhuizen describes the Dutch Revolt as follows: "maar de wettigheid, waarop zij aanspraak maakte, was niet meer dan schijn, was een voortzetting van, een aanknoping aan het werk der omwenteling, in 1566 begonnen, en van hare handelingen kan men zeggen: het was allerminst een restauratie, het was niet eens een reformatie, het was een revolution" (pp. 507, 525-525).
Putnam\textsuperscript{19} because even discussions on what the exemplars of these terms are can never be settled conclusively.

Ultimately, the foregoing discussion provides the justification for the thesis — put forward in this book several times — that historicity precedes individuality\textsuperscript{20}. On the face of it, the reverse order seems more likely i.e. that \textit{things} are first given to us and that their history can only be written afterwards once we have followed their course through time and change. But even for the normal things in our universe this picture is only part of the truth: types of normal things can only be recognized in reality after historicization of the world has taken place and an intensional typification of Nss has been successful. In other words, our world contains a number of things of which it is presupposed that they actually have a history (i.e. are a type of thing) and then, indeed, we can write these histories. But because historicity is always presupposed — even if we are dealing with a thing of a certain type — even then individuality (being a thing) is not logically prior to historicity. To sum up, “normal” things do not contradict our thesis because we already know or presuppose that they have a history. Lastly, if it is reasonable to say that those things “exist” whose history we can write, we may conclude that “existence” corresponds to a property of specific sets of Nss, viz. their being intensionally typifiable. Both the nature of reality itself and the narrativization procedures we apply to it determine whether a particular set of Nss will or will not have this property.

I would like to refer to the beginning of this discussion when I suggested that socio-historical reality should be described in statements that do not presuppose the presence (or “existence”) of certain types of individual things. We found that on this most elementary basis, thanks to two different ways of typifying Nss, the existence of normal things and of groups of vaguely similar Nss (e.g. on “the Renaissance”) could be explained. Certainly, and with good reason, the objection will be raised that such a procedure is a highly unrealistic account of how terms like “the Renaissance” have come to be used. Whoever writes on the Renaissance presupposes the presence of an immensely wide variety of individual things like paintings, sculptures, statesmen, condottieri, popes, philosophers and so on. Writing a historiography of the Renaissance without assuming the existence of these types of individual things is well-nigh impossible. Consequently, so the objection continues, it cannot be true that history could be written without the recognition of certain (types of) individual things in (historical) reality. Thus, individuality must precede historicity and it is not the other way round. My answer to this objection is as follows. When I argued that historicity precedes individuality I always had in mind the historicity and the individuality of one and the same thing: I claimed that individual things in reality can only be recognized as such on the basis of the relevant Nss (embodying

\textsuperscript{20} Cf. p. 117.
their historicity) out of which they are constructed (by intensional typification). So the present objection would only be to the point if it could be shown that first a thing (to be called “the Renaissance”) is given to us and that its history is written after that. And the analysis I have given of concepts like “the Renaissance” by no means commits me to such a view.

I should like to make a few additional remarks with regard to this discussion. Firstly, it will be possible at least in theory to recast the statements that form a Ns Renaissance in such a way that the presupposition of the presence in our universe of certain (types of) things is eliminated. No doubt a rather odd thing to do, but it could be done. But secondly, and this is more important, it must be noted that the problem of the historicization or narrativization of our world is precisely the same a) on the very elementary level (where, in the end, the concepts of (types of) normal individual things are formed), and b) on the level where concepts like “the Renaissance” are formed. On both levels historicization takes place without there being an individual thing (e.g. a “Renaissance”) whose history is being written. The recognition of the presence of certain (types of) individual things in historical reality like Rafael or the Mona Lisa when a Ns on the Renaissance is being constructed does not alter this fact. That such individuals are given to the historian when he writes a Ns on the Renaissance is most convenient for the practice of writing history, but irrelevant to narrative logic.

And maybe even the practice of history does not depend so strongly on the presence of (types of) individual things as we might surmise. Our knowledge and our ideas on the past are largely “channeled” by Ns like “the Renaissance”, at least to a greater extent than by knowledge of individual things (whose function is more “illustrative” (see p. 138)). Suppose somebody who is unacquainted with history is to be instructed on the European past from, say, 1400 to 1550 AD. Then the best way to start is to give him an idea of “the Renaissance”, “the decline of the Church”, or of “the rise of the New Monarchies” (all Ns!) and not to provide him with a lot of biographical details of the lives of individual popes, monarchs or men of letters. Apparently, the cognitive force of those Ns outweighs by far that of statements on actions and characteristics of individual persons. Those statements are merely the material for real historical knowledge and not historical knowledge itself. So, even in the practice of history knowledge of Ns is more essential than knowledge of individuals.

I would like to add a final remark. As in the example of the nails, the decision as to whether an extensional or intensional typification is to be preferred, is always a pragmatic one. Narrative logic only claims that we are at liberty to choose between two possibilities: 1) an intensional typification of Ns on states or revolutions can be attempted and 2) we can speak of the world as if it did not contain any (types of) individual things. However, in the former case, confusion and disagreements will prove to be ineradicable and, in the latter, speaking of reality may be
hopelessly cumbersome. Nevertheless, the recognition of certain (types of) individual things can only have a pragmatic and not a logical justification. However, although in some cases it may be hard to decide which typification procedure is to be preferred (take concepts like "parliamentary democracy" or "republic"), even in these cases we are not permitted to disregard which typification procedure we have in mind when using these terms.

(3) Do Narrative substances refer? Of course this question can be answered in the affirmative for the names of Nss (if Nss happen to have one): they refer to the Nss named by them. But can Nss themselves be said to refer? At first it seems reasonable to suppose that they can: shouldn’t there be “something” in historical reality that corresponds to a Ns on, for instance, the Renaissance? Surely, if we should deny such a correspondence, the construction of Nss would look like a completely arbitrary affair, where the historian’s fantasy can go its own way unbridled. Either Nss do refer, or they are mere invitations to conjure up historiographical dreams. This will be our initial reaction to this question. I nevertheless believe this reaction to be a mistaken one.

Nss consist of sets of statements. On the assumption, then, that our argument against narrative reductionism has been conclusive, it is certainly true that Nss are “something” more than just conjunctions of statements. However, in so far as a cognitive connection between Nss and historical reality can be claimed, this connection is always channelled through the statements contained in a Ns. We shall see in the next chapter that what makes a Ns more than a mere conjunction of statements is embodied in the “point of view” on the past proposed in the narratio and from which we are invited to look upon historical reality. Although such “points of view” are, of course, partially determined by the nature of historical reality itself, they do not refer to historical reality. Speaking metaphorically, indicating a point of view is not “sending the reader back to reality” (which is the essence of all acts of reference) but, on the contrary, it is a “drawing the reader out of it”. As a consequence the question as to whether Nss refer can ultimately be reduced to the question as to whether statements on historical reality refer (n.b. not parts of statements, but complete statements).

This problem has already attracted the attention of philosophers, even though they have mostly considered the problem of the reference of sentences and not of propositions (or of statements). According to a well-known view of Frege (which was later also defended by A. Church) truth and falsity are what sentences refer to. Frege believed that just like proper names, sentences have both a meaning (the proposition expressed by the sentence) and a reference (truth or falsity). If Gale is right21 the motive behind this curious terminology was Frege’s intention to develop an extensional logic. What exactly Frege’s arguments were need not

bother us in the present context. It is more relevant to note that Frege studied the reference of sentences while we are interested in the reference of statements. But even if we skip this difficulty Frege’s suggestion as to what sentences refer to can be of little use to us. I will not enter into a discussion of the objections to Frege’s proposal that have already been brought up (e.g. by Dummett)\textsuperscript{22}, but restrict myself to pointing out that if we were to accept Frege’s position, all acceptable Nss, whatever their differences may be, would refer to one and the same thing, i.e. truth. I have no idea how to interpret such a suggestion. It looks more like a novel way of speaking than like a sensible answer to a sensible question. One may wonder if the word “refer” really has the same meaning here as it usually has.

Ordinarily, the word “refer” is used to indicate a specific relationship between language and reality. This is a more promising approach. Initially we are inclined to associate referential capacity exclusively with the subject-term in statements like “Mary cuts the red rose”. An individual person is here referred to by the proper name “Mary”, while the predicate “cuts the red rose” attributes to this person a specific kind of action, i.e. cutting the red rose. So apparently in the more typical case the subject-term of a statement refers, while its predicate-term attributes something to the thing referred to. From this point of view, then, the task of establishing which utterances refer is identical with the task of finding which utterances can be subject-terms of statements. And this would imply that, whatever we may discover in this connection, Nss will never refer because (sets of) statements (i.e. Nss) are not subject-terms of statements. It should be noted that the obvious objection that Nss can be subject-terms in statements — take, e.g., “N\textsubscript{1} is p” — results from confusing of names of Nss (e.g. “N\textsubscript{1} “) with what these names refer to (i.e. Nss themselves).

But why should we impose such restrictions on the referential capacity of phrases? Would it be wrong to say that the phrase “the red rose” refers? Surely, a particular thing is introduced into language when it is uttered. The same goes for the verb “cuts”. It can even be plausibly argued that the word “red” refers, because it makes “reference to a feature”\textsuperscript{23}. Together with Mooij, we can conclude from these considerations that we should use “a generic notion of reference of which reference to an object and reference to a feature are special variants”\textsuperscript{24}. As a result of this strategy, the notion of reference gets a very wide application. Only terms mentioning non-existent things or words expressing relational predicates like “after” or “greater than” would probably be somewhat troublesome. And maybe even such terms could be said to refer if only the notion of reference were to be made so wide as to


\textsuperscript{23} This proposal has been made by Srzednicki; see Mooij; p. 41.

\textsuperscript{24} Mooij; pp. 41-2.
include also “references” to those features of reality “created” by the linguistic instruments we have at our disposal. Thus, “the not being present of a certain thing in reality” might be accepted as a feature of reality we (can) refer to with the word “x” when we say “x does not exist”. Anyway, if it is not irrational to make the notion of reference so capacious, one may, indeed, wonder why complete statements could not be said to refer. And a very obvious candidate for serving as a referent presents itself: i.e. the event. What is wrong with looking at the event of Mary cutting the red rose as an identifiable individual thing you can refer to? Surely, from such a point of view, it seems reasonable to suppose that statements as such can refer.

However, difficulties will soon arise. Take the statement “in 1670 Louis XIV and Charles II concluded the secret treaty of Dover” (by means of this treaty both monarchs intended to achieve the downfall of the Dutch Republic). As an individual thing the event referred to behaves most irregularly. If we have the relevant information at our disposal we can always find out whether some properties are rightly or wrongly attributed to a particular individual thing we refer to in statements. However, in the case of the event of the Dover treaty, we are placed in an awkward dilemma. Do the facts that the treaty was concluded in a certain room and that it was written on a specific piece of paper form part of the event or not? These facts are not explicitly mentioned in the statement, so it seems they do not. On the other hand, they are undoubtedly aspects of the event itself. So should we reject a description of the conclusion of the Dover treaty containing incorrect information about the room in which the treaty was concluded as a false description of the event or not? It looks as if statements mentioning events have a “soft underbelly” just like narratios (see Chapter III, section (4)). And if we are right in saying that statements, in contrast to the names of Nss, do not have a referential capacity, we could propose to say that the statement on the Dover treaty is the name of a statement contained in a Ns that has this statement as its unique property. In this sense the statement (as the name of a Ns) can be said to refer to itself (as a Ns). And, actually, this is how, in my opinion, the reference of statements should be understood. Thus, at least part of what is said on narratios in this book will also hold for statements on events. That is to say, the narratio has certain repercussions on the statement on an event. The difference between states of affairs and events runs parallel to that between the statement interpreted as a statement on reality and the statement when seen as the proper name of a Ns that has this statement as its unique property. This difference therefore has nothing to do with an intrinsic or material difference between states of affairs and events as such, but applies only to the way in which we tend to interpret the statements expressing them. If a statement is a natural component of a narratio we shall see it as a statement on an event; if the statement is more self-sufficient it will be said to describe a state of affairs.

However, our problem is the reference of statements and not their
names so let us return to the question as to whether the statement on the treaty of Dover can be taken to refer. If we say that this statement as such does refer there are two possibilities: 1) what the statement refers to is the sum of what the individual components of the statement refer to, 2) what the statement refers to is different from this sum. If one prefers the first option it seems odd to maintain that statements as such should refer. Indeed, one can say that each individual Dutchman pays his taxes or that the Dutch nation pays its taxes. But fortunately even in Holland taxes are paid only once and not twice. Similarly, one cannot say that the statements as such refer as well as the individual components of the statements; if, at least, this were to mean that both the statements and its constituent parts have their specific referential task to perform. So let us consider the second option. Here we may ask what the difference is between what the statement as such refers to and what the individual components of the statement, when taken together, refer to. Or, in other words, in what respect does an event (i.e. what a statement is supposed to refer to) differ from the persons, actions and so on (i.e. what the components of the statement refer to) involved in the event? I am afraid that this question, can only, if at all, be answered after spending a great deal of scholastic application on preliminary problems. For instance, what exactly do we do when we add up referents? Can such additions form new referents? The list of these curious questions can be expanded at will.

So let us try to approach the problem of the eventual reference of statements to events in another way. Let us once more consider the statement on the Dover treaty of 1670 mentioned above. We can describe this event in more than one way: e.g. “in 1670 Louis XIV and Charles II appended their signatures to the Dover treaty” (1), or “in 1670 Louis XIV succeeded in completely destroying the political position of the Dutch Republic” (2). Certainly (1) and (2) refer to the same event, if statements can be said to refer. Next, if two phrases have the same referent they are interchangeable salva veritate. Obviously, this is not the case here: “x believes that (1)” does not permit us to conclude that “x believes that (2)”. But even if we leave non-extensional contexts out of consideration, substitution continues to cause trouble. For, certainly, what is referred to by the second description is the consequence of what is referred to in the first description — if it is assumed that statements can refer to events. Such absurd conclusions can only be avoided if we deny statements the capacity to refer. It should be noted that scientific statements can cause the same kind of trouble. The same state of affairs can be described by statement 1) an electric current goes from A to B as well as by statement 2) electrons move from B to A, while it does not seem inappropriate to assert that what 2) refers to is the cause of what 1) refers to. Nevertheless, the causal relationship between 1) and 2) is less obvious in this case because here it is relatively hard to separate both descriptions. We can easily imagine that Louis XIV and Charles II succeeded in destroying the political position of the
Republic by other means than the Dover treaty. However, it is precisely the scientific knowledge enabling us to assert the equivalence of the statements 1) and 2) on the electrical current that effectively prevents us from separating the two statements. The explanation is probably that the differences between descriptions given by historians of what is still felt to be the same event may be of a more dramatic nature than in the case of scientific descriptions. Therefore in history an event can be described in ways so dissimilar that a causal relationship between what two of its descriptions refer to can be argued for.

If the statements contained in a Ns do not refer, Nss cannot be said to refer either. As far as historical reality is concerned a Ns can have no fewer and no more objects of reference than its statements, namely none. It may seem rather odd that Nss like “the Renaissance” or “the (a) state” should have no referents in historical reality, but we cannot decide otherwise. An example may be helpful. Consider the Ns “Mannerism” that was introduced in the early part of this century by historians of art such Riegl, Dvorák and Pevsner in order to obtain a more refined interpretation of the transition from Renaissance to Baroque painting and sculpture (I will not go into the differences between the Nss proposed by each individual historian of art). The proposal to discern a “Mannerist” phase in Italian 16th century painting is, of course, quite unlike the discovery of Pluto by Tombaugh in 1930 or the discovery of electromagnetism by Oersted. This already suggests that whereas there really is a planet Pluto or a physical phenomenon to be called “electromagnetism” one should not believe historical reality to contain something we may refer to with the help of a Ns to be called “Mannerism”. If a future historian of art were to declare that there was no “Mannerist” phase in 16th century Italian art he would not be accused of being either blind or joking. And this would happen without doubt to somebody who denied the existence of e.g. electromagntical phenomena. We can just see that a compass-needle reacts to an electric current that comes close to it. Although physicists may differ with regard to the correct explanation of this phenomenon, the phenomenon itself cannot reasonably be denied. The fact that our observation of physical reality depends to some extent on what (physical) theories we use in describing it should not entice us to defend a similar thesis for historiography. Whoever adheres to some physical theory has a very precise idea of what physical phenomena the theory is about (if not, he simply doesn’t understand the theory). On the other hand, historiographical discussions on e.g. the Renaissance are exclusively concerned with the question as to what uses can be made of the term “the Renaissance” in order to understand historical reality. Or, to put it differently, that which is a simple requirement for merely understanding a physical theory is what historians, in their approach to (historical) reality, always disagree about. Where the exact sciences begin, i.e. with having an idea of how terms relate (refer) to reality, is precisely where historiography ends (here I would

like to call to mind what was said on pp. 91 ff.). Once more every attempt to see similarities between the exact sciences and historiography should be mistrusted: such similarities may, indeed, exist, but they should always be argued for from a vantage point that presupposes no such similarities. I would now like to revert to what was said in Chapter V, section (4). If Nss referred to historical reality, historical discussion would be useless. If Nss referred to specific “things” in historical reality, historiographical discussion would, considering the very concrete and a-theoretical language historians employ, amount to little more than an appeal to what our ears can hear and what our eyes can see. Here I should like to call to mind what was argued for in Chapter V, section (3). Discussions on whether we should or should not use the concept “Mannerism” are not concerned with the presence or the absence of a certain “thing” we can refer to in the past: how could we possibly fail to see such a “big” thing? Ayer once attacked “the belief that what can be shown can also be said”; whoever thinks that Nss refer commits himself to the converse of this fallacy, i.e. the belief that what can be spoken about can also be shown. But although we can meaningfully discuss Mannerism, Mannerism can never be shown.

If anything, Mannerism is a way of looking at the paintings of Rosso Fiorentino, Pontormo or Parmigianino but it is not these paintings themselves or even only aspects of them. Indicating or referring to specific paintings of Parmigianino or their characteristics can never show what Mannerism is, but can only clarify an intention without being such an intention itself; here acts of reference are like quotations in an unknown language — apparently someone wants to convey a particular meaning to us but we lack the instruments necessary to discover it. Only statements can bridge this gap. I know we feel a strong intuitive resistance to the assertion that Nss do not refer: surely Mannerism must have something to do with the paintings of Pontormo or Parmigianino, otherwise we could just as well locate Mannerism in the days of Charlemagne. However, what the word Mannerism refers to is to statements on these paintings and these statements do not refer to those paintings (or anything else), although the components of these statements do. Therefore, we should overcome our intuitive resistance and avoid postulating things in historical reality that correspond to terms like “Mannerism”, “the Cold War”, “the (a) state” and so on. Curiously enough, narrative realism (the position that induces us to postulate such entities in the historical past) is more idealistic in this respect, more inclined to assume that things correspond to words, than narrative idealism. However, no identifiable objects correspond to most of the terms we use for discussing the past. Whether these terms refer to a Ns or are sortal concepts is decisive. Thus, in so far as the term “the fall of the Roman Empire” refers to a Ns we can agree with Munz when he writes: “there is no sense in imaging that there was such a thing as the fall of the Roman Empire and then examine whether Gibbon’s or Rostovtzeff’s or Seeck’s explanation is the right one (...). Gibbon’s Decline and Fall and

26. Ayer (1); p. 54.
Rostovtzeff’s story are not two attempts to depict one and the same event, but are two completely different historical narratives. There is not one set of events with two different causal explanations, but two narratives of sets of events”\textsuperscript{27}. Indeed, there is no such thing as the “Fall of the Roman Empire” — to mention only one problem: when did the Roman Empire fall? In 395 AD when the Empire was divided into two halves, in 476 when Romulus Augustulus was deposed by Odoacer, when the Empire became Christian or when the urban middle class, the so-called “curi-ales”, disappeared? Or did the Roman Empire only fall on that fateful morning of 30th May 1453 when Mohammed II stormed the walls of Constantinople? Causes of the decline, symptoms of the decline and the decline and fall itself of the Empire have become indistinguishable in the historiographical discussions on this famous topic. And this is typical of historical argument. Every attempt to “remedy” this state of affairs would require a formalism quite alien to historical method.

All the answers I have just mentioned have been defended by historians in the course of time. I am quite convinced that reasonable things can be said on the relative plausibility of all these answers but we cannot decide on this matter by simply inspecting an object known to everybody as the “Fall of the Roman Empire” and then ascertaining at what point of time or in what period this object came into existence. Nss are not “shorthand” (as the adherents of speculative philosophies of history and the protagonists of “history as a social science” wish to maintain) enabling us to speak about things in historical reality: the past itself knows no “Falls of the Roman Empire”, no “Renaissance”, no “social classes”, no “states” - in contrast to the objects of our ordinary world, these “things” lead their lives exclusively in the narrativist universe. And this narrativist universe has a remarkable degree of autonomy: at least, what it contains are by no means simple projections or pictures of the historical past itself.

If, then, Nss do not refer it may well be wondered how reference to real things actually is achieved. How does reference to things fit in the picture given in the preceding section dealing with how individual things come to be recognized in reality? In answering this question I will restrict myself to the most elementary cases in which reference is made to things in reality: i.e. those cases where the subject-term of a statement refers to a certain individual thing. I trust that more complicated ways of referring to reality can ultimately be reduced to these cases - and should this hope turn out to be unfounded I do not believe that we are confronted with a problem that is peculiar to narrativist philosophy.

In the previous section it was argued that intensional typification and only intensional typification of Nss will permit us to speak of instances of (types of) things in extra-linguistic reality. Suppose now we have a Ns N\textsubscript{1} of an intensional type T that contains the statements p, q, ... not belonging to the set of statements of N\textsubscript{1} defined by T. A “T”

\textsuperscript{27} Munz (I); p. 122.
will be a Ns of type T, a “t” will be an instance of the class of things denoted by the type-concept which corresponds to the intensional type of Nss T; furthermore, the statements p, q, ..., expressing the presence of reality of the qualities P, Q, ... should, of course, all be formulated in such a way that no (types of) individual things are presupposed by them. However, if the qualities P, Q, ... happen to be attributed to some individual thing of the type T, the corresponding attributes a, b, ... are predicated of the subject-term referring to that individual t. If we bear all this in mind, we can say that the statements of N₁ entail the following statement S: “some specific t is a, b, ...”. S is analytical: S’s being entailed by N₁ implies that the t to which the subject-term of S refers is actually a, b, ... Thus the subject-term of S, i.e. “a specific t” refers to a certain t. Consequently, S is a statement in which reference is made to a unique individual thing in extra-linguistic reality by means of its subject-term. This analysis shows how from Nss and the statements contained in them (which do not refer to individual things either as a whole or in so far as their component parts are concerned), statements can be derived whose subject-terms refer to individual things in reality. And if there are more t’s which are a, b, ... this does not prevent S’s subject-term from referring to a unique individual thing, although S’s descriptions of this thing need not be an identifying description of it. For the statement S’, “some t’s are a, b, ...” cannot be derived from the statements contained in N₁.

When discussing the reference of Nss there is a last problem that requires our attention. In historical studies we sometimes find statements like “the Renaissance is p”, or “the Cold War is q” and so on. We can look at such statements in two ways. Firstly, in some cases these statements may reasonably be regarded as redundant and as expressing no more than just “p” or “q”. For when we come across statements like “p” or “q” we should always read them as “N₁ is p”, “N₁ is q” in order to define their narrative meaning, because from the narrativist point of view the statements of a narratio are statements on Nss. However, when a historian writes “the Renaissance is p” instead of just “p” he only wants to emphasize that “p” really is part of his Ns on the Renaissance. Here we shall not meet with any difficulties: the subject-term of these statements refers to some specific Ns and the statement as a whole is analytically true. Here everything is in accord with what has been said up till now on Nss. But, in some other cases we may be confronted with statements on Nss that to all appearances are not trivially reducible to the statements contained in a particular Ns. And then difficulties will arise. For instance, after reading Gaddis’ book on the origins of the Cold War we could say: “after all, the revisionist account of the Cold War (i.e. a specific Ns) has not proved to be a reasonable assessment of political history since, say, 1941”28. Of course, this is a statement of the form

“this Ns is p”. Generally speaking, historiographical discussions will often yield this kind of pronouncement on Nss. From this example it will be obvious that such statements are never — and certainly not trivially — reducible to the statements contained by some Ns: no historical account will condemn itself as an unreasonable assessment of the past. Nevertheless, being a statement on some Ns such a statement could be said to be a property of Ns.

However, if we are ready to accept this kind of property of Ns we will, no doubt, come into conflict with the assertion made in section (1) of this chapter, viz. that only the statements contained in a Ns can be seen as the properties of a Ns. I strongly object to the proposal to consider the kind of statement under discussion here as additional properties of Nss: accepting them as properties of Nss would result in confusing disastrously the level of speaking on the past with the level of the discussion of views on the past. Such a confusion would raise a dust in which all clarity, which is so hard to obtain in the first place in an analysis of historiography, would be lost again. Moreover, if we were to accept this kind of statement as properties of Nss we could never be sure whether a Ns does possess a certain property or not — and that is not what the relation between things and their properties should be. For historiographical discussion is always concerned with the question of whether instances of this kind of statement are acceptable or not. We can only believe such statements to express a property of Nss if we take some given state of historiographical discussion as an absolute. And that would, again, be tantamount to denying the whole raison d’être of the writing of history. Therefore, I propose to consider the kind of statements under discussion here not as statements on Nss ascribing a certain property to these Nss but as statements on our opinions on the merits of certain Nss. And such opinions cannot be seen as properties of Nss themselves. Similarly, it would be odd to say that the opinions people have of us form part of our characteristics.

Lastly, we should consider statements such as “England went down-hill in the period after the second World War” or “liberal-conservatism was the best answer to the threat of totalitarianism in the first half of the 20th century”. Pessimistic narratiohs have been written on England since 1945, similarly Nss have been proposed (e.g. by J.L. Talmon in his recent and monumental The Myth of the Nation and the Vision of Revolution on the disastrous victory of political extremism in the first half of this century. It is to such Nss we refer when making statements like “England went down-hill in the period after the second World War”. Such statements should therefore be interpreted as follows: 1) there is a Ns that is, roughly, such and such, 2) this Ns is an acceptable assessment of part of the past. So not reality but Nss are referred to by this kind of statement

and this is done with the help of a very sketchy individuation procedure. Many statements in ordinary and historiographical language are of this type. These statements being statements on Nss are all analytically true. Of course, the corresponding Nss themselves cannot be said to be either true or false, as we have seen in the conclusion to Chapter IV.

(4) Narrative substances and identity. In the foregoing discussions we have spoken repeatedly about the identity of Nss and we have discovered how Nss can be individuated. It seems reasonable to suppose that these discussions should have some bearing upon the problem of the identity of things: when change is investigated the concept “identity of things” is often resorted to and in Chapter V we saw that Nss are a prerequisite for the possibility of describing change. Thus, we may put the question: can we derive from narrativist philosophy a specific view on the meaning of the concept “the identity of x” (where “x” refers to a particular individual)? I will start with an analysis of “personal identity”. Unfortunately, I must leave the concept “personal identity” undefined at the present stage, because the various positions taken up in this old controversy could be looked upon as elaborations of different definitions of this concept. The acceptance of a particular definition would prejudice the matter we have to decide upon here. So, for the time being, the concept may be interpreted in an un-philosophical, common-sensical way. It may seem strange to start an analysis of the concept “the identity of x” with a discussion of personal identity, because that is the most problematic use of the concept. Nevertheless, there are good reasons for this apparently inverse order in our argument: we shall see that “personal identity” logically precedes other uses of the concept “the identity of x”.

So what do we mean by “my (or your) personal identity”. Current debate on identity suggests two answers. Firstly, it is argued that the statement “a is identical with (or is the same) as b” should be read as “a is the same f as b”, where “f” denotes a general concept. When we speak of “personal identity” “f” could be the concept “human being” or something more specific like “Dutchman” or “historian”. This is the so-called D-thesis. Secondly, the D-thesis is accepted, albeit with the proviso that there may be another concept “g” for which the statement “a is the same g as b” is untrue. This is the so-called R-thesis. With regard to personal identity the R-thesis seems the more plausible option: I shall remain the same human being all my life, but I could very well give up Dutch nationality and become an American citizen. Furthermore, both the D-thesis and the R-thesis require certain criteria of identity so as to establish on what terms we are allowed to say that something is the same f or the same g as something else. Consequently, as has already been noted by adherents of the D-thesis and the R-thesis, all the logical weight of identity-statements comes to rest on these criteria of identity.

31. For Wiggins's criticism of the R-thesis see Wiggins (2), esp. Chapter I.
Let us now take a closer look at these criteria of personal identity. An obvious, although rather naive course would be to rely on the way individual human beings are actually (re-)identified by police- or customs-officers, i.e. by investigation of fingerprints. Thus, if the R-thesis is accepted, the statement that “x\(_1\) is identical with x\(_2\)” (where “x\(_1\)” and “x\(_2\)” refer to individual human beings) is equivalent to saying “x\(_1\) is the same f (e.g. human being) as x\(_2\)” (1), “it is possible that x\(_1\) is not the same g as x\(_2\)” (if, for instance, “g” denotes the concept “nationality”) (2), while (1) implies “x\(_1\) is the same c as x\(_2\)” (3), where “c” denotes the property of having fingerprints of a certain type.

Although we shall find later on that there is some truth in this picture of personal identity, it should be pointed out that this proposal for an analysis of personal identity as it stands is going to meet with a number of difficulties. First, we may doubt the reliability of fingerprints as a criterion of personal identity: it is conceivable that somebody’s fingertips will be transplanted onto some other human being. But maybe this difficulty can be removed by turning to better criteria of identity. In fact, philosophers have never associated these criteria with fingerprints but always with bodily continuity, (continuity of) memory and so on. However, even these better criteria seem to get entangled in difficulties peculiar to each of them. I will not enter into this rather fruitless discussion on criteria of personal identity, but will suppose, for argument’s sake, that a more eligible candidate “C” has been discovered. Even then we are confronted with a second difficulty. There is something wrong with the statements (1), (2) and (3). They all contain the word “same” and that is precisely the word we are trying to explain here: it will be obvious that the concept “same” largely covers the meaning of the concept “identity”. For what does the conceptual difference between the adjectives “identical” and “same” consist in? It may be hard to eliminate the word “same” from (1) and (2). However, there may be a solution to this problem. We can place all the logical weight of the analysis on statement (3) implied by (1); and this would be in harmony with suggestions of the adherents of the D-thesis and the R-thesis themselves. The rationale for this move is, that it seems likely that the word “same” can be eliminated from (3) and that the vicious circle in our reasoning could thus be avoided.

The statement “x\(_1\) is the same c as x\(_2\)” can be re-written as follows: “x\(_1\) is C\(_1\) and x\(_2\) is C\(_1\)” , where “C\(_1\)” is a particular property of x\(_1\) and x\(_2\) that is defined by the criteria of identity “C” associated with things of the type c. C\(_1\) may denote either the property of having fingerprints of a certain type, or that of being part of a specific spatiotemporal worm (then C\(_1\) corresponds to the criterion of personal identity or bodily continuity) or that of being part of some specific sequence of memories and/or experiences (then C\(_1\) corresponds to the memory criterion of personal identity). It may seem, then, that the concept “same-(ness)”, “identity”, “identical” or synonymous variants have been eliminated from our analysis of personal identity. However, we can only claim the truth of
“$x_1$ is $C_1$ and $x_2$ is $C_1$” if we know what it means for two persons to have a specific property in common. So we are caught in a third trap: apparently we have merely shifted our problem from the identity or sameness of two persons to that of the sameness of properties of persons. And all the difficulties we encountered in our analysis of the identity of persons (or things) will now reappear in connection with the problem of the identity or sameness of properties. The phrase “... is $C_1$” denotes a general predicate for whose correct application we need, once more, criteria for sameness. And so we can go on without ever getting rid of the concept “same-(ness)”, “identity” or related notions. In my opinion the explanation for this sorry state of affairs is that the concepts of “identity”, “sameness” and so on, if they are interpreted as they have been here, belong to a very peculiar class of concepts — a class that also contains such a concept as “value” and, perhaps, “truth”. The trouble with this kind of concept is that the application of the criteria for their correct use presupposes a knowledge of these concepts, because the meaning of the concept “criterion” is part of the meaning of these concepts, or vice versa. We should not be too astonished when we find ourselves helpless in such situations. This argument adds to the cogency of the thesis defended in Chapter V, section (6), that when we try to define “identity” little help can be expected from an analysis couched in terms of criteria of identity. This thesis can be seen, from the present point of view, as a third objection to the analysis of the concept of personal identity discussed here.

However, there is a fourth objection that seems to me the most fundamental one. Up till now we have discussed personal identity in the hope of getting a reasonable answer to the question of what we mean when we say that a particular person (e.g. myself) is the same as some other person (e.g. myself in the past or in the future). But sometimes personal identity is discussed in a quite different context. It is often said that there is a peculiar “unity of perception and/or feeling” that pervades all our successive experiences and states of consciousness. We feel that our personal identity makes us into the unique human being we are; nevertheless it is very hard to express what this uniqueness and this unity that ties all our experiences together precisely consists in. The all-pervasive vagueness of this sense of personal identity may easily convince us to dismiss the notion as some psychological delusion without philosophical implications. On the other hand, the very unclarity and mysteriousness of this sense of personal identity should challenge the philosopher to investigate precisely this notion of personal identity. It might even be hoped that the two notions of personal identity (i.e. the one we have explored in the foregoing paragraphs and the one I have just referred to) are, in some way or another, intrinsically related. Perhaps, then, an investigation of the second interpretation of the concept of personal identity will shed some light on the first interpretation and remove some of the difficulties we encountered there. Anyway, that the two interpretations of the concepts of personal identity are different cannot
reasonably be doubted: the approach suggested by the first interpretation is, speaking metaphorically, “externalist” — one looks at a person, myself for instance, from the outside, as it were. And we may then wonder what justifies my saying, but after I have already said it, that this and that person (e.g. myself at different phases in my life) really are one and the same person. The approach suggested by the second interpretation could be indicated as “internalist”: the question is what makes me say that I am one and the same person throughout my whole life?

I agree with H.D. Lewis and G. Vesey that we should take care to keep the externalist and the internalist approaches apart. Getting them confused is largely responsible for the fogs that obscure the notion of personal identity. Thus Lewis writes “there are two major senses of self-identity. There is in the first place the sense of self-identity which I have described as the most radical or basic one. This is the sense in which one knows oneself as one ultimate indivisible being in the course of having any experience whatsoever. I know myself now as one being who just could not be any other. The question of my being or becoming some other person just could not arise, I am myself whatever my experience is like. But there is also a sense in which I am continually subject to change. Every instant I change; a moment ago I was the person who was looking at this tree, I am now looking at the lawn (...). In terms of what I undergo or experience or do I am never the same person”[^33]. Vesey accepts Lewis’ dichotomy of the two senses of personal identity. He notes that there is a sense in which the word “I” is used where it does not refer to a particular person (i.e. myself) that can be identified by his having a number of specific properties. In this sense of the word “I” I could say “it’s me, whoever I am.” On the other hand, there is a use of the phrase “it’s me” that is meant to indicate that I am not some other person[^34]. Having noted these two senses of the word “I” Vesey distinguishes “self-identity” from “personal identity” — the former term refers to the “radical” (Lewis) or “internalist” interpretation of identity, whereas the second term indicates the “externalist” interpretation. From now on I will conform to Vesey’s terminology. Moreover, I will distinguish between “I_{int}” and “I_{ext}” the first term referring to the internalist use of “I” and the second one to the externalist use. It will be obvious that the term “I_{int}” can only be used by me in statements on myself. Applying this terminology, we can state that in recent philosophical discussion personal identity has received much more attention than self-identity. This fact can be explained by our habit of first attending to the more manageable problems before we summon our courage to attack what seems more complicated. And certainly externalism is a much clearer and less hazardous way of dealing with identity than internalism. Internalism may be suspected of being an inextricable muddle of

[^33]: Lewis; p. 239.
[^34]: Vesey; p. 31.
psychological, epistemological\textsuperscript{35} and logical questions. Nevertheless, although I will be the first to concede the mysterious and elusive character of selfidentity, I am surprised to find that even authors like Lewis and Vesey have been content to claim only the internalist use of the word “I” without seriously attempting to offer us an explanation or a justification of this use. Moreover, they did not ask themselves what relation obtains between “I\textsubscript{int}” and “I\textsubscript{ext}”; a question that can be expected to give a solution to the problems caused by a purely externalist approach to identity.

The concept of selfidentity denotes the uniqueness and the unity that characterizes and pervades all my experiences; it is the logical entity that, somehow, ensures that all my experiences and states of consciousness are really mine and not either partly or totally somebody else’s. Thanks to this logical entity, i.e. the concept “I\textsubscript{int}”, all the experiences I come to see as my experiences are effectively attributed to me, whatever these experiences may have been or will be. In other words, “I\textsubscript{int}” is the logical entity required for the possibility of describing the (historical) change I undergo during (phases of) my life, where “change” is defined in terms of the experiences and perceptions I have of what I come to see as myself. Thus, with a view to what was argued for in Chapter V, section (6), we can conclude that the concept “I\textsubscript{int}” is my subject of change. Consequently, the word “I\textsubscript{int}” when used by me, refers to a Ns I have formed on myself. The statements of this Ns express the experiences or the perceptions I come to see as mine. The number of these statements may be large or small, or even, in the case of a complete amnesia, shrink to nothing but merely a readiness to collect from now on statements within a Ns, to be referred to as “I\textsubscript{int}”. In fact, the readiness to collect statements within the Ns “I\textsubscript{int}” is always inherent in the use of the word “I\textsubscript{int}”.

Selfidentity is a narrative concept: “I\textsubscript{int}” refers to a certain Ns. In using the word “I\textsubscript{int}” I do not refer to myself because Ns do not refer to extra-linguistic entities. In so far as “I\textsubscript{int}” can be said to refer it refers

\textsuperscript{35} The notion "I\textsubscript{int}" that will be proposed here, bears some superficial resemblance to Kant’s and Wittgenstein’s "transcendental ego", since no empirical truths can be asserted about either of these notions. Kant describes his transcendental subject in the following way: "durch dieses Ich oder Er, oder Es (das Ding), welches denkt, wird nun nichts weiter, als ein transzendentales Subjekt der Gedanken vorgestellt = x (…), und wovon wir, abgesondert, niemals den mindesten Begriff haben können; um welches wir uns daher in einem bestandigen Zirkel herumdrehen, indem wir uns seiner Vorstellung jederzeit schon bedienen müssen, um irgend etwas von ihm zu urteilen"; see I. Kant, Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Hamburg 1956 (Felix Meiner Verlag); p. 374. Cf. L. Wittgenstein, Tractates logico-philosophicus, Frankfurt am Main s.a.; section (5.632): "das Subjekt gehört nicht zur Welt, sondern es ist eine Grenze der Welt". However, both Kant and Wittgenstein are speaking epistemologically, while we are considering the issue from the point of view of philosophical logic.
to statements that express my experiences, perceptions or states of consciousness. The peculiarly “elusive” character of self-identity arises from the little-recognized fact that the (narrative) subject of my experiences is not part of this world but of a narrativist universe. Selfidentity is not situated in a property or properties of mine that remain unchanged during my life or in bodily continuity or a continuity of memory or consciousness, but in my having fused statements on my experiences into the Ns we call “I_{int}” and/or in my readiness to add new statements to this set of statements. However, continuity of experience, consciousness or memory can be explained by the narrativist analysis of the concept “I_{int}”: everything that is and will be attributed to this Ns “I_{int}” is the property of this very specific and unique Ns. Because there is no obvious reason to catalogue these attributes as either spatiotemporal or otherwise, it can be claimed that there is not sufficient justification for the mind-body dichotomy from the perspective of the present analysis of selfidentity. Thus it is a linguistic entity (i.e. the Ns “I_{int}”), and not parts or aspects of myself that makes me the same individual at different stages in my life. Even the fact that I have certain memories does not explain selfidentity, for these memories are expressed in statements and not by statements (i.e. a Ns).

The unity of this Ns “I_{int}” explains the intuition of continuity we associate with the stream of our experiences, states of consciousness and so on. Individual statements on my experiences can be derived analytically from the complete notion of “I_{int}”, whatever these experiences have been or will be. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the Ns “I_{int}” refers to a history I have constructed on myself. This history will change continually. Most human beings have no fixed ideas about their past; moreover, every month and every year adds a new chapter to the history of our lives. The term “I_{int}”, if it does not refer to a specific interpretation I have of my history, is the scene in which these changes are enacted. In the latter case we may agree with Vesey’s comparison of the word “I_{int}” with the word “here”. I can say with absolute certainty “I am I, whoever I am” — even if I have forgotten all about myself up to the point of not knowing that I am a specimen of the human race; similarly, I can say with absolute certainty “here is here (or I am here), wherever that may be”. Yet in neither case is the term “I_{int}” or “here” redundant. Although these terms do not specify a history or a place, such specifications only become possible after we have learned to use them. They convey no knowledge, but permit us to arrange our knowledge. And they do so by providing us with an initial “point of view”; they offer us a frame of reference that is not itself part of a more fundamental frame of reference. But we may and probably should change these “points of view” continually.

From these considerations it may well be concluded that selfidentity is a more fundamental notion than the concept of personal identity.
I can only recognize myself as an *individual thing* possessing unique characteristics after I have constructed and intensionally typified a number of other Nss. Knowing that I$_{int}$ am I$_{int}$ does not yet imply that I know myself to be an individual thing of a certain type (i.e. human being) with some specific characteristics. That there is an individual thing in reality corresponding to some Ns, and more particularly to the Ns “I$_{int}$” depends on the outcome of typification-procedures. For the sake of order it should be noted that the exact meaning of the *passe-partout* term “corresponds” is, of course, determined by what has been argued for in the sections (3) and (4) of this chapter. Just using the word “I” need not always imply that an individual is referred to, neither does the word “the Renaissance” refer to an individual thing (of course it refers to a Ns). However, as soon as thanks to a typification-procedure individual things (e.g. individual human beings) can be recognized in reality, the (re-)ident-i-fication of these individual things or human beings has become possible. Not until then can the externalist approach to identity (i.e. an analysis of “I$_{ext}$” and of “personal identity”) be conceived of. Now we can understand why a purely externalist account of identity must leave some questions unanswered. The troubles the externalist approach ran into were all connected with its unavoidable reliance on criteria of identity. And criteria of identity can never tell us what the meaning of the concept “identity” is, because they merely reflect what we actually happen to see as identical things (e.g. myself at different phases in my life). It was only the internalist approach to identity that acquainted us with a use of the word “I” that does not depend on criteria of identity. *This* word “I” (i.e. “I$_{int}$”) refers to a Ns. And when other Nss have been formed and typification has taken place, reference can be made to those individual things that correspond to instances of a certain intensional type of Nss (e.g. human beings) (cf. p. 160). In this way a referential use of the word “I” comes into being. The term “I$_{ext}$” has been proposed for this use of “I”. Criteria for the correct use of “I$_{ext}$” (and the same goes for the referential use of other words) are embodied in those statements contained in the Nss which have been typified intensionally and which yield the corresponding type-concept(s). This is, in a nutshell, how the non-referential and the referential use of “I” - i.e. “I$_{int}$” (indicating a Ns and not its name) — and “I$_{ext}$”, or the concepts of self-identity and of personal identity are related to each other.

Consequently, statements on either “I$_{int}$” or “I$_{ext}$” have distinct logical forms despite their grammatical similarity. A statement like “I$_{int}$ am a” is not a statement on myself but on some Ns that bears this name and has the statement “a” as one of its properties. It is an analytical truth. In a statement like I$_{ext}$ am a” reference is made to the individual human being called F.A. and “a” is not a statement but denotes a property that is attributed to F.A.. And this is a contingent truth. But what about
statements like “a” in the statement “I_int am a”: “I_int” cannot be the subject of such statements, because a Ns cannot be the subject of one of the statements it contains. Should we conclude, then, that such statements have “I_ext” as their subject-term — and, if so, does this not mean that the notion of “I_ext” is logically prior to that of “I_int” (only after the formulation of statements like “a” can a Ns containing such statements be formed)? Surely this would entirely disrupt my account of self-identity.

To solve this problem we shall have to return to what was said in section (2) on the so-called “baby view of reality”. According to this view all statements on reality should be formulated in such a way that the presence of specific (types of) individuals in reality is no longer presupposed. In conformity with the Russellian and Quinean analysis of statements the subject-term of the statement is robbed of all content so that only by means of its predicate-term the statement asserts the presence of certain qualities in reality. Thus, the baby view of reality requires us to reformulate statements on our experiences, perceptions and feelings in such a way that neither our own individuality nor the presence of other (types of) individual things is presupposed, for instance: “here and now there is a perception of pain”. A series of such statements yields a history or a Ns on me and when such a Ns has come into being I can say “I(int) am in pain”. The meaning of such a statement is therefore as follows: 1) “here and now there is a perception of pain” and 2) “statement 1) is part of a Ns “I_int””. Statements like these could be compared to those statements on e.g. the Renaissance in which the name of the Ns in question is continually repeated: e.g. “the Renaissance is p”, “the Renaissance is q” and so on, instead of just “p” or “q”. The fact that the name of the Ns in question is mentioned in each statement suggests that Nss are very conspicuously present in the case of Nss embodying self-identity. Indeed, as we shall soon see, the Ns “I_int” is the most important Ns we know and, moreover, prerequisite for our very ability to recognize other Nss and thus for the narrative writing of history. However, even though a substantial subject-term seems very well entrenched in a statement like “I am in pain”, this should not lead us to think that such a statement should be the kind of statement contained in Nss: it is really a statement on a Ns. Therefore, the subject-term of such a statement is the name of a Ns, and not of a thing in extra-linguistic reality. Certainly, such a statement entails another statement on extra-linguistic reality, but in this latter kind of statement the subject-term has no content because the statement should be formulated in accordance with the baby view of reality. In short, statements like “I am in pain” are all statements on a Ns, hence they are analytically true and they do not refer to reality although other statements mentioning some state of affairs in reality are implied by them. The present analysis of self-identity runs parallel to a well-known argument of Wittgenstein: “when I say “I am in pain”, I do not point to a person who is in pain, since in a certain sense I
have no idea who is. And this can be given a justification. For the main point is: I did not say that such-and-such a person was in pain, but “I am ...”. Now in saying this I don’t name any person. Just as I don’t name anyone when I *groan* with pain. Though someone else sees who is in pain from the groaning.”

And a little later he adds: “’I’ is not the name of a person, nor “here” of a place, and “this” is not a name. But they are connected with names. Names are explained by means of them. It is also true that it is characteristic of physics not to use these words. The non-referential character of the word “I” in “I am in pain” has been cleverly expounded by Wittgenstein in this argument. Nevertheless, we might like to qualify his suggestion by adding that although “I” does not refer to a person (F.A.), reference is made to the Ns “I_int”- (Wittgenstein’s claim that physics does not use the words “I”, “here” etc. is most remarkable in the context of our discussion. Indeed, unlike the historian or ourselves when we ponder our life-history, the physicist does not propose but elaborates “points of view”.)

When statements are tied together in the Ns “I_int”, neither my individuality nor my personal identity is presupposed, although my self-identity comes into being in that way. Therefore, the logical task performed by the Ns “I_int” is not to (re-)identify a human being (i.e. myself) as the same human being it was or will be, but to create my selfidentity, that is, to distinguish between myself and what is not myself. To say that all my experiences and states of consciousness are mine is to imply that they are not yours. I shall now discuss how this division of reality into what is and what is not part of myself is achieved by our use of the concept “I_int”.

Learning to use the word “I_int” is like erecting a landmark in a landscape and becoming aware that the landmark is our vantage-point so that what is seen from it is not a landscape perceived from just anywhere but from a certain point of view (in the next chapter the concept “point of view” will be elaborated). This forces upon us a dissociation of the landmark (i.e. “I_int”) from the landscape itself (i.e. what is perceived from this landmark). However, the difficulty with the landmark “I_int” is that it is a landmark for all my experiences and not just some of them - therefore, at first, “I_int” does not seem to divide the world into myself and not-myself. For why shouldn’t I say that my experiences and states of consciousness are the whole of reality? What compels me to extract myself from the reality in which I am, initially, immersed? Here we may think of Diderot’s argument: “Car après tout qu’il y ait hors de nous quelquechose ou rien, c’est toujours nous que nous apercevons. Nous sommes l’univers entier”.

As long as this question has not been posed, it is true that we are helpless. Indeed, there may be a kind of awareness of reality which

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36. Wittgenstein (2); sections (404) and (410).
owes its origin to the whole of perceived reality having been absorbed by what we would call “selfidentity”. Because all my experiences and states of consciousness are mine no inconsistencies need arise her. Whoever ignores that he sees a landscape from a certain point of view may be in a state of mind we could best describe by saying that for him the landscape is part of himself. Again, the totality of my experiences and states of consciousness are all mine, which guards us against any inconsistencies as long as we are in this state of solipsism.

However, once the above question has been formulated we cannot seriously be in doubt as to its answer. For the very same reason that all my experiences and states of consciousness are mine, accepting this question as a reasonable question is tantamount to conceding that there must be something beyond my experiences and states of consciousness — and how could this concession possibly be falsified? To sum up, as soon as the question arises as to whether “I_{int}” devides the world into what does and what does not belong to myself, an affirmative answer must be given. As long as the question has not been asked, a solipsist position is self-consistent, which, however, does not imply a negative answer to our question, because it has not yet even been put. Demarcating between the self and what does not belong to the self is equivalent to recognizing other Nss besides the Ns “I_{int}”. These other Nss must be different from “I_{int}” because of the applicability of Leibniz’s Law of the Identity of Indiscernibles claimed in section (1) for Nss. Nevertheless, as soon as the possibility of other Nss is recognized, similarities between Nss can be conceived of and, with that, (types of) individual things remaining the same or identical with themselves through processes of change. For whoever acknowledges the difference between the Ns “I_{int}” and other Nss must also know what it is for Nss not to be different. Thus, sameness of things through change depends on otherness of Nss. In this way our abandoning the solipsist view of the world can explain how (types of) individual things that remain the same during change come to be recognized in reality. Lastly, I would like to point out that sameness of states of affairs (as described by the statements of Nss) was not presupposed in this argument. Descriptions of identical states of affairs occurring at different times or places may be part of a solipsistic Ns “I_{int}” and, on the other hand, I can speak as I have done here of similarities, without committing myself to a particular view as to what makes some Nss similar (e.g. their containing descriptions of similar states of affairs). So the possibility of sameness of things through change has been demonstrated here with the help of an argument discussing simply and solely Nss. Only in this way was it possible for us to steer clear of circularities in our argument.

I should like to emphasize that the line of demarcation between what is and what is not myself is by no means fixed or unalterable: everything depends on whether we interpret a given experience or state of consciousness as a state of ourselves or as a signal that some state of
affairs obtains outside ourselves. Such signals are the disclaimers of a logical or analytical relation between “I_{int}” (a Ns) and what is perceived (i.e. statements describing states of affairs in reality): the fact that I perceive something is interpreted not as a part of my own history (“I_{int}”) but as part of the history of something else (another Ns). Such signals are therefore the announcers of the contingencies in our experience. How we narrativize ourselves and external reality will decide how we actually interpret our experiences and states of consciousness. This may be illustrated as follows. If “I_{int}” absorbs nearly all the statements on my experiences and states of consciousness, I can come extremely close to solipsism (nearly all reality is part of my history). According to Fichte such an identification of the self with the world is the highest ethical goal man can achieve. On the other hand, “I_{int}” may virtually abandon reality altogether; in that case even the pain I feel now may be interpreted by me as merely a signal that someone is in pain (more precisely, that there is just pain here and now). Likewise, an experience I have is merely a signal that e.g. this piece of paper is white. And if being a piece of white paper is not part of my history, why should I be the person who is in pain?\(^{38}\)

In the first case the world has become my point of view on an empty world, in the second case the whole of reality (including myself) is seen from a point of view by which the capacity to see the self as opposed to reality has virtually been lost.

If I lead a solitary life it may be expected that the line of demarcation between what does and what does not belong to myself will steadily lose its stability which is usually more or less maintained, thanks to all kinds of socio-cultural and psychological “narrativization” habits I have acquired in the course of my social life. Tournier’s extraordinary novel admirably illustrates how the solitary can move relatively freely between the two extremes just mentioned. Crusoe, during the solitary life he leads on his island Esperanza, writes in his log-book: “cette nuit, mon bras tendu hors de ma couche s’engourdit, ‘meurt’. Je le saisis entre le pouce et l’index de ma main gauche et je soulève cette chose étrangère, cette masse de chair énorme et pesante, ce lourd et gras membre d’autrui

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38. Rousseau describes his having had such an experience of the self. He had been run down by a dog and regained consciousness much later: "la nuit s'avancéait. J’aperçus le ciel, quelques étoiles, et un peu de verdure. Cette première sensation fut un moment délicieux. Je ne me sentais encore que par là. Je naissais dans cet instant à la vie, et il me semblait que je remplissais de ma légère existence tous les objets que j’apercevais. Tout entier au moment présent je ne me souvenais de rien; je n'avais nulle notion distincte de mon individu, pas la moindre idée de ce que venait de m'arriver; je ne savais ni qui j'étais ni où j'étais; je ne sentais ni mal, ni crainte, ni inquiétude. Je voyais couler mon sang comme j’aurais vu couler un ruisseau, sans songer seulement que ce sang m'appartînt en aucune sorte. Je sentais dans tout mon être un calme ravissant auquel, chaque fois que je me le rappelle, je ne trouve rien de comparable dans toute l’activité des plaisirs connus". See J.J. Rousseau, Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire, Paris 1972; pp. 48-49.
soudé à mon corps par erreur. Je rêve ainsi de manipuler tout mon cadavre, de m’émerveiller de son poids mort, de m’abîmer dans ce paradoxe: une chose qui est moi. (...) Depuis quelque temps en effet je m’exerce à cette opération qui consiste à arracher de moi successivement les uns après les autres tous mes attributs — je dis bien tous - comme les pelures successives d’un oignon. Ce faisant, je constitue loin de moi un individu qui a un nom Crusoe, prénom Robinson, qui mesure six pieds etc. Je le vois vivre et évoluer dans l’île sans plus profiter de ses heures, ni pâtir de ses malheurs. Qui est je? La question est loin d’être oiseuse. Elle n’est même pas insoluble. Car si ce n’est lui, c’est donc Speranza. Il y a désormais un je volant qui va se poser tantôt sur l’homme, tantôt sur l’île, et qui fait de moi tour à tour l’un ou l’autre. Similarly erratic behaviour of the Ns “I_{int}” has been described by Alison Lurie when she has one of her principle characters in her novel The War between the Tates declare “somebody’s crying (...) I think it’s me”40. Psychological disorders such as depersonalization, schizophrenia or anxieties can probably be described as uncertainties or inconsistencies in the way the Ns “I_{int}” is constructed by human beings. The result is always a loss in self-identity, a loss in clarity of the point of view from which reality is organized and acted upon. All this may help to explain the therapeutic effect of psychoanalysis. For psychoanalysis attempts to eliminate the inconsistencies in the history (a Ns “I_{int}”) an individual human being has constructed on himself. How the concept “narrative substance” and in particular the Ns “I_{int}” relates to the concept of (political) freedom and how it can lay the foundations of a political theory will be described in a later study.

The manner in which human beings collectively construct the Ns “I_{int}” may differ from one historical period to another. To mention an example, psycho-historians have discovered that in Classical Antiquity extraordinary feats of courage or deeds of cowardice were not seen as emanating from the individual being himself but as the result of the intervention of the Gods; since Romanticism, however, extraordinary behaviour has been associated with the very core of somebody’s identity. We shall find in the next chapter that this fluidity in the line of demarcation between what does and what does not belong to a certain identity (Ns) creates the logical space for the historian to perform his task. Only where identities have no fixed borders can narratives be written. Therefore, a constant awareness of this fluidity is of the utmost importance, not only to understand the concept of self-identity but also to grasp the methods of historiography.

It is no coincidence that I just mentioned the concept of self-identity and of the methods of historiography in the same breath. For they are very closely connected, which may well justify the ample space allotted

here to a discussion of self-identity. We can truly say, and this is most essential, that conceiving of our self-identity is our foremost historiographical enterprise and the necessary condition for the writing of history to be possible at all. As we have just seen, conceiving of my self-identity implies a division of reality into a sphere “myself” and a sphere of “not myself”. Only after this division has been made, does it become possible to write history; i.e. to recognize identities or Nss outside myself or “Iint”. That we are aware of having a history ourselves (self-identity) is the logical prerequisite for all writing of history, that is, for our ability to discern “identities” (or Nss) and, possibly, at some later stage, “individualities” (i.e. intensional types of Nss) in external historical reality. Paraphrasing Leibniz we might say: “So only the self is the primary unity, the simple original substance of which all the created or derivative monads are products, and from whom they are born, so to speak, by continual fulgurations of the self from moment to moment, but limited by the receptivity of the created being, for whom it is essential to have limits.

This argument could be said to reveal the kernel of truth in hermeneutic theory. In a sense it is correct to say that the identities and individualities we discover in the historical past presuppose an awareness of our own (self)identity or that our knowledge of the past is essentially anthropomorphic. But we should never forget that the structural similarity between self-identity and our knowledge of things in the historical past is entirely formal: inference from my (self)identity to the identities we discern in the past is necessary for historical understanding, but should be devoid of material content. I must never project my own experiences on the entities I discover in the past, not even when I am describing human beings like myself. The pure formalism of this kind of “Einfühlung” is obvious because it enables us to write not only the history of other people but also of entities like “the Enlightenment” or “the Cold War” whose histories do not materially resemble ours. One of the mistakes in hermeneutic theory, therefore is, that it always emphasized precisely the material instead of the formal inferences from one’s own experiences to those of other historical entities.

However, even though the resemblance between the constitution of my own (self)identity and the identities that can be discovered in historical reality is merely formal, important conclusions can be drawn from it. Just as no empirical proof can be given of what my own (self) identity is like (only the nature of an individual thing of a certain type can be


42. Cf. Leibniz (2); p. 647.
established empirically), this cannot be done either for the identities or Nss recognized in the historical past. The identities or Nss discussed by historians, “the Renaissance”, “the Cold War” and so on, are constructed or postulated, but have not been discovered in the historical past. We shall find in the past those identities or Nss (n.b. not “individualities” - where the term “individuality” is taken to indicate the notion of an individual thing of a certain type) only because we decide to look at the historical past from a certain point of view. This may be clarified by the following example. The History Department of Groningen University has formed a research-group which is studying the development of Dutch governmental bureaucracy since the Middle Ages. In the context of this investigation the history of the civil servant has to be written. Tracing this history back from the 20th century we shall not find it hard to indicate who were the civil servants in the 19th century. However, in its societal structure and constitution the Republic of the United Netherlands differed greatly from the Kingdom which has existed since 1813, so in many cases we can only decide who were the civil servants before 1795 and who were not. In a way, therefore, the history of Dutch officialdom is what one decides it to be like. Here lies the curious element of circularity that is inherent in narrative historiography. Narrativist philosophy explains this circularity by means of the thesis that all the predicates of a Ns can be derived analytically from the complete notion of a Ns.

Of course, it does not follow that arguments cannot or should not be adduced to justify what identities or Nss one wishes to discern in historical reality. In this connection I should like to draw attention to a famous historiographical discussion in the recent past on what was called the “general crisis of the 17th century”. That this term refers to a (set of) Ns(s) or identity(ies) will need no further clarification. The French historian Mousnier was the first to defend this idea of a general crisis in the 17th century, although he was mainly concerned with France. Mousnier argued that in the 16th and 17th centuries France changed from the most classic feudal state into the most classic absolutist state. The institutional instabilities occasioned by this transition were aggravated by the economic decline characteristic of large parts of 17th century Europe and by the widening gulf between different social strata within both the town and rural populations. The Marxist historian Hobsbawm heartily

43. See also N. Hampson, The Enlightenment, Harmondsworth 1979; p. 9: “the attitudes which one chooses to regard as typical of the Enlightenment therefore constitute a free, subjective choice, which then, in turn, determines the shape of the synthesis one constructs for one's self. It may be argued with equal plausibility that Rousseau was either one of the greatest writers of the Enlightenment or its most eloquent and effective opponent. After weighing what the writers of the time thought of themselves and their period, one must finally impose a personal pattern on the rich anarchy of evidence. Within limits, the Enlightenment was what one thinks it was [italics mine]. This book embodies one particular synthesis, one personal point of view". 
approved of the idea of the general crisis and interpreted it as the growing pains of an emerging capitalism. Trevor-Roper, on the other hand, was more sensitive to the institutional and social aspects of the crisis, which he explained as a struggle between Court and Country. However, Mrs Lublinskaya and the Dutch historians Kossmann and Schöffer rejected the whole idea of the general crisis; for various reasons they did not believe this concept to be conducive to a proper understanding of the 17th century’s socio-economical and institutional reality.\footnote{There are two collections of essays on the general crisis of the 17th century: T.S. Asten ed.,\textit{ Crisis in Europe 1560-1660}, London 1965; G. Parker ed., \textit{The general crisis of the seventeenth century}, London 1978.}

This discussion on the general crisis of the 17th century demonstrates that historians sometimes propose certain Nss and, by doing so, postulate specific entities in the past. And when they wish to see such an identity in the past, it will, in a certain sense, be there. Then they ascribe to that identity a number of properties, which can be expressed in terms of statements on the past. Every historian will do this in his own way and his arguments, given in terms of descriptions of the past, can be analytically derived from the complete notion of such an identity or Ns. However, other historians may doubt the fruitfulness of such a narrative concept and the point of view on the past embodied in it. But the consecutive historiographical discussions do not concern the \textit{existence} of something in the past. Whether there was or was not a general crisis in the 17th century is decided neither by philosophical argument (in the way of discussions on e.g., the existence of God or Beauty), nor by an empirical searching of reality (do unicorns exist or not?). In historiography identities or Nss are discussed without the implication that something possessing such an identity should \textit{exist} at all. For even historians like Kossmann and Schöffer, who reject the idea of a general crisis in the 17th century, do not consider the question as to whether there was such a crisis to be meaningless - whereas that is how we normally respond to discussions on the existence of fictitious entities. We can only speak of the existence of individual things of a certain type ("individualities"); identity, on the other hand, logically precedes but does not imply existence.

Historiographical discussion in the narrativist sense comes to an end as soon as we have proceeded from the level of "identities" to that of "individualities", and this even holds for the history of individual things of a certain type. Hence the distinction between Nss and narrative subjects (Chapter V, section (1)). Thus Huizinga writes "Luther als specimen van het biologisch genus mensch is strikt bepaald, maar Luther als historisch verschijnsel is even volkomen onbegrensd en onafgrensbaar als de Hervorming. (...) Men kan niet objectief vaststellen, welke historische gegevens tot het verschijnsel Hervorming behoren en welke niet. En deze onmogelijkheid ligt niet in den abstracten aard van het
The elusive character of historical identities or Nss is aptly expressed by Huizinga in this quotation.

In so far as historical knowledge is formulated in terms of identities or Nss, its lack of fixity presents a strong contrast to our knowledge of individual things of a certain type. This contrast is in many ways similar to that between smelling an odour or hearing a noise on the one hand and seeing a thing on the other (I emphasize that it is the odours and noises themselves I have in mind and not the things we have learned to associate them with such as flowers, motorcars or aeroplanes). Odours and noises are not individual things like the things we see. Note, for example that we cannot distinguish between a) hearing the same noise (we have heard before) and b) hearing another instance of the same kind of noise (we have heard before) — a) and b) have exactly the same meaning. However, in the case of the individual things we see, such a distinction can usually be made (one may think of different specimens of the same type of motorcar). Thus, speaking metaphorically, we could say that identities or Nss like “the Renaissance” or “the Cold War” are “smelled” or “heard”

45. Huizinga; p. 53: “as a human being Luther is strictly determined, but as a historical phenomenon Luther has not any more fixed and accurate limits than the Reformation. (...) It cannot be established objectively which historical data belong to the phenomenon Reformation and which do not. And the cause of this impossibility is not the abstract nature of the phenomenon, but the historical approach to it. For it holds for a concrete historical individual as much as for a general historical concept".
rather than “seen” by historians. This is probably what historists such as Ranke and Humboldt\textsuperscript{46} had in mind, when they argued that the historian’s task is essentially an “Ahnen” of the “historische Ideen”.

\textsuperscript{46} See Iggers and Von Moltke; on p. 19 Humboldt writes: "The number of creative forces in history is not limited to those directly evident in events. Even if the historian has investigated them all, separately and in their interrelationships - the nature and the changes of the soil the variations of the climate, the intellectual capacity and character of nations, the even more particular character of individuals, the influence of the arts and sciences, and the profoundly incisive and widespread influences of social institutions - there still remains an even more powerfully active principle which, though not directly visible, imparts to these forces themselves their impetus and direction: that is, ideas which by their very nature lie outside the compass of the finite and yet pervade and dominate every part of world history". And of how these "ideas" are grasped by the historian Humboldt says: "here, as in art, not everything can be derived logically, one thing from another, by mere operation of the intellect, and dissected into concepts. One can only grasp that which is right, subtle and hidden, because the mind is properly attuned to grasping it", (p. 14) See also the introduction pp. liii-liv.