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Abstract:

Dette speciale omhandler det funktionelle kildebegreb, som er grundlaget for den nuværende danske historiske metode. Størstedelen af specialet bliver benyttet til at analysere og diskutere nylige paradigmer inden for det historieteoretiske – og filosofiske område: Den sproglige vending (narrativisme), presence paradigmet og spøgelsesparadigmet. Specialets opgave består i at undersøge, om disse paradigmer kan være med til at udvikle på den eksisterende danske metode. De analytiske kapitler er derfor anvendt til at analysere, diskutere og sammenligne de forskellige teoretikere der hører under hvert enkelt paradigme og derefter diskutere, hvorvidt og hvordan deres teorier og ideer kan benyttes i en metodisk kontekst.

De metodiske konsekvenser af paradigmerne er tæt forbundet til de enkelte teoretikere. I forhold til den sproglige vending, kan en teoretiker som Keith Jenkins f.eks. ikke bruges metodisk, da han reelt set argumenterer for at opløse historiefaget. Hans begrundelse herfor ligger i hans anti-fundamentalistiske holdning, som er en konsekvens af hans fokus på sproget. Historie er ifølge Jenkins udelukkende en diskurs, som kan misbruges til at understøtte forfærdelige holdninger og handlinger og bør derfor afskaffes. Narrativisterne Hayden White og Louis O. Mink er ikke enige med Jenkins, selvom de også har fokus på sproget og specielt narrativer. Narrativer er for White og Mink det der udgør historie, og i deres øjne bør den metodiske praksis derfor også omhandle narrativer. White og Mink mener dog ikke at man skal opløse historiefaget og narrativerne om fortiden ligesom Jenkins.

Presence paradigmet er metodisk set ikke brugbart. Eelco Runias teori om presence og Frank Ankersmits teori om den sublime historiske oplevelse/erfaring er begge subjektive og passive fænomener, hvilket betyder at det er umuligt at uddrage noget metodisk fra disse. Ankersmit forsøger sig med at udvikle på ideerne for at gøre dem aktive, men dette forsøg er hæftet med mange forskellige forklaringsmæssige problemer, hvilket derfor gør det svært at basere en metode på.

Spøgelsesparadigmet indeholder to teoretikere, hvoraf jeg trækker min metodiske inspiration fra den ene. Dorthe Gert Simonsen udvikler en teori om radikal historicitet, hvilket betyder at tiden er usammenhængende med sig selv. Der er derfor et meningsmæssigt overskred mellem fortid, nutid og fremtid, hvilket gør at mening fra fortiden kan arves og kontinuerligt udvikles. Dette er en interessant ide, men desværre fremkommer der ikke noget metodisk nyt ud fra hendes perspektiv. Berber Bevernage er den anden teoretiker fra spøgelsesparadigmet, og som

jeg har ladet mig inspirere af i sammenhæng med Jacques Derrida. Bevernage søger en ahistorisk måde at undersøge fortiden på, for at forklare de sociale og politiske konsekvenser af forskellige tidsopfattelser.

Denne ide fra Bevernage er grundlaget for mit argument, hvorfor jeg i sidste ende heller ikke kan svare på problemformuleringen eller i hvert fald må afvise den, da jeg ikke kan udvikle på en *historisk* metode. Jeg argumenterer for at vi længe er blevet ledt på afveje af meningens spøgelse når forholdet mellem fortid og nutid diskuteres. Historie er en diskurs hvortil meningens spøgelse er uløseligt forbundet, og dette forhold ikke har bragt andet end krig. Derfor bør vi søge frihed i tiden, og undersøge forholdet mellem fortid og nutid som et tidsligt fænomen i stedet for et fænomen der er bundet op på mening.

Introduction:

This thesis is concerned with theoretical and philosophical history, and with the explicit goal of trying to connect these thoughts and theories to methodology. My interest in the field of philosophical and theoretical history slowly began during the course of my education at Aalborg University, and the interest was originally initiated when I read “Metahistory” by Hayden White. I thought, and still think, that he raised some critical issues to the foundation of history and about the relation between past and present which is inherent in history; a relation which is naturally assumed to be unproblematic. Before then, I did not really reflect critically upon this relation myself. I believed that the relation between past and present *was* unproblematic. When I read history books, I naturally assumed that there was a truth of correspondence; that the words on the page of the book resembled the actual past reality, even though that these were just letters on a page and that the past of which I read was no longer present. I never questioned this assumption. It was just a part of my experience when reading history books. Hayden White muddled that picture for me, because he asked questions to the nature of this assumption, and I experienced these questions as rational and logical, even though I did not like that my own implicit assumptions about history and the relation between past and present were being manhandled. At least that is what it felt like the first time I read “Metahistory”, because up until then I *believed* that history was equal to truth, but without being able to account for why, and I was never asked to account for this. Hayden White thus sparked the initial annoyance which later became an interest, and this was the first stage in the development of that interest. The second stage of development happened when my interest

was further fueled by the introduction to Eelco Runia, who was very dissatisfied with narrativism and Hayden White, and thus developed an alternative theory to account for the relation between past and present. I liked Runia immediately, because he put words on my own dissatisfaction with narrativism at the time. His article “Presence” showed me that it was possible to be critical in a theoretical way to those who were critical of history, instead of just clinging to the belief in truth of correspondence with no theoretical arguments to do so. The last stage of my interest was developed two-fold. Firstly, I attended a conference in Aalborg in which Berber Bevernage participated. Before-hand, I read his book “Memory, History and State-Sponsored Violence”, and together with his presentation at the conference, this evoked an interest into the issue of time and history, which again gave an alternative perspective on the relation between past and present. Secondly, after the conference in Aalborg I participated in the inaugural conference of the International Network for Theory of History (INTH) in Ghent, which was an eye-opener into the larger field of theoretical and philosophical history. The closing round-table discussion of the conference, which discussed the future role of philosophical and theoretical history, was one of the things that helped me develop the idea to this thesis. One of the points was that theory and philosophy of history was interesting when it was connected to practice instead of just being idle speculation. The idea of the thesis is thus to analyze and discuss the development within field of theoretical and philosophical history concerning the relation between past and present while simultaneously discussing if these different theoretical developments can be used in the effort to develop upon the existing Danish methodology.

This thesis is thus concerned with the concept of functional sources, which is the current methodological approach within Danish history. The method has some underlying theoretical assumptions that are problematic, which further makes the method itself problematic; this will be elaborated further upon later. Over the last years, several new directions have developed within the field of theoretical and philosophical history, and it is the objective of this thesis to analyze and discuss these theoretical directions in the effort to discover if any of them could be used to develop the concept of functional sources, or at least point towards something in these theories which has possibilities in relation to methodology. The research question of the thesis therefore is:

How can recent advances within the field of theoretical and philosophical history contribute to the effort of developing upon the existing Danish methodology?

The implicit question these theoretical directions have to account for is the nature of the relationship between past and present, because this is the relation which historical methodology is based on and a relation that has been challenged by postmodern theory, as will be further elaborated on in the chapter about the linguistic turn.

To answer this question, the thesis is structured according to the chronological order in which the different theoretical developments occurred. Firstly, however, there will be an introduction and analysis of the concept of functional sources to give an overview of the underlying theoretical assumptions which this method has in order to be able to discuss these assumptions in relation to the following chapters. Then the chronological sequence of theoretical directions begins, which starts off with the chapter about the linguistic turn. This is then followed by the chapter about the presence paradigm, and finally the ghost paradigm chapter in the end. Each of these chapters contains an introduction to the theoretical direction, and then an analysis, discussion and comparison of the different theorists belonging to each theoretical direction. There are individual differences to the structure of every chapter because different things are of different importance. All the chapters discuss how the theoretical insights can be used in relation to methodology. Lastly, there is a discussion in which I give my suggestion on how to move forward.

This is how this thesis is structured, and the next chapter will thus revolve around the concept of functional sources.

Danish Methodology:

This chapter is concerned with developments within Danish historical methodology and theory since the beginning of the 20th century up until today. The area of attention within this field is the concept of functional sources. The source concept is a practical method, but this method has underlying theoretical assumptions concerning the relation between the historian, the sources and the past which have evolved alongside the development of the source concept itself. This particular theoretical evolution is the main concern of this chapter. The material used for the chapter is mainly theoretical and methodological educational books meant for Danish students of history. The logic behind this choice of material is that these books

provide a normative framework for the historical research process, and further provides a glimpse of how the authors themselves conduct their research, and also which theoretical assumptions underlie the normative framework and the authors' approaches.

The chapter firstly contains a brief introduction to the concept of material sources from which the concept of functional sources grew. Secondly, there will be a survey of the underlying theoretical assumptions of the different authors who deal with the functional source concept. The second part of the chapter will also contain an analysis of the different theoretical directions within the intellectual debate about the concept of functional sources.

The Concept of Material Sources:

The theoretical and methodological foundation of Danish history was laid in the beginning of the 20th century by Kristian Erslev, a Danish historian and professor at the University of Copenhagen who lived from 1852-1930 (Den store danske). Theoretically, there is a distinction between the “younger” Erslev, and the “older” Erslev. The younger Erslev's understanding of the historian's work later came to be identified as the concept of material sources. This concept was at the heart of historical method courses in Copenhagen from the beginning of the 20th century until 1977, but already began its dissolution in Aarhus in the 1950's (Nevers, 2005, 82-85). The concept of material sources builds upon a positivist approach to sources. The language of the sources is thus seen as a mirror through which the past is reflected. Furthermore, this approach is generally combined with traditional source criticism, which is the division of sources into primary and secondary sources, first degree and second degree witnesses, and an evaluation of the quality of each source (Erslev, 1926, 26-75). The concept of material sources and this way of approaching sources methodologically was continued by Erslev's students Aage Friis and Erik Arup on the University of Copenhagen, but was also transferred to the, at that time, new University of Aarhus in 1928 through Erik Arup himself and his student Albert Olsen. With minor degrees of change, the concept of material sources continued to be the foundation of historical theory and methodology in Copenhagen through the next two lecturers in these courses: Aksel E. Christensen and Niels Skyum-Nielsen. The continuum in Copenhagen thus lasted from Erslev himself in the beginning of the 20th century, to Niels Skyum-Nielsen in 1977, even though methodological debates slowly began to change the approach in Copenhagen in the 1970's (Nevers, 2005, 79-83). However, Helge Paludan argues that the University of Aarhus was

already moving in another direction long before the change occurred in Copenhagen. He argues that the change initially began with Troels Fink, a professor at the University of Aarhus, already in 1944 (Paludan, 2001, 79). However, it was another professor at the University of Aarhus who in 1955 published the first Danish book on historical methodology and theory since Erslev: H.P. Clausen. The offset was still Erslev, but it was the older Erslev and not the younger, which meant that the functionality of sources became the center of attention. In the 1960's and 70's, the methodological publications and debates in Aarhus thus took their offset in the views of the old Erslev (Nevers, 2005, 84-85).

The Concept of Functional Sources:

The invention of the concept of functional sources is thus attributed to the older Kristian Erslev (Paludan, 2001, 81). However, Erslev combined this approach with traditional source criticism belonging to his earlier thoughts. The functionality of sources appears in Kristian Erslev's book when he writes that history only exists through the historian. The only thing available is the narrator's representation of the past, and when the historian asks about a past reality the question becomes the center of attention, and the sources must thus be seen in relation to this question because the past reality is not directly available (Erslev, 1926, 2, 61 and 72). Herein lays the functionality of the sources, because they serve as functions of the research question and not the other way around. The research question is thus at the very heart of the functional source concept. This is in conflict with the earlier concept of material sources, because the sources then serve as direct proof of a past reality, and the historian's task, in such a perspective, is only to relay what is already in the source. There is thus an implied shift of agency with the development towards the concept of functional sources; the agency shifts from the sources to the historian, and it is thus the historian who applies meaning to the sources instead of receiving meaning from them.

As before-mentioned, the next Danish methodological publication came from H.P. Clausen in 1955; the first one since Erslev published his book in 1911. Clausen took up the idea of the functional concept of sources, to which the older Erslev laid the foundation. In Clausen's perspective, the historian's epistemological and methodological approaches, determines the knowledge which can be obtained about the past. Thus the present knowledge of the past cannot be separated from the historian and the present of the historian "The sources exists in the present, the work of the historian takes place in the present, and knowledge of the past can

only be established in the historian's contemporary society" (Clausen, 1963, 54). The historian never passively approaches the sources, and neither can the sources speak for themselves. They have to be brought to speak. However, Clausen also states that the research question has to be researchable and that the sources have the power to verify or falsify a research question (Clausen, 1963, 58 and 60). The view that Clausen expresses is thus generally constructivist and in agreement with the emphasis on the historian's agency. But as seen above, he retains that the sources have some degree of influence on the historical research process and that they actually do speak, even though they cannot speak for themselves; it then appears as if the historian can bring sources to speak and Clausen thus retains a degree of emphasis on the sources.

The next major methodological publication from the University of Aarhus was *Kildekritisk Tekstsamling* from 1978, which since became a monument over the methodological approach of the history department in Aarhus (Nevers, 2005, 85-86). This work was made by Jørgen Fink, Jens Chr. Manniche and Helge Paludan, and the approach which the book emphasizes is that the content of the sources is predetermined, but the use of the sources is a function of the research question. However, it is still underlined that there is a dialectical relation between the source and the research question and that the research question may change due to information in the sources (*Kildekritisk Tekstsamling*, 1978, 8-9). The approach outlined in *Kildekritisk Tekstsamling* is thus less constructivist than the one H.P. Clausen proposes, and is more concerned with a dialectical relation between the historian and the sources. Meaning flows back and forth between the historian and the source. In H.P. Clausen's view, meaning mainly flows from the historian to the source. The historical methodological and theoretical approach in Aarhus grew from these thoughts, but as before-mentioned Copenhagen soon followed, and the concept of functional sources has since become the leading methodological and theoretical paradigm within Danish history (Nevers, 2005, 84).

More recent authors are also concerned with the theoretical implications of the functional source concept. Sebastian Olden Jørgensen from the University of Copenhagen has a view that is very closely connected to the one in *Kildekritisk Tekstsamling*, because there is an assumption of a dialectical relation between the historian and the source. He even goes further by stating that the research question may be functionally determined or materially determined. The idea is that if the research question is materially determined, it is because the

reading of a source generates a question. On the other hand, if the research question is functionally determined, then it is the historian who is wholly responsible for making the question (Jørgensen, 2001, 8-9 and 26). When speaking of the materially determined research question, it is unclear whether Jørgensen believes that the source itself has an intrinsic meaning, which will inevitably generate certain questions, or whether the reading of the source only emphasizes the historian's preexisting cognition. Of the two, the first is more likely since Jørgensen has chosen to call it a materially determined research question i.e. that the source determines the question, and thus the source must have an intrinsic meaning or it would not be possible. Jørgensen's explanation is thus related to both the concept of material sources and the concept of functional sources. In the same year as Sebastian Olden Jørgensen, Claus Møller Jørgensen from the University of Aarhus also wrote of his understanding of the functional source concept. He states that the research question sets the limits for the part of the past which is to be investigated, and thus also determines the relevance of sources, and which statements in the sources that can be used as facts. The historical research process is thus always limited by the question and the perspective which this question implicates. Furthermore, Møller Jørgensen emphasizes that the functional source concept does not treat the content of the sources; which means that it is not a tool for textual analysis, the concept only implicates that the sources cannot be independent determinants of their use. Moreover, Møller Jørgensen continually mentions that it is the constructed situation of the sources creational moment which is the basis of historical knowledge, and the self-evident implication is that the historian is the agent behind this construction. The only concession to this point which Møller Jørgensen makes is that sources to some degree have limits concerning their capability to answer any research question (Møller Jørgensen, 2001, 60-65). Møller Jørgensen mentions H.P. Clausen and also places himself along the same lines, but expresses an even further constructivist view on the concept of functional sources.

Another author who also mentions and draws inspiration from H.P. Clausen is Knut Kjeldstadli from the University of Oslo. Kjeldstadli also expresses constructivist views in relation to the concept of functional sources and he thus emphasizes the agency of the historian, but retains that there is a dialectical relation between the sources and the historian. Kjeldstadli believes there is a fixed and determined past reality because new sources cannot be created (Kjeldstadli, 2002, 38-44). Furthermore, he believes constructions are not random, and that not all constructions are valid; sources can "resist" being interpreted in certain ways:

“The sources ‘resist’ being interpreted in certain ways. All the pieces of the puzzle must be accounted for, and some interpretations of the past will thus be invalid as a consequence” (Kjeldstadli, 2002, 43). As the quote shows, Kjeldstadli is rather vague of how the sources actually resist, but it nonetheless underlines that Kjeldstadli is less constructivist in his approach than Møller Jørgensen because he is more determined in his belief of a fixed past reality, even though they both draw their inspiration from H.P. Clausen.

Bernard Eric Jensen is another Danish author who deals with the theory and methodology of history. In his view, the functional source concept is a process of questions and answers, where the historian provides both. The historian thus formulates the research question, and then answers the question by using available sources to render the answers to the question probable. With this perspective, the sources only serve as a function in the historian’s own realization of the past. The sources are thus always considered in relation to the question, and traditional source criticism therefore becomes inadequate because the value of the source entirely depends on the question asked. (Jensen, 2003, 140 and 189-190). As the other authors, though, he also has a slight concession to his otherwise constructivist view: New sources may bring the historian to reconsider the research question (Jensen, 2003, 190), which indicates that the sources may also affect the research question and not only the other way around. Bent Egaa Kristensen from the University of Copenhagen emphasizes this aspect of the research process. As other authors, Kristensen proposes a dialectical relation between the historian and the sources. He states that the preexisting epistemology of the historian determines how the sources in question are used, and in *part* determines which sources are usable. However, through the historian’s research process, the research question may change due to the reading of different sources, which may then increase the knowledge of the historian (Kristensen, 2007, 53).

There are thus two perceptions of the functional source concept. When speaking of the functionality of sources, both directions agrees that the research question determines the historical research process, and thus which sources are relevant to answer this question. The main point of the functional source concept is therefore that the historian is of utmost importance in the creation of historical knowledge because without the historian, historical knowledge would not exist. The important word here is “creation” because that is what historians do according to this concept. Historians create a past by asking question about the

past which they themselves answer afterwards by turning to the sources. The relevancy of sources, though, is already predetermined by the research question, but here the agreement between the two directions ends. Kristian Erslev, the authors of *Kildekritisk tekstsamling*, Sebastian Olden Jørgensen, Knut Kjedstadli and Bent Egaa Kristensen believe that the sources are able to directly affect the research question, which means that sources must have an intrinsic meaning themselves to be able to do so. Individual authors in this direction further underline that there is a fixed and determined past, and that historians expand their knowledge through the reading of sources, which may change the research question. The other direction comprises of Bernard Eric Jensen, H.P. Clausen and Claus Møller Jørgensen. They all underline the centrality of the historian to the creation of historical knowledge, and in H.P. Clausen's situation, also the historian's contemporary society and time. Sources can therefore never have intrinsic meaning because the historian's cognition wholly determines this aspect. However, the authors of this direction are not completely constructivist in their approach because they do state that the sources set some kind of limit. The difference between the two directions is thus not a great one, as both recognizes and emphasizes the importance of the historian in the research process by underlining the research question as the governing aspect of this process. The small but significant difference lies in whether this question can be affected through something else, which is outside of the historian's mind. The central element in this difference is the question of meaning, and whether meaning is only generated by the historian, or whether sources somehow contain their own traces of meaning which are non-negotiable despite of the interpretative filter of the historian, and thereby enabling sources to affect the historian. The former explanation is founded upon a one-way process from the historian to the source; meaning only flows from the mind of the historian down to the books, papers and documents during the research process, and historical knowledge is thus the outcome of this one-way cognitive process. This further implies that the historical knowledge created during this process, is only a reflection of either the internal processes of the historian or the structures in the historian's contemporary society. As before-mentioned, Benard Eric Jensen speaks of the historian's own realization of the past, which implies that he believes the internal processes of the historian is what creates historical knowledge. On the other hand, H.P. Clausen speaks both of the historian and the contemporary society of the historian which also implies that historical knowledge is created due to the internal processes of the historian. However, he also believes these processes are

affected by paradigms present in the contemporary society of the given historian. In both perspectives, historical knowledge is thus only a reflection of preexisting meaning within the historian and preexisting meaning in society. Historical knowledge is thus bound to be individual knowledge or individual and paradigmatic knowledge, but what connects these points of view is that it will always be present individual knowledge of the past and present paradigmatic knowledge of the past. The past will always be subdued to the whims of the present within this understanding of the functional source concept. Clausen, Jensen and Møller Jørgensen all lean towards this understanding, but do not embrace it to its full extent.

The other approach assumes a dialectical relation between the historian and the sources. The centrality of the historian and the research question is the more important aspect, but in this view meaning still flows both ways. It is thus in part the cognitive processes of the historian, but also meaning within the sources which create historical knowledge. Past meaning is therefore available to the present through the sources, which is then combined with a present meaning which the historian applies through internal processes, and this mixture is what historical knowledge consists of. In contrary to the other view, this implies that historical knowledge is not only present knowledge of the past, but also in part past knowledge of the past available to the present. The past is therefore not completely subdued to the whims of the present within this understanding of the concept of functional sources. The past itself has the power to at least affect the present of the historian, and the historical knowledge which is created during the research process.

The two views are not extremely different in their understanding of the functional source concept. However, the slight variation between a one-way process and a dialectical relation between the historian and the sources has profound implications in relation to whether it is possible to obtain *in situ* knowledge of the past, or whether knowledge of the past will always be the product of a retrospective present. These two views provide the foundation for the next chapters in relation to methodological discussion of how to contribute to, or develop upon the historical methodology.

The Linguistic Turn:

This chapter revolves around what has been called the linguistic turn, and specifically the issues which the linguistic turn introduced to the academic scene of history. It should be noted, though, that the linguistic turn is a loosely defined notion which broadly encompasses many different methodological approaches in the human sciences since the 1960s, which overall rejects the idea of language as a neutral medium for human experience. As a consequence, the methodological emphasis is thus directed towards language instead of experience (Piirimäe, 2008, 603). This emphasis on language has also affected the theoretical and philosophical debates about the relationship between the past and the present within the academic field of history. Many different theorists who belong to this tradition have problematized this relationship, and they call into question the foundation on which the academic discipline of history rests. These theorists, such as Hayden White, Louis O. Mink and Keith Jenkins will be treated throughout the chapter, and the underlying assumptions of the concept of functional sources will further be related to the philosophical questions which these theorists raise.

As explained in the former chapter, there are two branches within the theoretical thinking of the concept of functional sources in Denmark. One branch argues for a dialectical relation between the historian and the source, which means that the sources retain some essence of the past, thus enabling the past to affect the historian's research question. The cognitive processes of the historian are not forgotten, but meaning flows both ways, back and forth between the historian and the source. The other branch argues for the autonomy of the historian's cognition during the research. However, the theorists of this branch do not embrace the complete autonomy of the historian's cognition. Instead, they all retain a small objection to this idea by stating that the sources somehow may limit the historian in what can be produced from certain sources, but they are rather vague in how this relation works. However, the emphasis is that meaning flows from the historian to the source, while the source is almost a passive recipient. As a consequence, the past has little agency in affecting the historical research compared to the dialectical branch. The question is, though, how the underlying theoretical assumptions of these branches of the concept of functional sources relate to the theorists of the linguistic such as Louis o. Mink, Hayden White, Keith and Jenkins. Firstly, the narrativists Louis O. Mink and Hayden White will be discussed, because these two theorists have somewhat similar points of view. Their views will then be compared to the

concept of functional sources. Then Keith Jenkins will be introduced while also discussing the fear of nihilism which the Danish theorists express in relation to the linguistic turn.

Hayden White:

In 1973, Hayden White published his book “Metahistory”, which has become *the* book concerning narrativism and history. His overall thesis is that the historical work is a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse. This is because White believes that the historical work contains a structure which is linguistic of nature, and which serves as a paradigm for what a historical explanation is. White’s mission with the book is thus to establish the poetic nature of the historical work because he feels that too much effort has been applied to making history a science (White, 1973, IX - XI); an effort which is actually futile in the first place. White says this directly in his article “The Burden of History”, which deals with the peculiar situation that history finds itself in; a position between being a science and an art and perhaps being neither. The sciences accuse historians of having no particular methodology or intellectual equipment to exercise history, there is no academic foundation for what historians do. The arts accuse history of entralling human consciousness and thus preventing creative solutions in the present. Both sides agree that history does not illuminate of humanity, but rather the opposite (White, 1966, 124-125). The solution for White is to make the study of the past relevant by shifting the attention to how this endeavor can provide perspectives to present problems, instead of the studying history as an end in itself, which qualifies it neither as an art nor as a science (White, 1966, 126). The natural consequence of this is to look at the artistic side of history if one embraces his theory explained in “Metahistory” and its philosophical undercurrents. The explanation for this is that “historiography has remained prey to mutually exclusive, though equally legitimate, interpretations of the same historical processes” (White, 1973, 428). This may seem a strange statement at first, because how is it possible for interpretations of the same processes to be mutually exclusive while also being equally legitimate? According to White, it is because historical work, as a narrative prose discourse, purports to be a model of past structures and processes. This model seeks to explain these structures and processes through representation. The issue, however, is that there can be different models of explanation of the same data i.e. sources. These different models of explanation do not rest upon the data used to support their theories, but rather the internal consistency and coherence of their views of the historical field (White, 1973, 2 and 4).

White goes on to show this through his theory of how the historical work is founded upon several literary techniques to make the narrative, which the historical work essentially is, coherent. The reason why historians do this is because narratives are a mode of cultural comprehension, which for White is a specifically Western mode of comprehension (White, 2001, 224-225). The consequence is that historians apply this mode of comprehension when they study the past, and the result is that meaning is created retrospectively by the historian; meaning which is not inherent to the past, but which is necessary for the specific culture to understand the past. The practical way that this happens is that historian applies meaning to the data by emplotting it with different kinds of narrative structures such as romance, satire, tragedy etc. “No historical event is intrinsically tragic; it can only be conceived as such from a particular point of view” (White, 2001, 223). Just as a fiction writer, the historian structures the historical narrative as a beginning, middle and end, highlights certain things, while others are left in the dark. Furthermore, the historical narrative is emplotted by the historian which means that the historian tells the story in a certain story-mode and what the point of the narrative is; whether it is meant to be understood as a fatal tragedy or a romance where the hero of the story appears victorious over the dark forces. According to White, however, historical events are value-neutral, they do not have these emplotments naturally, and the reason why historians interpret these events differently is not because they have different information, but that they seek different “facts”, because they have different stories to tell (White, 2001, 224). Potentially, this is not a problem if there is a one-to-one relation between the narratives which historians apply, and the past which they seek to represent in their historical work. However, White argues that this is not the case “We do not live stories” (White, 2001, 228). White is quite ironical about the view that historians “discover” or “identify” stories in chronicles, and combined with the foregoing argumentation it is clear that he believes that these stories are constructed and not something inherent in the data itself. This is also true of the beginning-middle-end structure, which is what a historian applies to the events in a chronicle. The events are transformed and arranged into a hierarchy of significance by assigning the events different functions as story elements considered as a comprehensible process with a discernible beginning, middle and end (White, 1973, 7). “Historians may not like to think that their work is the translation from fact to fiction; but this is one of the effects of their work” (White 2001, 229). White argues that there is a discrepancy between the past described in the historical work and the actual past. The historical work

seeks to represent the actual past, but the actual past contains none of the narrative features of the historical work which make the past comprehensible to the present. Thus, for White, there is a past, but historians are incapable of representing it because they apply meaning and structure to the past, which are not intrinsic to the past. This further implies that the “actual” past is value-neutral; there is no inherent meaning to be found in the past itself. Meaning can only be applied by the historian retrospectively, and if this is the case the past itself is value-neutral as a logical consequence. If this view is accepted, the question then becomes what is left to salvage of the discipline called history? Clearly, as a consequence of this approach, history cannot be considered a science with any claims to truth.

Louis O. Mink:

Louis O. Mink is contemporary with Hayden White, who has a similar narrativist approach to history. Mink also argues that if history were to be a science then historical explanations should also serve as a model to predict the future. This is because there is no difference between explanation and prediction; the objective of any science is to create covering-law models of how the world is, therefore explaining it and thus predicting how the world will be in the future (Mink 2, 1987, 69 and 76-77). A simple example is gravity, a covering-law model which explains some part of the present that further predicts certain things work according to this model in the future. If these are the standards, then history clearly does not meet the requirements. When adding the arguments of Hayden White, the status of history as a science is further problematized because the current historical discourse is simply not able to represent reality. Mink’s famous quote in relation to the narrative qualities of history is that “stories are not lived but told” (Mink 1, 1987, 60). Mink thus implies that reality has no connection to narratives at all, and thus arrives at the same conclusion as White: Meaning is created retrospectively through narratives, but these narratives are only a mode of comprehension, and do not resemble the past as it really was. In the same vein, Mink argues that narrative is transferred from art to life. Life holds no beginnings, middles or ends, only in retrospect (Mink 1, 1987, 60). Thus Mink and White aligns in the understanding of the past as something value-neutral. Especially Mink criticizes the idea of a single, unchanging and solid past actuality which he argues permeates the general understanding of the world (Mink 5, 1987, 194). The problem is that this perception of a solid unchanging past is founded on the basis of history being able to establish truth claims of the past. However, the establishment of truth claims is seriously undermined by the narrative form of history. Mink thus sees a

discrepancy because the narrative form of history is artificial, but is still accepted as claiming truth even though narratives are unable to subscribe to truth (Mink 5, 1987, 199). Historical narratives cannot subscribe to truth because they are a mode of comprehending the past retrospectively from the present. When meaning is applied through retrospective historical narratives of the past, the only truth claims to find are the ones which the historian wants to find. This may sound as Mink and White are deeply mistrustful of narratives, but this is not the case. They both agree that the present makes the past comprehensible through narratives, but they disagree why narratives are the form which the historical discourse has taken. Mink argues that narratives are a mode of human comprehension “The cognitive function of the narrative form is to put forth a series of events into a single whole” (Mink 5, 1987, 198). Mink explains that the narrative form is the primary cognitive instrument to make experience comprehensible, and that this mode of comprehension rivals other modes, such as a theoretical one which builds on the covering law model concept (Mink 5, 1987, 185-187). White, on the other hand, argues that narratives are a cultural mode of comprehension and understanding. It is a way for some cultures to make something unfamiliar, familiar, and which is bound to the literary traditions and heritage of the culture in question. This is why White argues that there are only certain amounts of pregeneric plot types of which information can be encoded with, and this encodation is one of the ways which are used to make sense of public and personal pasts (White, 2001, 224-225). For Mink, narratives are an expression of individual internal cognitive processes of comprehension, and thus history holds the same features because history is narratives. The same goes for White, but instead narratives are not individual internal cognitive comprehension. They are rather expressions of the specific culture’s literary heritage, and how the particular culture encodes information according to this heritage in order to make it comprehensible. Thus it makes sense why White’s book “Metahistory” is dedicated to the study of such conventions as plot structures; if narratives cannot represent the past, then instead the attention should be turned towards the conventions governing the discourse of history to explain how the present understands the past. As a consequence, White does not encourage the end of history as a discipline, but rather seeks to direct the academic attention into another area, because the effort to represent a past reality through narratives with claims to truth-value is futile in his view. However, White does not argue that the practice of writing narrative of the past should end. Instead, he argues such

practice should continue, but with an awareness of the conventions applied and that truth can never be an attainable goal (White, 1973, 434).

Temporal Comparison:

There are further points where Mink and White are not entirely alike: Time. Mink and White have different perceptions of time. When White writes of the narrative qualities of history it is always in comparison to the chronicle, which for White is just a list of events without a narrative. According to White, the chronicle does not have a beginning, middle or end, and the events listed are not emplotted or enforced some kind of hierarchical structure. What a historian does is to make narratives by choosing events from the chronicle, emplotting them, highlighting some, discarding others and so on (White, 1973, 5). This also serves to illuminate the way in which White perceives time. White's perception of time is actually deeply chronological. The example of the chronicle shows this by revealing that to White events happen on a straight line. Each event succeeds another from a fixed point in the past to a fixed point in the future; a classical linear understanding of time. In this case, there is nothing relativistic about White at all. He does not question that things happened, or that they happened at that particular time at that particular moment. He actually agrees with such a view. The only thing White argues is that this past, which is definitely there, is value-neutral. Even though the past is solid and unchanging, meaning is still generated in the present which determines how events in the past are to be perceived. Mink would completely disagree with this. To him there is no solid and unchanging past:

“Narrative histories should be aggregative, insofar as they are histories, but cannot be, insofar as they are narratives. Narrative generates its own imaginative space, which does not depend or displace other stories. But it presupposes that past actuality is a single and determinate realm which is at odds with the incomparability of imaginative stories – they cannot be imaginative if they are determined” (Mink 5, 1987, 197)

What Mink argues is that there is a paradox between the idea of a single determinate, unchanging, solid past and historical narratives. This is because historical narratives presuppose a solid past, but at the same time many historical narratives can be written about the same past. If the past is solid and unchanging, it should not be possible to write narratives which are mutually exclusive but equally legitimate about the same part of the past. As a

consequence, Mink is highly critical of the idea of a solid past and goes on to say that “Events are not the raw material from which the narrative is constructed, but rather an abstraction of the narrative” (Mink 5, 1987, 201). Mink thus argues that events do not happen in succession, as White argues, events are abstractions of the narrative, imaginative creations of the historian. Mink’s perception of time is not a straight line running from the past to the present to the future. There is no past other than the past which historians choose to write about in their narratives “If we accept that events are functions of the narrative, then there can be no untold stories or no unknown knowledge. There can be only past facts not yet described in a context of narrative form” (Mink 5, 1987, 201). For Mink, the narrative is all there is. The past itself as a reality is dead and beyond what humans are capable of representing through literary techniques. In this view, speaking of a retrospective present is not even worth considering, because the present is retrospective of nothing. There is nothing to look *back* upon, because this action of looking back is in reality only imagining something in the present. Thus, there is a difference in opinion between White and Mink when one considers the issue of time. White is only relativistic in terms of how meaning is applied to the past, but he is certain of a solid chronologically ordered sequence of time, although the past does not have any inherent meaning. Mink, however, argues that the past is only a construct of the present. There is no unknown knowledge, there is no chronology, and there is nothing to look back upon in retrospect. It is all invented and imagined in the present through narratives, and the knowledge which humankind has of the past is only what humankind creates in the present.

Methodological Consequences of Narrativism and the Paradoxical Nature of the Concept of Functional Sources:

Some of the conclusions Hayden White and Louis O. Mink reach, though, are already a part of the underlying assumptions of the concept of functional sources, at least in relation to the branch which almost embraces the complete autonomy of the historian in the historical research process. This is due to the reason that authors like Bernard Eric Jensen, H.P. Clausen and Claus Møller Jørgensen, are in favor of the model where meaning flows in only one direction: From the historian to the source. This can be elaborated further to say that meaning only flows from the present to the past, which is exactly what Mink and White argue. The past is value-neutral, and thus it is only possible for meaning to be applied to the past through a retrospective present. This is the implicit assumption which these Danish authors express

when they stress the autonomy of the historian during the historical research process. They imply that the past is value-neutral because it is only the historian who actively produces meaning through a continuous process of asking questions and continuously answering these questions; the sources, i.e. the past, do not answer, they only passively await judgment by the historian. However, the picture is not as clear cut as it may seem at first glance. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Bernard Eric Jensen, H.P. Clausen and Claus Møller Jørgensen all have some kind of resistance toward embracing this value-neutral past completely, and somehow they have to. It seems paradoxical that these authors argue for a value-neutral past while further arguing that historical research should just keep doing business as usual. The concept of functional sources is an oxymoron because it embraces that meaning is only created in the present, but does not change the historical area of attention as a consequence like White and Mink do. White and Mink are logically consistent because they embrace the value-neutral past and therefore shift their attention accordingly towards narratives, whereas the concept of functional sources is logically inconsistent because it implicitly accepts that the past is value-neutral, but does not change the attention field of research, which is still writing representation on the basis of sources. This is also why Bernard Eric Jensen, H.P. Clausen and Claus Møller Jørgensen have to argue that the sources "limit" the historical inquiry in some way; that only certain amount of questions and certain kinds of questions can be asked and answered when dealing with specific sources. If this "but" was not there, the logical consistency of the method for which they argue would simply collapse completely. Instead, it stands on ramshackle pillars ready to fall if the wind blows too hard.

This paradoxical nature of the concept of functional sources is perhaps best expressed by Bent Egaa Kristensen in his book "Historisk Metode" (Red. Historical Methodology), in which he argues that the historian determines how the sources are used and in part which sources are used, but that there is a dialectical relation between the historian and the source during the research process (Kristensen, 2007, 53). Even though he belongs to the dialectical branch, it is paradoxical that he stresses the active nature of the historian in the research process, while his book has the structure of making a methodological statement, and then trying to prove it by example by working with different sources. The sources thus prove what Kristensen says and not the other way around, which is the opposite of what Kristensen claims to be the foundational concept of historical methodology. Bent Egaa Kristensen thus seem to prove himself wrong by doing something else than he says, but this problem is far greater because

what Kristensen exposes is the inherent paradoxical nature between what the concept of functional sources preaches theoretically and the practice connected to this concept; or, in other words, the complete lack of coherence between theory and practice. It does not make much sense to have a theory which in principle connects to White and Mink, and still have a practice which is empirically founded. How is it possible to argue that the past is value-neutral and that meaning is applied retrospectively or that the past is constructed in the present, which means that there is actually nothing to be retrospective of, and still practice empirical history and writing historical narratives with claims to truth? It does not make any sense to have such underlying theoretical assumptions and then completely disregard them in practice. The mental image which comes to mind is the one of Donald Duck walking over a cliff: He keeps walking in thin air without realizing that the cliff stopped supporting his weight long ago. Eventually, though, he looks down and realizes his peculiar situation, and then everybody knows what happens next. In this case, however, it seems that the Danish theorists are aware of the situation, but refuse to acknowledge the consequence of what they themselves propose, so they keep walking in thin air, downright refusing to ever look down.

One could thus propose that the dialectical branch is a better alternative which Sebastian Olden Jørgensen, the authors of "kildekritisk tekstsamling", Knut Kjeldstadli and others argue for, because they do accept that the historian actively produces meaning, but also that the historian is affected by the sources which retain some inherent meaning themselves. The past is thus not seen as completely value-neutral which enable the authors of this branch to partly escape the paradox. Even though historians are producers of meaning, some meaning in the sources, will be retained despite of the historian. White and Mink would be highly critical of such a view because it is almost a return to the empirical and positivist approach which they oppose. The question is also how these Danish authors would refute White and Mink, and they would argue that meaning is retained in the sources. The Danish theorists would have to explain exactly how these sources affect the historical research process and the historian, and how a source can act as a container of past meaning, and further how this past meaning can be made accessible to the present. None of them do, and none has ever done so successfully because they would then have created *the* theory of history, and the linguistic turn would thus not pose a problem to the empiricist practice of the academic discipline of history. This is what they would have to establish if they want to argue that sources contain inherent meaning from the past, no matter how much or how little. This thus poses a problem to the dialectical

branch, but the same problem is also relevant for the other branch because they would have to argue how sources can act as limitations, and what the nature of these limitations are.

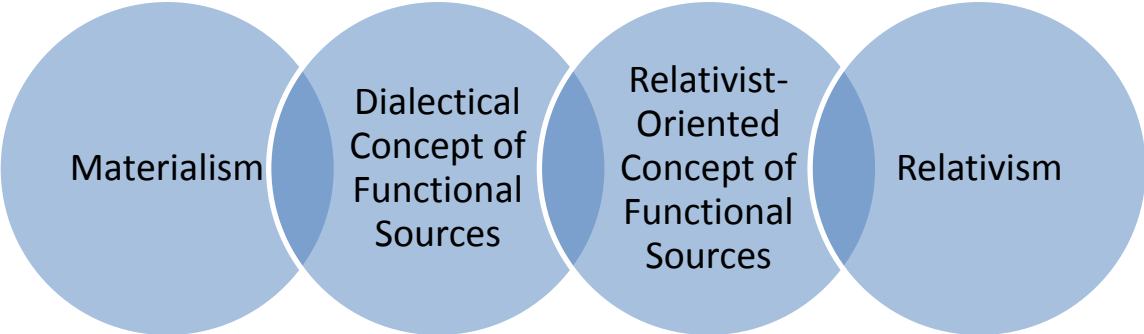
Keith Jenkins' Perspective on History:

Another theorist, Keith Jenkins, is also highly critical of this and what he calls "lower case" history that is equal to today's academic history, which he argues is just as ideological as "upper case" history i.e. Marxist history and the like, even though the academic discipline views itself as neutral and objective (Jenkins, 1999, 2). Jenkins further argues that humankind should emancipate itself from history and ethics. The reason why he argues this is because he believes that the past does not exist historically outside of the historian's textual constructions, and therefore has no independence to resist historians' interpretative will (Jenkins, 1999, 2-3). In this way, Jenkins aligns himself with Mink and White. However, he further argues that humankind, as a consequence, does not need these selective images of the past to act as a measuring tool for present changes; that the myths which take us from the present to the future might best be of the present instead of the past (Jenkins, 1999, 4). In this way, Jenkins differ from Mink and White who do not argue for the dissolution of history, but rather that history should reconfigure its academic attention to other areas. The reason why Jenkins argues strongly against history is because he connects history with foundationalism. History can be used to argue for certain all-embracing truths, even though history does not have the ability to do so. History can thus be applied to argue for foundationalist views such as Nazism or worse, and ultimately supply justification for events such as the holocaust (Jenkins, 1999, 27). Jenkins thus seems to be deeply mistrustful of history because he believes it is a discourse, which bends at the will of the one who wields it, concealing the fact that history does not hold any meaning or truth in itself, and thus potentially capable of justifying atrocious acts despite having no grounds to do so. This is grounded in an argument that revolves around the selective process of historical work.

"Statements about the past are statements about the evidence. The problems arising from the selection of evidence are manifold. Selections from the evidence refer to a real but no longer existing object (the past) which is unknowable. The relationship between the selection and the object is problematic and unprovable. Further, any selection requires interpretation. Attempts to validate the interpretation by reference to the evidence are invalid because this will only be a reassertion of the interpretation" (Jenkins, 1999, 110).

In this perspective, arguing for a particular historical interpretation will always be a cyclical motion: The evidence will always support the given historical interpretation because the evidence is selected to support the interpretation beforehand. It is thus never possible to be proven wrong because the evidence, which is an interpretation in itself by selection, will always support the particular statement made about the past. History is a discourse which can thus be used for whatever reason, even though it is perceived by its practitioners and in general as neutral, which in the end is only self-delusion "It is we who do the dictating in history" (Jenkins, 1999, 14). It matters little, though, when the consequences of such self-delusion are real. Jenkins thus argues that humankind should live in time but outside of history, because history is a temporary discourse that has outlived itself (Jenkins, 1999, 3 and 31). Rather, relativism and skepticism should be embraced because that is all there is, further, it is all humans have ever needed. Jenkins does not argue this in the negative, but argues for the positive emancipatory aspect of relativism and that humankind should embrace the freedom to construct and accept things to be constructions (Jenkins, 1999, 186). This is perhaps exactly the conclusion which the different Danish theorists are afraid of, regardless which theoretical branch they belong to in relation to the concept of functional sources. Such a conclusion would effectively put them out of work. However, none of the theorists want to go in the other direction either, back to the completely empirical and positivist way, because this position has been thoroughly discredited by narrativism.

Materialism vs. Relativism and the Fear of Nihilism:



The discussion thus figures between these two concepts: Relativism and materialism. This is not a new thing. The discussion is inherited from historicism, a philosophical thought founded

in 19th century Germany. The discussion inherent in historicism revolves around the issue whether the past is similar to the present and thereby comprehensible to the present, or whether the past is different and thereby incomprehensible to the present (Ankersmit, 1995, 153). The discussion between materialism and relativism revolves around the same issue, and moves between these two extremes as shown in the figure above. Materialism stresses comprehensibility because language is seen as a neutral medium, whereas relativism stresses incomprehensibility because language is seen as anything but a neutral medium. The dialectical concept of functional sources is closer to the material concept of sources, whereas the relativist-oriented concept of functional sources is closer to relativism, which is also shown in the figure. The different Danish theorists can be said to position themselves at different places along the line in the figure; some more material in their thinking and some more relativist than others. However, none of the theorists embrace either of the extremes, and instead position themselves between two chairs; it may be uncomfortable, but there are nails on both chairs which are even more uncomfortable to sit on, or so it seems from the perspective of the different theorists.

But why is relativism feared? The reason why relativism may seem frightening to these Danish theorists, is because they connect relativism with nihilism. One of the Danish theorists, Bent Egaa Kristensen, argues that if the theoretical approach of Hayden White is accepted, then anything goes, everything is fiction and even the holocaust must be accepted as just another story among others (Kristensen, 2007, 260). White is thus connected to relativism, which is then connected to nihilism; that nothing then matters anymore. If this is the case, then it is understandable that the Danish theorists fear relativism. However, White is not a nihilist and he is only a relativist concerning the question of meaning and truth. As before-mentioned, White does not question that events such as the holocaust happened; he actually has a deeply classical chronological perception of time, and the holocaust in itself as an event is not just a story. The only thing White maintains is that such an event does not have any meaning in itself. It is not given that the stories written *about* the holocaust should inherently be tragedies. This is only how the present retrospectively perceives the past. Despite of this White argues that the practice of writing about the past should not stop, but rather that it should continue with an awareness of the narrative roots, which can then serve to de-establish foundationalist views (White, 2001, 235). White is thus an anti-foundationalist, and not a nihilist. He seeks to create greater awareness of the narrative practice of history, and

not to stop the practice itself, which is a very important distinction. Louis O. Mink, on the other hand, is more relativistic in his approach because he would argue that the holocaust is just a story. To Mink, there is no past other than the one invented in the present. Despite of this, Mink does not argue the dissolution of history, just as White, because the narratives written about the past increases understanding even if it cannot explain anything according to the standards of science. Narratives are a basic human mode of comprehension which rivals theoretical comprehensions of the world. Neither of these narrativists thus argue against the practice of history, but rather an increased awareness of the practice.

Keith Jenkins, on the other hand, argues strongly against history because of the link he sees between history and foundationalism. History is a lying whore which can be used to justify anything, and has been used to argue for the holocaust. Jenkins therefore turns the argument around on Bent Egaa Kristensen, and says that the problem *is* history in relation to the holocaust. If relativism and skepticism is not accepted, then there is possibility that such events will happen again. The holocaust is told tragically now, but it is not certain if it will be in the future. Kristensen then writes and would respond that there is overwhelming evidence to support the occurrence of the holocaust (Kristensen, 2007, 260). Jenkins would then refer to the before-mentioned cyclical motion between the interpretation, and the evidence which has been chosen on the basis of the interpretation, and which will therefore always support the interpretation. This means that the interpretations can also change and so will the evidence accordingly. This is what Jenkins fears and why he argues to dissolve history, but still not on the grounds of nihilism. He is an anti-foundationalist in the extreme because he distrusts narratives of the past, which he believes can be used to justify atrocious acts in the present. Therefore he embraces relativism in the positive, because he argues that it will emancipate humanity, and for this to happen history needs to die. Even though Bent Egaa Kristensen argues against Hayden White, it is perhaps not the conclusions of White that he actually fears, and this is symptomatic of the situation which all the Danish theorists are in. Kristensen argues against relativism because he perceives it as nihilism. When it is all stories then none of it matters, and everybody can just write anything about the past. However, not one of the theorists are actually nihilist: They are anti-foundationalists. It is thus wrong to accuse them of nihilism because none of them argue to do nothing even though they do not believe in an empirically founded discipline of history. However, nihilism seems to be what Kristensen and others object to when they discuss relativism, because they believe nihilism is the natural

outcome when one accepts the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of Hayden White for example. These theorists are therefore all afraid of embracing relativism entirely in relation to the concept of functional sources, because it will then dissolve the basis of history as an academic discipline. However, this can only be true if the premise of the discussion is that relativism and nihilism are the same. Mink, White and Jenkins all show that this does not have to be a premise at all, because they argue from an anti-foundationalist view. In Jenkins' case this means that history should be dissolved anyway; humanity should emancipate itself from the past. Conversely, Mink and White do not agree with Jenkins in this perspective. Mink does not agree because even though he believes the past is entirely constructed, these narrative constructions may increase understanding. White instead argues that past events are not constructed, but the stories about the past are, and these narratives about the past should then be the area of attention while the practice of writing about the past should also continue. Kristensen does not see this distinction, and neither do the other Danish theorists, and this is why they guard themselves against embracing relativism and instead position themselves, uncomfortably, between two chairs, either closer to materialism or closer to relativism. So, if the discussion is between relativism and materialism, there is simply no other option than to embrace relativism because materialism cannot be theoretically defended or argued for. The semi-positions in this discussion which the different Danish theorists hold are accordingly paradoxical and do not offer a better alternative to the relativist position. If the only option is between the concept of relativism and materialism, then relativism is simply the answer.

This, however, is also a premise which is being contested by recent developments within the field of theory and philosophy of history, and this is what the next chapters of the thesis will discuss in relation to the concept of functional sources.

The Presence Paradigm:

As observed in the last chapter, the traditional discussion between materialism and relativism figures between three phenomena: The subject, the object, and language. The subject in this context is the historian, whereas the object of attention is the past. Language is then the mediator between the past and the historian. Louis O. Mink and Keith Jenkins question the existence of the object of history, the past, whereas Hayden White does not question the existence of the object, but rather believes it to be inaccessible on the level of meaning and truth. Language, what mediates between the subject and the object, is the common

denominator for these three theorists. White sees language as incapable of actually representing the past as it really was, because language applies meaning, truth and narrative structures where none is to be found. Mink and Jenkins, on the other hand, have a common belief in the all-encompassing nature of language. There is no object for the subject to discover because the past can never be independent of language; language *creates* the past, and thus for Mink there can be no unknown knowledge of the past.

Recently, however, there has been a movement away from the traditional division between subject, object and language. This movement has mainly been driven by Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia, both professors at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. The movement was made famous in Frank Ankersmit's book "Sublime Historical Experience" and Eelco Runia's article "Presence". Before Ankersmit published the book on sublime historical experiences in 2001, he argued along the lines of narrativism, which was the prevalent view within historical theory and philosophy since the 1970s, and Ankersmit's former arguments even appear in Keith Jenkins' book "Why History" to question the merits of history. "Sublime Historical Experience" therefore signals that Ankersmit turns away from narrativism, and instead tries to find new theoretical ground for history, while also criticizing narrativism, the direction from which he originally came. Just as Ankersmit, Runia is also dissatisfied with narrativism, and his contribution to this dissatisfaction came through in 2006 with his article "Presence" in the academic journal "History and Theory", wherein he has published numerous theoretical articles that revolves around the same issue. Runia and Ankersmit have similarities in some aspects of their theories, and for the sake of simplicity they have both been categorically assigned to the presence paradigm in this thesis, because they have similar conceptions of a presence of the past in the present. This is what lies at the heart of both their theories, and they apply this concept in their critique of narrativism and the meaninglessness and value-neutralness of the past that the direction entails. Ethan Kleinberg, the editor of "History and Theory", writes that the concept of presence is to convey that the past is literally in the present in significant and material ways, and that presence is a return to a relationship with the past which is predicated by unmediated access to material things that enables a direct connection with the past. Presence thus counters traditional understandings of meaning and the attack on meaning which is posed by the linguistic turn (Kleinberg 1, 2013, 1-2), because the past is directly present in the present, and can therefore be encountered without mediation through language. There is thus some form of meaning already in the past

itself, which goes beyond language, and this is where Ankersmit and Runia differs from the narrativists. The presence paradigm can therefore be seen in terms of a response to the linguistic turn, but not a response which figures within the traditional discussion between materialism and relativism inherited from historicism. The presence paradigm moves the discussion away from whether or not it is possible for the present society to understand past societies through language, by arguing that the past is present in the present in a way which is beyond language. The response to the linguistic turn is thus not posed in terms of language being a barrier to reality or not; the presence paradigm asks an entirely different question, and thus attacks the linguistic turn from a different angle instead of just arguing from a traditional empiricist and materialist position. The question is then if this more recent theoretical direction has any insights to offer in relation to the concept of functional sources, and whether the notion of presence can be of any help in developing the methodology of history.

This chapter will thus consist of three parts. Firstly, the theoretical and philosophical assumptions of Eelco Runia and Frank Ankersmit will be introduced and analyzed, while further discussing the relation between the presence paradigm and the linguistic turn. Secondly, it will be discussed how the questions which the presence paradigm raises relate to the concept of functional sources, and whether there are any valuable insights to be gained methodologically from this relatively new theoretical direction. Finally, Frank Ankersmit's most recent book "Meaning, Truth, and Reference in Historical Representation" written in 2012, will be analyzed and discussed in relation to the former parts of this chapter. This addition will come at the end of the chapter because it builds upon some of the ideas of the presence paradigm, but also tries to develop these. Below it will be explained in detail that the presence paradigm is based on passive reception, which therefore makes it hard to use the ideas of the presence paradigm methodologically. "Meaning, Truth, And Reference" is, in part, Ankersmit's attempt to make the ideas of presence active and therefore applicable in historical research, and the merits of this attempt will therefore be discussed at the end of the chapter, and furthermore this attempt theoretically also points toward the next section of the thesis, which revolves around the ghost paradigm.

Frank Ankersmit:

In an article, Anton Froeyman has compared Runia and Ankersmit wherein he states that:

“In the course of the last decade there has been an increasing feeling of dissatisfaction with the postmodern and poststructuralist paradigm among many theorists of history (see for example Palti 2004; Agnew2007; Bentley 2006). The main objection is that the focus on the creation of meaning and representation has led to the loss of the object of the historian or the philosopher of history rather than to its revelation or affirmation. In response to this dissatisfaction with the postmodern and poststructuralist paradigm, several alternative approaches have turned up, which all share the same aim. They try to rethink our relation with the past as a more real, direct, material and affective one. Their common project is to make the past present again, not as an ideological or tropological construction, but as the past itself, whatever this may mean” (Froeyman, 2012, 393).

Froeyman argues that these two authors are a part of a movement which seek to establish the past as something on its own; something which exists outside linguistic representations, and which is accessible on the level of the present.

Frank Ankersmit is incredibly abstract to read and write off and the next chapter will thus reflect this, but the way he tries to do the above-mentioned is by establishing one concept and one phenomenon. The phenomenon is what grants access to the concept. Starting with the concept, Ankersmit tries to establish a concept of experience. As before-mentioned, subject, object and language is one way to divide the concepts of epistemology. Ankersmit, on the other hand, introduces the concept of experience into this matrix. There are thus four concepts instead of three: Experience, subject, object and language. In a narrativist view, language mediates between subject (the historian) and object (the past), but the mediation only goes from subject to object, and never the other way around. The causal relationship is thus that meaning comes from the subject through language to the object. Ankersmit, however, outlines another causal relationship because of his new category of experience: “Experience brings us into contact with the world, consciousness offers us representations of the world as we encounter it in experience; and, (...) these representations can be expressed in language” (Ankersmit, 2001, 6). Experiences of the past affect the subject, and the consciousness of the subject offers representations of the past as it was experienced. Experiences of the object (the past), which are not mediated by language, therefore cause changes in the subject that then cause changes in the linguistic representations that the subject makes. This is an entirely different causal relationship than the one which the narrativists argue, and Ankersmit further

proposes that experience is on the side of the object (Ankersmit, 2001, 4), which again underline that experience is unmediated; that one experiences the past as the past itself on its own premises outside of language. It seems strange, though, how experience is connected to the past and not language. Mink and White would probably argue that an experience of something is filtered through language, through narratives, if the category of experience would even exist in their vocabulary. Ankersmit, however, argues that experience is something which is beyond language, and which is foundational of both language and subject; language could not do without consciousness, the thinking subject, and consciousness could not do without experience, and thus experience is foundational of both (Ankersmit, 2001, 6).

Ankersmit's arguments are grounded in wanting to establish experience as something in its own right; a reaction against the all-encompassing focus on language "language has long been in the way of experience, and that experience needs to be unearthed from the thick sediment of language; experience has been forgotten in the race towards language" (Ankersmit, 2001, 14). Ankersmit has an axe to grind against the linguistic turn, and he grinds this axe to set his own theory apart from language and the epistemology which follows the narrativists' emphasis on language. Ankersmit even calls his own theory "a theory against theory" (Ankersmit, 2001, 263). This sounds extremely self-contradictive, but the point which Ankersmit wants to make is that experience has an ontological status. Even though Ankersmit applies an epistemological model to describe experience, experience itself is something which figures outside of theory "experiences just *are*" (Ankersmit, 2001, 233). The way that Ankersmit connects experience with history is done through multiple phases. First he proposes that experience is not necessarily bound to the receptive organs such as eyes, ears and nose. Instead, he argues that the mind also has the ability to experience something; an "intellectual experience" he calls it (Ankersmit, 2001, 7). However, he does not argue how or why this intellectual experience exists. This then leads to the claim that his book is not on historical writing, but rather how humankind *relates* to the past (Ankersmit, 2001, 14), which implies that the way which humankind relates to the past is through this intellectual experience.

This is the foundation of Ankersmit's theory, which he connects with the phenomenon mentioned earlier; the second part of Ankersmit's theory which will be outlined now. This phenomenon he calls the sublime historical experience. The sublime historical experience is

the practical method of how to access the concept of experience. The above-mentioned concept of experience is not something, which is just readily accessed on command. It occurs through the sublime historical experience which is facilitated through the ability of having and intellectual experience; that it is possible to sense and feel the past through the mind. This is also the reason why Ankersmit states that the sublime historical experience is closer to feelings than to knowledge. Knowledge is something to be attained and owned, whereas one does not own feelings. Thus the sublime historical experience do not aim to satisfy the thirst for knowledge, and the thirst for knowledge is in reality only a substitute for the desire of “being” in the past (Ankersmit, 2001, 224-225 and 328). However, the sublime historical experience provides an entry point of having an experience of the past in the present “The sublimity of historical experience originates from this paradoxical union of the feelings of loss and love, that is, of the combination of pain and pleasure in how we relate to the past” (Ankersmit, 2001, 9). As Anton Froeyman states, this experience arises when one encounters something of the past which does not quite fit the linguistic schemata, and therefore refers to a reality which is unattainable, but despite being unattainable, it is still there, which then provokes a feeling of loss and love (Froeyman, 2012, 398). Ankersmit further states that:

“Sublime historical experience is the experience of a past breaking away from the present. The past is then born from the historian’s traumatic experience of having entered a new world and from the awareness of irreparably having lost a previous world forever” (Ankersmit, 2001, 265).

There is thus something of a nostalgic longing for a lost paradise in feeling that the past breaks away from the present when experiencing the sublime historical experience, and as Froeyman explains, the past is thus essentially a good thing in Ankersmit’s view (Froeyman, 2012, 413), something which is let go off with sadness and longing, but also something of a quite mystical character which suddenly overwhelms the historian in question. The sublime historical experience thus provides an entry point to the concept of experience, but the experience is a subjective and passive experience of the past.

Furthermore, the sublime historical experience exists without an experiencing subject. This also appears self-contradictive, because how is it possible to experience something without there being someone to experience the experience itself? The explanation is that when Ankersmit speaks of an experience without an experiencing subject, it is not because that

there is no one to experience the past, but rather that there is not interpretative filter between the subject and the experience. There is no language and no epistemological barrier between the subject and the sublime experience of past, and thus object and subject becomes one in this instance (Ankersmit, 2001, 227). This establishes the past as something on its own, something which can be experienced on an ontological level outside of linguistic representations. Ankersmit is also very adamant in maintaining that historical experience is beyond truth and meaning, because truth and meaning adheres to language, to epistemology, whereas experience does not. The relation between experience and language is therefore not one of meaning, but rather a causal relationship from experience to language (Ankersmit, 2001, 234), which is mentioned earlier. This is a peculiar argument because how is it possible for experience to cause certain linguistic representations without being a causal relationship of meaning? Ankersmit also states that “Sublime historical experience does not serve any purpose at all, but may have consequences for the one who experiences it” (Ankersmit, 2001, 226). When the sublime historical experience of the past breaking away from the present affects a subject, then it must contain meaning itself, even though it may be argued that it is meaning on an ontological level. Evidently, following through with this argument means that one can experience truth and meaning of the past through the sublime historical experience. Not truth as represented in language, but real ontological truth about the past beyond language, which lies outside the human capability to describe in epistemological terms. This is also why Ankersmit compares the sublime historical experience to trauma. Froeyman writes that:

“Trauma fits Ankersmit’s idea of historical experience because the patient who suffers from trauma, experience it as more and less real than in a normal situation. Less real because the patient cannot represent a past which the patient is not conscious of, but more real because the past of the patient affects everyday life more than any meaningful represented past” (Froeyman, 2012, 401).

The sublime historical experience is therefore something which is incapable of being represented in the linguistic representation, or being expressed in any other way, and yet it still affects the subject on a deeper level. The problem thus arises when one tries to codify the sublime historical experience because it something which is ontological and pre-linguistic (Ankersmit, 2001, 226).

“Trauma and the sublime experience has (have) a directness absent from normal experience since it must be undergone without the protective cognitive and psychological apparatus that normally process our experience. On the other hand, it is indirect because one cannot face this directness and thus one dissociates oneself from it and remains external to it” (Ankersmit, 2001, 336).

This disassociation is needed for the sublime historical experience, because the disassociation from the past spurs the feeling of loss and love, by entering a new world while also being painfully aware that the former is irreparably lost, which then provokes the sublime historical experience (Ankersmit, 2001, 265); back to the nostalgic feeling of a lost paradise. It may seem then that the sublime historical experience can only occur within contemporary history when societies and cultures traverse from one epoch to another; that a historian may only feel the past of oneself breaking away from the present of oneself. However, Ankersmit further implies that the sublime historical experience can also come to pass through language (Ankersmit, 2001, 237), which opens up the possibility that a historian may read sources, historical representations etc. and experience the past through these

“Historical experience is not the return to a state of primeval innocence, to a state preceding historical writing – it should be situated, instead, in a realm after or beyond all historical writing. Sublimity enters the scene only after all has been said and done; it has no affinity with beginnings, foundations, first principles, and so on. It is the sign that something has come to end” (Ankersmit, 2001, 277).

So despite of the causal model between the concept of experience and the concept of language, the phenomenon of the sublime historical experience which grants access to the concept of experience, can come to pass through language, after everything has been said and done. Ankersmit also directly states that “language itself can be a source of the sublime” (Ankersmit, 2001, 237). The way this could be imagined is that while reading of the Renaissance for example, one would feel the past of the Renaissance breaking away from the present in which the reader is situated, thus provoking a sublime historical experience and thereby also granting access to the concept of experience of the Renaissance. This is one way of explaining it, but Ankersmit himself does not provide any clues of how this works. However, these are the very abstract basics of how Ankersmit’s theory works: One feels the past breaking away from the present because the culture that one is situated in traverses to

another epoch, which then spurs the sublime historical experience, a nostalgic longing for this past, that also gives access to the concept of experience, where it is possible to gain ontological truth and meaning of some part of the past. This may then affect the linguistic representations that the historian in question writes.

Ankersmit's theory is thus very different from the ones proposed by White, Mink and Jenkins. Instead of language, experience is the foundational relation which humanity has to the past. The past is neither absent nor unreachable in Ankersmit's view. Language may function as an epistemic grid, but this grid is surpassed by the sublime historical experience, which may even be the reason for changes in the subject and language. This is beyond what can be expressed in language, an ontological truth of the past which affects the one experiencing it as something more real, which can be likened to trauma; it is beyond what can be processed in the subject's cognitive capabilities and expressed in the subject's representations, but which still affects the subject on a deeper level as something more real than reality. The past thus transgresses into the present in the form of the sublime historical experience, and has the ability to affect the present actively. In this view, the past is not only a target of meaning which is produced by a retrospective present or merely being completely absent outside of language. The past can influence the retrospection through being experienced directly in the present, and thereby be foundational of the meaning produced about the past. In this sense, it is not meaningful to divide past, present and future into strictly separate categories; the past is in the present and affects the present which means that the present will also affect future presents as a past. There is thus an intertwinement of time in Ankersmit's theory due to the ability to have an intellectual experience, and thereby a sublime historical experience, which opens up for the concept of experience. If there is no strict division between the past, the present and the future, it should also be possible to experience the past because the past is here in the present. As Ethan Kleinberg writes, thinkers within the presence paradigm focus on spatiality rather than temporality, the past is in the present because it is here spatially (Kleinberg, 2013, 22), which is exactly what happens when the sublime historical experience occurs. What the theorists of presence and what Ankersmit want to do is to think time differently. Ankersmit has to think time differently to account for his theory of experience because one cannot experience what is essentially not present anymore, but if the past has a presence in the present it is a whole other matter. Then the question becomes how it is possible to relate to such a past, and how the past affects the present which is what Ankersmit

tries to do. Even though Frank Ankersmit's book is mostly about experience, this thesis proposes that the main issue which Frank Ankersmit and other presence thinkers address is the issue of how temporality is perceived. This is because their theories simply do not hold any merit unless one completely alters the perception of time and thus refrains from separating past, present and future into completely different categories.

Eelco Runia:

A theorist who emphasizes this perspective is Eelco Runia in his article "Presence", which is the outcome of several articles which Runia published in "History and Theory" up until 2006. And just as Frank Ankersmit, Runia is very dissatisfied with narrativism:

"Whitean representationalism is like the man in the fairy tale (fairy tale) who sees his wish fulfilled that everything he touches turns into gold - only to discover that the food he desperately wants to eat changes into the precious metal the moment he brings it to his mouth" (Runia, 2006, 4).

What Runia addresses in this quote is the concept of meaning, because Runia believes that by dismantling the mechanics of producing meaning, Hayden White has effectively also dismantled every attempt of successfully establishing meaning. The outcome is thus a vicious cycle of trying to establish some kind of meaning, only to see the attempt destroyed immediately by being deconstructed; thus the metaphor of the man whose food turns into gold. He wants to feed on meaning, but cannot do so because he deconstructs it every time he brings it to his mouth, and is thus doomed to starve. To Runia, Hayden White is therefore like a starving man craving for meaning, but which he forbids himself to eat, not out of necessity, but by choice. Therefore Runia argues that narrativism unveils the mechanics of how continuity is created, but he is not interested in continuity; he is interested in discontinuity (Runia, 2006, 7). Discontinuity is for Runia understood as the past being present in the present, and Runia applies the term presence to cover this phenomena.

"My thesis is that the presence of the past does not primarily reside in the intended story or the manifest metaphorical content of the text, but in what story and text contain in spite of the intentions of the historian. One might say that historical reality travels with historiography not as a paying passenger but as a stowaway. As a stowaway the past "survives" the text; as a stowaway the past may spring surprises on us" (Runia, 2006, 27)

Presence is thus a part of the past which can reside in texts, and which is there, despite of the historian, despite of the cognitive processes and interpretative will of those who write of the past. Here Runia introduces the concept of metonymy to explain how this is possible. Metonymies are displaced words, words which are slightly out of place and do not quite fit the context they are situated in. These metonymies are thus a presence in absence. To explain this further Runia states that monuments, relics and other objects are metonymies, things from the past, from another context, that are slightly out of place in the present and which he calls fremdkörper. This out-of-placeness that these fremdkörper represent also represents the discontinuity that Runia talks about. The displacement provokes the presence of the past, exactly because these fremdkörper come from another context and are odd and awkward in the present (Runia, 2006, 16-20). However, it is not only through monuments that the presence of the past can come to pass.

“Historical texts are full of metonymies, and below metaphor these metonymies are still there, the presence in absence” (Runia, 2006, 26).

Textual metonymical features in historical representations are thus also capable of provoking the presence of the past, the discontinuity. The reason why Runia speaks of metaphor is because he connects metaphor with continuity, and continuity for him is meaning or meaninglessness which narrativism represents; despite of the textual layers of meaning the metonymies creates discontinuity within continuity, and therefore the presence of the past is able survive as a stowaway beneath these layers of meaning.

Furthermore, Anton Froeyman writes that Runia is inspired by Lacan and Lacan’s theory of the split subject and the impossible real. Froeyman explains that according to Lacan, the real is outside the symbolic order, language, and that the real can never be assimilated into language. The real is thus impossible, but still real, which also means that it has the traumatic quality of being a presence in absence. When the subject begins to participate in the symbolic order, the subject is then cut off from ever knowing itself completely, this also means that the subject will be split from the moment it speaks, which further means that there are two ways that the subject engages with the world: One which is conscious through language, and another which is unconscious through the real, and the unconscious determines much more than one would like to think (Froeyman, 2012, 402-403). This explains the nature of how Runia views the presence of the past. The presence of the past is like the impossible real

which affects on an unconscious level, but which cannot be represented in the symbolic order, in language. The past affects the present, but not in a way which can consciously be determined. This concept of the unconscious real can further be seen in Runia's article "Forget about it: Parallel processing in the Srebrenica Report". In this article, Runia writes of parallel processing which is a concept of how a researcher sometimes unwittingly reproduces what the researcher studies. Runia then relates this concept to the historians who wrote the Srebrenica report, and argues that they reproduced the event which they described (Runia, 2004, 295). Runia argues the same about parallel processing in the "Presence" article, but here he argues that the American soldiers who took over the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, reproduced the actions of torture which had formerly been done in the prison; the overwhelming presence of the past affected the American soldiers on an unconscious level to reproduce the atrocities and acts of torture which had been committed in the past (Runia, 2006, 7). The past can therefore actively affect the present on a subconscious level, as the impossible real, and directly force action in the present. Therefore there is no strict division between the present and the past, because the past has a presence in the present, as a presence in absence, as something impossibly real, but which is still *there*:

"The wonder of a historical text is not - as representationalism implies - that it fails to bring us into contact with historical reality, but that it, despite its textuality, somehow, sometimes, does bring us into contact with historical reality. It is clear that this contact is not continuous, that it is not willfully and intentionally brought about by the undistorted mirror of the mind of the historian - as naive historicism had it - but this doesn't alter the fact that the past is present in the present, that the past does spring surprises on us, that though we may not be able to get in contact with historical reality as intensively as we would like, historical reality is, so to speak, very able to get in contact with us" (Runia, 2006, 28).

Runia therefore separates his own theory of presence from both narrativism, which he calls representationalism, and naïve historicism which is closely connected to the material approach explained in the chapter about the concept of functional sources. However, he does not explain exactly how his theory is separate from naïve historicism, but he uses an immense amount of space in his article criticizing narrativism and how presence is different from this direction, just as Ankersmit does. As before-mentioned, both theorists are very much in opposition to narrativism which has dominated historical debates on theory and philosophy

since the 1970s, and both their theories can be seen as a response and a reaction against narrativism borne of the meaninglessness and value-neutrality of the past which it entails. However, both have to consider their position and try to talk about the past itself without resorting to naïve realism (Froeyman, 2012, 394). This is what Runia seeks to achieve in the quotation, but he does not elaborate further on how his position sets itself apart from such a stance. Neither is any explanation on this found in Ankersmit, but implicitly both their theories are different from realism, naïve historicism, materialism or whatever term is used. Their theories consider the past to be present in the present either abstractly in Ankersmit's view, or almost physically in Runia's view so that they can speak of the past itself, which is an aspect that is not considered in materialism. However, the lack of explanation about this particular relationship is because Runia's and Ankersmit's want to refute narrativism and not materialism. If this was not the case, then why should they both spend such energy on raging against narrativism and putting their own theories in opposition to narrativism?

Runia and Ankersmit thus have the same objective of freeing the past from meaninglessness, but as Froeyman writes there is a difference in their theories. For Ankersmit the experience of the past is a conscious state of mind, a nostalgic longing for something of a lost paradise, and the feeling of distance to this past arouses the historical experience. For Runia, on the other hand, the past is something which is too horrible, absurd and chaotic to represent, but which nonetheless affects the present and can force individuals to behave a certain way (Froeyman, 2012, 405). In disagreement with Froeyman, however, Runia does not always seem to believe that the past is horrible or absurd as the examples of the Srebrenica report and Abu Ghraib show. Runia also states that it is not meaning humans want, but presence, and that presence is "being in touch" - either literally or figuratively with people, things, events, and feelings that made you into the person you are" (Runia, 2006, 5). The past is thus not always traumatic as Froeyman describes, it is also something desirable, which relates to the nostalgic feelings that Ankersmit writes of. Moreover, if the past shines through historical representations despite of the historian's intentions, the past need not necessarily be traumatic or absurd, depending on the individual representation. Runia and Ankersmit are thus more of one mind than what Froeyman observes, even though he is correct in the assessment that Runia also believes that the past can have a traumatic and horrible character, whereas Ankersmit only focus on the positive character of the past.

Presence, Narrativism and Time:

As formerly argued, this thesis proposes that the overall question which both Frank Ankersmit and Eelco Runia raise is not that of meaning or experience, but rather a question of time and how time is perceived; the chronosophy which is prevalent when discussing the past. Continuity, the chronological separation of past, present and future, is what these two thinkers attack, and this is the tool which they both use to attack narrativism. Hayden White, for example, believes in a strict chronological ordering of time, and that the present applies meaning and structure to the past in retrospect, meaning and structure which is not inherent to the past. This view presupposes a separation of past and present, because it is implied that there is a present, which is different from the past and temporally distant from the past. If there was no temporal distance, then there would be no past to look back upon. The present is an independent island and so is the past, and language is a barrier which makes it impossible to bridge the gap. This thesis argues that this is what Runia and Ankersmit essentially rebel against: The complete separation of past and present. Ankersmit wants to bridge this temporal gap between past and present with experience. In Ankersmit's view, experience can grant direct access to the past. Experience is even foundational of language, and therefore it does not make sense in this perspective to argue that language separates past and present, which is contrary to the approach of the theorists of the linguistic turn. The ability to experience something with the mind which is outside of the representational system is what gives access to the past. This is reminiscent of Runia's inspiration from Lacan; that there is something which figures outside the symbolic order, something which is impossibly real, but still real, and which affects on an unconscious level. To Ankersmit, though, this is not unconscious but conscious. However, there is the similarity that language is not the only way to engage with the world. There is also an unmediated way to engage with the world, which can even lead to changes in the representational system.

The unmediated engagement with the world, experience, also grants unmediated access to the past, and may then be the basis of change in present representations of the past. The gap between past and present is therefore bridged by experience, which provides ontological truth and meaning beyond language to the present from the past. It may even be wrong to discuss a gap between past and present in this perspective, and instead discuss the lack of a gap; that past and present intersects and is woven together and that the past is here in the present. As formerly mentioned, this is the reason why Ethan Kleinberg argues that the presence theorist

think of time in spatial terms, and not chronological. The past, a temporal phenomenon, is something which can be engaged with in space. Runia also writes that history is not to be thought of as something irredeemably gone, but as an ongoing process (Runia, 2006, 8), i.e. the present is a part of this ongoing process, a part of the past as much as the past is a part of the present. This is why Runia speaks of the presence of the past, because the past is actually *here*. Runia's theory of presence, however, does not rest on experience, which is something the subject can have, but rather that the past resides in things, such as historical representations, monuments and others material things. For Runia, the past is therefore physically here, and not just something which the mind can experience. The past can even provoke physical action directly in the present. Therefore there is a difference between the Runia and Ankersmit. Ankersmit thinks of the past in the present in more abstract and immaterial terms, whereas Runia thinks of the presence of the past as something very material and in very forceful terms. Jenkins, Mink and White would certainly disagree with both Runia and Ankersmit in these temporal perceptions, because their theories rest on completely different underlying chronosophies. As before-mentioned, White's chronosophy is founded upon the separation of past, present and future, where each of these are isolated islands, and it is impossible to reach beyond the present because of the insurmountable barrier of language. Mink, however, is different. For Mink time is not separated because the present is all there is. Language is not a barrier *between* past and present which makes it impossible to reach from one to another, language *is* the past. There is no gap to fill or to bridge, and in this sense Mink resembles Runia and Ankersmit. However, to Mink there is no past at all, contrary to what Runia and Ankersmit believe. The present is thus all there is in the view of Mink, whereas Hayden White believes in a very traditional linear chronosophy. Mink and White thus disagree on the nature of time, but despite of their differences they arrive at the same conclusion regarding the relation between the past and the present, even though different reasons are provided. The separation of past and present by language, the consequence of White's theory, means that there can never be a relation between past and present. Only in terms of how the present retrospectively narrates the past, which is only an expression of the present culture. Language is thus the only way in which it is possible to relate to the past, but language is incapable of representing the past as the past really was. The relation to the past is hindered by language, and this relation can thus only be the present's own relation to itself. The same conclusion goes for Mink, but here language is not a hindrance, it is simply the

past. There can never be a relation between the past and the present because the past does not exist outside language in the present, which is also why, as formerly mentioned, Mink writes that there is no unknown knowledge of the past, there is nothing waiting to be discovered of the past because what is discovered is created. Runia and Ankersmit would furiously disagree with this point because they believe in a past that is concrete, which exists despite of language, or else their theories would simply fall apart. They are bound to believe in a fixed past because otherwise there could be no presence of the past in the present, and the idea that the past is created is what they both spend an immense amount of time arguing against. For Mink, though, the relation between the past and the present is merely a reflection of the present's relation to itself and the present's engagement with language. So whether language serves as a barrier or whether language is all there is, the relation between past and present is non-existent in both White's and Mink's view.

This non-existent relation between past and present is what Runia and Ankersmit tries to remedy and attack with theories, and they both do so by stating that the past is *in* the present in each their way. There cannot be a non-existent relation between past and present if the past actually exists in the present, and this is how they counter narrativism. Narrativists such as White and Mink would call this concept nonsensical, whether it was argued on the premises of experience or presence. A narrativist answer to Ankersmit's concept of experience would be that it simply is not possible to experience anything beyond language. Language will always be the interpretative grid which determines the experience of the subject; the world is experienced through language and so is the past. Experience can thus never be independent because experience will always be tied to language. A sublime historical experience is just not possible in this view, or the sublime historical experience would simply be the product of a self-told narrative, it could not exist outside language. The same goes for Runia's theory of presence which amongst other things manifests itself in parallel processing, or as a stowaway that travels with historical representations. In a narrativist perspective, the action of certain individuals could never be ascribed to such a phenomenon as parallel processing that the past affects an individual directly which leads to certain action. If a person were to be affected it would be through language, and how that individual interpreted the part of the past in question, which thereon after could lead to action. The action, however, would solely be based on the individuals experience though language and not by the past itself. The idea of the past as a stowaway in historical representations would be equally ludicrous in a narrativist

view. Historical representations are narratives and narratives only. White, Mink and Jenkins all emphasize that meaning is created in present and that there is nothing within historical representations, which lies outside the text, and therefore there cannot be any presence of the past which as a stowaway shines through the layer of text.

In agreement with the narrativists, both Runia and Ankersmit's theories have problematic aspects. The concept of parallel processing probably has its merits in psychology, but whether the past can actually force individuals to certain kinds of action is at least dubious. The question which comes to mind is how this functions; does it have to be a recent past for example? Is it possible to be forced to action by something which happened hundreds or even thousands of years ago? If not, then where is the limit, and if there is a limit is it not just because that the recent past is more present in language? Runia's example of the American soldiers who turned to torture because of the overwhelming presence of the past seems very extreme, and could be a case of false coherence. At least numerous other explanations seem to come to mind such as that the soldiers were at war and under extreme pressure, that they were ordered to do it, that they had grudges because of 9/11 and so on. These are more reasonable explanations than the past of Abu Ghraib overwhelmed them and dictated the soldiers to torture their prisoners. There is of course no way to prove which explanation is true. This is because Runia believes this happens on an unconscious level, but the leap of faith required to believe in Runia's scenario is just too great. Ankersmit's theory of the sublime historical experience is equally mind boggling. There is almost a religious fervor to the sublime historical experience because the subject experiencing it becomes one with the experience, and the experience may then change the subject accordingly to the ontological truth revealed; touched by divinity. As Michael Roth writes, Ankersmit tries to romanticize the relationship to the past by saying that the historian should trust in oneself rather than trust theory (Roth, 2007, 70). It is hard to grasp such a concept in relation to history, and one could ask: What is a *historical* experience? It could be argued that history is discursive and paradigmatic, and no one knows if the practice will stay the same, and whether it will even be called history in the future. The question is then how it is possible to experience something sublime, something beyond language, if history is not an inherent part of the world, but a paradigmatic practice of dealing with the past, and therefore very much a part of language. The term sublime historical experience is thus paradoxical unless history is seen as an inherent part of the world, which may be the case with Ankersmit. It can be argued that the

past is inherent to the world and that something happens before something else, but how humankind choose to deal with the past can hardly be argued to be predetermined.

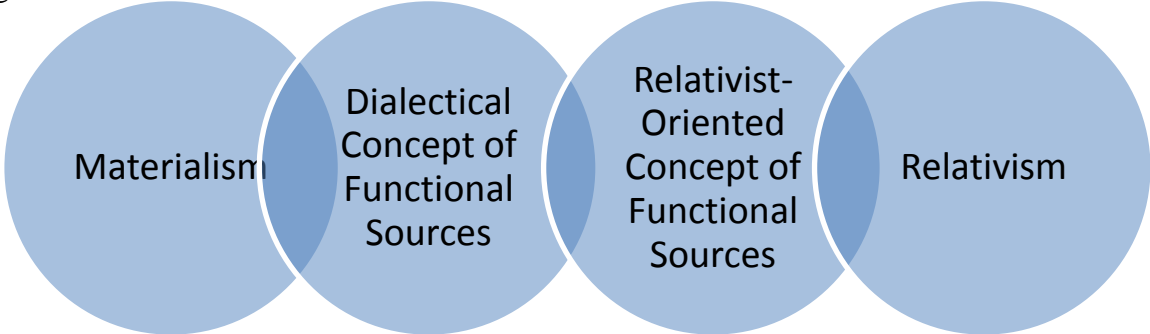
There are many problems with both theories, but the core issue, as Froeyman writes, is that both theorist tries to establish a way to talk about the past itself, outside of linguistic representation, but without resorting to naïve positivism (Froeyman, 2012, 394). Both Ankersmit and Runia are very skeptical of the relativism which the linguistic turn brought along, and their theories can be seen as a rebellion against relativism and narrativism in order to save history as a discipline; that language is not everything, that the past exists on its own and has some kind of meaning which does not spring from the present, and therefore it is still fruitful to continue the current practice, and believe that historical representations still contain truth and meaning regardless of the historian. Runia and Ankersmit would not argue that the academic attention within history should be diverted away from the current practice, and instead focus on the narrative qualities of history. This is because they believe that what historian's are currently doing is basically still correct, because language of historical representations either have metonymies which provoke presence in Runia's view, or provoke a sublime historical experience.

Despite of these things and the above-mentioned problems, both Runia and Ankersmit have an interesting point: That the past is *here*. If all the excess arguments and theoretical constellations are cut away, both theorists basically argue that the past has a presence in the present. The ways which they argue that the past is here may be more or less problematic, but disregard these for a moment and just consider the simple and insightful observation that the past is in the present. One could ask Hayden White, for example, where his tropological figures originate from? If the past and the present are separate islands, then these figures must be of the present and constantly invented or reinvented in the present. This is a problem for Mink, White and Jenkins because their underlying temporal perception erects barriers of language between past and present or that language is the past, but is the language which they talk about really of the present? Another question which comes to mind is when something becomes past and when something is present. Mink, White and Jenkins all argue that there is no relation between past and present and that the second one looks back in retrospect it is already a present perception of the past. Therefore the answer must be that past and present radically breaks apart from each other all the time, and thus the present is constantly in a flux

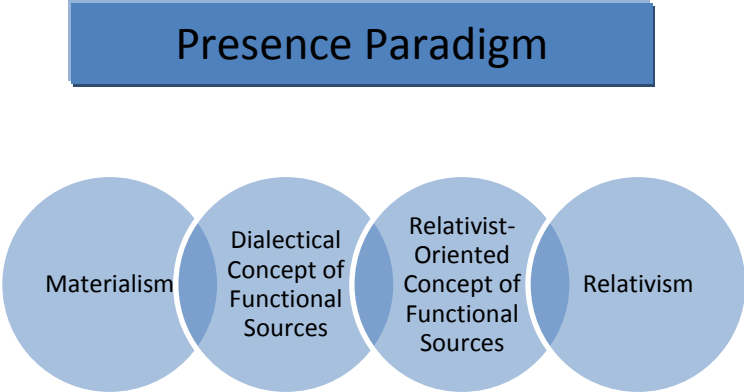
of reinvention because there is no relation to the past; there is nothing which is carried along from the past to the present, because the past breaks away from the present every time that the past is dealt with retrospectively. The consequence of a theory such as White's is thus that drama, tragedy and comedy are constantly invented in the present. These tropological figures and the meaning implied in these do not *come* from anywhere. This is what is interesting about Ankersmit and Runia because they acknowledge that the present comes from *something*, and that the present is not just a lonely island, hence Runia's comment that history should be thought about as an ongoing process. Their theories about this relationship are utterly problematic, but this simple insight is very interesting. What they actually do is to shift the discussion away from the traditional dichotomy between relativism and materialism, so instead of just continuing the same old discussion they attack the question about the past from a whole other angle.

Presence and Methodology:

Original discussion:



Presence paradigm in relation to the original discussion:



The reason why presence has its own line is because it does not figure within the original discussion between relativism and materialism. It is impossible to place the presence paradigm along the line between these concepts because it deals with another question, or at least asks the question differently, and this is the truly interesting insight which the presence paradigm has to offer.

The question is then how this insight can be utilized in relation to a practical method. If there is a relation between the past and the present, then how is it possible to work with this relation in the present, and is it possible to improve upon the concept of functional sources with this insight?

As before-mentioned, Runia argues that the presence of the past shines through historical representations, despite of the layers of language and the intention of the historian. If this is the case, then there is no need to reexamine the current practice, because it is already capable of delivering what is needed. The same situation applies to Ankersmit because it is possible to experience the sublime historical experience through reading or looking at art. The problem is, however, that these experiences of the past in both Runia's and Ankersmit's case, are extremely subjective, and furthermore, as Kleinberg remarks, both presence and the sublime historical experience are *passive* phenomena (Kleinberg, 2013, 24). The presence of Runia suddenly overwhelms one without the awareness of the subject, and there is no way to guarantee a sublime historical experience either. The only thing which these theories add up to is saving the past, but they do nothing for the discipline of history. Because these phenomena are subjective and passive, it is impossible to base an academic methodological approach on these. Therefore there is not much which the presence paradigm has to offer to improve upon the concept of functional sources, because all that the historians can do is to wait around and hope that either of these phenomena happens, or that the past hopefully shines through their representations. Even worse, one would have to fear the past if the parallel processing which Runia describes suddenly overwhelms one and forces one to commit atrocious acts. The presence paradigm has an interesting insight to offer in relation to the past, but methodologically it is completely useless. The concept of functional sources, which first of all is a practical method, therefore has little gain from incorporating presence or the sublime historical experience. The only thing these theories may support is a theoretical attack on relativism, which perhaps appeal to those historians whose perception have ties to

materialism, such as the dialectical branch of the concept of functional sources; they now have more substantial critique than just wrongfully accusing narrativism for encouraging nihilism. However, the presence paradigm cannot change anything in the current practice; it can only support this practice by encouraging continuing the practice and then just hope for the best, or fear the worst. This is the Achilles' heel of the presence paradigm, because hoping for the best is simply not enough to base an entire academic discipline on. Instead, it would be much more fruitful if there was a way to actively work methodologically with the relation between past and present *in* the present, if the relation is actually there.

However, recently there have been methodological approaches inspired by the temporal perception which the presence paradigm has introduced, and thus also attempts at working with the relation between past and present. In this thesis this paradigm is called the ghost paradigm, which can be argued to be a mutation of the presence paradigm that borrows some of the theoretical insights from Eelco Runia and Frank Ankersmit while also rejecting some of their arguments. This mutation is mainly carried forward by Berber Bevernage, a Belgian Researcher from the University of Ghent, but it has also found an expression in Dorthe Gert Simonsen, a Danish researcher from the University of Copenhagen. Both researchers are heavily inspired by Jacques Derrida, who is perhaps most known for his contribution to the linguistic turn by introducing deconstructivism, who they none the less apply in a different way than usual.

But before the attention is turned to the next chapter which contains the ghost paradigm, it is time to discuss Frank Ankersmit's most recent contribution to the discussion, which is found in his book "Meaning, Truth, and Reference". As mentioned in the introduction to the chapter, this book contains views that build on some of the previous work which Ankersmit has done, and it is an attempt to make the previous described passiveness of the presence paradigm into an active approach that can support the discipline of history. This is the problem with the presence paradigm, because it succeeds in saving the past, but it cannot be used to save the discipline of history, and this is what Ankersmit tries to remedy with this book. The views expressed in the book will be analyzed and discussed in relation to the overall discussion, and how the insights of the book may contribute to the concept of functional sources.

Frank Ankersmit. The Effort to Make Presence Active:

The main argument of “Meaning, Truth, and Reference” revolves around trying to separate representation, and specifically historical representation, from description, and thereby establishing representation as something in its own right. Currently, representation is not an established linguistic phenomenon, and this is what Ankersmit tries to remedy, and in doing so he thereby tries to support the current practice of writing history; at least this is what will be argued in this thesis.

Ankersmit argues that there is a distinction between description and representation. Ankersmit writes that description or true statements require a specific ontology: An ontology in which the world is made up of unique identifiable objects and that these objects can be ascribed properties using the predicates of the true statements whose subject terms refer to those objects (Ankersmit, 2012, 65). This means that A, the predicate of the true statement, refers to B, the unique object which is identifiable by the properties ascribed by A. This is the simple form of description that A refers to B. However, Ankersmit argues that this is not the case with historical representation. In the case of historical representation, representation and attribution cannot clearly be differentiated from each other. It is impossible to say which word, sentence, chapter or section in a historical representation that attributes certain properties to a specific historical event; it is rather the whole of the historical representation and not its individual parts which attributes properties to the event in question, and therefore it is different from description (Ankersmit, 2012, 66 and 92). Ankersmit further argues that it is impossible to apply the criteria of propositional truth to argue for one representation over another. This is because representations are different *aspects* of the world. To explain this concept of aspects, Ankersmit develops what he calls a three-way operator that adheres to representation, and which is different from the two-way operator that adheres to description i.e. that A refers to B. The three-way operator is instead (1) a representation (2) which defines a represented (3) in terms of which the world is seen. Ankersmit further explains this in terms of a metaphor: (1) The metaphor (2) invites to see to world (3) as a spaceship. Number 3, the spaceship, is the aspect, and this aspect invites the reader to view the world in a certain way and enables historical representation to cross the demarcation line between language and reality (Ankersmit, 2012 67-77).

The reason why aspects enable historical representations to do this is because these aspects are not directly parts of the world, they are rather abstractions. Ankersmit gives an example with the renaissance, a thing which is not directly a thing of the world but an abstraction. These abstractions, however, these aspects, are a stronger brew than truth because they reveal more than true statements, like a caricature which does not entirely resemble the person in question, but yet reveals more about the person than a photograph (Ankersmit, 2012, 92-107). This is what Ankersmit means when he says that, what he calls representational truth, is a stronger brew than propositional truth such as those found in true statements; even though these aspects are abstractions they reveal more about the character of the event, era etc. than is possible by description "I propose to define representational truth as what the world, or its objects, reveal to us in terms of its aspects" (Ankersmit, 2012, 107). Ankersmit thus argues that representational truth bridges the gap between language and reality by linking the textual level of the historical representation and its presented, which is not a conceptual entity like a word's meaning but an aspect of the world itself (Ankersmit, 2012, 107). An example could be again be the renaissance, an abstraction, which to Ankersmit is an aspect which cannot be referred to directly in the world, but still presents a part of that past in a certain light, just like a caricature that reveals more about a person than a photograph. The different aspects are not merely textual abstractions meant for the present to make the past comprehensive, but rather aspects of the world itself; inherent truths of the world and the past, which cannot be referred to because of their abstract nature, but which nonetheless reveals more than description and true statements, again remember the metaphor of the caricature.

The question is then what happens when there are more historical representations on the same subject. Ankersmit answers this by turning to meaning and presence. He argues that each historical representation helps to fix meaning because they are measured against each other, and here he draws on Saussure and writes that: "Each representation of parts of the past that is added to an already existing set will help refine the semantic contours of all others in that (always open) set" (Ankersmit, 2012, 147). There can thus always be added to the pool, but to Ankersmit meaning of texts in relation to other texts is not incompatible with intrinsic meaning (Ankersmit, 2012, 147). Furthermore, this accumulation of meaning also grants presence. Ankersmit argues that representations grant presence to something which is absent because knowledge is accumulated through aspects. The way this works is that each and every historical representation highlights different aspects of the same situation, and the more

aspects which are accumulated, the more presence is granted “Presence is achieved collectively by all the representations there are and could possibly be” (Ankersmit, 2012, 159). Thus Ankersmit returns to the ideas of the presence paradigm, but this time he does not advocate a passive approach to historical research, but rather for the continuous accumulation of historical representations, and thereby also accumulation of knowledge, representational truth and meaning. In the end, Ankersmit returns to the ideas of the sublime, where he writes that presence is an aspect of the sublime, and that representational truth also has its ground in the sublime (Ankersmit, 2012, 172 -174).

The Theory of Representation and Methodological Consequences:

Ankersmit thus return to his former theory, but the aim of his book is rather to write of historical representation and how to separate historical representation from description. As formerly mentioned, this is a more active approach than the one Ankersmit describes in “Sublime Historical Experience”, because there is a way to actively pursue presence, to pursue meaning and representational truth. The way this is done is through writing representations, and thereby accumulating aspects on different subject matters, which then in turn allows for greater presence of the past, which itself is an aspect of the sublime. What can this approach then add to the concept of functional sources? The simple answer is that it cannot add anything new to the process. The concept of functional sources already revolves around asking different questions to the material, and then trying to answer the question. The process is already meant to end up with some kind of historical representation of what is researched by asking these questions, and the questions can be on the same subject, but with a different perspective. The requirement of producing different aspects of the same subject to accumulate presence, meaning and representational truth is thus already met by the concept of functional sources, and therefore the theory of historical representation cannot add anything new to this method. However, the theory of historical representation can be applied as a theoretical foundation to support the current practice. The presence paradigm could not really be applied for this because of the passive element, which is embedded in the paradigm. This theory, on the other hand, can actively support the foundation of the current practice by explaining the relation between the past and historical representations. So, if the mission is to continue the practice of the concept of functional sources, then this theory is amenable support to do so, even though that the underlying theoretical assumption would have to be reworked to fit the theory; the practice would nonetheless stay the same.

If this is done, then the question is whether Ankersmit is successful in separating representation from description, and in this pursuit there are several problems. His foundational model of the three-way operator is important to his theory because it differentiates representations from description which is only a two way operator. Instead of just having A which refers to B there is (1) a representation (2) a represented (3) and an aspect of the represented. Ankersmit continuously warns against conflating 1 and 3 so that the representation and the aspect are not viewed as the same, but how is this meaningful? The aspect invites the reader to view the world in a certain way, but does the representation not do this itself? Another problem is his statement that the aspect may be an abstraction which cannot be referred to in the world, but despite of this is still a part of the world. If the aspect cannot be referred to in the world, then it is exactly because aspects are a part of *language*, and not the world as Ankersmit argues. Thereby it is possible to eliminate one of the elements in his three-way operator. The whole notion of the aspect is also peculiar because it does not adhere to propositional truth, but this also means that it is possible to have equally legitimate but mutually exclusive representations, as Hayden White writes about. If aspects are part of the world, then it means that if some subject of the past has aspects which are equally legitimate but mutually exclusive, the world is inherently paradoxical; both aspects on the same subject are legitimate parts of the world, but still in complete opposition to each other. This simply does not make any sense, which emphasizes that the aspects which Ankersmit talks about are part of language and not the world. It would perhaps if Ankersmit was a Lacanian and did not have any trouble with things being inherently paradoxical, but it appears through his argument of aspects that he has not thought about this at all. Instead it seems that Ankersmit presupposes that these aspects are coherent and that the continuous development of aspects will identify the past, just as a scientist tries to identify and explain the laws of nature. There is thus a very positivist notion implied in Ankersmit's idea of aspects. Secondly, Ankersmit argues that representation is different from description because it is impossible to say which word, sentence, chapter or section of a historical representation that attributes certain properties to a specific historical event; it is rather the whole of the historical representation and not its individual parts which attributes properties to the event in question. Ankersmit is correct in this observation, but one could then ask if the whole of the representation does not refer to a particular event? There is no reason why representation is any different from description in this regard, other than it is the whole of the representation

which attributes certain properties to the object in question. One could therefore say that A, the whole of the representation, refers to and attributes properties to B, the represented, which is identifiable by the properties assigned to it by A. Then there is no difference in the way that description and representation functions at all other than the amount of properties ascribed. Ankersmit's aim to separate representation and description is therefore at the very least questionable, and when the foundation of the theory is questionable, it should be considered thoroughly before it is used as a theoretical foundation for a methodological practice, even though it does not change the practice. On a practical level, it does not even make a lot of sense to exchange one set of theoretical assumption with another, when it changes nothing in relation to the actual historical research process or the historical work. However, it would solve the inherently paradoxical nature of the concept of functional sources and the practice connected to thus concept which is anything but coherent. Ankersmit's theory would just legitimize the practice, and argue to forget the theory. This is one of the problems with the theory of representation: It seems more an attempt to argue for the way things have always been done, rather than to search for new and exciting ways of how to work with the past. Ankersmit's new book is thus interesting in its own right, but the problem is that Ankersmit has to find a way of how to make the passive ideas of the presence paradigm into an active approach, and still retain the current practice, which seems to be his goal. Therefore he combines presence with the attempt to set historical representation apart from description, but the outcome is dubious; both in terms of trying to make presence active through aspects, and because his arguments of the particularity of representations are problematic.

Ankersmit's effort of making presence active is thus problematic as a whole, while the notion of presence itself cannot contribute to or develop upon the concept of functional sources. However, recently there has been a theoretical development that focuses explicitly on time, something which the presence paradigm began. This development is called the ghost paradigm, and the next chapter will revolve around this.

The Ghost Paradigm:

One of the more recent developments within historical theory and philosophy is the ghost paradigm. The ghost paradigm is a term used in this thesis to cover this development, and the term cannot be found anywhere else. The ghost paradigm has mainly found its expression internationally in Berber Bevernage with his book "History, Memory, and State-Sponsored

Violence” from 2012. Berber Bevernage is a professor at the University of Ghent in Belgium, and has published articles in “History and Theory” leading up to the publication of his book. These articles revolve around the same issues as the book, which mainly focuses on two themes: A philosophical discussion of time and history, and a more practical dimension and examination of transitional justice. Bevernage has since developed his interest for the theoretical and philosophical field of history, and created “The International Network for Theory of History”¹ that held its inaugural conference in Ghent 2013, in which I myself participated. Bevernage’s theory focuses on time in general and a critique of time in academic history and how time is experienced in countries with traumatic pasts. Bevernage has observed a difference between the temporal perception in academic history and these countries where he conducted his research. Bevernage thus builds a theory of time and a critique of how time is utilized in academic history, by using Derrida’s principle of spectrality; that time is out of joint, which will be elaborated on later. Another researcher who also uses Derrida’s principles is Dorthe Gert Simonsen, a Danish Professor at the University of Copenhagen. Simonsen also focuses on time in the effort to discuss the problems which the linguistic turn poses to academic history. She does this in her book, “Tegnets tid “(red. Time of the Sign), which was published in 2003. The book is an edited version of Simonsen’s PhD thesis, and before the book she published articles in Danish academic journals, which revolved around the same issues as the book raises. Simonsen is inspired by New Historicism, but just as Bevernage, she also applies Derrida’s idea of spectrality to create a theory of time, which she calls radical historicity. The ghost or specter is therefore a central concept to both of these authors’ theories; something which is absent, but still present, and this is why they are treated under the term, ghost paradigm, in this thesis.

Even though both theorists arrive at similar outcomes, the outcomes are of different reactions. Berber Bevernage’s theory can be seen as a mutation of the presence paradigm. It builds on similar concepts of time, but yet still goes in another direction and disagrees with some of the fundamental assumptions of the presence paradigm. Furthermore, Bevernage directly addresses the issue of time. Ankersmit and Runia are only interested in responding to the challenges which the linguistic turn raises, and they only indirectly address the issue of time as a consequence of their mission. Simonsen’s theory, however, is not a response or mutation of the presence paradigm, which was not even fully developed when she published her book

¹ <http://www.inth.ugent.be/>

in 2003. Rather, her theory is a response to the resistance within the discipline of history against the linguistic turn, and what she calls the postmodern challenge to history. Both theorists arrive at Derrida's idea of spectrality, and from this idea they construct new theories of time, but the origin from which they grow are very different.

This chapter revolves around the theories that Berber Bevernage and Dorthe Gert Simonsen have produced. As in the other chapters, these theories will be analyzed and explained, and then further discussed in relation to the issues raised by the earlier paradigms. Lastly, it will be discussed how the ideas of the ghost paradigm can contribute methodologically to the practice of history. First of all, though, there will be an introduction to Jacques Derrida's idea of spectrality, which he presents in the book "Specters of Marx". The reason for this is that both Simonsen and Bevernage theoretically borrow heavily from Derrida, and their theories are thus more comprehensible in the proper context.

Jacques Derrida:

The book "Specters of Marx" from 1994 was made in relation to a conference called "Whither Marxism?" in which Derrida participated (Derrida, 1994, Editors preface), and the book thus revolves around the issue of Marx and Marxism in connection to Derrida's idea of the specter. Derrida's initial idea which underlies his concept of the ghost is that "Time is out of joint" (Derrida, 1994, 20); a puzzling statement. However, the sense of the statement is that the present is non-contemporaneous with itself; the present is not *only* the present:

"The present is what passes, the present comes to pass, it lingers in this transitory passage, in the coming-and-going, *between* what *goes* and what *comes*, in the middle of what leaves and what arrives, at the articulation between what absents itself and what presents itself. This in-between articulates conjointly the double articulation according to which the two movements are adjoined. Presence is enjoined, ordered, distributed in the two directions of absence, at the articulation of what is no longer and what is not yet" (Derrida, 1994, 30).

The present is therefore of the past, but further it is also something which will be of the future, even more than that, the past is *in* the present and the present is *in* the future, which is why time is out of joint. Time is never just a single conceptual category as past, present and future, these concepts are part of each other. This is also the way which Derrida imagines the ghost or the specter:

“Repetition *and* first time this is perhaps the question of the event as question of the ghost. What is a ghost? What is the *effectivity* or the *presence* of a specter, that is, of what seems to remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial as a simulacrum? Is there *there*, between the thing itself and its simulacrum, an opposition that holds up? Repetition *and* first time, makes of it also a *last time*. Each time it is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Altogether other. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it a *hauntology*” (Derrida, 1994, 10).

The ghost is a repetition of the past, and yet it is still the first time that this repetition appears, and despite of being a repetition it is still unique from the phenomenon which it is a repetition of. Present phenomena thus refer back to past phenomena in the sense that they are repetitions thereof, but still different, and in this way the past is a part of present phenomena, part of the present as a ghost, and the present is a ghost of what is to come. The present is thus temporally open both forward and backward; time is open.

This further leads Derrida to write of inheritance, and the nature of what humankind inherits “We inherit the very thing that allows us to bear witness to it. As for Hölderling, he calls this language, “the most dangerous of goods,” given to man “so that he bears witness to having inherited/what he is” (Derrida, 1994, 68). The nature of what is inherited from the past is thus language, and therefore it is clear that Derrida believe worldly phenomena to be engrossed in language. In this sense one can see the inspiration which Derrida draws from Ferdinand De Saussure, who believes that the nature of the linguistic sign is arbitrary. That the sign is arbitrary means that there is no immediate connection between the signifier, a word such as “dog”, and the signified, the actual dog, because the signifier can be replaced with any other word as proved by the different words used in different languages for the concept of dog. This leads Saussure to conclude that the language system is socially constructed (Saussure, 1961, 67-70). However, Saussure further argues that even though the language system is socially constructed it is also subject to time “No matter what period we choose or how far back we go, language always appears as a heritage of the preceding period (...) a particular language-state is always the product of historical forces, and these forces explain why the sign is unchangeable, i.e. why it resists arbitrary substitution” (Saussure, 1961, 71-72). So, even though that signs are arbitrary and in part socially constructed, signs and languages do not just change at any given moment because they are inherited. Language thus acquires its own *materiality* through its temporal character. The present is able to inherit language because

language is a *thing*. This materiality of language and its temporal character is something Derrida borrows from Saussure and develops upon with his idea of the ghost.

“Let us consider first of all, the radical and necessary *heterogeneity* of an inheritance (...) and inheritance is never gathered together, it is never one with itself. Its presumed unity, if there is one, can consist only in the *injunction to reaffirm by choosing*. “One must” means *one must filter, sift, criticize, one must sort out several different possibilities that inhabit the same injunction. And inhabit it in a contradictory fashion around a secret. If the readability of a legacy were given, natural, transparent, univocal, if it did not call for and at the same time defy interpretation, we would never have anything to inherit from it*” (Derrida, 1994, 18).

The linguistic inheritance is temporally open, but also open *meaning-wise*. If the phenomena of the world, which are immersed in language, were closed meaning-wise, if there was a *final* truth and meaning of the past, then nothing could be inherited. The heterogeneity of meaning which the linguistic inheritance has means that the past is able to be inherited. To Derrida, it is therefore an impossibility to finally describe any worldly phenomena, and this impossibility makes it possible for the past to be in the present, and the present in the future as a ghost. The specter or the ghost is thus first of all openness in the materiality of language due to the openness of time.

Dorthe Gert Simonsen:

Dorthe Gert Simonsen is inspired by these thoughts of Derrida, and builds her theory of time on the premise that “nothing can evade time” (Simonsen, 2003, 13). Her reason to create this theory is grounded in Simonsen’s dissatisfaction with the theoretical debates at the time she wrote the book, which according to Simonsen all too often revolved around the polarization between construction and reality, that has been called relativism and materialism in this thesis, and this is a polarization she wishes to overcome (Simonsen, 2003, 39-40). Simonsen’s theory should therefore not be seen as an attempt to attack narrativism, as Ankersmit and Runia do, or to further support this stance, but rather to displace the debate between the dichotomy of materialism and relativism. The way which Simonsen does this is through considering and rethinking the concept of time in relation to history. Simonsen thus have a similar approach as Runia and Ankersmit, but the difference is that Simonsen directly observes time to be of crucial significance, whereas Runia and Ankersmit only implicitly deal with time through their theories of presence and experience.

In dealing with the concept of time, Simonsen deconstructs the prevalent concept of time within the discipline of history: “Time is rarely discussed in historical debates even though history deals with temporal phenomena. Rather, time appears as an unproblematic frame in historical research and is often equated with chronology. Time has thus become a classification tool. Time is therefore the most significant unreflected truism of history” (Simonsen, 2003, 39). Simonsen thus reflect upon the current status of time in history, and she defines this concept of time as mechanical time. Mechanical time is chronology, an unreflected way of structuring past events by synthesizing the time of past worlds, and this time is moreover universal, homogenous and linear which furthermore has a direction toward the future. There is thus an implicit connection between chronology and progress. Mechanical time therefore also becomes an alibi for the strict separation between past, present and future (Simonsen, 2003, 52-61). This strict division between temporal categories is what Simonsen attacks with her idea of radical historicity, which means that nothing can evade time.

The premise that nothing can evade time is the foundation of the theory which Simonsen proposes. Simonsen’s explanation of radical historicity is that phenomena, textual or material, are never closed entities in the sense that nothing in this world is *final*, which is the same idea as Derrida’s: “Signs and texts cannot be fixed, things and events are historical in a radical sense i.e. they are not just *there* at any given moment. The historicity breaks them apart from the inside as all places and materials are subject to time“, (my emphasis), (Simonsen, 2003, 25). In this sense, there is no phenomenon which is completely consistent with itself. This seems a complex concept, but the idea of it is that all phenomena are open entities because of time. Nothing remains *completely* the same from one moment to another, even though there is continuity between one being and the other being. Simonsen’s here creates the term *fixion*, which is the meaning-wise identification and fixation of phenomena, which is what humans do to categorize and understand the world around them, but the *fixions* created are like snapshots of things that constantly moves, and it is therefore an impossible effort to make a *final* *fixion* because everything is subjected to time (Simonsen, 2003, 43 and 52). Simonsen borrows a quote from Michel de Certeau which explains this idea: “Time is precisely the impossibility of an identity fixed by a place” (Simonsen, 2003, 43). If phenomena are able to be identified by their spatial position, then time causes such identities to break apart (Simonsen, 2003, 43). However, this inherent inconsistency is not exclusive to worldly phenomena alone; the inconsistency is also inherent to time itself. Time itself constantly

moves, is heterogeneous and constantly breaks apart, and this is manifested in all phenomena of the world. Furthermore, this inconsistency which is manifested in the phenomena also leaves an opening towards the past and towards the future; the present is temporally out of joint with itself, which leaves an opening both forward and backward (Simonsen, 2003, 51).

This is where Simonsen introduces Derrida's notion of spectrality and ghosts, which is established above, to explain this temporal inconsistency that is inherent in time and thereby also in the phenomena of the world. Ghosts are not present, but neither are they absent, and they are not an exact copy of anything, but they do refer to something else. This is cryptic and puzzling, but the idea is that phenomena in general are like these ghosts, which refer to something that was before, but that are still unique in their appearance; the phenomena are repetitions of something which came before, but repetitions that are still different and unique from what they refer to, and furthermore these phenomena are then open to be repeated in the future, even though that repetition will also be different. Simonsen applies a metaphor to explain this concept: "A war, an opera, a railroad – they are all defined as such because they are understood as repetitions of something else, but also as specific, unique examples thereof" (Simonsen, 2003, 49). As explained before, the idea even goes further than that because the specific war, opera or railroad in question will not even stay consistent and the same over time. To Simonsen, this is not a problem because this is actually what enables historical knowledge to exist. The inconsistency leaves an opening in every phenomenon which makes it possible to inherit from the past "If the heritage from the past is supposed to be possible, the events of the past cannot be limited and final as they would be if they were consistent with themselves" (Simonsen, 2003, 52). In this perspective, if a phenomenon was final, fixated in both place and time, then it would be dead because it could only be accessed in that specific time and place, in that sole moment, and future presents would then have no access to the phenomenon at all; nothing could ever be known of the phenomenon, because it would be dead in the sense that the phenomenon would be without meaning. That nothing is final because of time enables the ability to know something of the past, because the past extends into the present through being repeated, not as the past itself, but as repetitions which are unique and different that retain reference to past phenomena. The past is thus a ghostly presence in the phenomena of the world, just as the present will be a ghostly presence in future presents "A phenomenon's "historical" change can be understood as a repetition of what once were and a difference to this" (Simonsen, 2003, 85). Simonsen thus argues that

there is already something “other” inscribed in the core of every phenomenon; the “other” which comes from the past and that the present phenomena is also an opening towards the future as the “other” of future phenomena. Thus, when something is described as *this* there will always be an “other” involved (Simonsen, 2003, 87).

To explain the relation between her chronosophy and history, Simonsen uses Derrida’s explanation of the Original and the Translation as an analogy to the historical source and the historical representation. The idea is that the Original has meaning because the Original was never a closed circuit of meaning to begin with, it was never final. The meaning of the Original is only discovered in relation to the Translation; the relation between these two concepts is what defines and delimits the meaning of the Original, so the creation of the Translation creates a relation which defines the meaning of the Original that also becomes a point of reference for the Translation. As Simonsen writes, “The core of the Original is always postponed” (Simonsen, 2003, 165), which underscores the idea of meaning being defined and created in relation to something else “the other”; The Original thus serves as “the other” of the Translation, just as much as the Translation is “the other” of the Original. Simonsen therefore emphasizes that the Original and the Translation are co-dependent of each other, but that the Translation is not a copy or a projection of the Original; the Translation rather continually develops the meaning of the Original (Simonsen, 2003, 165).

As explained, Dorthe Gert Simonsen uses this idea as an analogy to history, to the sources and the historical representations thereof. However, Simonsen notes that there are differences between this idea of the Original and the Translation and the case of history. The idea is not directly translatable to history because the Original of history is not what the discipline actually deals with; the Original of history is the past, but the object of research are the sources and not the past itself. The sources are already a Translation of an Original, and thus the historical representation of the sources will always be a Translation of Translations. Simonsen thus states that: “The sources can only constitute themselves as “original” (...) through translation and reference to the sources by the historical representations” (Simonsen, 2003, 166). This goes back to the idea that the Original and the Translation are co-dependent. The sources become Originals by their relation to the historical representation in the sense that the historical representations establish a link between the past and the sources. The sources thus *need* the representations to constitute them in relation to the past and continually

develop their meaning, just as much as the representations depend on the sources to be constituted as representations. The sources and the representations are thus the “other” in each other. The past thus becomes the “other” of the sources, and therefore also the “other” of the representations through the sources “Historical sources refer to, and develop the past other (...) through our translation of the sources, and the sources then become the “other” of our representations” (Simonsen, 2003, 169-170).

This also goes back to Simonsen’s idea that the present is non-contemporaneous with itself, and that it is neither a whole in itself. The present needs an “other” to be explained as *this* present, which is where the past enters the scene. However, the meaning of the past is also established in this relation, and so is the meaning of the present, but the meaning of both is always *postponed*. The meaning is never final because finality means death. In this perspective, if the final meaning of the present and the past could be established, they would die. The reason for this is that they would then be unable to influence anything in the future; that meaning is postponed means that the past and the present *lives*, because the meaning can continually be developed and thereby influence the future by becoming a part of it in this relation of continual development of meaning. The essence of Simonsen’s theory therefore lies in the ghostly relation between past, present and future, which makes each of these concepts non-contemporaneous with themselves. The non-contemporaneity of time, that meaning is always postponed, enables past, present and future to breathe life into each other in the form of a ghostly presence. The ghost is of course a metaphor for the idea that the present, or any other time, is not just itself; that things which came before are part of the things which are, but not in the sense that these are replications. Instead, the things that are refer to things that were, but are still different and unique from them. Nothing is thus completely itself and nothing can finally be described, and the historical work can therefore never be done in this perspective, which is also why everything lives in time.

As before-mentioned, Simonsen’s theory is not directly related to the presence paradigm, so her theory cannot be seen as a mutation or an evolution thereof. It is rather an independent contribution where she seeks to discuss and overcome the dichotomy of materialism and relativism, and the theory should therefore be seen in this context. Simonsen tries to overcome the dichotomy by using theorists of the linguistic turn, such as Derrida. So, Simonsen adheres to postmodernist theory as opposed to materialism, but she also uses postmodernist theory

differently than the narrativists, while further stating that: “The discipline of history cannot be satisfied with deconstructing historical representations” (Simonsen, 2003, 145). Instead of discussing how language hampers the relation between past and present, Simonsen turns to the issue of time in an effort to displace the debate between the dichotomies, and reveals that language is not a problem to the relation between past and present. Thus Simonsen actually follows the same path as Ankersmit and Runia in her effort to displace the debate, because their theories also deal with the issue of time. There are vast differences, though, because Simonsen is direct about her focus on time, whereas Runia and Ankersmit only deal with time implicitly. Furthermore, Simonsen is not negative towards postmodernist theory of the linguistic turn, which Ankersmit and Runia rebels furiously against. Rather, she uses such theory to develop a different notion of time. The motivation and end-goal of Simonsen are thus different from Ankersmit and Runia. Their theories are also different. Radical historicity is perhaps most reminiscent of Runia’s idea of presence, because the present of the past travels as a “stowaway” in the metonymical parts of historical representations, which could be translated to Simonsen’s idea of the ghost. The similarities end here, though, because both Runia and Ankersmit have ideas of ontological “whole” truths and meaning of the past. To Simonsen, this would mean death of the past; as soon as something is described *finally and fully*, the phenomenon is dead because if the phenomenon is described in its final form, then it would fixated in time and space, and thereby accessible only at *that time* and *that space*; the phenomenon would cease to be translated. The idea of aspects which Ankersmit proposes in “Meaning, Truth, and Reference” is thus a suicidal mission in this view, because the continual development of aspects that leads to greater knowledge and greater presence of the past would instead lead to greater death of the past. Ankersmit *wants* the wholeness of the past to appear through the development of aspects, the ontological truth and meaning in their whole form. However, to Simonsen this would be the darkest dystopia, the Armageddon of the past, because the past would then be fixated in time and space, and therefore completely inaccessible and dead to the present, and the present would thus lack its “other”. The same is applicable to the idea of presence, experience and the sublime historical experience, and the quest which Ankersmit and Runia embark upon with their theories would to Simonsen be the quest to kill the past – which is what Runia and Ankersmit try to save in the first place.

Simonsen therefore deviates considerably from the presence paradigm. However, Simonsen also deviates from the narrativism when she stresses that the discipline of history cannot be

satisfied with deconstructing narratives. The theory of time which Simonsen creates also surpasses the barrier of language that narrativism builds between past and present. Considering the theory of Simonsen, language is not a barrier. Language is a phenomenon of the world which is also subjected to time, and language is therefore also something that is in relation to the past. The past is thus a ghostly presence in language as it is in everything else, and the meaning of past language is continually developed in relation to present language and so on. The use of language in itself is thus an invocation of past ghosts by the very act of speaking and writing etc. while also developing on the meaning of these ghosts. Language can therefore never be a barrier to Simonsen, because it is a phenomenon subjected to time. Simonsen also directly criticizes Hayden White for being a linguistic determinist, in the sense that the tropes and plot structures which he argues for almost seem as natural and predetermined linguistic protocols that have a universal nature (Simonsen, 2003, 215-216). According to Simonsen's theory, these tropes and plot structures can never just be a given. They are also subjected to time and therefore do not come from nothing. Simonsen's theory of radical historicity is thus different from materialism, narrativism and the presence paradigm because she emphasizes a different nature of time, and the effect of this time on worldly phenomena.

This different notion of time is something Simonsen has in common with the other theorist of the ghost paradigm: Berber Bevernage. Both of them are also heavily inspired by Derrida. Bevernage's contribution to the debate can more be seen in terms of a mutation of the presence paradigm, but the motivation for developing a different chronosophy lies in his research of transitional justice in countries with traumatic pasts.

Berber Bevernage:

The main thesis of Bevernage's book "History, Memory, and State-Sponsored Violence" is:

"that the way one deals with injustice and the ethics of history is strongly dependent on the way one conceives of historical time, that the concept of time traditionally used by the historians are structurally more compatible with the perpetrators' than the victims' point of view, and that breaking with this structural bias demands a fundamental rethinking of the dominant modern notions of history and historical time" (Bevernage, 2012, IX).

This is then what Bevernage tries to do: Rethinking the notion of historical time. Or at least this is what is done in the philosophical and theoretical part of the book. The other part of the

book is a study of transitional justice in Sierra Leone, South Africa and Argentina, and a deconstruction of the chronosophy in these situations, but this is less interesting in this thesis, besides showing how Bevernage applies deconstruction. The focus is therefore on the theoretical insights which Bevernage provides instead.

Berber Bevernage analyzes two conceptions of time, which he states are prevalent in the current modern society: One which adheres to the justice system that he calls the reversible time, and one which adheres to history that he calls the irreversible time. The reversible time of the justice system rests on the premise that the past can be annulled through punishment. A crime, which will always be in the past, can therefore be reversed in the present by punishing the perpetrator with prison etc., and thus Bevernage calls this the reversible time. The reversible time is not the main focus of the book; rather, it is the irreversible time, which is a chronosophy that Bevernage connects with history. Bevernage states that there is a widespread conception in Western society, which emphasizes that the past is absent or temporally distant. History builds on such assumptions because history stresses that what has happened is irretrievably gone. In this perspective, the past is absent from the present and therefore also inalterable. History thus underscores the arrow of time, which only moves forward and forces the recognition that the past is irreversibly gone (Bevernage, 2012, 1-4). Bevernage argues that there are four specific temporal evolutions which have all contributed to the development of the irreversible time.

First of all it is connected to modernity, which defines itself by its orientation towards the future, and therefore needs continuous breaks with the past in order to distinguish itself as *the new epoch* “Modernity is an obsession with new beginnings” (Bevernage, 2012, 99). To explain this, Bevernage here draws on Koselleck’s explanation of a shift from the space of experience to the horizon of expectation, which gradually happened from the second half of the eighteenth century and onwards. This means that there was a shift towards a belief in progress and the future, and away from the belief that the past could offer vital lessons for the present and the future (Bevernage, 99-101). This may seem contradictive in terms of how this would ever help establish history. However, Bevernage here borrows a quote from Koselleck:

“The historical and the progressive views of the world have a common origin. They complement one another like the faces of Janus. If the new time is offering new insights all

the time, the different past has to be discovered and recognized, that is to say, its strangeness which increases with the passing of years” (Koselleck, 2002, 120).

The belief in progress thus *supports* the establishment of history because the past becomes ever more alien with the passing of years, which then requires specialized researchers to investigate it i.e. historians. The strict division between past, present and future thus supports the foundation of the historical work “It was only with the qualitative separation of the past from the present and the future that history could become a science” (Bevernage, 2012, 102).

Another concept which has been important to the evolution of the irreversible time is the idea of empty homogenous time. In relation to empty homogenous time Bevernage states that:

“A universal and continuous chronological ordering of all historical facts reveals a dependency on a linear concept of time that functions as an abstract container which exists as an empty and homogenous entity prior to, and independent from, the events and facts bestowed on it” (Bevernage, 2012, 92).

According to Bevernage, this conception is possible because time has become an abstraction. Time is not measured in seasons or indicated by how the sun moves across the sky. Rather, time exists as an independent category, which is empty and homogenous, and wherein it is possible to plot events in a continuous linear chronological ordering. Furthermore, this is believed to be a neutral conception, but which enables “historians (...) to describe historical time as an endless continuum of passed historical events” (Bevernage, 2012, 95), and therefore appears as anything but neutral.

The last two concepts which Bevernage argues have been important to the development of the irreversible time are historicism and secularism. Historicism revolves around the idea that everything is subject to historical change and denies the idea of unchanging essences, and when everything changes constantly it is hard to think of the past as anything but irretrievably gone, because there is no continuity between past and present. Furthermore, secularism helped develop the idea of the irreversible time because the notion of “higher” times has gradually been abandoned, i.e. the belief in time as something determined by divine powers does not hold any explanatory power. Things are able to reappear in “higher” times, which therefore cannot be considered fully past, and this does not fit the secular linear conception of time (Bevernage, 2012, 96 and 104-106).

According to Bevernage, these four concepts, modernity, empty homogenous time, historicism and secularism, have all been central to the development of the irreversible time of history where past, present and future are separated, and in which the past is perceived as temporally distant or absent in relation to the present. However, Bevernage is critical of this chronosophy that he first of all sees as anything but neutral:

“This understanding – that the distancing of past and present does not simply result from the passing of time but is something that must actively be pursued – underpins one of the central propositions of this work. Instead of being a neutral analytical frame, I will argue, history can be *performative*. By this I mean that historical language is not only used to describe reality (the so-called “constative” use of language) but that it can also produce substantial socio-political effects and that, to some extent, it can bring into being the state of affairs it pretends merely to describe (the so-called “performative” use of language)” (Bevernage, 2012, 15).

Bevernage thus argues that history is not a neutral means of describing the world, but rather a performative tool. The reason why Bevernage argues this is because of his work with transitional justice in countries with traumatic pasts, in which he has observed the performative use of history in the so-called truth commissions and other kinds of tribunals set to deal with this past. Bevernage observes that the atrocious past of dictatorship, apartheid or the like have become a major political problem, and it is in this context where the performativity of the irreversible time can be situated “The turn to history, I claim, primarily has to invoke the notion of irreversibility and restore or enforce the characteristically modernist belief in a break between past and present that is threatened by memory that refuses to let the past go” (Bevernage, 2012, 15). History is brought to the scene to historicize the past, and thereby create distance to the atrocious past in the effort of nation-building. The problem is that there is a “devil’s dilemma”, as Bevernage calls it, because either the historical injustices should be repaired in the present, and thereby risk social dissent and a return to violence, or these injustices should be let go off so that the nation can move forward. The last option is often chosen, and here the irreversible time of history is applied through historicizing the past and thereby performatively making it absent (Bevernage, 2012, 7-16).

Through Bevernage’s research, though, he has observed that despite of this performative action to make the past absent, the past still clings to the present for many of the victims, and therefore there is a conflict between memory and history. The irreversible time of history is

actually applied to fix this by pacifying memory “Truth commissions sincerely reject amnesia, but want to pacify memory, and therefore history is introduced, not because of the lack of memory, but because of the overabundance of it” (Bevernage, 2012, 15). However, Bevernage argues that the effort is not entirely successful, and the past has thus become a major political problem internationally in countries with horrible pasts (Bevernage, 2012, 13).

The aim of Bevernage is to conceive of this different experience of time that the victims have, and to do this he develops the concept of the irrevocable time, which builds on the ideas of spectrality that Derrida proposes. In short, the irrevocable time breaks the idea that there is a temporal gap between past and present; that the past haunts the present as a ghost (Bevernage, 2012, 4-5). To Bevernage, the past is therefore not something positive. The past is a ghost in the sense that it clings to the present, but the ghost also has a horrible character unlike the ghosts that Dorthe Gert Simonsen speaks of. Arguably, this is because of the nature of Bevernage’s research which deals countries that have traumatic pasts. Similar to Simonsen, though, Bevernage argues that the ghost that haunts the present is there because time is out of joint, because the present is non-contemporaneous with itself: “Ghosts introduce a constant “anachrony” into the present; they provoke an “untimeliness and disadjustment of the contemporary”” (Bevernage, 2012, 142). Bevernage further writes that Derrida’s idea of the ghost and the denial of absolute absence, that past phenomena are completely absent in the present, is the logical consequence of his lifelong mission to deconstruct the metaphysics of presence (Bevernage, 2012, 143). This is also what Bevernage does by incorporating the ghost into his own theory of the irrevocable time; he denies an absolute absence of the past in the present. Again, unlike Simonsen, Bevernage does not turn to another universal explanation of time to account for his denial of absolute absence. Instead, he turns to memory because he does not believe that the irrevocable past exists in itself as such “The dead and the irrevocable past cannot exist in themselves and for themselves; rather, they exist “in us” and in our “memory”” (Bevernage, 2012, 166). The past does not have any agency outside of the living, but he does state that: ““in me” and “in us” are constituted by the dead and the irrevocable past at least as much as they contain them” (Bevernage, 2012, 166). So, even though the past does not have any agency as an entity in itself, it is still something which constitutes the living in the present.

Comparison:

There are thus some similarities and differences between Berber Bevernage and Dorthe Gert Simonsen. They both apply Derrida's idea of the ghost or the specter, and use this to argue that the past is not completely absent from the present. However, Simonsen is far more complex and detailed in the development of radical historicity than Bevernage is in his development of the irrevocable time. Partly, this is because their aims are different. Simonsen wants to construct a new universal conception of time to replace the mechanical time as she calls it, which is similar to what Bevernage calls the irreversible time of history. This is not the aim of Bevernage. Rather, he wants to account for a different experience of time which he has observed during his research. He even criticizes Derrida's idea of the ghost for being transhistorical and that it just replaces one universal model of time with another universal model of time. Bevernage is not positive towards such a replacement and instead he states that: "A genuinely historical account of haunting will need to be able to explain that situations of violence and civil war tend to produce a much more vigorously persisting past than peaceful and stable situations" (Bevernage, 2012, 146). Bevernage therefore wants to account for the difference in how time is experienced, and therefore it does not help to just replace one model with another. Thus, Bevernage would be highly critical of Simonsen approach, which has the aim of developing a new universal chronosophy. On the other hand, Simonsen would be critical of Bevernage's approach because he does not really address the theoretical issue at stake in relation to time, and just wants to account for different experiences of time. Furthermore, one could ask Bevernage that if a genuinely historical account of haunting will have to explain that civil war and violence produces more persisting pasts than peaceful situation, then why has he not done so? As mentioned, though, their aims are different because Simonsen *wants* to create a new universal model of time in relation to the past and history, which also implies that she wants to create a foundation for a historical method. Bevernage, on the other hand, seeks an *ahistorical* way to talk about the past; he seeks an entirely new way to deal with the past other than the historical one.

Generally, though, Simonsen and Bevernage both contribute to the overall discussion by moving the issue of time center-stage in a more direct fashion than Runia and Ankersmit. As before-mentioned, Bevernage builds upon the idea that the complete absence of the past must be denied, which is similar to the ideas that Ankersmit and Runia propose. In this sense, the theory of the irrevocable can be seen as a mutation of the presence paradigm. However, the

difference is that Bevernage sees the presence of the past as something related to the living. The past is not something that has agency in itself, which is what both Ankersmit and Runia propose. Nevertheless, there is a similarity between Runia and Bevernage in terms of how they regard the past. To both of them, the past that clings to the present is something traumatic, and something which is undesirable. So, even though Bevernage criticizes the universal irreversible time, he does not endorse the irrevocable time either, because the past that clings to the present is horrible. One could thus ask if Bevernage would rather that the irreversible time of history was successful in the effort to make the past absent, which would then solve the problem in transitional justice because amnesia would be a perfect choice. The same goes for Runia because the notion of parallel processing, that the horrible past overwhelms the present, begs the question whether Runia actually would rather want this past gone. There are thus some similarities between these two theorists because they agree on the nature of the past, that it is horrible and atrocious, but they have different perspectives on whether the past is something in itself or whether it is dependent on the living.

Even though Bevernage believes the past to be dependent of the living, he does not have the same perspective as the narrativists who believe the present to be the only thing that constitutes the past through language. Dorte Gert Simonsen refers to the view of the narrativists as “present-imperialism” (Simonsen, 2003, 149), in the sense that everything White, Mink and Jenkins say about the past is always grounded in the present. In White’s view, language is a barrier between past and present because the language of the present can never resemble the past, and in Mink’s view the language of the present *is* the past. The narrativists’ focus on language therefore compels them to engage with the present as the foundation of speaking about the past, and thus Simonsen has a point: The narrativists are present-imperialists due to their focus on language. Bevernage would not thoroughly be satisfied with the view of the narrativists because they do not take into account other times than the present; they actually embody the irreversible time of history because the narrativists either stress the absence of the past, as Mink, or that the past is temporally distant, as White. As mentioned, Bevernage argues that the past is constituted by the living present, but the past is also something which made and continues to make the present into what it is, and Bevernage would thus criticize the narrativists for forgetting this because of their obsession with the present that ironically is grounded in their belief in the irreversible time of history. Bevernage would further criticize Jenkins, because Jenkins just wants to forget about history

and the past, which in Bevernage's view hardly would be possible, especially in the countries where Bevernage conducted his research that have violent and horrible pasts; his thesis is exactly that the past clings to the present as a haunting ghost, despite of the active effort to make it disappear by historicizing the past. Jenkins and Bevernage thus agree that history is performative, albeit in different ways. Jenkins believes that history is used performatively as truths to support foundationalist views, which history is not able to in reality. In short, history is a lie used to support other lies. Bevernage, on the other hand, believes the irreversible time of history is used performatively to create distance to violent and atrocious pasts in order to preserve national unity. Both thus agree that history, as such, is a discourse, but they disagree on the nature of how the discourse is applied. Bevernage therefore partly agrees with the narrativists, unlike Runia and Ankersmit, but he disagrees with narrativist on the nature of past, present and future, on the nature of time. Bevernage therefore separates the concept of history and the concept of time, which Jenkins does not. The past and history are not equivalent to each other in his perspective, which it sometimes seems as it is in Ankersmit and Runia's view. History is a discourse that has a certain perspective on and performative use of time, but time is not inherently historical. Somehow, Bevernage is thus sort of an in-between, between the narrativists and the presence theorists because he acknowledges that history is discursive, but also that time is a separate phenomenon.

The question is then how the narrativists and the presence theorists would object to the ghost paradigm. Ankersmit and Runia would like the idea of denying the total absence of the past, which both Simonsen and Bevernage do. However, they would criticize Simonsen and Bevernage for never leaving the realm of language entirely, and therefore never grasping the essence of the past being present in the present. Both ghost theorists use deconstruction as their method, borrowed from Derrida, and thus Ankersmit and Runia would object that even though they speak of time, they are not radically different from the narrativists whom Runia and Ankersmit continually criticize throughout their work. The presence theorists seek a wholeness and truth of the past, especially Ankersmit, which both Bevernage and Simonsen oppose; Simonsen because wholeness and truth means death of the past, and Bevernage because the past cannot exist independent of the living present. Runia and Ankersmit would therefore be dissatisfied with these theories because they in their perspective ultimately do not differ from the narrativists in the end. The narrativists, on the other hand, would plainly disagree and criticize the ghost theorists for trying to make the issue of the past and history to

be about anything other than language. They would explain Bevernage's observation that time is experienced differently by referring to the fact that time is just narrated differently; it has nothing to do with time itself, it has to do with language. The narrativists would thus agree with Bevernage that the past is constituted in the living present, but they would also argue that this is the *only* way that the past can ever be constituted. A logical consequence of the chronosophy which underlies the narrativists' theories is that they can never agree to the observation that the present is made by the past, or that the present is non-contemporaneous and therefore in relation to the past, as both Simonsen and Bevernage argue. Simonsen's ghosts and Bevernage's haunting specters can therefore only be products of the language of the present, and the narrativists would thus thoroughly disagree with the chronosophies which Simonsen and Bevernage constructs. Considering their theories, neither the presence theorists nor the narrativists would therefore be overjoyed by the theoretical insights which the ghost paradigm offers.

The Ghost Paradigm and Methodology:

Even though the narrativists and the presence thinkers disagree with the ghost paradigm, the next consideration is whether the theoretical insights on time which the ghost paradigm proposes, has anything new to offer in terms of developing the concept of functional sources, or a method in general for the discipline of history.

In terms of the method which both Bevernage and Simonsen apply, there is problem in creating a foundation for a new method. Both of them are inspired by deconstruction, which is a useful tool, and they both show it by deconstructing mechanical time as Simonsen calls it, and the irreversible time of history as Bevernage calls it. The question is then what is next when the time has been deconstructed, how to build something from the rubbles after everything has been displaced? Bevernage proposes the irrevocable time, but it is perhaps better to call it an observation of how time is experienced in the countries he has scrutinized rather than a proposal. It is an observation wherein he finds theoretical support in Derrida's idea of the ghost, and it is also an observation he arrives at by deconstructing the temporal perception in the countries in question. As mentioned, Bevernage states that a truly historical account of time would have to take into consideration and explain why violent pasts cling more vigorously to the present than peaceful pasts, yet he does not do so himself. Bevernage's book therefore works beautifully as a critique, but does not go beyond this to explain or solve

anything. Furthermore, it is easy for Bevernage to observe that the past clings to the present because he works with contemporary history, but how is this approach then applicable to cases which are not of a recent past? Do the ghosts of the Renaissance still haunt the present? Probably not because the past is only constituted through the living present as Bevernage states, and therefore this is problematic in terms of creating a method based on Bevernage's approach. Meanwhile, Bevernage is not *interested* in creating a new method for history as he seeks an ahistorical way to talk about the past. This train of thought is interesting and will be elaborated further upon in the discussion.

Simonsen also applies deconstruction and is therefore liable to the same critique as Bevernage. However, Simonsen's theory opens up other possibilities. Her idea of the ghost is different than the one Bevernage proposes in the sense that the phenomena of the world are all non-contemporaneous. The past is part of present phenomena, and thus by writing something about the past, the meaning of the past is continually developed and lives on in the present. There is never anything that is final because of the nature of time, which is also why it is possible for the past to be like a ghostly "other" in present phenomena; that the present phenomena in question refers to something in the past, but is still unique and different from it. The question is then how to examine this ghostly "other". Simonsen's basic method is to deconstruct, which therefore begs the question whether it is possible to deconstruct the present phenomena to discover this ghostly other. As mentioned, though, deconstruction only takes one so far, the problem comes when it is time to go beyond critique and start to explain things. It is also unclear whether Simonsen is interested in examining and discovering the ghostly other, because this would mean fixation in time and space and thereby the death of the past. Simonsen further states that: "it is only possible for history to represent the past "other" by participating in the play between the repetition and the "other"" (My italics), (Simonsen, 2003, 170). By participating and continually writing representations of sources, the historians thus continue the development and the postponement of past meaning. Simonsen thus arrive at a similar place as Ankersmit does with "Meaning, Truth and Representation", albeit with another theoretical foundation. Historians should keep doing what they are already doing, because their work fulfills the requirements of Simonsen's theory. Thus, radical historicity has not got anything radically new to add to the concept of functional sources other than a more coherent theoretical foundation for the current practice. However, Simonsen does add deconstruction to displace the debate and to seek the instability instead, and she does not only

rely on reconstruction in the effort to imply wholeness such as Ankersmit. Simonsen thus has more to add than Ankersmit, but she does not push the boundaries further in the direction of contemplating a new method.

The theories of the ghost paradigm are thus interesting, but they do have problematical issues in relation to how these can contribute methodologically to history. However, the theories do have important key points in relation to time, and time will be the critical issue in the next chapter.

Discussion:

This discussion is inspired by Derrida, and in this discussion I will argue that we have long been led astray by the specter of meaning when speaking of the relation between past and present. I argue that history is a certain discourse of this relation in which the specter of meaning is deeply imbedded and that it has brought nothing but war. Thus, we should seek freedom in time, and examine the relation between past and present as a temporal phenomenon, and not as one of meaning.

There is a ghost that haunts the Danish historical methodology, something which seems to linger on, something which the current practice in Denmark has inherited from times past. There is an inescapable dichotomy seeping through the pages of the books of methodology; like a misty fog that is barely noticeable and yet still omnipresent, something which is impossible to touch due to its ethereal form, but still something very real, a *thing* which is continuously conjured. Derrida explains this notion of conjuration in “Specters of Marx” by stating that when capitalism heralds the death of Marxism, when Francis Fukuyama writes of the end of history by the victory of liberal democracy, the specters of Marx are conjured (Derrida, 1994, 68). By the very act of declaring Marxism dead, it is necessary to conjure the specters of Marx, because the act of speaking of Marxism shows that Marxism is still *there*. The ghosts of Marxism thus live on in the discourse of capitalism and in its declaration of the death of Marxism. The opposite is thus achieved by declaring Marxism dead, because this conjures the specters. This is an analogy, of course, to the ghost of Danish historical methodology, which is continuously conjured and that continuously haunts the pages of the books concerning Danish historical methodology. The ghost has nothing to do with Marx, though. Instead, the ghost takes form of a discussion inherited from historicism. As Ankersmit explains, the discussion is the dialectic in historicism itself, which revolves around the issue

whether the past is similar to the present and thereby comprehensible to the present, or whether the past is different and thereby incomprehensible to the present (Ankersmit, 1995, 153). I argue that this dialectic has gradually become the dichotomy of relativism and materialism, *the* ghost of Danish historical methodology, but perhaps this ghost is just another specter of something *deeper*? I will return to this, but for now this is a satisfactory beginning: The dichotomy. As explained in the chapter concerning the concept of functional sources, every one of the Danish theorists can carefully be plotted in along a line that moves from materialism to relativism. Some adhere to the dialectical understanding which is closer to materialism, while others adhere to the relativist-oriented understanding of the concept of functional sources. However, none of these have moved *beyond* the discussion. The ghost of the dichotomy haunts these theorists, and none of them are able to escape the ghostly presence. The theorists' attempt at escape is to search for the middle-ground, but they find no freedom there as they continue to conjure the dichotomy by the act of searching for the middle-ground; the compromise. These different specters of the dichotomy, materialism and relativism, do not compromise well, though. These specters have fought a battle since they were forced together, and in the end the battle is perhaps what the historical method has inherited? Which is what the Danish theorists try to resolve, but fails to do? I have least found that none of these middle-positions resolve anything, and perhaps this is a battle which may never find resolution.

What about narrativism then? Narrativism only embodies the specter of relativism; any shred of materialism has surely been banished!/? But as capitalism tries to banish Marxism and instead conjures the very thing which was meant to die, so does narrativism conjure materialism by the act of forswearing it. The specter of the battle has never left narrativism. Jenkins, White and Mink all furiously seek to banish materialism, Jenkins mostly so, and thereby they invoke the specter of the battle which is inherited from historicism, and with this specter, along comes the specter of materialism. The specter of materialism and the specter relativism are thus each other's opposite, and yet they are still bound to each other unwillingly, even by those who seek to worship one and banish the other.

But what does the battle concern, one might ask? Why are these ghosts locked in an eternal battle, and a battle which is continuously conjured? Even this thesis conjures these ghosts, but what is at stake since different philosophers and theorists of history continue to be haunted by

the specters of materialism and relativism? The answer is meaning, and this is the *deeper* ghost, the *true* ghost of history which persists to haunt. The question which narrativism and the different Danish theorists try to answer is the nature about the relation between past and present, and the answer has always been founded upon the concept of meaning. Runia writes that: "In philosophy of history we have long been led astray by the phenomenon of "meaning"-first by pursuing it, then by forswearing it" (Runia. 2006, 1). This quote harbors the essence of what the ghosts of materialism and relativism have been fighting over: The specter of meaning. However, Runia is not correct when he says that narrativism forswears meaning, rather, it assigns meaning as something only of the present, and thus the focal point of narrativism is *still* meaning, but only as a product of the present. Perhaps he is right in another way, though. Perhaps we have been led astray by the specter of meaning. After all, this specter has only produced war.

This is why Runia and Ankersmit are interesting. These theorists of the presence paradigm argue that there is something else, something different from meaning "This essay posits that what may be called "presence"("the unrepresented way the past is present in the present") is at least as important as "meaning"" (Runia, 2006, 1). For Ankersmit it is called the sublime historical experience, but the concept roughly harbors the same basic idea as Runia's. Their thoughts, though, are just idle speculation because these ideas cannot be translated into something methodologically worthwhile. However, the ideas of presence and the sublime historical experience seem to escape the ghost of meaning, and instead focus on time. Nevertheless, Runia and Ankersmit cannot escape from the haunting ghost of meaning in the end, and from the battle that ensues. Their implicit focus on time is after all only applied to attack narrativism and establish the meaning of the past once again, albeit from another perspective than materialism. This is most prominent in Ankersmit's attempt to make presence active in "Meaning, Truth and Representation", where he wants to seek out and establish the wholeness of the past; the wholeness of meaning. Even the name of the book evokes the specter of meaning. Runia and Ankersmit are thus still caught up in the same discussion even though they attempted to break free.

I will now make a slight detour and discuss the nature of the ghost of meaning, because another interesting issue is the establishment of the wholeness of meaning which Ankersmit seeks; that meaning can somehow be closed. Dorthe Gert Simonsen points out that such a

move is both impossible, and a move which would also render meaning dead in the end – something which Derrida would agree with since he is the basis of Simonsen’s approach to meaning. The underlying assumption of this approach to meaning goes back to Saussure’s idea of language as a material entity because of the temporal character of language. Thereby it is possible to inherit language, and therefore also inherit meaning even though language and meaning never stays exactly the same and are subject to change over time. Meaning is therefore *open* because meaning is a part of a material entity, language, which changes over time as any other material and thus enables the possibility of meaning being inherited. This perspective serves as a critique to Ankersmit who wants to close meaning away in his nostalgic yearning for the “truth” of the past, and in this sense the specter of materialism haunts Ankersmit’s sublime historical experience. Furthermore, the idea of the material language also serves as a critique of White and Mink. As before-mentioned, Simonsen calls the narrativists “present-imperialists”, which they are because meaning is always established in the present in their view. To Mink and White, language and meaning are also closed in the same sense as Ankersmit, although the explanation is different. To narrativism meaning is closed because meaning is in constant flux which makes it impossible to inherit. Meaning changes at such a rate that meaning is essentially dead; it lives only in the briefest second of the fleeting present. However, we do not relearn to speak every day. White and Mink cannot explain from where their narratives and tropological figures originate, they just insist that they are *there*. Therefore there is an unexplained determinist aspect of narrativism which Mink and White cannot account for. The explanation that language and meaning are inherited is thus a sensible alternative as a basis to explain where narratives and the tropological figures of White and Mink come from; that these are also inherited because they are a part of the material language. Saussure and Derrida thus have some fruitful insights regarding the specter of meaning, which can be used to question narrativism, presence and the underlying assumptions of meaning inherent in these theoretical directions. This was a detour, though, a detour that once again summoned the specters of meaning, but an interesting detour nonetheless.

For now I return to the question whether this specter of meaning has led us astray. How does Simonsen fit into this? Does she escape this haunting ghost? Her explicit focus is on the nature of time, and in this sense she might do so, because Simonsen is concerned with another concept. Simonsen also explicitly wants to displace the debate between materialism and

relativism, and thus she turns to time in the effort to achieve this; time is the escape from the specter of meaning and the eternal battle fought over this concept in relation to history. However, Simonsen does displace the debate, but she does not escape it. The universal model of time which Simonsen create is still connected to the specter of meaning because she borrows Saussure's and Derrida's idea of the material language. So even though the material language has its merits as shown above, it still connects time and meaning, albeit in another way than materialism, narrativism or presence, and this is how Simonsen displaces the debate, but meaning is *still* central to her theory even though it is explicitly connected to time. The reason for this is that Simonsen wants to create a method for *history*. Just as this thesis initially began with the quest of finding a new method to develop upon the concept of functional sources, so does this goal permeate Simonsen's theory of radical historicity. The specter of meaning, though, *haunts* history and this is why it also haunts Simonsen; because she wants to find a new methodology for history, and as long as history is a part of Simonsen's goal the specter of meaning will inevitably haunt her – and the same is true of this thesis. So far this specter has crumbled every attempt at creating a theory of history and thus also any attempt at creating a method as a consequence, and perhaps this is also why Simonsen fails in the end? And why the objective of this thesis is also doomed to fail?

What is there left to do then, when this specter of meaning seems to haunt history at every turn? Berber Bevernage gives a perspective on this because he seeks a distinctly *ahistorical* way to talk about the past. The objective has always been to answer the question about the nature of the relation between past and present, and whether one looks at narrativism, presence or Simonsen the answer has always been meaning. What Bevernage does instead is that he *separates* time and history. As the narrativists, Bevernage believes history to be a certain discourse, but he also believes that history is separate from the issue of time. I want to borrow this approach in part in order to separate time and meaning. I argue that the relation between past and present is not one of meaning, but one of time. I agree with Bevernage that history as such is a certain discourse of the past, but I argue that the nature of this discourse is one of meaning; the specter of meaning permeates history and has brought naught in the effort to understand the relation between past and present, it has only brought war. This specter cannot be banished because in doing so the specter will be conjured, but perhaps it is *time* to focus on something else. What Bevernage does is that he seeks to explain different experiences of time and the social effects and political issues that different chronosophies

leads to, which is why Bevernage is the one who comes the closest to escaping the haunting ghost of meaning, because his research and methods are distinctly ahistorical, and yet still revolves around the issue of time and the relation between past and present. Thus I argue that this is a foundation from which a new methodology can evolve, something which is not plagued by the haunting ghost of meaning to the extent that history is, while still working with the relation between past and present, but within a temporal framework. To seek freedom in time.

The consequence is of course that I cannot develop upon the concept of functional sources, as I initially wanted to, because this concept is already haunted by the ghost of history, and thus I would only enforce this ghost. Instead I suggest another way, to study the relation between past and present ahistorically as a temporal phenomenon, the experience thereof and the social and political effects of this. Either that or find resolution with the ghost of meaning, but I cannot see how, as I agree with Runia that this specter has long led us astray.

Conclusion:

The research question of the thesis is:

How can recent advances within the field of theoretical and philosophical history contribute to the effort of developing upon the existing Danish methodology?

This thesis has dealt with three different theoretical directions in the effort to answer the research question, and the question which these directions try to answer concerns the nature of the relation between past and present. This is the fundamental question that needs to be answered in order to develop a coherent historical methodology.

The three directions are Narrativism, the presence paradigm and the ghost paradigm. Each of these theoretical directions provides insights which can, or cannot, be applied in relation to historical methodology. In terms of narrativism the methodological consequences differ in relation to which theorist is chosen. However, all of the narrativists agree that there is a problem in the current historical practice, because meaning and truth cannot be assigned to the past itself, but are rather a product of the present language. The relation between past and present is thus one meaning, but meaning only goes from the present to the past. On this basis Keith Jenkins develops his idea, although it cannot be used in order to develop historical methodology, because he argues for the dissolution of history as a consequence of his focus of

language and his anti-foundationalist view. Hayden White and Louis O. Mink have a different perspective. They are also anti-foundationalists, but they do not argue for the dissolution of history as such, but rather that there should be an academic emphasis on narratives and the inner logic of narratives.

Concerning the presence paradigm, nothing methodologically can be drawn from either Eelco Runia's concept of presence or Ankersmit's sublime historical experience. In their perspective, there is a relation between past and present, and one which also goes from the past to the present and not only the other way around. The problem is that these ideas are inherently passive and subjective, and it is therefore impossible to build a methodology based on the presence paradigm. Ankersmit does try to make the ideas of the presence paradigm active, but his theory has many problematic aspects, while the theory does not contribute with anything methodologically new either. The presence paradigm has some interesting perspectives in relation to time, but in the end the relation between past and present is still based on meaning, even though meaning does not only travel one way.

The ghost paradigm also contributes differently methodology in relation to which theorists is chosen. Dorthe Gert Simonsen argues that the relation between past and present is both temporal and of meaning. Simonsen's idea is that the present is non-contemporaneous with itself, which enables meaning to be inherited and continuously developed. The theory Simonsen presents is interesting, but the methodological consequences of her theory are not much different than the ones which Ankersmit arrives at; that nothing will change considerably in the current methodology. Berber Bevernage, on the other hand, seeks an ahistorical way to examine the past, in order to explain the social and political effects of different chronosophies.

The views of Bevernage are foundational to what I argue, which is also why I cannot develop on the existing Danish methodology according to the research question. I argue that the specter of meaning has long led us astray; a specter which has brought nothing but war without resolution that has been raging since the aegis of historicism. I therefore agree with Bevernage's approach and argue that the relation between past and present is not one of meaning but one of time, which is contrary to all of the other theorists who essentially argue from the position of meaning. My idea is thus also ahistorical, and I believe that this is necessary because history is a certain discourse concerning the relation between past and

present in which the specter of meaning is deeply imbedded. Bevernage's approach is thus a foundation on which to build a new ahistorical method, something which is not plagued by the haunting ghost of meaning to the extent that history is, while still working with the relation between past and present within a temporal framework. To seek freedom in time.

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