

The Historical Past of Tübingen University within the 1927 Jubilee Context

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ABSTRACT: This article reviews the history writing practices employed at Tübingen University on the occasion of its 450th anniversary. The author examines an anniversary edition of the university's history and the speeches of professors, identifying in them the ways in which they represent historical plots and their role in the self-identification of the academic community.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: University; History; Identity; Germany; XX Century.

1. *Problem statement*¹

In late July 1927, Tübingen University (Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen) celebrated its 450th anniversary. The anniversary involved many events, and preparations for these began as early as 1925. These events included rallies, church services, speeches by professors and guests, banquets, fireworks, etc., as well as the publication of books that were meant to commemorate the event for later generations, presenting the university in its full splendour. Some of the anniversary writings, including the published versions of speeches by the rector, professors and guests were dedicated to the university's history.

¹ The results of the project «Academic Attestation and Degree Awards at European Universities in the Modern Era», carried out within the framework of the Programme of Fundamental Studies of the Higher School of Economics in 2014, are presented in this work. Archival sources and abbreviations: UAT = Universitätsarchiv Tübingen (Tübingen), HZ = Historische Zeitschrift, BW = Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte, AK = Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, HA = Historische Anthropologie.

Researchers repeatedly noted that university jubilees were reference points in its historiography. The history writing of Tübingen University best illustrates this view².

The term «university history writing» (*Universitätsgeschichtsschreibung*) does not have a fixed meaning in the English, Russian and German academic environment. Historians use it as a synonym for «university historiography», although its meaning may cover a broad variety of writings on university history that includes periodicals, albums, pamphlets, etc. Who writes and publishes such works, and how, on what occasion, and with what goal: all of these questions require a more thorough elaboration. Of special relevance today is the role of writings and public speeches by academic community members in creating their own past, i.e. the consolidating and generalising of basic perceptions of their «common» history and hence «common» identity.

Thus, exploring universities' perceptions of their histories creates far broader challenges for researchers, namely: the role of the anniversary celebrations and the commemorative writings published on the occasion in structuring cultural, social and historical spaces³. In this article I will be analysing the contents of

² This is best evidenced by the 500th anniversary of Tübingen University: Tübinger Chronik launched a series of publications featuring the history of the development of natural and humanitarian science; an anti-Nazi committee published *The Brown Book* in commemoration of Nazi crimes and Vergangenheitsverarbeitung in the second half of the 20th century; a special exhibition was held based on archival and library sources, while a serial edition *Contubernium* published a dozen articles on the history of the university and science in general. See: H. Decker-Hauff, W. Setzler (edd.), *Die Universität Tübingen von 1477 bis 1977 in Bildern und Dokumenten*, Tübingen, Attempto, 1977; H. Decker-Hauff, G. Fichtner, K. Schreiner (edd.), *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Universität Tübingen 1477-1977*, Tübingen, Attempto, 1977; *Braunbuch zum 500jährigen Jubiläum der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen*, Tübingen, u.a., 1977; R. Muth, *Studentische Emanzipation und staatliche Repression: die politische Bewegung der Tübinger Studenten im Vormärz, insbesondere von 125 bis 1837*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; W. Teufel, *Universitas Studii Tuvingensis: die Tübinger Universitätsverfassung in vorreformatorischer Zeit (1477-1534)*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; G. Saltzwedel, *Victor von Bruns (1812-1883): Leben und Werk*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; M. Brecht, *Theologen und Theologie an der Universität Tübingen: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Evangelisch-Theologischen Fakultät*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; E. Sieber, *Dokumente zur gescheiterten Tübinger Universitätsreform in der Revolution 1848-49*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; D.A. Uwe, *Hochschule im Nationalsozialismus. Die Universität Tübingen im Dritten Reich*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; F. Elsener, *Lebensbilder zur Geschichte der Tübinger Juristen Fakultät*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; R. Reinhardt, *Tübinger Theologen und ihre Theologie. Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte der Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät Tübingen*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; R. Vorndran, *Südslawische Reformationsdrucke in der Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen: e. Beschreibung d. vorh. glagolischen, kyrillischen u. anderen Drucke d. «Uracher Bibelanstalt»*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977; W. von Engelhard, H. Hölder, *Mineralogie, Geologie und Paläontologie an der Universität Tübingen von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977.

³ As Marina Rumyantseva notes with reference to Natalya Komleva: constructing social and cultural spaces is closely associated with human attitudes of the post non-classical era. Rumyantseva stresses historical space with its 'non-territorial borders', which evidently is the essential part of a broader informational and ideological space, but with a stress on historicism. M. Rumyantseva, *Logika narrativa v badenskom i rossiyskom neokantiantstve. Izvestia Uralskogo*

the anniversary history and speeches in terms of the methods used to represent the university, organised on the basis of historical plots. As a case study, I have chosen Tübingen University.

The sources for my research include a history of Tübingen University published in 1927, speeches by its rector, professors and guests that were published later in commemorative collections of articles, as well as the records of the anniversary committee and the university administration. The article will also make use of the publications dedicated to the historiography of German universities⁴ and academic publications on the history of Tübingen in the first half of the 20th century.

The stated problem will be covered in three stages. A first part will highlight the mutual influence of university history writing and the jubilee; a second part will review a treatise on the history of Tübingen University in terms of narratology; and finally, in a third part, I will point out references to the historical past encountered in the jubilee discourse that can be used as ways of self-identification. But first I will take the liberty of reviewing the key landmarks in university history writing in Germany from the 19th to the early 21st centuries in order to show the place of these works within the context of other studies on similar issues.

2. University history writing in Germany

Since medieval times, festive events have been distinguished by close attention to the past. As Winfried Müller notes, until the 16th century, the form and contents of jubilees were determined largely by religious doctrines. Yet as early as the second half of the 16th century, in the German regions where the Reformation prevailed, university anniversaries came to be perceived as secular festivals and a means of self-identification for Protestant professors

federalngogo universiteta, vyp. 3, 2012, p. 258.

⁴ N. Hammerstein, *Jubiläumsschrift und Alltagsarbeit. Tendenzen bildungsgeschichtlicher Literatur*, «HZ», vol. 236, 1983, pp. 601-633; R.A. Müller, *Genese, Methoden und Tendenzen der allgemeinen deutschen Universitätsgeschichte. Zur Entwicklung einer historischen Spezialdisziplin*, «Mensch-Wissenschaft-Magie: Mitteilungen der österreichischen Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftsgeschichte», vol. 20, 2000, pp. 181-202; M. Asche, S. Gerber, *Neuzeitliche Universitätsgeschichte in Deutschland. Entwicklungslinien und Forschungsfelder*, «AK», vol. 90, 2008, pp. 159-201; R. vom Bruch, *Methoden und Schwerpunkte der neueren Universitätsgeschichtsforschung*, in W. Buchholz (ed.), *Die Universität Greifswald und die deutsche Hochschullandschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Kolloquium des Lehrstuhls der Pommersche Geschichte der Universität Greifswald in Verbindung mit der Gesellschaft für Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 2004, pp. 9-26; S. Paletschek, *The Writing of University History and University Jubilees: German Examples*, «Studium; Revue d'Histoire des Sciences et des Universités», vol. 5, 2012, pp. 142-155.

who sought to protect themselves from the power of the Roman curia⁵. Until the 19th century, universities appealed to the past in the form of the festive addresses via their representatives, who spared no words in extolling the great history of their alma maters. But in the 19th century, German Protestant universities began to release voluminous works featuring the landmark events of their history, with this practice becoming tradition over time. A pioneer in this regard was Göttingen University: at the beginning of the century, Christoph Meiners published several books at the same time dedicated to the history of higher educational institutions in German-speaking Europe, and in Göttingen in particular⁶.

Between the 19th and the early 21st centuries, university history writing underwent a series of transformations. Rüdiger vom Bruch notes that while the history of German universities has not become an independent subdiscipline in the historical sciences over the past twenty years, as was the case with the history of state and law (*Verfassungsgeschichte*) or the history of the Church (*Kirchengeschichte*), university past is nonetheless an essential part of historical studies⁷. Since the second half of the 20th century, university history writing has been increasingly noted for its institutionalisation, professionalisation and growing popularity among experts in the history of education⁸.

Institutionalisation in Germany began in the 1990s. 1995 saw the foundation of the Society for University and Intellectual History (*Gesellschaft für Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*)⁹. In 1998, the first issue

⁵ Interestingly enough, anniversary cycles were first performed by the universities of Tübingen (1578), Heidelberg (1587) and Wittenberg (1602). W. Müller, *Erinnern an die Gründung. Universitätsjubiläen, Universitätsgeschichte und die Entstehung der Jubiläumskultur in der Frühen Neuzeit*, «BW», vol. 21, 1998, pp. 79-102.

⁶ C. Meiners, *Ueber die Verfassung und Verwaltung teutscher Universitäten*, 2 vols., Göttingen, J.F. Röwer, 1801-02; Id., *Geschichte der Entstehung und Entwicklung der hohen Schulen unseres Erdtheiles*, 4 Bde, Göttingen, J.F. Röwer, 1802-05; Id., *Kurze Darstellung der Entwicklung der hohen Schulen des protestantischen Deutschlands, besonders der hohen Schule zu Göttingen*, Göttingen, J.F. Röwer, 1808.

⁷ Bruch, *Methoden und Schwerpunkte der neueren Universitätsgeschichtsforschung*, cit., p. 9.

⁸ Paletschek, *The Writing of University History and University Jubilees: German Examples*, cit., p. 143.

⁹ During its lifetime, the society published twelve editions in the series «Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft für Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte»: R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Artisten und Philosophen. Wissenschafts- und Wirkungsgeschichte einer Fakultät vom 13. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Basel, Schwabe, 1999; J. Schmutz (ed.), *Juristen für das Reich. Die deutschen rechtsstudien an der Universität Bologna 1265-1465*, Basel, Schwabe, 2000; R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Humboldt International, der Export des deutschen Universitätsmodells im 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Basel, Schwabe 2001; M. Schalenberg (ed.), *Humboldt auf Reisen? Die Rezeption des «deutschen Universitätsmodells» in der französischen und britischen Reformationsdiskursen (1810-1870)*, Basel, Schwabe, 2002; C.-R. Prüll, *Medizin am Toten oder am Lebenden? Pathologie in Berlin und in London, 1990-1945*, Basel, Schwabe, 2003; R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Die Finanzierung von Universität und Wissenschaft in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Basel, Schwabe, 2005; R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Examen, Titel, Promotionen. Akademischen und staatlichen Qualifikationswesen vom 13. bis zum 21. Jahrhundert*, Basel, Schwabe, 2007; B. Immenhauser, *Bildungswege –*

of the yearbook «Jahrbuch für Universitätsgeschichte»¹⁰ was published. Professionalisation revealed itself through the embedding of university historiography in the frameworks of social, intellectual and cultural history; the evolution of new subdisciplines (histories of the faculties and chairs; international university relations, separate scientific disciplines, university relations with the city, etc.); the appearance of so-called «critical» histories of universities (the history of female higher education, anti-Semitism, the crisis and decline of the institutions of higher education during national socialism). Professional self-reflection helped researchers prove the inconsistency of ideologemes such as the «university idea» and «university model». Historians managed in particular to dispel the famous «Humboldt myth» («Mythos Humboldt»)¹¹.

The scientification of university history writing, however, could not save it from the propensity to hold jubilees and the tradition of releasing multi-volume works. As the 2010 anniversary of Berlin University – and particularly its six-volume history published under the editorship of Heinz-Elmar Tenorth – has shown¹², it is not necessary in contemporary university historiography to choose between narrative history and problem history, as contemporary university historiography is able to synthesise both.

Lebenswege. Universitätsbesucher aus dem Bistum Konstanz im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert, Basel, Schwabe, 2007; R.A. Müller, R.C. Schwingers (edd.), *Wissenschaftsfreiheit in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Basel, Schwabe, 2008; R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Universität im öffentlichen Raum*, Basel, Schwabe, 2008; R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Universität, Religion und Kirchen*, Basel, Schwabe, 2011; R.C. Schwingers, C. Hesse (edd.), *Professorinnen und Professoren gewinnen. Zur Geschichte des Berufungswesens an den Universitäten Mitteleuropas*, Basel, Schwabe, 2012.

¹⁰ In Austria, a society of specialists in intellectual history was set up as early as 1980 under the name the Austrian Natural Science Association (*Österreichische Gesellschaft für Naturwissenschaften*). In 1992, it was renamed the Austrian Association for Intellectual Science (*Österreichische Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftsgeschichte*) with its annual publication («Mensch – Wissenschaft – Magie: Mitteilungen der österreichischen Gesellschaft für Wissenschaftsgeschichte»).

¹¹ On the «Humboldt myth» see: M.G. Ash (ed.), *Mythos Humboldt. Vergangenheit und Zukunft der deutschen Universitäten*, Wien, Böhlau, 1997; Id., *Bachelor of What, Master of Whom?*, «European Journal of Education», vol. 41, 2006, pp. 245-267; H.-E. Tenorth, *Mythos Humboldt. Eine Notiz zu Funktion und Geltung der großen Erzählung über die Tradition der deutschen Universität*, in C. Behrmann, S. Trinks, M. Bruhn (edd.), *Intuition und Institution. Kursbuch Bredekamp*, Berlin, Akademie, 2012, pp. 69-80; D. Langewiesche, *Die Humboldtsche Universität als nationaler Mythos. Zum Selbstbild der deutschen Universitäten in ihrer Rektoratsreden im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik*, «HZ», vol. 290, 2010, pp. 53-91; Id., *Humboldt als Leitbild? Die deutsche Universität in den Berliner Rektoratsreden seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, «Jahrbuch für Universitätsgeschichte», vol. 14, 2011, pp. 15-37; S. Paletschek, *Die Erfindung der Humboldtschen Universität. Die Konstruktion der deutschen Universitätsidee in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, «HA», vol. 10, 2002, pp. 183-205; Id., *Verbreitete sich ein «Humboldtsches Modell» an den deutschen Universitäten im 19. Jahrhundert?*, in R.C. Schwingers (ed.), *Humboldt International, der Export des deutschen Universitätsmodells im 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Basel, Schwabe, 2001, pp. 75-104.

¹² H.-E. Tenorth, *Geschichte der Universität unter den Linden*, 6 Bde, Berlin, Akad.-Verl., 2010.

3. *Tübingen: History writing and the jubilee context*

A jubilee is a reference point in a university's history writing as well as in its historic development. According to Sylvia Paletschek, the anniversary celebration brings into the foreground not only university history, but also its privileged, political, social and cultural position¹³. Anniversary also provide university leadership with an opportunity to make their political preferences public: to express solidarity with the government, or conversely, to oppose its policy¹⁴. During anniversary celebrations, universities open their gates to the outside world in search of image capital. Mathias Kotowski¹⁵ showed in his study that during the Weimar Republic it was the commemorative celebrations that allowed Tübingen University to grow from an isolated corporation into a new public space. This was due in no small part to the 450th anniversary of the University¹⁶.

The historization of daily and scientific discourse is a key aspect of an anniversary celebration. As historian Waldemar Teufel noted on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of Tübingen University, «jubilees are always a reason to look back at the past»¹⁷. Such close attention to history is not accidental. Historical plots, selected and presented in the proper light, conceal a powerful commemorative potential. If properly used, history not only provides spectators or readers with spectacular images, but it also creates a symbolic space, a self-identification factor for society.

¹³ «University jubilees not only highlight the history of the university but also the respective overall political, societal and cultural conditions. University anniversaries never just exhibit a purely commemorative dimension. They simultaneously serve political and economic interests and bring the university and the public into closer contact. In terms of ritual, university anniversaries encourage reflection upon the prevailing self-identity of the institution». Paletschek, *The Writing of University History and University Jubilees: German Examples*, cit., p. 146.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

¹⁵ M. Kotowski, *Die öffentliche Universität. Veranstaltungskultur der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 1999.

¹⁶ According to Mathias Kotowski, commemorative culture in the Weimar Republic era included not only university anniversaries, but also a number of anniversary and commemoration dates, some of which were celebrated at regional or even national level. For example, German Empire Foundation Day (*Reichsgründungstag*) day became a national holiday in the Weimar Republic after long discussions that were elicited by the 50th jubilee of the Reich in 1921. In May 1921, the Association of German Universities (*Verband der deutschen Hochschulen*) declared 18 January – the day on which William I, the King of Prussia, was proclaimed German Emperor – as a national holiday. Kotowski, *Die öffentliche Universität. Veranstaltungskultur der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik*, cit., pp. 45-63; F. Schellack, *Nationalfeiertage in Deutschland von 1871 bis 1945*, Frankfurt am Main, u.a., 1990; D. Lehnert, K. Megerle, *Politische Identität und nationale Gedenktage*, in Id., (ed.), *Politische Identität und nationale Gedenktage. Zur politischen Kultur in der Weimarer Republik*, Opladen, Westdeutscher Verlag, 1989, pp. 9-30.

¹⁷ W. Teufel, *Universitas Studii Tuvingensis. Die Tübinger Universitätsverfassung in vorreformatorische Zeit (1477-1534)*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1977, p. 1.

Looking at the jubilee writings from this perspective, we are challenged by two questions: has the evolution of university history writing been the result of freedom of artistic expression on the part of its authors, or has it been initiated by the political authorities or university administration for whom scientific knowledge is only a means rather than an end? When writing that the anniversary's connection with history suggests the latter's dependent position, Vadim Parsamov emphasises one important circumstance as a result of which history loses its «authenticity», becoming a maid-servant of ideology: «By defining 'history' as 'jubilee' or 'official', we acknowledge that this is not history in its original form. The attitude toward such history largely depends on the attitude to official propaganda, which is an important estimation criterion in this case»¹⁸.

In the 19th to the first quarter of the 20th centuries, works dedicated to university histories were an essential part of the commemorative culture of an institution of higher education. A voluminous, several hundred page-long book is certainly not the most effective way to propagandise unity and heroism. A visual and performative component to jubilees – involving parades, exhibits, banquets, and, most importantly, anniversary speeches – accomplishes this task far more efficiently. The organisers of the 1927 celebrations did not ignore the visual. On the second day of the jubilee, for example, a festive rally of professors and students in the central part of the city marched from the main building (*Neue Aula*) to St. George's Collegiate Cathedral (*Stiftskirche St. Georg*)¹⁹. Due to their impermanence, however, festivals cannot retain a long-term illusion of unity. On the other hand, the writings and symbolic spaces created within them can maintain the corporate image for centuries, until the next jubilee. It was precisely for this reason that the anniversary committee (*Jubiläums-Ausschuss*)²⁰ and the Great Senate (*Großer Senat*) exercised editorial control over the official history of the universities.

The Tübingen anniversary of 1927 literally became the invention of tradition²¹. Until that time, the university had celebrated only centenaries.

¹⁸ V. Parsamov, «*Istoriya imperatorskogo Moskovskogo universiteta*» S.P. Shevyreva: *istoricheskiy narrativ v politicheskom kontekste*, Moskva, Izd. dom Vyshei Shkoly Ekonomiki, 2013, p. 3. This article is the best evidence of how the political struggle between Public Education Minister Sergei S. Uvarov, university curator, and Gen. Dmitry P. Buturlin, the 1849 Committee Chairman, was reflected in the anniversary history of Moscow University, published in 1855. The work, published by Prof. Stepan P. Shevyrev served as a historical argument in favour of Uvarov's university policy, which was viewed critically by contemporaries.

¹⁹ See photo of an anniversary rally: Decker-Hauff, Setzler (edd.), *Die Universität Tübingen von 1477 bis 1977 in Bildern und Dokumenten*, cit., pp. 278-279.

²⁰ The committee usually included the pro-rector, the chancellor, the *Universitätsrat* and one professor from each faculty. The committee's composition changed regularly. Normally, preparations for an anniversary took approximately two or three years. The university rector, elected for one year, resigned from the committee upon the expiration of his mandate, and his chair was taken over by his successor.

²¹ Kotowski, *Die öffentliche Universität. Veranstaltungskultur der Eberhard-Karls-Universität*

The idea of celebrating the 450th anniversary was advanced by lobbyists from the university administration that included *Universitätsrat*²² Theodor Knapp and rector Ludwig von Köhler²³. Naturally, this initiative raised questions and enjoyed a mixed reception in the Great Senate²⁴: the first problem to be addressed by the anniversary committee, set up in 1925, was whether it was even necessary to hold an unscheduled celebration given the shortage of funds and the lack of rooms capable of accommodating grand banquets and conferences²⁵. In the book released after the jubilee, Theodor Knapp provided the ideological grounds for holding the ceremony, presenting the year of 1927 as a turning point and a landmark in the history of Tübingen:

We stand on the threshold of a new era that is possibly seen nowhere as clearly as in the institution of higher learning. Does it not make sense to make use of this time and look back on the past to obtain a better view of the future, to understand our current position and thus become stronger? Was it not necessary to restore connections broken or weakened by wartime and the postwar period? And did not the university, like us all, have reason to draw public attention to itself in order not to find itself in oblivion as a modest school, located far from the centres where spiritual and economic life boils and where other educational institutions compete with one another?²⁶

The release of the university history book (*Universitätsgeschichte*) was preceded by reflections and discussions. The archived anniversary committee records reveal that at its second meeting on 21 October 1925, it decided to

Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik, cit., pp. 270-271.

²² One of the most influential officials in university administration, equal to the chancellor in the hierarchy, whose authority was regulated by § 42 of the University Charter dated 5 October 1912.

²³ Ludwig von Köhler was known not only as rector but also as the last Interior Minister of the Württemberg Kingdom. He performed his duties up to the abolition of monarchy in November 1918. About him, see: W. Kohlhaas, *Ludwig von Köhler. Letzter königlich württembergischer Innenminister, Lebensbilder aus Baden-Württemberg*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, Vol. 18, 1994, pp. 471-485; *150 Jahre Promotion an der Wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Universität Tübingen. Biographien der Doktoren, Ehrendoktoren und Habilitierten 1830 bis 1980*, Stuttgart, Konrad Theiss, 1984, pp. 33, 615, 684.

²⁴ «Professor Schmid hält es für zweckmässig, wenn vor der Einberufung eines Ausschusses die Frage entschieden wird, ob überhaupt eine Feier stattfinden soll». UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 2: Auszug aus den Protokollen des Grossen Senats, 5. Juli 1925, p. 1.

²⁵ UAT, 117/2003 Nr. 2: Akten über Jubiläums-Ausschuss 1925-1927, p. 1.

²⁶ «Wir stehen in einer Zeitwende, die vielleicht nirgends stärker in die Erscheinung tritt als an einer Hochschule. Lag es nicht nahe, den Einschnitt eines halben Jahrhunderts zu kurzem Halt zu benutzen, um sich im Rückblick und Ausblick über den eigenen Standort klar zu wenden und aus dieser besinnlichen Betrachtung neue Kraft zu schöpfen? Galt es nicht, die Fäden, die durch Krieg und Nachkriegszeit gelockert oder zerschnitten wurden, wieder fester oder neu zu knüpfen? Und hatte nicht eine Universität wie die unsrige allen Anlaß, wieder einmal die Aufmerksamkeit der weitesten Öffentlichkeit auf sich zu lenken, um als bescheidene Kleinstadtuniversität weitab von den Brennpunkten des Verkehrs und des geistigen und wirtschaftlichen Lebens im Wettbewerb der Hochschulen nicht in Vergessenheit zu geraten?». *Die Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen vom 24 bis 26 Juli 1927*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1928, p. 3.

charge the Great Senate with the writing of a historical treatise. The decision was also taken to release a jubilee collection of articles (*Jubiläumsfestschrift*), each to be written by one of the six faculties. At the following convention of the Great Senate a few days later, it was suggested that the history book be written in several volumes. A Senate member, Prof. Adalbert Wahl, proposed making it a three-volume edition written in chronological order: the first volume would cover university history from 1477 to the Reformation period, the second until the end of the era of Rationalism (this obviously meant from the late 16th to early 18th centuries), and the third volume describing the contemporary period²⁷. According to Wahl's concept, the edition should focus on the evolution of humanitarian disciplines²⁸. Other proposals included releasing an illustrated book (*Bilderband*) to be written by a team of historians, theologians, philologists under the general guidance of the Baden Historical Commission in Stuttgart²⁹.

Interestingly, at the meeting of 18 December 1925, the organisers abandoned their ambitious plans due to a lack of time and money. At the same meeting, the Rector proposed publishing a few works on the faculties' history for the jubilee. His proposal was supported by Prof. Hennig, a committee member representing the department of natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaftliche Fakultät*). At the Chancellor's initiative, it was nonetheless decided to prepare a treatise on the history of the University, entrusting this work to professor of medieval history Johannes Haller³⁰.

But Haller was noncommittal concerning the offer. As little time was left for the preparation of this work, he agreed to write a work on the medieval history that was congenial to him, for which he requested six months' leave³¹. The state

²⁷ UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 2: Auszug aus den Protokollen des Grossen Senats, 26. Oktober 1925, p. 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.* The Baden Historical Commission (Badische Historische Kommission) operated in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1941. The 1954 newly established Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde is the successor to the Badische Historische Kommission (1883-1941), the Oberrheinische Historische Kommission (1941-1945) and the Württembergische Kommission für Landesgeschichte (1891-1954). It is comprised of a maximum of 60 appointed members resident and active in the State, and an unlimited number of corresponding members from Baden-Württemberg, other States and neighbouring countries.

³⁰ J. Haller is recognised as one of the brightest historians of the first half of the 20th century. His major work is a four-volume history of the papacy that was published between 1934 and 1945. In the early 1950s, the serial edition was complemented by the fifth volume. J. Haller, *Das Papsttum: Idee und Wirklichkeit*, in 5 Bde, Urah-Stuttgart, Port.-Verl., 1950-1953. About Haller, see: H. Müller, *Der bewunderte Erbfeind. Johannes Haller, Frankreich und französische Spätmittelalter*, «HZ», vol. 252, 1991, pp. 265-317; H.-E. Volkmann, *Von Johannes Haller zu Reinhard Wittram. Deutschbaltische Historiker und der Nationalsozialismus*, «Zeitschrift für Geschichte», vol. 45, 1997, pp. 21-46; S. Kaudelka, *Johannes Haller. Frankreich und französische Geschichte aus der Sicht eines Deutschbalten*, in U. Pfeil (ed.), *Das Deutsche Historische Institut Paris und seine Gründungsväter. Ein personengeschichtlicher Ansatz*, München, Oldenbourg, 2007, pp. 178-197.

³¹ UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 2: Akten über Jubiläums-Ausschuss 1925-1927, pp. 9-10.

initially was expected to incur all expenses involved in the publication of this work. At the Great Senate meeting on 26 October 1925, Haller and other like-minded persons openly claimed that the state must view the publication of the *Universitätsgeschichte* «as its honourable duty»³².

As the meetings minutes demonstrate, the date of release of the *Universitätsgeschichte* was very important to the setting of the anniversary dates, since the book was due to come out by the beginning of the jubilee. In Haller's words, publication earlier than late July was not possible, taking into account the proof-reading and printing that would take at least two months. As a result, the Senate set the anniversary dates at 24 through 26 July 1927. This was certainly done in view of the preparations of the Marburg University jubilee that were currently underway. Its organisers had decided to move the celebration date to the end of the academic term³³. Still, this decision was due in no small part to the book release dates, since the book needed to be published before the anniversary celebration. From the very beginning of the anniversary preparations, the Tübingen University leadership wished to release a good historical work, but its form and chronology constantly changed due to pragmatic considerations.

Researchers need to keep these things in mind in order to understand the circumstances in which such a work was created. Sometimes information of this sort is more valuable than source study materials. It, for example, helps reveal disagreements or conflicts between the various sides. I discovered one such disagreement in the minutes of 17 June dedicated to a very specific, formal problem. At this meeting, J. Haller raised a question concerning whether the work he was going to write should contain a reference to the Great Senate if he did not receive any official orders from the Senate to write the jubilee history³⁴. Haller wanted to write the work on his own behalf, and dedicate it to the university. This idea was opposed by the pro-rector and chancellor, who claimed that reference should be made to the Great Senate that directly took part in the anniversary preparations³⁵. As a result, the front page of the book

³² UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 2: Auszug aus den Protokollen des Grossen Senats, 26. Oktober 1925, p. 2.

³³ *Ibid.*, 15 Juli 1926, p. 774; UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 1. Anniversary committee minutes show that when setting the anniversary timeframe and drawing up the programme, the organisers often took into account other universities' experience. Unfortunately, no studies of the 1927 and 1977 anniversaries have been written to date that thoroughly explore all the preparations for the jubilees and their perceptions. M. Kotowski's work, with all its scientific accomplishments and well considered concept, highlights the 1927 anniversary only on several pages, mostly based on one anniversary edition that was released in 1928 under the editorship of T. Knapp, which itself is a summary of major events, dates and names, an attempt to commemorate the July events in a book. See: *Die Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen vom 24 bis 26 Juli 1927*, cit.

³⁴ UAT, 117/2003, Nr. 2: Akten über Jubiläums-Ausschuß 1925-1927, 17. Juli 1926, p. 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

carries the inscription that it was written by Prof. J. Haller at the request of the Senate³⁶.

4. *Characters and intrigues: Jubilee history as a narrative*

Until now, I have avoided applying the term «narrative» to university histories. I did so intentionally, since not all writing is a narrative. Problematisation of texts in terms of narratology can be done in different ways depending on the concepts preferred by the researcher: the ideas of Frank Ankersmit, Arthur Danto, Paul Ricoeur, Hayden White, etc.

Here, by way of a specific example, I will attempt to outline several perspectives that open up before the historian when using the theoretical approaches of narrativists in analysing university historiography. I will focus on the ideas of Paul Ricoeur. In his reflections, he proceeds from the dichotomy of explanation and narrative, concealing the complex relationship between two historiographic genres – narrative history and problem history – answering the question ‘why?’³⁷. It is from this perspective that one should view the demarcation of academic and popular university history writing that became relevant after the professionalisation of university history in the 20th and early 21st centuries.

J. Haller’s work *The Origin of Tübingen University 1477-1537* («Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537») is a three hundred page-long book embracing the period from 1477, the year the university was founded, to 1537. In his memoirs Haller admits that this was his favourite work. He named as one of its accomplishments the reconstruction of the image of medieval Tübingen which he admired³⁸. A first glance at the book’s content leaves no doubt that the author intended to cover the university’s history from different perspectives, thus highlighting its inner diversity. In the first part of the book, Haller consistently describes the foundation of the university and all the characters who played a major role in this process³⁹. In the second part, he moves to exploring academic life, reconstructing the social and institutional

³⁶ J. Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1927.

³⁷ In the first volume of his *Time and Story*, Paul Ricoeur explores the possibilities and limits of historical knowledge as well as the intelligibility of narrative. The challenge to event history made by the followers of the Annals school become for Ricoeur the starting point for his further speculations on the status of event as such and the narrative opportunities of social history. P. Ricoeur, *Vremya i rasskaz, Moskva/Sankt-Peterburg. Universitetskaya kniga*, Vol. 1, 1998, pp. 114-130.

³⁸ J. Haller, *Lebenserinnerungen. Gesehenes – Gehörtes – Gedachtes*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1960, p. 268.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-50.

history of the school: the university's charter, the structure of the faculties and chairs, the main administrative positions, its economic development, daily life)⁴⁰. The third part of the work focuses on the biographies of scholars⁴¹. The author admits that it was more important for him to show the university's role in the history of science and education, which – in his view – was possible only by presenting a collective portrait of the academic community of that time⁴². Finally, in the fourth part, the scholars' biographies are embedded in the event history of the early 16th century, a period of collision between the scholastic traditions and humanism⁴³. The book ends with the beginning of the Reformation period, which is described very briefly.

Haller's work is a compound work in which we can distinguish several specific features. The author's intention to present the university as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, showing its social and intellectual aspects, looks innovative and ambitious for its time, the early 20th century. Contemporary scholars R. vom Bruch and S. Paletchek defend the professionalisation of contemporary university studies, highlighting the need to present the university as an institution that produces and translates scientific knowledge⁴⁴. Even in the early 21st century, this task is extremely difficult for historians to accomplish in view of the poorly developed disciplines and the university sciences in general. Due to the inadequate qualifications of its authors, a story on scientific achievements easily turns into a collection of biographical sketches⁴⁵. Haller also fell into this trap. He does not deny that he wished to write a story dedicated to the life of Tübingen professors and to show their role in the development of the university's intellectual life⁴⁶. As a result, the entire third part of the book is a chain of biographies (physicians, lawyers, theologians, students), with each chain being a story that features the labours and discoveries of various scholars. The author clearly is more disposed to some of his characters than to others,

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-121.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-247.

⁴² «Was sie gewesen und getan hat, ist vor allem insoweit wissenswert, wie es Antwort gibt auf die Frage: was hat sie für die Wissenschaft ihrer Zeit und der Nachwelt, was für den Unterricht, für die Hebung des geistigen Durchschnitts in ihrem Wirkungskreis, für die Verbreitung von Kenntnissen und Bildung bedeutet? Beides ist in erster Linie eine Geschichte ihrer Lehrer. Suchen wir uns also von den Männern ein Bild zu verschaffen, die an der Tübinger Universität im ersten Menschenalter ihres Bestehens gelehrt haben». Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., p. 125.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 249-341.

⁴⁴ Bruch, *Methoden und Schwerpunkte der neueren Universitätsgeschichtsforschung*, cit., p. 10; Paletschek, *The Writing of University History and University Jubilees: German Examples*, cit., p. 148.

⁴⁵ Paletschek, *The Writing of University History and University Jubilees: German Examples*, cit., p. 148.

⁴⁶ Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., p. 125.

which is evidenced by the sketch size and the epithets chosen. Examples include the biographies of physician Johannes Widman⁴⁷, theologian Gabriel Biel⁴⁸ and an almost hagiographic description of the first rector and chancellor Johann Vergenhans⁴⁹.

The issue of intellectual biographies I touched upon above opens up a different perspective from which we can approach research into university history. This concerns the scale of the narrative – the limits on the representation of the past chosen by the author. This problem is closely associated with narratology, in particular the narrative opportunities of historical stories and counterpoising event history, and their relation to «longue durée» history.

We find at least two narrative levels in Haller's work. The first level is a traditional story written in the event history genre, in which the main character is a real person such as Eberhard V, Pope Sixtus IV, Philipp Melanchton, etc. The character is one of the implications introduced by Paul Ricoeur when writing about the «narrative identification» of a historical story. The character is always at the centre of event history; he is a potential actor who sets the plot in motion. But the narrative character is not necessarily a living person: «the notion 'personage' understood as the one who performs action, does not necessarily suggest that the personage will be an individual [...]. The personage can be anyone who is described in the narrative as a grammatical subject of the predicate of action in the basic declarative sentence 'X makes R'»⁵⁰. Freedom of defining the subject opens up an opportunity for the author to use collective substances as rightful action participants. These very substances constitute the second level of narrative, in which the university is described as the acting subject. As a result of the author's strategy, an impression is created that the academic institution is capable of acting as an integral totality, on a par with other characters⁵¹. Ricoeur terms this subject a «quasi personage»⁵².

The presence of such collective substances is typical for academic discourses in the field of macrohistory – the history of nations, empires, civilizations, states, etc. In such cases, loyalty to 'methodological individualism' would make it impossible to embrace global processes, forcing researchers to resort to the creation of generalising constructions. In this case, each of these is likened to an individual⁵³. This method is employed in order to create a simplified image of the university as an integral totality, removing it from the context of complex social and professional relations at the level of faculties, chairs, student

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-140.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 153-156.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-19, 251 ff.

⁵⁰ Ricoeur, *Vremya i rasskaz*, cit., p. 228.

⁵¹ Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., p. 328.

⁵² Ricoeur, *Vremya i rasskaz*, cit., p. 228-229.

⁵³ Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., pp. 20-43.

associations, leadership, etc. Haller, however, is not consistent in applying this method. He uses it mostly in introductory and concluding descriptions⁵⁴. For the rest, his book is distinguished by constantly changing scopes, from institutions to specific characters and vice versa. This narrative reconstruction creates a multidimensional history of the university that prevents it being perceived as a homogeneous body.

Another implication emphasised by Ricoeur is intrigue, in which «event» acts as a variable. In his book *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Ricoeur defines «event» as «any incoordination coming into collision with coordination of action»⁵⁵. Event is caesura, which in historical representation symbolises the acceleration of social time⁵⁶, concealing in itself a fateful value for the next plot, thus ensuring the narrative consistency of the story. Michael Stolleis adds an important note saying that caesuras are the markers of historiography⁵⁷. Their selection and description are the privilege of the storyteller; it is precisely through caesuras that we can understand the nuances of the author's perception of the past. For university history writing, the «caesuras problem» is relevant in the light of the above-mentioned changes in the scopes of the narratives and the presence of different levels within them, each having its own intrigues. These, for example, might be political events affecting the whole nation, including universities (wars, revolutions, rebellions, epidemics, reforms, etc.) or events that can be observed only at the level of university history writing because their consequences do not go beyond the limits of an academic corporation or even the life of one of its members.

In Haller's book, the interconnection of the narrative scopes can be seen in the examples of the caesuras he describes. Caesuras of the second level are global events that have recently become commonplace in studies of the Middle Ages and early contemporary history: the humanism era (late 14th-early 15th centuries), the plague epidemic in 1482-1483, and the Reformation, before which the author ends his story. One way or another, these events influenced the fate of the higher schools: humanism created a new generation of professors and served as the impetus for change⁵⁸, the plague killed many people⁵⁹, while the Reformation is termed none other than the «new foundation» (*Neugründung*) of the university⁶⁰. Concurrent with this, the narrative includes the first level

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 208 ff., 338-341.

⁵⁵ P. Ricoeur, *Pamyat, istoria, zabvenie*, Moskva, Izd-vo gum. lit., 2004.

⁵⁶ Ricoeur, *Vremya i rasskaz*, cit., p. 121.

⁵⁷ M. Stolleis, *Der lange Abschied vom 19. Jahrhundert. Die Zäsur von 1914 aus rechtshistorischer Perspektive*, Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1997, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., pp. 314-316.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁶⁰ «Was sich da seit dem Winter 1534 abgespielt hatte, war mehr als eine Reform, es war eigentlich eine Neugründung. Blieben die äußeren Formen auch die alten, so war mit den neuen Männern doch ein neuer Geist eingezogen, und die neuen Lehrpläne sorgten dafür». *Ibid.*, p. 340.

caesuras that can be seen only from the perspective of university history. These include the 1534 fire that destroyed the main building and many records⁶¹, and the resignation of J. Fergenhans as university chancellor in 1509⁶². According to Haller, the chancellor's retirement and death initiated a period of decline for the university. To single out this historical landmark, Haller – having mentioned the chancellor's death – described his intellectual legacy⁶³.

The correlation of caesuras can be productive not only within university historiography, but also when comparing, for example, the history of a university with the history of a region, county or even a nation. Searching for such common points would help embed university history into other historical subdisciplines and reveal possible connections between different levels of history writing.

5. The university commemoration: 1914-1918 war image in the jubilee rhetoric

J. Haller's historical narrative focusing on the early history of Tübingen University – with the emphasis on an academic community versus an educational institution – contrasts sharply with anniversary speeches, which are a different kind of commemorative writing. The major theme of the 1927 public addresses was the First World War and its aftermath. It was on the lips of almost all who spoke on 24 July at the opening of a children's clinic that was a part of the anniversary program, and on 25 July in St. George Collegiate Church. Wilhelm Trendelenburg gave a speech dedicated to the memory of those killed in action during the war. Below is a citation from his address:

It was only yesterday that we commemorated them, standing by the memorial. There, their names will be passed down to the following generations. But even here, we realise what they mean for us, but even here we promise with unyielding dedication and tireless loyalty to the nation and the Fatherland to remember and value the sacrifice they made! [...] Neither professors, nor students – none of those who with eagerness and endurance went through this war, will be forgotten. Today, these people are an example for our generation. We are grateful to all who fought and shed blood for our Fatherland⁶⁴.

⁶¹ Haller, *Die Anfänge der Universität Tübingen 1477-1537. Zur Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Universität im Auftrag ihres Grossen Senats dargestellt*, cit., p. V, 133.

⁶² «Das Leben einer Republik läßt sich nicht nach Herrscherperioden gliedern. Und doch wird in der Geschichte der Tübinger Universität ein neuer Abschnitt bezeichnet durch das Zurücktreten und schließliche Verschwinden des Mannes, der sie mit klugem Rat und sicherer Tatkraft schaffen geholfen und ihr ein Menschenalter lang sorgsame Aufsicht gewidmet hatte. Die Tage des Kanzlers Vergenhans neigten sich ihrem Ende zu». *Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 251 ff.

⁶⁴ «Schon gestern haben wir ihrer am Gefallenendenkmal gedacht. Ihre Namen wurden dort der Nachwelt überliefert. Aber auch hier sind wir dessen eingedenk, was sie für uns waren, und auch

The duty to remember the dead mentioned by Trendelenburg acquires heroic overtones, with the sacrifice made on the battlefield becoming sacred. Not all the speeches concerning the war were mournful. Some were very critical of the postwar political system and the victor countries' policy towards Germany. For example, Prof. K. Heim said the following in his speech of 24 July:

Deeply imbued with the feelings of sorrow and gratitude, we are here to speak with them (with the fallen – O.M.) alone and gain strength to struggle for high ideals. Can we find a better example to follow than those who, not yet having reached the age of thirteen, voluntarily went to the front? The present generation of students was too young then to answer the call of our Fatherland in those great inspiring days. [...] Economic scarcity on the front and in the rear constantly threatened to defeat the German people's almost unshakable will for victory. After four years of battles, it was broken in a battle with external and internal enemies, and over time, we felt the Versailles dictate hanging over us, a dictate that deprived us of opportunities to live and of economic and cultural prosperity⁶⁵.

Other speeches were also imbued with patriotic pathos. Prof. Bebermeyer spoke, for example, of «German heroism»⁶⁶. General Eberhard von Hofacker, speaking on behalf of the German armed forces, urged students, professors and guests to put together the remaining pieces of German «patriotic spirit» («vaterländischer Geist»)⁶⁷ and keep them within the university walls as a «great treasure that we have inherited from the former Germany»⁶⁸. The speeches by retired representative of the German War Graves Commission (*Volksbund Deutscher Kriegsgräberfürsorge*) Lt.-Gen. Baron von Brand and Ellenbeck, a deputy of the Reichstag⁶⁹, were in a similar spirit. The presence

hier geloben wir, durch unbeugsamen Fleiß, durch unermüdliche Hingabe an Volk, Heimat und Vaterland des Opfers wert zu sein, das sie uns brachten! [...] Jedem akademischen Lehrer werden der Fleiß und die Arbeitsfreude der damaligen durch den Krieg gereiften Schüler unvergeßlich sein, welche der heutigen Generation zum Vorbild dienen müssen. Auch ihnen, die für das Vaterland kämpften und bluteten und die uns ein gütiges Geschick zurückführte, sei hier gedankt». *Festrede gehalten zur 450 Jahrfeier der Universität Tübingen beim Festakt in der Stiftskirche am 25. Juli 1927 von Prof. W. Trendelenburg*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1927, p. 12.

⁶⁵ «Tief erfüllt von dem Gefühl der Wehmut und des Dankes stehen wir hier, um in stiller Einkehr und Zwiesprache mit ihnen uns neue Kraft für den Kampf um die hohen Ideale zu holen, für die sie in den Tod gegangen sind. Könnten wir denn auch bessere Vorbilder finden als jene, die vor nun 13 Jahren als Kriegsfreiwillige in den Kampf gezogen sind? Wir, die heutige Studentengeneration, waren ja damals noch zu jung, um in jenen großen Tagen der Begeisterung dem Rufe des Vaterlandes Folge zu leisten. [...] Die wirtschaftliche Not vor und hinter der Front lief immer wieder Sturm gegen den festen und schier unerschütterlichen Siegeswillen des deutschen Volkes. Nach vier Jahren heißesten Ringens unterlag es im Kampfe gegen äußere und innere Feinde und kurze Zeit darauf mußten wir es erleben, daß das Versailler Diktat, das uns jede Lebensmöglichkeit und das Wiederaufblühen unserer Wirtschaft und unseres kulturellen Seins nehmen sollte, über uns verhängt». *Die Feier des 450jährigen Bestehens der Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen vom 24 bis 26 Juli 1927*, cit., p. 23.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

of military officers at the jubilee was not merely evidence of respect for those who had fought on the front. The armed forces and the university were seen as communities loyal to the old values. As Dieter Langewiesche notes, these institutes were associated with hopes for reconstructing the country, and were presented in this light at the 1927 anniversary⁷⁰.

Public discontent with the new political system was not uncommon in postwar Germany, and intellectuals were no exception. The financial problems of the new – yet weak – state drastically affected the daily lives of students and professors. Professors' salaries were not sufficient to even buy food and essentials; traineeships and foreign trips could not be afforded, books and instructional materials were a luxury, while the fee charged for publishing articles in academic journals soared. State support programmes for talented scientists, and individual donations were unable to improve the situation⁷¹.

Social instability engendered nationalist and militaristic feelings within the university environment. Nostalgic feelings for the lost imperial grandeur grew, anti-Semitism was rampant, while the country, in its new democratic form, was perceived as «the victim of demagogues and blabbers, saturated with the lowness of vulgar instincts, with the passion of the envious, of outcasts, and of the disinherited»⁷². All who openly held non-conformist views and felt emboldened to denounce ostentatious rhetoric and ignorance, risked their jobs: «The anti-republican hysteria of professors and students continually led to incidents. Whenever a lecturer expressed anything resembling pacifist or Marxist views, there was a student riot against him, particularly if he was Jewish»⁷³.

Germany's new international status was perceived as a national humiliation by students and professors, who thus did not have warm feelings for the new political regime and the victor countries. The conservative part of the academic community was enslaved in revisionism: «They did not hesitate to clear their own nation of all responsibility for the failure of diplomacy in 1914. They continued, moreover, to defend the German recourse to unlimited submarine warfare and their agitating against a negotiated peace. Many of them actually argued that Germany had lost the war because its civilian leaders had defeatist sentiments due to their adherence to an insufficiently inclusive war aims

⁷⁰ D. Langewiesche, *Die Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik. Kriesenerfahrung und Distanz zur Demokratie an deutschen Universitäten*, «Zeitschrift für württembergischer Landesgeschichte», vol. 51, 1992, p. 374.

⁷¹ F.K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarines: The Academic Community in Germany, 1890-1933*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1969, pp. 62 ff. See also: A. Weber, *Not der geistigen Arbeiter*, München-Leipzig, Duncker & Humblot, 1923; G. Schreiber, *Die Not der deutschen Wissenschaft und geistigen Arbeiter: Geschehnisse und Gedanken zur Kulturpolitik des deutschen Reiches*, Leipzig, Quelle Meyer, 1923.

⁷² Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarines: The Academic Community in Germany, 1890-1933*, cit., pp. 214-215.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

programme»⁷⁴. Tübingen professors also shared such feelings; at the outbreak of the war, they justified its fair character and strengthened national patriotism⁷⁵. For that matter, J. Haller was one of the most fruitful military publicists and an «uncompromising annexationist» in his political views⁷⁶.

After the military defeat in the November Revolution of 1918-1919, Haller and others categorically denied Germany's responsibility for unleashing the war⁷⁷. For example, Prof. Wahl, whom I mentioned above, wrote in his article published in «Württembergische Hochschul-Zeitung» prior to the jubilee: «We must go on the offensive instead of defending ourselves. And, certainly, not with the purpose of proving that other countries than Germany were also responsible for launching this war. Many so-called 'Germans' still stick to such statements, in order not to deprive the revolution of the last remnants of morality. Germany must not feel blame for this war!»⁷⁸. Needless to say, amid such patriotic calls, contempt for the republic and the idealisation of Germany under the Kaisers only grew stronger. Thus, Trendelenburg stated in his speech:

The beginning of the last half century that we want to focus on was in the first place a happy time for consolidating power and economic growth in our Fatherland. Under the reign of our wise rulers that we gratefully recall today, the university was able to peacefully go forward and resolve many relevant problems that emerged as economic demands increased and the number of students grew⁷⁹.

Trendelenburg's nostalgia for the lost empire was accompanied by his rejection of new trends in the higher educational system. The attractive past was opposed to ugly modernity:

The postwar changes that I mentioned could prove significant for some universities. Many thought that all that was ancient was in need of renewal and change, only because it

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁷⁵ Langewiesche, *Die Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik. Kriesenerfahrung und Distanz zur Demokratie an deutschen Universitäten*, cit., pp. 368-371.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁷⁷ See, for example, Haller's speeches, published in 1934: J. Haller, *Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte und Politik*, Stuttgart-Berlin, Cotta, 1934, in partic. pp. 311-343.

⁷⁸ «Wir müssen offensiv vorgehen und uns nicht verteidigen, natürlich auch nicht mit dem elenden Ziel, nur die 'Nichtalleinschuld' Deutschlands zu erweisen, eine Formulierung, an der ja freilich noch viele 'Deutsche' festhalten, um der Revolution nicht jeden Rest von moralischer Berechtigung zu nehmen. Deutschland trägt überhaupt keine Kriegsschuld!» (in «Württembergische Hochschul-Zeitung», Neue Folge, Nr. 6, 15. Juni, p. 7).

⁷⁹ «Der Beginn der letzten 50 Jahre, auf die wir in erster Linie unseren Blick richten wollen, lag in einer glücklichen Zeit der aufstrebenden Macht und wirtschaftlichen Größe unseres Vaterlandes. Unter der Regierung weiser Fürsten, derer wir heute in Dankbarkeit gedenken, konnte auch die Universität sich ruhig entfalten und konnten viele Aufgaben gelöst werden, die sich mit dem Fortschreiten der wissenschaftlichen Bedürfnisse und mit der starken Zunahme der Zahl der Studierenden von selbst ergaben, die sich unserer schönen Hochschule zuwendeten». *Festrede gehalten zur 450 Jahrfeier der Universität Tübingen beim Festakt in der Stiftskirche am 25. Juli 1927*, cit., p. 11.

related to the prewar period, 'the old times'. But, fortunately, the healthy, peaceful and understanding attitude of the people of Württemberg saved us from dangerous experiments in higher education. Here is our unmistakable position: keeping to old principles when they stand the test of time, and being critical of all that is new by examining whether this novelty was due to fashion or the political establishment, which may not be allowed to affect university life⁸⁰.

The speaker's scepticism concerning the new times betrays his hidden discontent with the democratisation of higher education. Calls for independence were voiced by the academic community even during the war when military operations were well underway and no one could imagine the forthcoming revolution of 1918-19 and the abolition of the German monarchy. «More self-management! More freedom to set up small unions! First of all, more faith that such unions would be capable of independent development, not to the detriment, but in the best interests of our country», said rector Wilhelm von Blume on 25 February 1917⁸¹. But given the devastation, numerous victims, inflation and the contributions that Germany was bound to pay under the terms of the «disgraceful Versailles Treaty»⁸², these words did not elicit compassion from the defendants of the old order, nor did they arouse approval for the democratic innovations that the Weimar Republic brought with it.

Conclusions

Researching the 1927 anniversary has revealed two lines of self-representation that the university pursued via the historical plots. The first line – searching for identity through the events of medieval history – is presented in Haller's narrative and is based on the events of the university's early history. As Haller admits in his memoirs, most important for him was to show his love for Tübingen and to convey his fascination with medieval historical images. The university image he

⁸⁰ «Die Veränderungen, welche ich nach dem Kriege ergaben, mögen an manchen Universitäten einschneidender gewesen sein. Viele glaubten, daß alles Alte nur deshalb schon, weil es aus der 'alten Zeit' vor dem Kriege stammt, zu erneuern und zu verändern sei. Der gesunde, ruhige und verständige Sinn des Württembergischen Volkes hat uns glücklicherweise vor gefährlichen Experimenten im Universitätswesen bewahrt. Es ist mit Recht unser unbeirrbarer Standpunkt, am Alten festzuhalten, wenn es sich bewährte, und alles Neue der strengen kritischen Betrachtung zu unterziehen, ob es nicht nur der Mode oder der politischen Einstellung entspringt, welche beide im Universitätswesen niemals Platz finden dürfen». *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸¹ «Mehr Selbstverwaltung! Mehr Freiheit für die Bildung kleiner Verbände. Vor allem: Mehr Vertrauen zu der Fähigkeit dieser Verbände sich selbständig zu entwickeln, nicht zum Nachteil, sondern zum Vorteil des Staates». *Rede des neuen Rektors Professor Dr. Ludwig v. Köhler, in Reden bei der Rektoratsübergabe am 30. April 1925*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1925, p. 10.

⁸² Langewiesche, *Die Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in der Weimarer Republik. Kriesenerfahrung und Distanz zur Demokratie an deutschen Universitäten*, cit., p. 372.

created is very dynamic. Two narrative levels are present that can be identified through events and characters. The first level is local history writing featuring the institutional and social history of the university and the biographies of students, professors and the administration organically embedded within it. The second level shows Tübingen University as an independent subject of narration acting alongside other living characters. At this level, events develop locally, nationally and even globally, but still affect the university itself.

This second line is the jubilee rhetoric, with contemporary history at its core. A similar tonality present in all anniversary speeches indicates that in the days of the Weimar Republic, the university's leadership clearly felt the need to construct a single space of meanings. This symbolic space was created at the expense of the 1914-1918 war, which was depicted as a landmark separating the ideal «yesterday» from the gloomy and ugly «today». This shows how a global – not a local – event becomes a source of momentum for unity, and the major ideological element of the university anniversary. Thus, the jubilee discourse participants articulated the traumatised people's memory of the recent catastrophe. Romanticisation of the 1914-1918 war, heroization of Germany under the Kaisers, and a lack of repentance for unleashing the war were typical for the intellectuals of the Weimar Republic times. One might say that the 1927 anniversary context was determined by revisionist sentiments that reigned in many educational institutions in Germany during the 1920s.

Researching university history in terms of narratology is a promising approach to university history writing. First, it is important to realise how closely university history writing is associated with national history writing, not only in terms of caesuras, characters and common research approaches, but also in terms of moral evaluations. Second, contemporary narratology has made great advances in researching different types of historical descriptions and the intelligibility of narrative as a way of representation. Both theoretical research results could contribute to an evaluation of the scientific potential of jubilee narratives and solving the problem of demarcating scientific and popular genres of university history writing, or deciding whether such is even necessary. The approbation of theories and approaches of allied subdisciplines could advance university research to a new level.