

**Jury-report concerning the ICHTH International Bookprize
for the History and Theory of Historiography, 2016**

After a long process of selection and deliberation the jury of the ICHTH-Bookprize 2016 has finally come to a decision. The process was quite complicated because we received a remarkable number of books of very high quality. The full list of 17 accepted submissions is as follows (some submissions were not included because they did not meet the criteria of selection).

1. Jonas Grethlein, *Experience and Teleology in Ancient Historiography. Futures Past from Herodotus to Augustine*, Cambridge UP 2013.
2. Anthony K. Jensen, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of History*, Cambridge UP 2013.
3. Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage. Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914*, Cambridge UP 2013.
4. Eelco Runia, *Moved by the Past. Discontinuity and Historical Mutation*, Columbia UP 2014.
5. Warren Breckman, *Adventures of the Symbolic: Post-Marxism and Radical Democracy*, Columbia UP 2013.
6. Ian Verstegen, *A Realist Theory of Art*, Routledge 2013.
7. Liv Willunsen, *Witches of the North. Scotland and Finnmark*, Brill 2013.
8. Herman Paul, *Key Issues in Historical Theory*, Polity 2015.
9. Henning Trueper, *Topography of a Method. François Louis Ganshof and the Writing of History*, Mohr Siebeck 2014.
10. Anton Froeyman, *History, Ethics, and the Recognition of the Other. A Levinasian View on the Writing of History*, Routledge 2015.
11. Jouni Matti Kuukkanen, *Postnarrativist Philosophy of Historiography*, Palgrave 2015.
12. Andreas Boldt, *The Life and Work of Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886): An Assessment of his Achievements*, The Mellen Press 2014.
13. Frederic Will, *Historia: Profiles of the Historical Impulse*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2015.
14. Lucian Popescu, *The Archeology of Historical and Political Thinking* (in Rumenian, unpublished).
15. Gianluca Cinelli, *La Questione del Male in Storia della colonna infame di Alessandro Manzoni. Fondamenti di una Teoria della Letteratura Etica*, Troubadour Publishing 2015 (in Italian).
16. Jakub Muchowski, *Politics of Historical Writing. Hayden White's Theoretical Reflection* (published in Polish, 2015).
17. Weihun Liu, *The Struggles of an Ordinary Man (China 1930-2000)*, eBook 2015.

We have looked in these books for theoretical and methodological novelty and other forms of originality. Given the high average quality it was far from easy to rank them. Nevertheless, as a jury we had to do so and we did. In the last round we also asked an external expert for a review of our last shortlist in order to check our own. **The ultimate winner is Jouni Kuukkanen (nr. 11) with his fundamental book on *Postnarrativist Philosophy of Historiography*.**

Jouni-Matti Kuukkanen combines novel and agenda-setting claims with philosophical and historiographical analyses. The book is written in a crystal clear style and is discursive from its first page to the last. The author always clarifies which positions he subscribes to and which he is rejecting – while always informing his readers about his arguments why. Taking his departure from narrativist philosophies as developed by Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit, he analyzes their positions, weighting their pros and cons in the light of recent philosophical and historiographical discussions. He argues that narrativism has made important contributions to the theory of historiography, but also that by now there are good grounds to move beyond it to postnarrativism. Much of recent theorizing of historiography has focused on defending either absolutist historical realism or relativist postmodernism. Kuukkanen shows how it is possible to reject truth-functional evaluation of interpretations and yet hold that historiography can be assessed by rational criteria – and thus avoids the pitfalls of fictionalism and postmodernism. The postnarrativist view maintains that studies of history are informal arguments for theses about the past and that they can be located on a gliding scale between subjectivity and objectivity.

Saying goodbye to truth as a meaningful epistemological quality of historical narratives leads the author to the elucidation of the notion of 'warranted assertibility' and to an analysis of other cognitive values next to truth, like novelty, explanatory power and scope. These cognitive values are always debate - dependent, because what represents novelty etc. is dependent on the presence of competing views. He illustrates this context-dependency of historical narratives by the debates around E.P.Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class* and Christopher Clark's *The Sleepwalkers*. As the author also reconnects the debates in philosophy of history to debates in philosophy of science, he is reestablishing important links that have been backgrounded for quite some time.

All in all, Kuukkanen's book will probably function as the point of departure for many future discussions in philosophy of historiography, because it provides in a masterful way a fundamental analysis of the questions and routes that have taken us to the present.

Also on behalf of my fellow jury members Edoardo Tortarolo and Estevão de Rezende Martins,



Chris Lorenz

Chair of the ICHTH-Book Prize Jury