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From the Editor

The editorial board of the *Polish Journal of English Studies* welcomes you all to the first issue of the second decade of our activities. We enter the decade with new people on board, so let me welcome our new editors – Prof. Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak, who took over the Linguistics Section, and Dr Izabela Curyłło-Klag, who is now in charge of the Studies in Culture section. We would like to thank our former section editors – Prof. Danuta Gabryś-Barker, Prof. Ryszard Wolny, and Prof. Henryk Kardela – for their assistance during the last decade.

The present issue includes eight papers, four book reviews, and a conference report. As usual, the topics of the papers range from Old English religious poetry to contemporary American literature, with some Irish poetry, and a classical American novel in between. Another proof of the broadness of our interests, but there are still topics within English studies that have not been discussed in our journal yet, so your submissions are more than welcome.

We enter the new decade also with a slightly updated website – you will find there a clearer presentation of our constantly growing team reviewers, as well as a list of our authors with links to their papers. We have also updated the instructions for authors and reviewers.

Our work is done now, but as always it is only temporarily, as we are already planning the second 2025 issue, which will be dedicated to Critical Posthumanism and Relationality. It will be available in December 2025. If you would like to contribute, submissions to the volume are welcome by September. We are also looking forward to your submissions on any subject within English Studies; those will be considered for publication in 2025 or later. We are also happy to publish book reviews and conference reports.

Krzysztof Fordoński
Editor-in-chief of the *Polish Journal of English Studies*

The Duality of Clowns in W. B. Yeats's "The Mask"– Who is the 'I'?

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Abstract: This article offers a close reading of William Butler Yeats's "The Mask" (1910), a poem that has generated diverse critical interpretations, particularly concerning themes of gender and theatricality. Critics have read the poem through a biographical lens – often situating it within the personal life and romantic experiences of the poet himself. Unlike such interpretations, this study shifts the focus to the poem's rhetoric, visual imagery, and the layered symbolism of the "mask." By following semiotic reading (Ferdinand de Saussure), the analysis decodes the language, decenters the most literal meanings, and examines the figure of the clown through evocative phrases such as "burning gold" and "emerald eyes". In this study, we aim to interpret the clown not merely as a performative or external figure, but also as a metaphor for the fragmented and conflicted inner self – an identity concealed beneath layers of artifice and aesthetic expression. Drawing on the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's theory of otherness, the essay interprets the clown's identity through the dynamics of the big Other and the small other, demonstrating how these forces simultaneously shape and destabilize the 'I'. It explores the conflict between the inner

voice behind the mask and the power imposed by social norms. Ultimately, the essay proposes a philosophically informed reading of Yeats's poem, one that foregrounds its rhetorical texture and symbolic depth rather than limiting its interpretation to personal biography. This act highlights the enduring richness of Yeats's poetic vision and its capacity to engage with the profound questions of selfhood, perception, and representation.

Keywords: W.B. Yeats, mask, clown, identity, otherness

Introduction

William Butler Yeats's "*The Mask*" was originally published in 1910 within his collection *The Green Helmet and Other Poems* (Gould 2013, 9). Structurally, the poem comprises three stanzas of five lines each, resulting in a total of fifteen lines.[1] The fifteen-line verse captures the clown's duality through an internal dialogue, marked by the use of quotation marks enclosing the entire poem. This formal choice reflects a tension between the speaker's voice and the projected image shaped to satisfy the social gaze, symbolized by the recurring motif of "emerald eyes." In general terms, Yeats's verse has been examined through a variety of interpretive frameworks, each shedding light on different aspects of his work; for instance, Hussein (2024) argues that Yeats employs the concept of the mask as a literary device to explore the tension between outward appearances and inner emotions. According to Hussein, while the mask gleams with brilliance, it simultaneously acts as a barrier, preventing two passionate lovers from openly expressing their sentiments. These lovers are fully conscious of their emotions, yet the presence of the mask inhibits them from revealing their sensibilities. The critic then interprets Yeats's poetic exploration through a biographical lens, suggesting that the poet's text reflects his personal experiences with love and relationships, as well as his yearning to unveil authentic emotions beneath the surface (2024, 142-157).

In contrast, Jin (2016) provides a broader philosophical perspective, asserting that Yeats's overarching ambition in his poetry is to achieve what he calls "unity of being." This concept refers to the harmony that arises from the reconciliation

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1   "Spore." *Phantasmagoria*. Writing@CSU: The Writing Gallery. Colorado State University. 2005. https://writing.colostate.edu/gallery/phantasmagoria/spore.htm

of conflicting forces, such as emotions and reason. Furthermore, Jin views the mask in Yeats's work as a dramatic symbol, representing the constructed social self. That is to say, it functions as both a protective shield and an alluring presence, revealing the complexities of self-presentation (2016, 4). In addition, the mask embodies the poet's theme of the "anti-self" and the interplay of oppositional forces. In other words, Jin claims that Yeats had thought that the unity of emergence through the dynamic tensions between the self and its antithetical counterpart illustrates how personal and universal conflicts can lead to profound harmony and creative synthesis. Besides these critics, Lindy Spore (2005) argues that the poet's representation of the mask suggests that the concept of identity is awakened in both character and the audience through poetic drama, achieved by what he calls "the deliberate creation of the great mask," exploring the distinction between the self and the mask, which suggests that the self is split and that a form of unity can be achieved by setting one part of the self against the Other (2005, 5). Similarly, Levine (1977) sheds light on the concept of the mask, stating that it is related to the theory of anti-self, and the central conviction is that a person finds themselves by searching for their opposite, which Yeats calls "either mask." Through the disguise of an anti-self, the poet reconciles with everything beyond the individual, with what has been concealed from everyday awareness, and with what connects him to a larger, collective consciousness. Levine further states that whether we frame this process in existential, Freudian, Jungian, or classical aesthetic terms is less important than understanding that it represents the core way of imagining in Yeats's work. Although the poet expresses a deep discomfort with the everyday self, he does not propose that adopting a mask is necessary for writing poetry (1997, 11-16). Carberg (1974) thinks that the mask represents the poet's desire, or at least what he wants to present to the world, but it is always shaped by the opposite phase of his nature; for example, the deeply individualistic romantic figure often dreams of returning to a more primal and natural state (144-154). According to Cade-Stewart (2013), this poem presents a reimagined version of the poetic mask—that of the political balladeer. In contrast to the portrayal of O'Rahilly in Stephens's poem, the O'Rahilly depicted here is determined to raise his voice, openly criticizing the leaders of the Rising for excluding him from their plans, just as they had previously marginalized Yeats.

Unlike these interpretations, this essay follows a different approach to analyze Yeats's "The Mask," deliberately setting aside traditional interpretations

grounded in biographical or historical references. Instead, it adopts a Saussurean linguistic framework to unravel the language and explore the multiple layers of meaning embedded in each line of the verse. In other words, a semiotic approach makes it possible to offer theoretical ways of reading the text (Saussure 1972).[2] Put simply, in this study, we focus on the linguistic codes, metaphors, and the subtler, often hidden, messages within the text. The primary objective of this analysis is to illuminate how the linguistic structures of the language function to reveal the underlying logic and principles governing specific terms and expressions. Through a close reading, the study seeks to uncover the deeper mechanisms through which meaning is constructed. In particular, the analysis focuses on the duality embodied by the figure of the clown, interpreting this dualism through the lens of Lacanian psychoanalysis of the construction of the 'I'. This theoretical intersection enables a complex exploration of identity, self-perception, and symbolic representation within the poem.

The Lacanian "I" and the Dialectics of Otherness

Yeats's "The Mask" seems to examine the concept of identity as constructed through performance, exploring the tensions between the self and its projected persona. Strikingly, the poetic motif of the mask functions not merely as a disguise but as a metaphor for the self's construction through external images and symbolic expectations. This dynamic resonates deeply with Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, particularly his concepts of subjectivity, otherness, and the symbolic order.

Lacan's earliest references to 'the other' in the 1930s were relatively unspecialized, echoing Freud's usage of *Der Andere* ("the other person") and *Das Andere* ("the more abstract notion of otherness or alterity"). Initially, the term simply denoted 'others' as external individuals. Eventually, Lacan's understanding evolved dramatically, especially after his engagement with Hegelian philosophy – mediated through Alexandre Kojeve's lectures on *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in Paris (1933–1939). Kojeve's interpretation of Hegel emphasized the dialectic of recognition and the role of the Other in the formation

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2   Ferdinand de Saussure proposed that signs are made up of two components. He described the tangible form of the sign, whether in written or spoken language, as the signifier. This form, in turn, conveys specific mental concepts to the audience, which are represented by the signified (Saussure 1972).

of self-consciousness, which would become foundational to Lacan's own conceptualization of subjectivity (Lacan 2004, 97).

By the 1950s, Lacan introduced a crucial distinction between the little other and the big Other. On the one hand, the little other belongs to the Imaginary order and refers to mirror images, rivals, or ego-ideals – figures through which the subject perceives itself and establishes a sense of identity. On the other hand, the big Other functions within the Symbolic order and represents the locus of language, law, social norms, and the unconscious structure that governs meaning. Crucially, the big Other is not a person but a position; it is the symbolic authority through which subjectivity and desire are constituted (Chiesa 2007, 35). This distinction allows Lacan to theorize the subject not as a coherent, autonomous entity but as fragmented, structured by language, and oriented toward an unattainable ideal. This fragmentation is first enacted during what Lacan calls the *Mirror Stage*, a formative moment between six and eighteen months of age. In this stage, the child recognizes their reflection in a mirror and identifies with it as a unified image. However, this identification is alienating – the child misrecognizes the image as a coherent self, while in reality, it experiences its body as fragmented. Lacan calls this fantasized unity the ideal-I, a projection the subject can never fully embody. Thus, identity is constructed through an "orthopedic," which is an illusion of wholeness that is always deferred.

Then Lacan writes:

> […] it establishes a genetic in ego defenses […] situating the latter as prior to the paranoic alienation that dates back to the time at which the specular I turns into the Social I. (Lacan 2004, 97)

In other words, Lacan articulates the development of the ego through several stages, culminating in the transformation from the specular 'I' of the mirror image to the social 'I' shaped by the Symbolic order. The ego is thus formed through processes of repression, inversion, and alienation, governed not by biological instinct but rather by language and societal norms.

The implications of this theory are particularly relevant to Yeats's "The Mask," where the poetic voice grapples with the tension between the inner self and its outward persona. That is to say, the mask in the poem can be read as a metaphor for the Lacanian Imaginary – a seductive but ultimately deceptive image through which the subject seeks recognition. At the same time, the speaker's longing to be seen 'behind the mask' suggests a desire for recognition that transcends mere performance. Yet,

this desire is mediated through the Symbolic order – what Lacan calls the 'big Other' – revealing the inherent paradox: the self can never be fully transparent, as it is always constituted through external structures of meaning (Lacan 1966). As Lacan asks: "Where is the subject? It is necessary to find the subject as a lost object" (Lacan 1977). The subject, always already mediated by desire and language, emerges only through its relation to the Other – as both rival and symbolic authority.

In this light, Yeats's poetic inquiry into identity and performance mirrors Lacan's notion that the self is constituted not from within, but through an interplay of mirrored images and external symbolic structures. The mask is not merely concealment but a necessary interface – an illusion that enables, yet also destabilizes, the subject's fragile sense of self.

Language and the Fragmented Self in "The Mask"

The title – "The Mask" – essentially seems to initiate a series of unforeseen developments, as the term denotes the meanings of veil or disguise. Etymologically, the word "mask" appeared in the 1530s, referring to a cover for the face with openings for the eyes and mouth, or a "false face." It comes from the French word *masque*, meaning a covering to hide or protect the face, which itself derives from the Italian *maschera*. The Latin root *masca* refers to a "mask, specter, or nightmare," though its origin is uncertain. Alternatively, it could trace its roots to the Provencal *mascarar* or Catalan *mascarar* ("to blacken the face"), possibly linked to a Germanic origin. Another possibility is that it originates from Occitan *mascara*, meaning "to blacken" or "darken," which is believed to derive from mask, meaning "black" in a pre-Indo-European language (EOD 2025).[3]

Semiotically, the title connotes an arbitrary barrier between the signifiers and the signified, which constructs the identity. In this context, the term seems to function as a link between the comic figure, his external world, and the self behind the mask – a mask that, through the "burning gold" color, creates an identity that constantly questions the essence of its being. The opening lines of the verse introduce readers to the ekphrastic scene, describing the painted face of the clown: "PUT off that mask of burning gold / With emerald eyes." Through an internal dialogue, the language shows a conflict within the clown, who seems to be torn between two contrasting identities:

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3   Etymonline, 2025, "Mask," Online Etymology Dictionary, https://www.etymonline.com/word/mask.

the small other and the big Other. Above all else, the expressions "PUT off that mask of burning gold/ With emerald eyes" depict the image of the clown. The former phrase, written in capital letters, conveys a sense of affirmation and emphasis. The latter expression, "burning gold," on the other hand, can be interpreted metaphorically as referring to the clown's makeup, which obscures the genuine emotions and natural facial expressions. However, the "emerald eyes" also suggest a deeper, more enigmatic aspect of the clown's persona. Pillai (2021) sheds light on the historical context of clowns in the European milieu related to comic theatre, particularly during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries in Italy, through the masked performances of *commedia dell'arte*. He asserts that these theatrical traditions relied on stylized characters who, through the act of masking and deliberate foolishness, challenged social norms and performed identities that were both exaggerated and unstable. In this context, the clown's mask – specifically the detail of the "emerald eye" – evokes this theatrical heritage, serving not only as a performative surface but also as a conduit for the social gaze. That is to say, the eye becomes a site where the inner voice and the external projection of the self collide, echoing the historical function of the mask in commedia as both concealment and revelation. Eyes are often seen as the focal point of expression and perception, and in this case, they convey a sense of mystery that is a characteristic of the clown figure – an identity that is constructed through the power of gaze. The makeup and eyes collectively serve to mask with the hidden identity of the persona, blending the line between the small other – the voice – and the big Other to whom they perform. In other words, semiotically, the painted face adds another signification.[4] In Lacanian terms, the small other – the authentic voice behind the mask – commands the subject to 'put off' the veil, urging them to discard the constructed persona. Consequently, the clown's identity becomes obscured, leaving only a fragmented, uncertain representation of the self beneath the mask:

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4   The distinction between small and big becomes relevant only when we move away from understanding speech as it is spoken in the moment. This shift is linked to the process of turning the abstract social "big Other" into a fixed object that structures meaning – often mirroring the dynamics of power/knowledge systems aimed at enforcing compliance with certain norms. As a result, signifiers – originally meant to represent a subject to another signifier – are diminished into mere signs that stand for something to someone (Lacanticles 2018).

> O no, my dear, you make so bold
> To find if hearts be wild and wise,
> And yet not cold.

The small other now addresses the mask that is projecting the big Other with the affectionate phrase "my dear." This tone, however, also carries an assertion of boldness, which reflects the small other – the clown's ego. This dual gesture conveys a quiet confidence in the clown's performance while highlighting the audacity involved in assuming an artificial identity. Wearing a painted face and stepping into a role exposes a certain vulnerability, and the phrase captures the courage required for such an act.

The expression "to find if hearts be wild and wise" presents not only the image of the clown, but also a deeper philosophical layer. That is to say, the term "heart" initially appears as a reference to emotion, but semiotically, it also signifies essence or core, suggesting another layer of signification where the clown's identity is rooted, or at least where he continually seeks to locate it. Put simply, it explores not only the relationship between the clown, the persona, and the self behind the mask, but also the connection between the clown and the audience, which creates an agency of all social norms and appearances – the big Other. As the clown seeks to provoke two emotional states: "wild," which stirs the audience's emotions, potentially causing excitement or passion, and "wise," suggesting that the performance also invites contemplation or reflection. Through a combination of serious and humorous actions, the clown guides the audience through a range of emotional experiences. The mask, therefore, permits the persona to evoke emotions that are "cold. It prompts reactions such as laughter. In this way, the clown is caught between the symbolic order of the big Other and the constitutive lack embodied in the small other – aligned with the Imaginary order, as both participate in constructing the 'I': an identity that is, paradoxically, also dispersed across and lost between them. This act of observation transforms both the clown and the audience, blurring the boundary between performance and reality: "I would but find what's there to find, / Love or deceit."

The words now shift back and forth between the clown's internal duality – the struggle between authenticity and performance. The clown's identity seems to differ from the persona behind the "mask," raising philosophical questions about authenticity and artifice. That is to ask, who is behind the

painted face? The language reveals a tension between the id and the superego[5] – a voice driven by a compulsion to "find what's there to find." Through a Lacanian lens, this expresses the fundamental lack at the heart of subjectivity – an endless search for meaning or fulfillment that remains unattainable.[6] Moreover, the desire/ lack is integrated with the "emerald eyes" – the gaze that operates between the clown and the audience, where both are mutually transformed by this shared act of observation. In other words, the clown's performance, driven by the big Other – a projection of societal norms, prompts the audience to react emotionally. The terms "love" and "deceit" underscore the contradictions within the clown's emotional state, pointing to the tension between the big Other's societal expectations and the clown's primitive desires in the Imaginary order.[7] The mask, then, embodies the conflict between internal desires and the external gaze that shapes them. Dramatically, this conflict appears to be the source of the clown's frustration, as the mask increasingly serves as a barrier that conceals the small other:

> It was the mask engaged your mind,
> And after set your heart to beat,
> Not what's behind.

At this point, the mask plays a pivotal role in both constructing and deconstructing the 'I'. It mediates the shifting movement between the fictional persona, anchored in the symbolic horizon of social participation, and

5 Although Lacan at times aligns the concept of the big Other with something resembling the Freudian superego – as a source of law, prohibition, obligation, and guilt – his interpretation of the superego notably diverges from Freud's. In his work "The Moral Goals of Psychoanalysis," Lacan engages deeply with the Oedipus myth and challenges the idea that the superego functions as a moral conscience. He contends that the imperatives imposed by the superego, or the big Other, cannot be straightforwardly aligned with the principles of any established moral philosophy (May-Hobbs 2023).

6 Lacan's notion of lack is central to his understanding of subjectivity and desire. In his view, lack is an essential aspect of human existence, emerging in early development and closely tied to both language and the construction of the self (Lacan 1977).

7 According to Žižek, the "big Other" refers to the social substance that exceeds individual control, meaning that the subject can never completely master the consequences of their actions, as the results inevitably diverge from their original intentions or expectations (Hook 2008, 5).

the raw, unfiltered voice of primitive desires. Tobias (2007) explores the clown's identity by emphasizing their marginal status in society, portraying the clown as an outsider who perceives, understands, and behaves in ways that challenge the "normal order of things" (2007, 38). From this perspective, the clown is not only "engaged" with "[his] mind," but also with the "heart to beat" – the phrase here suggests a tension between rationality and emotional or instinctual drives, which seems to be related to the "wild and wise." This internal conflict mirrors a confrontation between the superego and primitive desires, both of which contribute to the construction of the 'I' behind the mask, though paradoxically, the mask conceals precisely "not what's behind." Here, the language reveals itself as a binarism between the painted face, the symbolic performance, and the unheard voice, which is aligned with the small other, underscoring the fragmented nature of clown identity. Eventually, these lead the clown to a complex riddle: "But lest you are my enemy, / I must enquire."

The voice seems to persist in its internal dialogue, now labeling the Other as "[its] enemy." This choice of words carries connotations of opposition and antagonism, suggesting a deep conflict. What is particularly striking is the shift in how the Other is addressed – first as "dear," then as "enemy." This linguistic contradiction reveals the clown's fractured identity, caught between opposing forces that simultaneously attract and repel. The self appears to be formed not through a unified identity, but through an ongoing oscillation between attachment and aversion – between what is desired and what is rejected. Such a dynamic reflects the Lacanian idea of the divided subject, whose identity is shaped by an irreconcilable tension between the symbolic and the unconscious. The line ultimately prompts a deeper question: To what extent does the clown genuinely wish to remove the mask and confront the raw, unfiltered desires of the unconscious? Or is the mask itself a necessary mediator that both conceals and sustains the self? Strikingly, the pronoun "I" in the phrase "I must enquire" presents a kind of riddle or ambiguity. As one reads the line, a critical question emerges: Who, exactly, is this "I"? Is it the clown as a subject, the internalized projection shaped by the audience's gaze? Or the reader momentarily inhabiting the voice of the text? From a semiotic perspective, the "I" appears not as a stable, unified speaker but as a point of convergence – a horizon where multiple voices intersect, overlap, and ultimately lose their original

source.[8] In this sense, the self is not a fixed identity but a shifting signifier, suspended in the interplay between presence and absence, self and the Other.[9]

> "O no, my dear, let all that be;
> What matter, so there is but fire
> In you, in me?"

Following the reference to the big Other as an "enemy," it is later addressed as "[its] dear," demonstrating the continuous fluctuation between the conscious and unconscious realms – the otherness. This shift also reflects the dynamic between the persona behind the mask and the one with "emerald eyes." The phrase "let all that be; [w]hat matter" suggests a dismissal of the essence of the small other, effectively disregarding the value of the self that has been constructed outside the constraints of social rules and standards. The expressions "so there is but fire/ In you, in me?" are linked to the imagery of "burning gold," which in turn connects to the concept of the mask itself. In this context, both the voice behind the mask and the clown are merged within the bar – the face – in order to construct an identity tailored to the expectations of the audience. Therefore, the mask becomes a central symbol, embodying both the thesis and antithesis of the clown. On one hand, it presents the antithesis by symbolizing love and deception, as well as the concealment of reality. On the other hand, it represents the thesis by integrating both identities within the metaphorical "fire," which signifies the coexistence of conflicting identities – those of the mask-wearer and the character being portrayed. In other words, the duality of identity is portrayed through both literal and figurative language, exploring themes of laughter and tragedy, as well as truth and obscurity. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that Yeats's verse presents itself to readers as a preliminary, pre-analytical exploration of the formation of identity and the ongoing conflict between the 'I' and the Other. This struggle is depicted as an essential,

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8   In "The Death of the Author" (1967), Roland Barthes argues for the erasure of the author's authority over a text, emphasizing that the voice within the text disrupts any notion of a singular, original source (Barthes 1977).

9   In Lacan's theory, the fundamental question posed by the psychoanalytic subject to the Other is: "What do you want?" This inquiry mirrors the subject's own internal question – "What is it that I truly desire?" – since both stem from the original longing for unity with the mother, who represents the primary and foundational "real Other" of desire (May-Hobbs 2023).

persistent dynamic, illustrating the complexities inherent in self-construction and the interplay between individual identity and external influences.

Conclusion

In this essay, we conducted a semiotic analysis of William Butler Yeats's poem "The Mask," aiming to uncover the deeper meanings embedded within its imagery and symbolism. Our study revealed that the poem does not necessarily present biographical references, as traditionally has been read; rather, it presents a more complex figure – one resembling a clown – who finds themselves caught in a perpetual struggle between the self-concealed behind the mask and the other that exists within it. Drawing on Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theory of otherness, we situated the concept of identity within a broader philosophical framework, emphasizing how subject formation was shaped by unconscious structures. Specifically, our interpretation highlighted the ongoing tension between what Lacan calls the small other and the big Other, a conflict that emerged from the "Mirror Stage" and continued to shape the subject's relationship with their own image and social reality. Through this lens, the poem's exploration of masking and self-presentation could be understood as a deeper commentary on identity, alienation, and the fragmentation of the self.

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Early Parodies of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Stories: Charles C. Rothwell's "Adventures of Sherwood Hoakes: An Interrupted Honeymoon"(1892) and A. Dewar Willock's "A Study in Red" (1892) as Criticism and Homage

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Abstract: The main objective of this paper is to explore how parody operates within, and engages with, the genre of detective fiction. By treating the selected texts as a form of literary review of Arthur Conan Doyle's works, the focus of the paper is on the analysis of the reception of Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories as carried out through the parodies and pastiches of the Great Detective. While a number of classifications of detective fiction have been proposed, little has been said about the genre's relationship with parody. Similarly, the figure of Sherlock Holmes, arguably the most influential creation within the genre, has rarely been analyzed in this context. Although many scholars acknowledge parodies and pastiches as a reflection of the popularity of the character, few of those texts, especially those created as an early response to Doyle's works, have been discussed. This paper examines two such texts – Charles C. Rothwell's "Adventures of Sherwood Hoakes: An Interrupted Honeymoon" and A. Dewar Willock's "A Study in Red," a parody and a pastiche respectively – which, although included in collections of parodies and pastiches, have not yet been examined in any capacity. Parody, understood both as an element of the structure of detective fiction and as a commentary on its conventions, serves as a tool for examining selected texts which constituted early responses to Doyle's work. This paper analyzes the texts as a means of literary criticism, in which the parodic device has been utilized to reflect the attitudes of Doyle's contemporaries toward his stories, demonstrating how parodic device can be used both as a vehicle for criticism and as a means of paying homage to the co-creator of the genre.

Keywords: parody, pastiche, detective fiction, criticism, absurd.

Introduction

Parody, a form which embodies the complex interworking of imitation and transformation, of homage and criticism, eludes a single definition. As a practice which is both productive and critical, parody is capable of mocking, preserving, or reinventing the texts or literary traditions it takes as its target. One of the crucial functions of parody is the critical role it performs. Be it general or specific, parody offers commentary on the hypotext, operating as either censorious force working in favour of the established literary hierarchy, or as a tool with which this hierarchy can be overturned. Parody highlights conventions and structures characteristic of its target, often uncovering their flaws and exorbitance or simply adapting them in order to reconceptualize the source material. It is not mere mockery; rather, it is used as a tool to create a space for creativity within the genres – such as detective fiction – where the fixed form and stable conventions limit the possibilities for innovation and originality.

Detective fiction, although highly formulaic, exhibits certain fluidity. As indicated by Tzvetan Todorov in his essay "The Typology of Detective Fiction", although its subgenres developed in chronological order, from whodunnits to thrillers, to the suspense novel, many writers exercised multiple subgenres simultaneously, often blurring the boundaries and introducing new conventions within the form, or rejecting structures which no longer served the narrative. This need for originality within the inherently mechanical genre made detective fiction highly receptive to parody, which was quickly incorporated into its structure. The parodic device, which has constituted a crucial formal aspect of the genre since its beginning, allowed writers to establish their stories and characters as unique and superior to those of their contemporaries and predecessors.

The parodic device characterizes the works of Arthur Conan Doyle, whose character of Sherlock Holmes can be considered a parody of Edgar Allan Poe's C. Auguste Dupin. Although Poe's Dupin stories can be considered the starting point of detective fiction, it was Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, in a sense, the parodied Dupin, that pointed the direction in which the genre developed. Doyle built upon the prototype of the Great Detective provided by Poe, reimagining it and adding new elements in order to establish Holmes as a distinct identity – a repetition with a difference. The Sherlock Holmes stories, in turn, were almost instantly met with a response in the form of numerous parodies and pastiches, which not only reflect the immense popularity of the great detective but also

provide a critical framework for the analysis of Doyle's fiction. These early parodies and pastiches, although rarely examined in depth, constitute a great insight not only into how parody operates within the genre of detective fiction but also into how Doyle's work has been received by his contemporaries, reflecting their mixed attitudes to the phenomenon of Sherlock Holmes.

Detecting Parody: The Parodic Device in the Development of Detective Fiction

As Janice MacDonald observes in "Parody and Detective Fiction", there are three main stances in terms of which the genre of detective fiction is usually analyzed: the psychological approach, the sociocultural approach, and the historical method. The psychological approach focuses on understanding why people are attracted to detective fiction, while the sociocultural approach also explores the genre's widespread appeal and the reasons behind its creation. In contrast, the historical method examines what has been written, along with the time and place of its production (1997, 61).

These approaches, however, fail to acknowledge *how* the inherently formulaic genre like detective fiction managed to evolve and maintain such popularity. John G. Cawelti addresses this question, linking the genre's transformations to the changes in the cultural climate (MacDonald 1997, 61). MacDonald, however, finds this answer insufficient. "There must also be an internal dynamic within the genre that aids in its propagation and flexibility," she argues, "and parody can be considered a key dynamic element in the development of the popular formulaic genre known as detective fiction" (1997, 61). She follows Rose's view of parody as a literary device rather than genre in her examination of how parody operates within, and shapes, the genre of detective fiction (1997, 63). The influence of parody on the genre is evident in the fact that detective fiction establishes the framework needed for the audience to recognize parody. "Readers of detective fiction often read widely within the genre", observes MacDonald, "and "addicted" readers are likely to have read (and recognize allusions to) the original of any given parody. This preknowledge is necessary to the appreciation of parody" (1997, 63). Many detective fiction authors draw on their predecessors, crafting characters that reflect earlier ones. This influence is often recognized only by a dedicated reader. This requirement

for previous knowledge corresponds to the elitism of parody indicated by Hutcheon in *A Theory of Parody*.

MacDonald further examines the influence of parody, inherently imitative in nature, within the formulaic genre, noting a strong alignment between Cawelti's definition of successful formulaic writing – where a work blends the enjoyment of a conventional structure with a new element or the creator's unique vision – and Hutcheon's concept of parody as "repetition that includes difference" (qtd. in MacDonald 1997, 63). Although, as she emphasizes, not all formulaic fiction is inherently parodic, this connection supports her exploration of parody within formulaic genres (1997, 63).

MacDonald observes that parody within detective fiction operates both in the specific structure (of the detective narrative) and in the genre (as a whole). As argued by Jacques Lacan, who also undertakes the subject of parody's function within the genre of detective fiction, the notion of detective's actions parodying those of the murderer constitutes the elementary structure of a detective novel (qtd. in MacDonald 1997, 63). The detective's actions mirror those of the criminal, but the nature of those actions is different, introducing a change within the repetition:

> In his ability to deduce the criminal's actions or "reconstruct the scene of the crime", the detective effects a repetition that includes difference. The ironic and incongruous effect is that the character who embodies ultimate good (the detective) is the only character who can understand ultimate evil. (1997, 63)

Another example of the influence of the parodic device within the structure of detective fiction is the employment of "red herrings", which parody the clues. These minor, fundamentally irrelevant details should mimic real clues closely enough to mislead the reader, but they should remain different enough from the main clues so that the author would avoid accusations of trickery. Red herrings, notes MacDonald, both underscore the need for correct reading and "ironically delineate the fine line between appearance and reality that is the essence of both parody and detection" (1997, 63–64).

The detective's "slow-witted" companion can also be considered as a parodic element, MacDonald observes. While the secondary character often functions as a foil, whose "obtuseness", according to Julian Symons (qtd in MacDonald 1997, 64), makes the brilliance of the detective "shine more brightly", MacDonald argues

that it also serves a parodic function: "[The character] situates the reader in terms of the text by portraying a parodic example of a naive reader" (1997, 64).

During the time of authors such as Poe and Doyle, parody in detective fiction served two key functions: it helped to create a distinct new genre by mocking the earlier genres – such as the novel of manners and the Gothic – and provided authors with a way to assert their "unique authority" within the boundaries of the set formula (64). Perhaps it is thanks to parody that the severely mechanical genre of detective fiction remains one of the most popular of formulaic genres. As MacDonald observes, parody has been quickly immersed into the structure of detective fiction, fostering the space for development within it:

> Parody and self-consciousness, tools that helped to create the genre, continued as elements of the genre. Indeed, parody quickly became an element of the formula itself: an element designed both to foster credibility and to generate new material within the highly mechanical formula. (1997, 68)

Thus, in short, detective fiction owes its origins to parody, which served as a "lever of literary change" (Erlich qtd in MacDonald 1997, 71). The genre quickly incorporated parody, with writers using it to position their works as distinct and superior to those of other authors.

Parody also became a key feature of the great detective's persona, with each new character building upon and exaggerating the traits of previous ones (1997, 71). As noted earlier Sherlock Holmes draws on Dupin, whose logical deductions, much like his own, often astonish the narrator. Both characters exhibit similar eccentricities, such as aversion to the sun, their cocaine habit, violin playing, arrogance, misogyny, a penchant for disguises, and a preference for solitude (MacDonald 1997, 70). These eccentricities in themselves can be viewed as a form of parody, argues MacDonald: "As a parodic element, eccentricities can be defined as exaggerations of certain features of behavior and therefore as parodies, or verbal caricatures, of the great detective" (1997, 70). Yet, although Doyle credited Poe as an inspiration in his memoirs, Holmes himself does not find this comparison to his predecessor flattering, calling Dupin a "very inferior fellow" (in *A Study in Scarlet*), thus establishing himself as separate (MacDonald 1997, 70). According to MacDonald, Doyle's reimagining of Poe's detective by maintaining enough similarities in the depiction of Holmes to qualify him

as a great "logical hero", while introducing differences that establish his own distinct identity, positions Holmes as a parody of Dupin:

> He is similar in order to qualify for the position of Great Detective; he is different from his predecessor in order to justify his existence as a separate entity. He is a repetition with a difference (Hutcheon 37); he is a "reorganization" of Dupin, to make him perceptible again (Erlich 226); he is Doyle's way of "coming to terms with the genius of his predecessors" (Kennedy 166). (MacDonald 1997, 70)

The creation of the master detective had a tremendous influence on the shape into which the genre developed, note Bernard Benstock and Thomas F. Staley in *British Mystery Writers* (1988, 114). Doyle relied on the foundation laid by predecessors and redefined it, introducing elements that have placed his works among the most enduring and widely-read works of fiction (1988, 114).

Taking the Mickey out of Doyle: "Adventures of Sherwood Hoakes" and the Hoax of the Great Detective

Given the immense popularity of Sherlock Holmes, it is hardly surprising that Doyle's great detective himself quickly became the subject of numerous parodies and pastiches, many of which, including "Adventures of Sherwood Hoakes: An Interrupted Honeymoon" and "A Study in Red", which are analyzed below, were published almost immediately after the character's debut in the world of detective fiction.

"Adventures of Sherwood Hoakes: An Interrupted Honeymoon" is the first of two parodies written by Charles C. Rothwell under the pseudonym A. Cone and Oil. It was published in *The Ludgate Weekly* on April 9, 1892. The plot of the parody follows the investigation of the mysterious disappearance of Mr. Arthur Bagworthy. After witnessing her husband vanishing right before her eyes on their wedding night, Mrs. Bagworthy turns to Hoakes for help in her desperate search for answers. While the story unfolds in a manner typical of detective fiction, with the detective employing his eccentric methods to solve the case, Rothwell exaggerates every aspect of the investigation, often to the point of absurdity. While his character, much like Holmes, pays close attention to detail, he either focuses on trivialities, such as the direction of the squint in the eye of the missing Mr. Bagworthy, or misinterprets the clues, frequently

falling victim to "red herrings." This inability to perform what MacDonald calls a "correct reading" (1997, 63–64) leads Hoakes to a series of outlandish and convoluted conclusions. Rothwell implements multiple conventions from Doyle's stories, such as the double identity, the locked-room mystery trope, as well as Holmes's penchant for disguises, using parody as a form of criticism of the resolutions of mysteries, which, although justified within the framework of the story, are often hardly plausible outside of it. He also mocks Holmes's seemingly infallible methods of deduction. "I don't know how it is, but try as I will I never seem to get the knack of it. It's most disheartening; yet I do my best. I strain every nerve," says Hoakes to Chasemore after his every deduction about his companion has been proven wrong. "Induction, deduction, ratiocination —I apply 'em all; but I'm almost always wrong. By every rule of evidence, you ought to have been a cheesemonger, and your daughter married to a tipsy jeweller" (Rothwell). The figure of the Great Detective is undermined, his almost religious faith in the power logic challenged. The parody ends with anticlimax: Mr. Bagworthy's disappearance turns out to be a result of a series of unfortunate accidents and misunderstandings rather than the complicated intrigue Hoakes believed it to be.

While Rothwell does not target a specific story, certain parallels can be drawn between the parody and the first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, which justifies the use of the fragments of the novel as a hypotext in further analysis. Both the novel and the parody present the detective through the eyes of the narrator, who, just like the readers, meets the detective for the first time. However, the images emerging from the descriptions provided by Watson and Rothwell's counterpart to Watson – Chasemore – vastly differ. Doyle's narrator portrays a figure who, albeit peculiar, can be regarded as a man of science, with a refined character that is reflected in his distinguished appearance:

> His eyes were sharp and piercing, save during those intervals of torpor to which I have alluded; and his thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin, too, had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination. His hands were invariably blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he was possessed of extraordinary delicacy of touch, as I frequently had occasion to observe when I watched him manipulating his fragile philosophical instruments. (Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet*)

While Rothwell maintains the style established by Watson's description of Holmes, he strips his character of any semblance of sophistication, turning Hoakes into an embodiment of absurdity. The sharp-minded investigator is replaced by a frenetic and bedraggled image of a snuff addict, poking fun at Holmes's cocaine habit, which is treated by Doyle like a quirk rather than an issue:

> He looked a man of about forty, whom time and fortune had conspired to ill-use. His face was long and blanched, his eye large and boiled, his red hair was cropped so short that it might have been under a lawnmower, his general expression was badgered and harassed, and that of a man constantly striving to accomplish something against adverse conditions. He wore a frock coat with inked seams; and his vest, which was buttoned askew, showed that he was one of those few remaining individuals who take snuff. (Rothwell)

Both descriptions reflect the attitude of the narrator toward the detective. While Watson seems to regard Holmes with respect and admiration, Chasemore describes his companion in a manner that reflects pity rather than awe. Rothwell inverts also the personality of Holmes, turning the cold and aloof Great Detective into a kindhearted, although simple-minded individual, whose naivety, as noted by Chasemore, often lands him in trouble:

> I was only too frequently pained to observe the endless troubles into which he was hurried by the unselfish zeal with which he espoused the causes of dubious and deceitful clients. His trustful, unshaken confidence in the face of failures innumerable, in the infallibility of his method of "lightning deductions," should have aroused the pity of the most callous of his dissembling clients.

Rothwell structures the dynamic between the character in a manner similar to that used by Cervantes in *Don Quixote*, subverting the traditional dynamic/hierarchy between the great logical hero and the "slow-witted" companion found in detective fiction. As opposed to Watson, who loyally accompanies Holmes in every adventure, Chasemore prefers to keep "judiciously safe distance," becoming, similarly to the reader, an observer rather than participant.

What the parody also subverts is the detective–police dynamic. When questioned by Chasemore whether he works with the police, Hoakes replies,

> "Not now, sir. I went down to Scotland-yard to offer them my co–operation but they declined; they even warned me off, and so far forgot themselves as actually to look me out in their Photograph Albums, and make references the reverse of considerate to — in short — to Millbank. (Rothwell 1892)

Rothwell reverses the convention of the incompetent police who rely on the assistance of the genius detective, prevalent in the detective fiction of the Victorian period. His character not only proves unhelpful to law enforcement, but also notoriously finds himself in prison as a result of his own incompetence and gullibility. Rothwell strips Hoakes of the immunity typically found in whodunnits, exposing him to genuine danger – such as getting arrested– much of which is self–inflicted by his ineptitude and lack of skill in his profession.

Although it is uncertain whether the connection was intended by Rothwell, Hoakes' first name, Sherwood, can be associated with Sherwood Forest, in which Robin Hood and his men hid from law. Hoakes, who, as he bitterly admits to Chasemore, is notoriously used as a "cat's paw", is much like the legendary forest, serving as a cover for criminals who often exploit his naivety. Throughout the text Rothwell frequently employs ambiguous language, which often gives the impression that Hoakes interests lie in committing the crime rather than preventing it. A perfect example of that is the business card which Hoakes presents to Chasemore, which, with phrases such as "Specialist in Crime and Mystery" and "Felonies a Speciality" resembles more a card of a criminal for hire than that of a private detective. Rothwell further accentuates this connection with criminal world by changing the address of the Great Detective from the famous 221B Baker Street to 404 Butcher Avenue. As a profession associated with killing, the word butcher has frequently been used to describe criminals, which further highlights Hoakes' place within the crime and law dynamic.

Rothwell's text seems to create a curious paradox, where the success of the parody on one level relies on its failure on another. It succeeds as an intertextual parody of Doyle's conventions and characters, yet fails on the formal level, where the detective's actions fail to effectively parody those of the alleged culprit. This failure on the formal level, ironically, enables the effectiveness of the intertextual parody.

Holmes Abbreviated: "A Study in Red"

Besides parody, Holmes became a prominent figure in another, albeit less popular, form reliant on the parodic device – pastiche. Pastiche is a relatively uncommon literary form, especially within detective fiction, note Peter Ridgway Watt and Joseph Green in *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes* (2003, 77). In the genre where only a few pastiches exist, and those that do have seldom reached the level of quality or popularity of the original works, Sherlock Holmes is quite a phenomenon. The creation of the Great Detective produced a new exceptional subgenre – the Sherlock Holmes pastiche, which developed into a separate literary form. From the very beginning the character's unmatched appeal has drawn the interest of some of the most prominent writers of the twentieth century, not only from the world of detective fiction but also from various other literary disciplines (Watt and Green 2003, 77).

"A Study in Red" is a pastiche by A. Dewar Willock, which follows the story of a Christmas dinner shared by the narrator and Holmes, during which, upon finding a red hair in his plum pudding, the detective deduces the presence of an untidy, red-haired maid hidden in the basement of the house by the landlady. It was published in the *Fun* magazine on July 6, 1892, three months after Rothwell's parody. Despite the relatively short period between the publication of the two texts, Willock's approach to the model material vastly differs from his predecessor's. In "A Study in Red" humor arises from the omission of one of the crucial elements of the hypotext rather than from its direct transformation, as was the case with Sherwood Hoakes. Willock subvert neither the style nor characters established by Doyle, maintaining Watson's very detailed, and sometimes superfluous, descriptions:

> I may state that we had almost dined. We had had soup, we had had a bit of fish with oyster sauce, we had had roast beef; we had dallied with a small bit of fowl, and we were about to deal with plum pudding. It will at once be seen that our dinner was plain, but substantial. It was a dinner which might have been eaten any day – the plum pudding, perhaps, being the only offering which had been made at the shrine of the festive season. (Willock, "A Study in Red")

Very similar description, can be found in one of Conan Doyle's stories, "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor":

> [W]ithin an hour there arrived a confectioner's man with a very
> large flat box. This he unpacked with the help of a youth whom
> he had brought with him, and presently, to my very great aston-
> ishment, a quite epicurean little cold supper began to be laid out
> upon our humble lodging-house mahogany. There were a couple
> of brace of cold woodcock, a pheasant, a patˆ e de foie gras ´ pie
> with a group of ancient and cobwebby bottles. (7)

Because the narrative style closely mimics that of Doyle, the reader naturally assumes the narrator to be Watson, even though he remains unnamed throughout the whole text. Although Willock maintains most of the characteristics of the hypotext, one of its key elements – the explanation of the deduction process – is entirely omitted, leaving the reader clueless about how Holmes arrived at his conclusions. The mystery is resolved in a brief exchange, added at the end of the story almost as an afterthought. It is Holmes abbreviated. The title itself reflects this abbreviation, with Doyle's sophisticated "Scarlet" replaced by simpler, shorter "Red". The title's meaning has also been changed. In the original novel, the titular scarlet refers to a metaphorical "scarlet thread of murder running through the colourless skein of life" (IV, 20), which the detective and his companion have to unravel. Willock turns this metaphorical object into an ordinary, material one – a single red hair, which Holmes finds in his pudding.

The pastiche ends without further explanation. "The whole affair was simple, and could be seen at a glance, but to make it clear, and draw the proper deductions, it required the intellect of Sherlock Holmes!" (Willock), states the narrator, despite the fact that nothing was actually made clear for the audience, which creates a comic dissonance of information. The mystery, although technically resolved, leaves the reader's curiosity unsatisfied.

It is a puzzling pastiche, largely reliant on the absurd. Although the text, at times, exaggerates certain features of Doyle's style, it does so in a playful rather than mocking manner. Unlike Rothwell, Willock does not use his text as a vehicle for criticism. While humor is certainly present in the pastiche, it does not come at the expense of the hypotext. It is what Fredric Jameson calls "an imitation without critical distance" (qtd. in Dentith 2000, 194), creating a sense of homage rather than mockery or spite.

Both works reflect the attitude of the author towards the model material, offering an insight into the mixed reception Doyle's stories received from his contemporaries. While Rothwell uses his parody as a vehicle for criticism, expressing his

disdain through merciless mockery, Willock's work humorously imitates the style of Doyle, rising from the desire to pay homage rather than critique. Published shortly after Holmes's debut on the scene of detective fiction, these and similar works offer not only an entertaining reading experience but also serve as a valuable form of literary review within a genre largely dismissed by literary scholars.

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A Recipe for Parody: Mark Crick's "Clafoutis Grandmère à la Virginia Woolf" as a Pastiche and Parody of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*

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Abstract: This paper explores a parody of Virginia Woolf's writing style featured in *Kafka's Soup* by Mark Crick. The volume by Crick comprises a wide range of parodies, including "Clafoutis Grand-mère à la Virginia Woolf", which, this paper strives to show, represents both a general parody of Woolf's writing style and a specific parody of her novel *To the Lighthouse*. This paper also highlights the similarities between certain features of Woolf's writing style and of the chiselled style of the late-Victorian, decadent-aestheticist writer Walter Pater – particularly the use of lengthy sentences divided by semicolons, stream-like writing with frequent subject changes, and the intertwining of the external events with the characters' impressions. This connection between Woolf and Pater is underexplored in scholarly research. Crick's *Kafka's Soup* is also rarely discussed academically, save for occasional reviews. This paper explores the inspirations behind the book and demonstrates how Crick's "recipe" functions as a literary pastiche. The recipe form is what makes Crick's parody unique; hence, an overview of the inclusion of recipes in twentieth-century literature is here provided. Crick's parodic rewrite of the British Modernist's literary manner is discussed here not only with regard to the stylistic features but also with reference to the motifs typical to Woolf's writing. Thus, while analysing "Clafoutis" as a specific parody of *To the Lighthouse*, this paper indicates specific themes from the novel – including the themes of the passage of time, of genteel sentiments, and of gender differences – which, too, find their comical reflection in Crick's text.

Keywords: specific parody, pastiche, Virginia Woolf's writing style, themes of *To the Lighthouse*, Mark Crick's *Kafka's Soup*

"I hate celebrity cookbooks - they're really boring . . . But I thought of what you could do if you had a huge budget and a time machine and could use any author or artist in history", says Mark Crick for the *Telegraph* (quoted in Milner 2005). Indeed, Crick had an idea for an unorthodox cookbook, resulting in the creation of *Kafka's Soup* – a book featuring "fourteen recipes in the voices of famous writers, from Homer to Virginia Woolf to Irvine Welsh" (Crick 2006b). Each recipe consists of a list of ingredients followed by a short excerpt written in a given author's style. As such, *Kafka's Soup* is an example of literary pastiche, defined by Jean-François Marmontel as "an affected imitation of manner and style of a writer" (quoted in Hoesterey 2001). Asked about how he mastered the art of pastiche, Crick recalled his childhood and university years:

> I'm a London East Ender, and when I got to university I realized people couldn't understand me, so I started adapting my voice. Also I'm a bit of a linguist, and I've developed an ear for voices. If you can get a writer's rhythm going, you're halfway there. As a child I was asthmatic and I couldn't sleep at night. I used to sit there, with a big pile of books, Proust-like, reading through the night. (2006a)

It was Crick's asthma, too, that became the reason why he became interested in food: "Because I couldn't eat much as a child, food became a source of enormous fascination . . ." (quoted in Milner 2005). As an adult writer who decided on the cookbook form for his pastiche, Crick set about finding recipes that would fit the themes of the chosen authors' texts (2006a). He would go to his friends in search of recipes, but he was not looking for general culinary recommendations (Crick 2006a). Rather, Crick was asking questions such as "'Have you got something nice I could cook and use violent, sadistic language in?' Or 'Have you got a recipe for something that's got a real class-consciousness to it?'" (2006a). Some examples of the recipes from the book include miso soup for Franz Kafka, who Crick felt would not be particularly interested in cooking; mushroom risotto as a symbol of the Great Depression for John Steinbeck; and clafoutis grandmère, representative of motherly and tender qualities, for Virginia Woolf (Milner 2005). All this care put into the selection of recipes for the respective authors makes *Kafka's Soup* a reflection of both Crick's interest in cooking and his passion for literature (Milner 2005). Incidentally, the genre

which his book represents takes its name from the name of a dish. According to the *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, the Italian 'pasticcio' means "baked meat dish, pie" (n.d.). In the same way that 'pasticcio', in a definition provided by Margaret Rose, combines "several different ingredients", a pastiche is a mixture of the distinct elements of a given author's style and the unique idea behind the hypertext (1993, 73).

The recipe form makes Crick's pastiche unique. J. Michelle Coghlan argues that "artful recipes – or, recipes artfully merged into books we wouldn't immediately describe as cookbooks – have long been regarded as a modern literary creation" and states it was the twentieth century when they were introduced (2018, 115). Coghlan goes on to differentiate between various recipe uses in literature, such as the "gastronomical essays of M. F. K. Fisher", "experimental cookbook-cum-memoirs", and "novels and memoirs which ingeniously embed recipes for the dishes cooked up in their pages" (2018, 115). Crick's *Kafka's Soup*, although not a personal memoir, has a preserving function as well. It is a homage to fourteen remarkable authors, their distinct writing styles, and their exemplary works. Crick's understanding of the selected writers' styles makes *Kafka's Soup* both an accurate testament to the authors and an effective pastiche. The success of *Kafka's Soup* as a parody lies in Crick's ability to combine a given author's style with a recipe form, which is not normally associated with literature. The result is a mix of the literary and the functional: the reader finds a list of traditional ingredients alongside a text written in a particular author's hallmark style. The subject of cooking is a subversion of expectations, as it is not the first thing a reader might find in the writings of, for example, Homer or Proust. Yet, Crick manages to create literary renditions of what such texts might have looked like if they had indeed been written by the selected authors, thus making the pastiche extremely successful.

Virginia Woolf's Style

One of the fourteen recipes in *Kafka's Soup* is "Clafoutis Grand-mère à la Virginia Woolf". Woolf's style, out of all the authors in the book, was the most challenging for Crick to recreate (Milner 2005). As he admits, Woolf "was difficult because her voice is so subtle and not that old-fashioned sounding. You really want people with a voice that is recognisable even if they're writing about car maintenance" (quoted in Milner 2005). As Michael Whitworth points out, Woolf's style had to be distinctive and experimental in order for her to separate

her writing from the Victorian literary tradition, mainly its 'materialism' understood as the nineteenth-century emphasis on tangible reality (2000, 151). The rejection of 'materialism' allowed Woolf to be experimental in her pursuit of representing "a reality which is semi-transparent, combining the solidity of granite and the evanescence of rainbow" in her works (Whitworth 2000, 151). Vid Simoniti adds that another distinction between the two literary approaches – described in Woolf's 1924 essay *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* as Edwardian (Victorian) and Georgian (Modernist) – is the degree of descriptiveness (2016, 65). While the Edwardian style abounds in accurate representations of material reality and detailed descriptions of characters and events, the Georgian style abandons detailedness altogether and shifts its focus to impressions (Simoniti 2016, 65–66). As Simoniti points out:

> What replaces the Edwardian pedantry is Woolf's emphasis on the stream of consciousness, which she would perfect not in *Mrs Brown* but in *Mrs Dalloway*. Her [Woolf's] style emphasizes colliding, unconnected impressions; it uses long sentences separated by semicolons, which sometimes change their subject matter midway; it contains unexpected mixing of action and reminiscence of her characters; there is little description of social fact or of fixed psychological characteristics. (2016, 66)

Woolf's style was not entirely free of Victorian influence, as its certain features – such as those lengthy sentences, frequent subject changes, numerous semicolons, and the intertwining of the external events with the characters' inner lives – could be a legacy of Walter Pater. Perry Meisel argues that, although Pater is not mentioned directly in any of Woolf's essays, Woolf draws from "Pater's celebration of personality and the privileged moment, his chemical vocabulary for the artist's crystalline or incandescent expressiveness" (1980, 13–14). Pater's style was regarded as unsurpassed. He was a supreme stylist, yet his meticulously crafted aestheticist-decadent style was also a subject of Max Beerbohm's light-hearted parody. In his essay "Diminuendo", Beerbohm recalled his experience reading Pater:

> Not that even in those more decadent days of my childhood did I admire the man as a stylist. Even then I was angry that he should treat English as a dead language, bored by that sedulous ritual

> wherewith he laid out every sentence as in a shroud–hanging, like a widower, long over its marmoreal beauty or ever he could lay it at length in his book, its sepulchre. (1896, 115)

Beerbohm claims that, through his extensive use of meandering sentences, Pater deadens the English language. Rather than lengthy, stream-like writing, the Victorians valued descriptive, matter-of-fact prose. Woolf, for that matter, commented on the Edwardian overreliance on descriptions in her essay *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*: "Begin by saying that her father kept a shop in Harrogate. Ascertain the rent. Ascertain the wages of shop assistants in the year 1878. Discover what her mother died of. Describe cancer. Describe calico. Describe –" (1924, 18). Yet, despite her writing sharing noteworthy similarities with Pater's style – particularly the paratactic sentences and frequent use of prolepsis – Woolf does not mention Pater as her influence. Meisel argues that this is due not only to Pater being "a confirmed misogynist and university man," but also to the fact that his status as a Victorian makes him, "however much an intellectual renegade to some among his contemporaries, . . . antipathetic to the revolutionary and loquacious matriarch of Bloomsbury" (1980, 12). Ultimately, it is the presentation of nearly simultaneous impressions as well as an extensive use of the interior-monologue, stream-of-consciousness, and fragmentation techniques, that makes Woolf's style clearly distinguishable from those established nineteenth-century literary traditions which were deemed materialist (as those represented by Galsworthy and Bennett). Her model – although rarely acknowledged – is in Walter Pater's decadent-aestheticist expression.[1]

For his pastiche to be successful, Crick had to retain all of the elements that make Woolf's style unique and use them to describe something as ordinary as cooking. Thus, Crick's Woolfian heroine – while covering fruit with dough – observes her youngest son and uses the dough metaphor while reflecting on her family's future security, or the lack of it:

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1   For Pater's influence on Woolf, see: Meisel, Perry. 1980. *The Absent Father: Virginia Woolf and Walter Pater*. Yale University Press.; and Tseng, Jui-Hua. 2004. "Walter Pater, the Stephens and Virginia Woolf's Mysticism." *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies* 30 (1): 203–26. https://doi.org/10.6240/concentric.lit.200401_30(1).0008. More recent studies conducted in the realm of autobiography, however, suggest the influence of Thomas De Quincey. See: Covelo, Roxanne. 2018. "Thomas De Quincey in the Essays of Virginia Woolf: 'Prose Poetry' and the Autobiographic Mode." *Journal of Modern Literature* 41 (4): 31–47. https://doi.org/10.2979/jmodelite.41.4.03.

> She looked up: what demon possessed him, her youngest, playing
> on the lawn, demons and angels? Why should it change, why could
> they not stay as they were, never aging? (She poured the mixture
> over the cherries in the dish.) The dome was now become a circle,
> the cherries surrounded by the yeasty mixture that would cradle
> and cushion them, the yeasty mixture that surrounded them all, the
> house, the lawn . . . (Crick 2006b, 63)

The above fragment mirrors Woolf's style through the use of brackets, rhetorical questions, repetition as a means of emphasis, and complex sentences with multiple commas. Woolf's signature is also apparent in the focus on the character's thoughts over what is taking place in the tangible reality. The mother is covering the cherries in batter, but at the same time she is pondering her son's future and the inevitability of time passing. By using brackets to indicate that the batter is being poured as the mother is lost in thought, Crick indicates that making the pie is only secondary to the character's musings. In the same way, in Woolf's works, events in the real world only serve as a background for the characters to explore their inner selves, reminisce, or envision the future. Once the cherries are topped with the mixture, the mother has yet another reflection, this time imagining the batter as if it covered not the fruit, but her household, providing a sense of safety. The use of words 'cradle' and 'cushion' is deliberate, as Crick wanted the cherries used in the recipe to be "cradled and protected in batter in the same way that the mother in Woolf's books protects her children" (quoted in Milner 2005).

While it captures the general characteristics of Woolf's style, "Clafoutis" is also a specific parody – defined by Dentith as a parody "aimed at a specific precursor text" (2000, 7). Not only a pastiche of Woolf's distinct writing style, "Clafoutis" also explicitly draws from *To the Lighthouse*[2]. Perhaps the biggest clue for the hypotext is the dish Crick chose for Woolf – a French tart called *clafoutis*

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2   It is crucial to acknowledge the differences between parody and pastiche. The main quality that distinguishes pastiche from parody is its neutral character; Margaret Rose argues that, in its assembling processes, pastiche is "neither necessarily critical of its sources, nor necessarily comic" (1993, 72). Simon Dentith, on the other hand, explains that parody, in contrast, albeit difficult to strictly categorise, is thought of as fulfilling a polemical function which varies in its degree (2000, 9). Because it is relatively neutral and recent historically, the term 'pastiche' should not be used synonymously with 'parody' (Rose 1993, 72). This article thus argues that "Clafoutis", written in Woolf's style and parodying certain themes and motifs from Woolf's specific novel, should be considered as both a pastiche and parody.

grandmère. As a justification for his choice, Crick said that he "thought of her [Woolf] making something soft, rising and feminine" (quoted in Milner 2005). Yet, apart from the thematic reasons, there is also significance in the dessert being French and not English. The mother in "Clafoutis" wonders:

> Should she have made something traditionally English? (Involuntarily, piles of cake rose before her eyes.) Of course the recipe was French, from her grandmother. English cooking was an abomination: it was boiling cabbages in water until they were liquid; it was roasting meat until it was shriveled . . . (Crick 2006b, 60, 62)

Her words mimic those spoken in Woolf's novel. Mrs Ramsay's triumphant dish in *To the Lighthouse* is also French; she chooses to serve boeuf en daube. She expresses her pride after Mr Bankes has praised the stew:

> 'It is a French recipe of my grandmother's,' said Mrs Ramsay, speaking with a ring of great pleasure in her voice. Of course it was French. What passes for cookery in England is an abomination (they agreed). It is putting cabbages in water. It is roasting meat till it is like leather. (Woolf 2018, 95)

Despite the change from the main course to dessert, the reasons given in "Clafoutis" for choosing a French dish over an English one are the same. The similarities between the fragments are obvious enough for the reader who is familiar with *To the Lighthouse* to recognise that "Clafoutis" is not only a general pastiche on style, but that this specific novel is being parodied as well.

The Woolfian Themes

"Clafoutis" also reflects specific themes present in *To the Lighthouse*, which explores a plethora of themes, including, but not limited to, the subjectivity of memory, the unexpectedness and fleeting nature of life, societal differences between men and women, and maintaining harmony in one's relationships. Memories shape the characters in the novel – their subjective impressions of the past greatly influence the characters' present feelings and actions. James's childhood memories of how Mr Ramsay repeatedly denied him the trip to the Lighthouse result

in James harbouring deep resentment for his father years later. James is able to differentiate between what his recollections suggest and reality – he recognises that "it was not him [Mr Ramsay], that old man reading, whom he wanted to kill, but it was the thing that descended on him—without his knowing it perhaps: that fierce sudden black-winged harpy …" (Woolf 2018, 177) – but the powerful impression of Mr Ramsay's tyranny is too ingrained in James's memory for him not to take a cautious approach when interacting with his father. The Ramsays' trip to the lighthouse is also indicative of the unpredictability of life. There is a certain bittersweetness in a childhood dream being fulfilled several years later, with many tragedies in the family along the way. The same goes for Lily Briscoe only finishing her painting after Mrs Ramsay's death. Gender differences reinforced by society are yet another important theme as they pervade not only the relationships in the novel but also the characters' understanding of themselves. Male characters possess the freedom to set lofty goals for themselves, which is shown through Mr Ramsay's obsession with leaving a legacy through scientific achievements and Charles Tansley's writing his dissertation. Moreover, the men in the novel are allowed to express their emotions openly and their lack of etiquette is excused. During the dinner party, for that matter, Mr Ramsay shows clear signs of discontent when Augustus Carmicheal asks for a second serving of soup, and Charles Tansley makes snarky remarks towards Lily Briscoe. Female characters, on the other hand, are expected to conform to societal expectations and show courtesy. For example, at one point during the dinner, Mrs Ramsay instructs Lily Briscoe to be polite when responding to Charles Tansley, which causes the latter to "renounce the experiment—what happens if one is not nice to that young man over there—and be nice" (Woolf 2018, 87). Although she cannot escape the expectations set for women entirely, Lily Briscoe shows defiance by being an unmarried woman and an artist; thus, she is the exact opposite of Mrs Ramsay, who plays the role of the perfect housewife. Mrs Ramsay feels inclined to care for other people, who, indeed, "came to her naturally, since she was a woman, all day long with this and that; the children were growing up; she often felt she was nothing but a sponge sopped full of human emotions" (Woolf 2018, 30). Her need to maintain unity is integral to the dinner party scene, which is also the pivotal scene of the novel.

The theme of the fleetingness of life is reflected in "Clafoutis" through the fact that neither the mother in "Clafoutis" nor Mrs Ramsay wants their children to grow up, and that both women feel pity over their inability to stop time. Their sentiments are expressed, respectively, in the above-mentioned fragment

of "Clafoutis", where the mother is covering cherries in batter while pondering the future awaiting her family, and in the reflection that Mrs Ramsay has about her children: "She did not like that Jasper should shoot birds; but it was only a stage; they all went through stages. Why, she asked, pressing her chin on James's head, should they grow up so fast? . . . They were happier now than they would ever be again" (Woolf 2018, 55). It is worth noting that Jasper Ramsay and Nicholas, the son in "Clafoutis", are similar as well. Jasper is keen on shooting birds, a habit Mrs Ramsay hopes is temporary, and Nicholas from "Clafoutis" is described as "that devil running past the window", which suggests that he is also quite an unruly child (Crick 2006b, 63). The theme of 'assembling' oneself, one's surroundings, and relationships is also parodied in "Clafoutis". In *To the Lighthouse*, Mrs Ramsay reflects on the opinion some people have of her:

> Wishing to dominate, wishing to interfere, making people do what she wished—that was the charge against her, and she thought it most unjust . . . Nor was she domineering, nor was she tyrannical. It was more true about hospitals and drains and the dairy. About things like that she did feel passionately . . . No hospital on the whole island. It was a disgrace. (Woolf 2018, 54–55)

Mrs Ramsay opposes being thought of as an authoritarian parent, a tyrant, and so does the mother in "Clafoutis":

> She was so commanding (not tyrannical, not domineering; she should not have minded what people said), she was like an arrow set on target. She would have liked to build a hospital, but how? For now, this clafoutis for Mrs Sorley and her children (she added the yeast, prepared in warm water). (Crick 2006b, 63)

Both women accept that they can be imposing at times, but not in the way other people think them to be. Mrs Ramsay and the mother in "Clafoutis" believe they fight for the right causes, such as reforming their surroundings. Thus, the hospital mention in "Clafoutis" serves as yet another hint about the parody's hypotext. The juxtaposition of the two creations – building a hospital and baking a pie – is a source of humour in this fragment, and perhaps it is also a mild mockery of performative gestures of the upper-middle and upper classes. The act of making

a dessert is treated by Crick's heroine as a worthy substitute for any grander form of help. As in – if she lacks the power to build a hospital, baking a pie will have to do for now. The mother in "Clafoutis" believes that it is her responsibility to offer her assistance to "Mrs Sorley, that poor woman with no husband and so many mouths to feed," and decides that baking is the right way to do it (Crick 2006b, 60). She is oblivious to the fact that a single pie might not be enough to improve the Sorleys' situation in any meaningful way, which makes the fragment a mockery on the futility of sentimental genteel gestures. Indeed, both the mother in "Clafoutis" and Mrs Ramsay believe that it is their duty to bring harmony to their relationships through gestures related to cooking. Mrs Ramsay feels the need to unite people around her and throws a dinner party as a means to achieve that. She is particularly pleased that Mr Bankes – that "poor man! who had no wife, and no children and dined alone in lodgings except for tonight" – accepted her invitation (Woolf 2018, 79). Thus, when Mr Bankes tastes the boeuf en daube and declares that it "is a triumph", Mrs Ramsay feels that she has fulfilled her role as the hostess and successfully brought her guests together (Woolf 2018, 95).

The societal differences between men and women are also parodied in "Clafoutis." In *To the Lighthouse*, James, the youngest in the Ramsay family, uses the metaphor of "the arid scimitar of the male, which smote mercilessly, again and again, demanding sympathy" when he thinks about his father (Woolf 2018, 36). Mr Ramsay constantly requires approval from others, especially from Mrs Ramsay, and is as ruthless as a blade in his pursuit of sympathy. Just as James perceives his father as the 'scimitar,' the son likens his mother to a "fruit tree" (Woolf 2018, 36). Mr Ramsay plunges into that very tree in search of validation, which he feels Mrs Ramsay is obliged to give him (Woolf 2018, 36). In "Clafouti", a similar metaphor appears. The mother wonders about the next stages of preparing the pie and has the following reflection in the process: "The yeast would cause the mixture to rise up into the air like a column of energy, nurtured by the heat of the oven, until the arid kitchen knife of the male, cutting mercilessly, plunged itself into the dome, leaving it flat and exhausted" (Crick 2006b, 63). This time, the knife is not an outright metaphor for destructive behaviour which affects the whole family, but seems to refer, quite literally, to the act of cutting the cake. Yet, through describing the knife as specifically "of the male", the fragment becomes a subtle commentary on social differences between the two genders (Crick 2006b, 63). Just like the pie in "Clafoutis" is left "flat and exhausted" as a result of being cut,

so is Mrs Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* after having to reassure her husband endlessly (Crick 2006b, 63).

Thanks to the inclusion of elements and themes specific to *To the Lighthouse*, "Clafoutis" works both as a general pastiche on style and a specific parody. Not only can "Clafoutis" be enjoyed by readers who are familiar enough with Woolf's writing to recognise her style, but it is also a nod to those who have read *To the Lighthouse* and can pinpoint exact thematic correspondences – the Woolfian themes and their parodic invocations. "Clafoutis" is at once humorous and slightly mischievous; it is a parody as fun – capitalising on its playfulness –but also, in social terms, a mild parody of, rather ineffective, genteel sentiments, and gender relationships. Still, despite its critical aspects, "Clafoutis" also pays homage to Woolf and her writing manner. The pastiche was not created with the intent to diminish Woolf's work; rather, it was written out of appreciation for her extraordinary modernist style. Even if certain Woolfian themes are subject to light parody and subtle satire, it is the admiration for the way Woolf construed her narratives that is at the heart of Crick's rewrite. Woolf's legacy is kept alive in "Clafoutis" through revisiting what made her writing truly unique and through the use of those elements to create an unconventional, playful retelling, one that recontextualises the classic Woolfian motifs and, at the same time, prompts a reflection. It can only be hoped that with the creation of works such as "Clafoutis," pastiche will shake off its long outdated-reputation as a mere 'fake' and receive full recognition for its ability to honour and enrich the literary tradition.

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Cathy Ames as a *Femme Fatale* in *East of Eden*: Steinbeck and Kazan

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Abstract: Through the lens of the *femme fatale* trope, this article compares the portrayal of Cathy Ames from John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* in the novel and the 1955 film adaptation directed by Elia Kazan. The text explores the perception of the *femme fatale* framework through the history of literary criticism and showcases how frequently it can be observed in a variety of texts. The character of Cathy Ames displays many characteristics typical for the framework, such as the fluidity of identity and class. She is an established villain of the book's story, and her actions greatly influence the narrative. The validity of her character and her purpose in the book have been greatly debated by literary critics. Elia Kazan's 1955 film adaptation changes her portrayal substantially; she is no longer a straightforward antagonist. The film problematizes her role and challenges the classic understanding of the *femme fatale* trope. This article exemplifies the changes made to her character through the analysis of specific scenes in relation to cinematography, acting, and alterations in the plot. It also analyzes how the medium of film influences characterization and transposition of information. The aim of the article is to explore the attributes of the *femme fatale* trope, as it is a term used frequently in relation to cultural texts, yet elusive in definition. The nature of film adaptations is also considered in the article, as it might help understand why filmmakers frequently make changes to the source material, which consequently result in works vastly different from the adapted material.

The *femme fatale* is a trope assigned to female characters who, through what is perceived as their beauty and cunning nature, cause the downfall of others.[1]

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1   This article develops some of the ideas included in my diploma paper presented at Kazimierz Wielki University in 2024.

Their relationships are frequently of romantic or sexual nature and are seen as instigated by the *femme fatale*'s seduction and ambition. The term itself comes from French and translates as "fatal woman" (Ostberg 2024). The origins of the *femme fatale* can be traced back to some of the oldest texts in human history. Eve is often regarded as the blueprint for the trope, though the validity of this assumption has been debated throughout the history of feminist literary criticism. At first, scholars claimed that relating the biblical story to sexuality is reductive and, in actuality, puts the man at fault, because Eve is tempted by the snake – a male figure. Later, it was argued that seeing Eve as an archetypal *femme fatale* is due to the readings of texts being influenced by the patriarchal system (Edwards 2010, 35). The *femme fatale* has also frequently been viewed as a manifestation of the male understanding of female sexuality and a "symptom of male fears about feminism" (Doane qtd. in Hanson and O'Rawe 2010, 2). The *femme fatale* is not always perceived as a negative character, however. Critics are drawn to *femmes fatales* due to them being focal points of many texts, often acting as a driving force in the narrative and representing "a mode of feminist agency" (Hanson and O'Rawe 2010, 2). The relevance of the *femme fatale* persists especially in contemporary film criticism. Katherine Farrimond argues that although the character does have a general framework, the *femme* is far more complex than the characteristics of manipulation and seduction. She states that the trope "holds a vexed but significant position in the history of film criticism, as well as in wider discourses about women and evil" (2018, 2). Furthermore, the *femme* is significant in feminist criticism as a tool for the "understanding of contemporary popular culture because her complex relationship with patriarchal and feminist understandings of female power forces to the surface broader concerns about the representation of women" (2018, 2). As an inherently mysterious character, the *femme fatale* is notoriously difficult to define – yet her pervasive presence across various forms of media continues to provoke discussion. The abundant presence of the *femme* in diverse texts indicates that the term is "evocative rather than descriptive" (2018, 3-4).

This article aims to analyze Cathy Ames from John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (*EoE*) with reference to the *femme fatale* trope and to examine how this character is portrayed in the 1955 film adaptation directed by Elia Kazan. *East of Eden*, published in 1952, is one of Steinbeck's most ambitious works, functioning as a modern retelling of the biblical story of Cain and Abel. The novel's narrative spans multiple decades and three generations of characters. The central theme of the story is the

role of free will in the binary struggle between good and evil, exemplified by the Hebrew word *timshel*, which translates to "thou mayest" (*EoE* 2017, 369). This word is uttered by Adam to Cal in the final moments of the novel as a way to argue the importance of free will in opposition to determinism. Cathy Ames is one of the driving forces behind the book's narrative, and her overtly established villainous role seemingly fits the *femme fatale* framework. Over the course of the novel's plot her actions cause numerous tragedies and the downfall of many people.

There are parallels between her and the character of Curley's wife from one of Steinbeck's previous works – *Of Mice and Men* (*OMaM*). The portrayal of Curley's wife in the novel is largely negative, and she too exhibits characteristics typical of a *femme fatale*. Steinbeck first introduces Curley's wife in the farm's bunkhouse as George and Lennie, the two protagonists, are settling in. George seems to instantaneously be aware it might be unwise to engage with the woman, as he acts disinterested and avoids looking at her. She displays what is seen as her flirtatious nature right away by leaning "against the door frame so that her body was thrown forward" (*OMaM* 2017, 32). Lennie is fascinated by her and calls her "purty" after she leaves the room, which causes George to scold him. His choice of words about the woman is harsh and shows disdain. That he should be calling her a "bitch" and a "tramp" is surprising due to the fact that George has just met her, but he explains that he has seen that type of woman before. The men in the story keep warning each other that interacting with her in any way will certainly bring trouble. The interaction also foreshadows the tragic events of the novel, as George's foreboding approach later turns out to be valid. The men's extreme opinion of Curley's wife reflects their preconceptions about female sexuality and is also evident of women's societal position at the time. Similarly to Cathy in *East of Eden*, Curley's wife plays a pivotal role in *Of Mice and Men*, as her being inadvertently killed by Lennie is the turning point of the narrative.

Mimi Reisel Gladstein has analyzed how Curley's wife was portrayed in the original text and its numerous adaptations. Curley's wife is the only female character truly present in the story, and although her appearances are infrequent, she plays a pivotal role in the narrative. Her characterization in the original text is very laconic; the reader does not know her backstory or motivations. She is not even given an actual name and only referred to by her marital status. When Steinbeck was adapting *Of Mice and Men* for Broadway, the play's director suggested that the character of Curley's wife should be more fleshed out. For the purpose of the stage production, Steinbeck gave Curley's wife "a troubled background of battling parents and an alcoholic and lost father" (Gladstein 2009, 203). The

1939 and 1992 film adaptations of *Of Mice and Men* also make changes to the character. While the book is told entirely through either George's or Lennie's perspective, the film shifts the focus to the woman at various points. Gladstein exemplifies a scene in the 1939 film which allows the viewer to glance into the woman's family life. The scene shows Curley's wife eating dinner at the ranch house with her husband and father-in-law. The woman is visibly bored as neither of the men engages in conversation. She tries to plead with Curley to take her out to see a movie; however, Curley acts disinterested and says that he has already seen the film with his friends. This allows the viewer to understand the motivation behind the woman's need for company (Gladstein 2009, 209). The 1992 adaptation does not switch the perspective to Curley's wife, but it does attempt to make the viewer empathize with the woman in different ways. By exemplifying Curley's violent nature in the scene where he can be seen practicing boxing on a punching bag, the movie makes a point about the wife's isolation and Curley's shortcomings as a life partner. The woman is present in this scene, yet she does not have any dialogue; she simply sits solemnly and passively, with no one paying attention to her. Her mean-spiritedness is also reduced, as this version omits the plot point in which Curley's wife makes fun of Crooks – the black ranch hand. What is more, the picture subtly makes the viewer consider the issue of domestic abuse. In another scene, George and Lennie see the woman crying in the yard. She explains that Curley destroyed all of her records – her only source of entertainment. Lastly, one short interaction between George and the woman in the barn is indicative of a potential romantic connection (Gladstein 2009, 209-211). These three scenes are not present in the novel; they are additions, whose purpose is to develop and humanize the female character. In the case of both adaptations, filmmakers made the decision to depart from the novel's negative understanding of the *femme fatale* trope in favor of a more nuanced portrayal. Gladstein's argument about the representations of Curley's wife is an informative context for the following analysis of *East of Eden*'s Cathy, whose character also varies significantly between the novel and the film adaptation.

Steinbeck's *East of Eden* portrays Cathy Ames as an irredeemable character capable of sacrificing everything and everyone for personal gain. She justifies her actions by stating that the world is full of evil, and, therefore, one is allowed to go to any means necessary for survival. Not being able to form a genuine connection with anyone, Cathy masterfully manipulates people who surround her (Cologne-Brookes 2013, 184-86). Steinbeck depicts her with absolutely

no sympathy, and her ruthless malevolence seems perplexing and unexplainable. Steinbeck's portrayal of Cathy, her way of seeing the world and awareness of the ability to influence others fit the *femme fatale* framework in a straightforward manner, as the character does not exhibit any nuance or positive aspects of the trope. The chapter where her character is introduced begins with the narrator pondering the source of her evil. He argues that "as a child may be born without an arm, so one may be born without kindness or the potential of conscience" (*EoE* 2017, 89). This passage suggests that no event caused Cathy to be the way she is – it is simply her nature. This is further reinforced by the fact that Cathy's appearance stands in opposition to her malevolence – as a child, she is described to have "a face of innocence" (*EoE* 2017, 90). As she grows older, she uses what is seen as her beauty and charm to exploit various men for her own personal gain. In the same chapter, the narrator states that at the age of ten, Cathy became aware of the power that sexual desire holds over people. She knew that she could use it as a way to manipulate others. The first major display of this manipulation comes when her mother finds her in a barn hand-tied, "naked to the waist" with two older boys. The mother instantly assumes that Cathy is being sexually assaulted; however, a doctor's examination does not find any physical trauma. Everyone assumes that Cathy's mother found her before a tragedy occurred. Cathy refuses to talk about the incident, and the two boys claim their innocence. Regardless of this, they are whipped by their fathers and sent to a correctional facility. Although never explicitly said, the vivid introduction of Cathy's malevolent nature perversely suggests that the whole incident might have been in some way orchestrated by the girl. A similar idea appears in her father's mind, but he keeps it to himself and decides not to confront his daughter out of fear.

Rosie White argues that the *femme fatale* is "less distinct in her class identity, often moving up the social scale through her immoral activities. Like the cities she inhabit[s], the modern *femme fatale* present[s] a fluid identity" (2010, 74). Cathy exhibits said fluidity throughout the novel. She designs her plots to improve her situation and live more and more comfortably, unbothered by anyone. The first example comes when, after killing her parents, she escapes her hometown and meets a pimp whom she manipulates into supporting her financially. After the pimp almost beats her to death one night, she manages to escape and finds herself at the Trask farm. Adam falls hopelessly in love with her, and Cathy agrees to marry him despite the fact that such an arrangement makes her dependent on another person. This type of captivity is her biggest fear; however, she decides

to go along with Adam's plans, as she knows she has nowhere else to go. When Cathy leaves Adam, having given birth to Cal and Aron, she goes to Monterey and assumes a new identity – she changes her name to Kate and starts working in a local brothel. After gaining the sympathy of the brothel's owner, Cathy employs another long-term plot which results in her poisoning the owner and inheriting the business. Cathy constantly changes her social status and seamlessly assumes new roles. As a young teenager she studies to become a school teacher, then becomes a trophy girlfriend of a pimp, a wife and a mother, to finally being a sex worker and a brothel owner. Her relentless plans to improve her life situation and gain control are examples of the female agency often associated with the *femme fatale* trope; however, in the case of the novel, the agency is always negative, as Cathy does not have any regard for other people's lives, health or safety.

Cathy's introduction in *East of Eden* strongly suggests how the reader should feel about her. It carries a similar sentiment to George's opinion of Curley's wife after he and Lennie meet her for the first time. The validity and purpose of Cathy's character have been heavily debated since the novel's release. Some critics have scrutinized Stenbeck's approach to morality, with one reviewer calling the book "naive" (qtd. in Ouderkirk 2013, 231). It might seem that Cathy exemplifies the *femme fatale* trope in an evidently negative manner only as a way to reinforce the novel's theme of the struggle between good and evil. Her moral bankruptcy functions as a binary opposite to the virtue of Samuel Hamilton or Lee. The book does not show much sympathy or nuance to her character, and the behavior she displays might even seem overly exaggerated at times. The only exception comes at the end of the novel; feeling that the truth about her past actions might come to light, she decides to commit suicide and writes Aron into her will as the sole benefactor. Simultaneously, out of sheer spite, she reveals the evidence of various prominent local figures frequenting her brothel. Bruce Ouderkirk argues that at this moment Cathy "acts as monster and vulnerable human simultaneously, blindly following both cruel and benevolent impulses" (2013, 238). These final acts suggest that even she, a seemingly irredeemable character, is capable of choosing between good and evil, which is meant to further reinforce the novel's main theme. Some critics, however, view Cathy as an antithesis to the novel's dichotomous theme. Carol L. Hansen argues that the character stands in opposition to *East of Eden*'s moral system, which operates on the basis of free will. Cathy exhibits amoral behavior as a way to question the validity of the *timshel* theme, which is one of the core elements of the novel's story (2002, 221-22). Kyoko Ariki

views Cathy as the central-most figure of the entire novel, a figure which stands at the crux of all pivotal events, facilitating the development of other characters (2002, 230-31). The ambiguity and problematic placement of Cathy's role in the story parallels the difficulty critics encounter while attempting to define the *femme fatale*, thus making Cathy function as a *femme fatale* on a metatextual level.

Elia Kazan's 1955 adaptation of *East of Eden* makes a significant departure from the novel in many regards. In a manner similar to how Curley's wife in the film adaptations of *Of Mice and Men* is transformed, Kazan changes the female character substantially. Steinbeck was, in fact, enthusiastic about the adaptation: he gave Kazan creative freedom and did not oppose the director's intention to omit a considerable part of the novel, only using the later chapters (Neve 2009, 94). During the production, Kazan was obligated to abide by the Motion Picture Production Code, whose censors were alarmed by Cathy's profession and the fact that some scenes were to take place in a brothel. Kazan, however, managed to convince them that these elements were indispensable and crucial to the film's plot. He also argued that it would be better to depict the brothel as "grim and unattractive" as any embellishment would prove counterproductive (Neve 2009, 98). When 20th Century Fox first started considering adapting the novel, Joseph Breen, a censor for the Motion Picture Association of America, deemed the source material "unacceptable" (qtd. in Neve 2009, 98). The requirements of the censors might have contributed to Cathy being rid of much of her brutality and villainy. In the film, Cathy's role is significantly less pronounced, as the film focalizes Cal's perspective and his relationship with Adam. Initially, Kazan was supposed to make *East of Eden* for 20th Century Fox; however, he decided to work with Warner Bros., because the executives at Fox were more interested in the first chapters of the novel instead of the later ones (Neve 2009, 94-95). The reason for Kazan being drawn to the final sections seem to stem from the director's personal life; he also had a tumultuous relationship with his father, who urged Kazan to participate in the "family rug business," whilst Kazan "conspir[ed] with his mother to discover other options for his life by going to college instead" (Neve 2009, 98).

Linda Hutcheon calls the process of adapting from a textual to visual medium a "move from [...] telling to [...] showing mode, usually from print to performance" (2013, 38). Novels provide the reader with a significant amount of information which has to be dramatized in a "performance adaptation." Elements such as "description, narration, and represented thoughts must be transcoded into speech, actions, sounds, and visual images. Conflicts and

ideological differences between characters must be made visible and audible"
(Lodge qtd. in Hutcheon 2013, 40). In most cases, film does not allow the viewer
to have access to characters' inner monologue, which hugely complicates charac-
terization. Film usually does not employ an omniscient narrator, who in novels
provides the reader with necessary exposition. In the case of *East of Eden*, Cathy
is introduced in Chapter 8, with the narrator telling the reader about her nature
and establishing her role in the novel. Moreover, the passages which focalize
her character allow access to Cathy's thoughts, which gives a glimpse into her
reasoning and how she justifies her actions. Kazan's film solely relies on cine-
matic language and mise-en-scène to characterize Cathy. One example which
illustrates how an element of characterization is transposed to the film relates
to Cathy's arthritic hands – she is very embarrassed of them, and every time
she goes outside she puts on gloves to make sure that no one sees her affliction.
In the novel, the reader is given this information by the narrator, whereas the
film relays the fact through its cinematography. At the beginning of the film,
a close-up shot depicts Cathy's gloved hand; this shot is later paralleled by an-
other close-up which depicts her hands ungloved and severely affected by ar-
thritis. The juxtaposition of these two shots communicates to the viewer that
Cathy is attempting to hide the symptoms of her disorder.

The film portrays Cathy (Jo Van Fleet) in a more nuanced manner, negotiat-
ing the classic understanding of the *femme fatale* trope. After the film's overture
and piece of expository text, which informs about the setting, the viewer sees
Cathy walking through the streets of Monterey. The film's wide aspect ratio,
achieved through the use of the CinemaScope lens, permits the audience to view
the character's surroundings in great detail. The first scene utilizes multiple
wide shots, consequently allowing the viewer to notice how other pedestrians
react to Cathy's presence. The camera is stationary and slowly pans following
Cathy, thus mimicking the townspeople turning their heads as she walks by.
The viewer first sees Cal (James Dean) sitting on the curb as Cathy passes on the
sidewalk behind him. The moment she walks past, Cal gets up and begins to fol-
low the woman, suggesting that he was waiting for her. At that point the viewer
does not know who the woman is; however, it seems that the boy does suspect
her identity. It is also apparent that Cathy attempts to hide herself using her
clothing – she is wearing a long dark jacket and dress, a black hat with a black
veil, and brown gloves. Despite her clothes, the town's inhabitants know her and
her profession, as evident by a group of men greeting her by name and catcalling

her. Cathy walks into a bank in order to deposit some money. Her interaction with the bank clerk begins to reveal information about her character; she waits impatiently while the clerk counts the money, and when he attempts to engage in small talk, Cathy ends the conversation by saying "I'm in a hurry, please" (Kazan 1955, 00:06:04-00:06:07), rips out her bankbook form the clerk's hand and quickly walks out of the bank. This scene might suggest that Cathy is simply rude, especially to a viewer familiar with the novel; however, it might also be interpreted as Cathy being headstrong and determined. Although Kazan's films are most often associated with androcentric stories and performances by male actors, such as Marlon Brando in *On the Waterfront* (1954), Savannah Lee states that the director also made movies with "actresses in stories about women;" however, the role of women in these is often overlooked. Lee further argues:

> *Pinky* (1949) is usually thought of as a movie about racial issues. *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) tends to be seen as a Marlon Brando film. *Splendor in the Grass* (1961) is remembered as the outstanding debut of Warren Beatty. But in fact, a case can be made that these films are equally about the pain of women. Kazan was every bit as interested in the characters of Blanche (Vivien Leigh) and Stella (Kim Hunter) as he was in the character of Stanley Kowalski (Brando). He was just as interested in the character of Deanie (Natalie Wood) as he was in the character of Bud (Beatty). And in the controversial and often-overlooked *Pinky*, the story is entirely that of the conflicted, racially stranded title heroine (Jeanne Crain). (2011, 116)

In a sense, this appears to be true about *East of Eden*. The film focalizes Cal's perspective and is most frequently associated with James Dean's performance, but Cathy's character also carries much nuance, especially when one considers how her portrayal differs from the novel.

The first time Cal sneaks into the brothel, he sees Cathy sleeping in an armchair in her room. He kneels in front of her and softly says that he would like to speak with her. Woken up, Cathy is obviously startled, begins yelling and covers her face, ultimately retreating to the back of the room to hide behind a curtain. This is the scene which employs the aforementioned close-up of Cathy's arthritic hands. It also further characterizes Cathy through Jo Van Fleet's acting. In the novel, it is explained that as Cathy ages and gains weight, she becomes

paranoid about losing her beauty, which prompts her to hide as much of her physical appearance as possible. The film does not overtly state that at any point. In turn, when Kazan's Cathy displays embarrassment at being seen by Cal, the viewer understands that she is ashamed of her looks, thus explaining the reason for her conservative clothing in the film's previous scenes. Cal, however, does not seem to be in any way shocked or appalled by his mother – on the contrary. With a slight smile, James Dean perfectly conveys the child-like hope Cal is feeling at the perspective of establishing a relationship with his mother and learning about his family's past. The male gaze plays a role in the scene, as Cathy is dressed much more revealingly compared to the previous scenes – she is only wearing a nightgown and a robe. Cal's longing expression and the fact that he is kneeling before Cathy indicate submission.

After Cathy orders for Cal to be thrown out, the boy struggles with the brothel's bodyguard and yells out "Talk to me, please! Mother!" (Kazan 1955, 00:30:58-00:31:02). Through a crack in the door, Cathy observes him being dragged out of the building. At first, her face is visibly angry, but as the boy keeps pleading for a conversation, the expression changes into fear and even pity. This scene marks a departure from the source text. The first proper interaction the two have in the novel is when Cathy confronts Cal having noticed that he keeps following her around the city. When she takes him to the brothel and they start speaking, she purposely tries to corrupt Cal, but the boy manages to oppose her:

> Kate, as she had always, drove in the smart but senseless knife of her cruelty. She laughed softly. "I may have given you some interesting things, like this—" She held up her crooked hands. "But if it's epilepsy—fits—you didn't get it from me." She glanced brightly up at him, anticipating the shock and beginning worry in him.
> Cal spoke happily. "I'm going," he said. "I'm going now. It's all right. What Lee said was true."
> "What did Lee say?"
> Cal said, "I was afraid I had you in me."
> "You have," said Kate.
> "No, I haven't. I'm my own. I don't have to be you." (*EoE* 2017, 563-64)

In the book, there is no display of sympathy during the whole conversation. Cathy's only purpose is to hurt Cal and make him doubt his character and

motivations. Furthermore, Steinbeck's Cal does not intend to meet with Cathy in order to establish a relationship; he goes to speak with the woman to find out about her evil nature, as he is afraid that he might have inherited her character.

In cinema, the *femme fatale* has been widely associated with the *film noir*. In films belonging to this genre, it is the troubled male character who is usually focalized with the *femme fatale* only being a meaningful addition. It can be argued, however, that in *film noir* the *femme fatale* shares many characteristics with the male protagonists. One such trait is transgression, which, in the case of the *femme fatale*, is frequently realized through role-playing. The *femme fatale* is inherently performative and finds herself constantly adjusting her behavior in accordance to the situation (Grossman 2020, 1-4). In Steinbeck's text, Cathy performs constantly as a way to manipulate people, gain their trust and ultimately use them for her own benefit. She has perfect control over her facial expressions, body language and speech cadence. Her physical appearance likewise functions as an effective instrument of seduction, especially in her interactions with men. In the scheme to gain legal ownership of the brothel she has been working at, she develops a relationship with Faye, the establishment's founder. When Cathy (at this point having changed her name to Kate) begins to sense that Faye deeply desires to assume a maternal role over her, she starts calling Faye her mother and even proclaims love for her. Cathy is able to perfectly sense how Faye would like her to behave and what words she would like to hear her say:

> Kate got up, gently pulled the table aside, and sat down on the floor. She put her cheek on Faye's knee. Her slender fingers traced a gold thread on the skirt through its intricate leaf pattern. And Faye stroked Kate's cheek and hair and touched her strange ears. Shyly Faye's fingers explored to the borders of the scar.
> "I think I've never been so happy before," said Kate.
> "My darling. You make me happy too. Happier than I have ever been. Now I don't feel alone. Now I feel safe." (*EoE* 2017, 284)

The only moments when Cathy is unable to maintain her performance is when she is under the influence of alcohol. This firstly becomes apparent when, having escaped her hometown, she manipulates the pimp into supporting her financially. One evening, he brings a bottle of champagne to a house where he allowed Cathy to reside. At first, Cathy is reluctant to have a drink but finally drinks

a number of glasses. She begins to call the man names and admits to having manipulated him. The situation results in the pimp nearly beating Cathy to death; however, she manages to survive by finding her way to the Trask farm where she is nursed back to health by Adam.

The second time Cathy loses control over her behavior comes right after the passage previously quoted. Having decided to write Cathy into her will as the only benefactor, Faye proposes that the two should celebrate by having a glass of wine. Remembering almost losing her life when she drank previously, Cathy is again hesitant but agrees so as not to upset Faye. They end up drinking the entire bottle, which once again unveils Cathy's true nature:

> The transition came to Kate almost immediately after the second glass. Her fear evaporated, her fear of anything disappeared. This was what she had been afraid of, and now it was too late. The wine had forced a passage through all the carefully built barriers and defenses and deceptions, and she didn't care. The thing she had learned to cover and control was lost. Her voice became chill and her mouth was thin. Her wide-set eyes slitted and grew watchful and sardonic. (*EoE* 2017, 285)

The contrast in Cathy's behavior between the two passages is stark. Faye realizes that she has been tricked and begins to scream. Cathy manages to forcefully drug her and later convince that the entire conversation was a dream.

Cathy in Kazan's picture does not appear to be performing, at least not as overtly. Her behavior throughout the film seems consistent and earnest. During the first actual conversation she has with Cal, at first, the woman mostly asks him questions about his family and explains that she threw him out before because she did not know who he was. It is Cal who goes into the interaction with a pre-meditated motivation – he wants to borrow $5,000 to invest into a beans business venture with Will Hamilton, to which the woman surprisingly agrees. In the novel, Cal borrows the money from Lee, the Trask family's Chinese domestic worker who assumes a parental role over Caleb and Aron, especially at the beginning of their lives during Adam's depression. He also acts as a confidant and advisor to both Adam and the two boys. Making Cathy assume some of Lee's positive traits complicates her character. Because the film does not include Cathy's backstory, the audience does not know how she got

to her present position. In the picture, she justifies shooting Adam – she says that it was because he tried to keep her on the ranch, not able to see other people. It puts into question Cathy's motivation for abandoning her family, and that her leaving Adam was not as unambiguous as in the book. Furthermore, she argues that she got to own the brothel through hard work and dedication, which stands in contrast to the book's elaborate plot of manipulating and murdering the previous owner. With the viewer having no reasons to doubt Cathy's words, they are likely to believe her, and one might even feel inclined to sympathize with her. This choice turns the female agency displayed by Cathy in the novel into a positive character trait. Later in the scene, Cal and Cathy bond over their dislike for Adam's self-righteousness. When the woman suggests that maybe Cal is more like her, because she thinks he too is very pragmatic, the boy nods his head. At the end of the scene, the woman shows sympathy for her son by stating that he is a "likable kid" (Kazan 1955, 01:03:24-01:03:29). The earnestness of the compliment is surprising when one considers Cathy's interactions with Cal in the novel. Their conversations in the book are mostly hostile, and even when the woman does appear to be saying something positive, it is always sardonic.

The alterations discussed in this article result in significantly different experiences of reading Steinbeck's novel and watching Kazan's film, especially in relation to Cathy's portrayal. The movie does not make her out to be a villain overcome with mean-spiritedness. It humanizes her and problematizes the understanding of the *femme fatale* trope. The film Cathy is shown in a less overtly negative light, helps Cal financially and even develops a kinship with him. She also seems to somewhat regret the fact that she does not have a proper relationship with her son, as when Cal leaves her room with the borrowed money, she appears to be devastated. These changes result from the fact that the film omits about two-thirds of the novel's plot and shifts focus to Cal's relationship with his father. From Cal's perspective it is Adam who assumes the role of the villain, whereas Cathy takes on the traits of Lee. The film employs the *femme fatale* trope as a way to underline the agency of the female character, whose motivations do not appear to be inherently evil. Kazan characterizes Cathy through the purposeful use of film language and Jo Van Fleet's acting. In Steinbeck's novel, Cathy embodies the classic understanding of the trope; she is indicative of the fears patriarchal society has about women and their sexuality. Conversely, Kazan's Cathy comes across as an independent, strong woman, who regrets some of the choices she made in her past but ultimately is very proud of her position. The fact that both *East of Eden* and *Of Mice*

and Men feature women who exhibit the traits of a *femme fatale* points to Steinbeck's tendency to employ this particular stock character. The book versions of Cathy and Curley's wife do carry some nuance; however, the film adaptations seem to take the nuance much further, resulting in the characters being more fleshed out and not simply serving as devices to reinforce the theme or push the narrative forward.

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Myth-Making Modern Cities: Paris and London in Jacques Tati's *Playtime* and Penelope Lively's *City of the Mind*

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> Each space determines, or at least encourages, its own kind
> of story… Space is not the 'outside' of narrative, then, but
> an internal force, that shapes it from within. (Franco Moretti 70)

Abstract: Focusing on Paris and London in Jacques Tati's *Playtime* and Penelope Lively's *City of the Mind*, I investigate how modern cities function as myth-makers. By drawing on urban theory and spatial analysis, this study explores how cities, as living and evolving beings, create stories and reflect the way people treat them and how they profoundly influence the lives of their inhabitants. In *Playtime*, Tati criticizes the dehumanizing effects of modernist architecture and rapid urbanization on cities and their inhabitants. I investigate how Tati's Paris as a Frankenstein-like city, with its fading historical past, manipulates and distorts the lives of its residents. The film delineates how removing the historical identity and replacing it by sterile and impersonal spaces can create myth-making cities narrating their own stories. This erasure of the past not only detaches inhabitants from their collective heritage but also cultivates environments that feel inherently unstable. The research underscores that a city's vitality and human connection are inextricably linked to its historical layers, arguing against a modernity that disregards its past and foundations. Similarly, Lively's *City of the Mind* depicts how London as a city fractured between its historical past and its gentrified present embodies the duality of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. This research argues that the erasure of past and historical memory or separating past and present in urban spaces can create foreboding and uncontrollable cities mirroring the anxieties of modern life. Analyzing these texts, I explore the relationship between space and time and the importance of the integration of history and modernity in urban planning. Without this

balance, cities are on the verge of becoming monstrous and alienating spaces failing to nurture human spirit.

Cities can be considered as texts that can be read and analyzed. Much like characters, cities can be studied to see how they make or produce different myths and how modern cities and literature are mutually constructed. The cinematic depiction of myth-making Paris in Jacques Tati's *Playtime* and the literary description of myth-making London in Penelope Lively's *City of the Mind* have been chosen to provide a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the myth-making in modern cities than merely focusing on a cinematic or a literary text.

The modern myth-making cities recount myths such as Prometheus, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Sisyphus, and Frankenstein. For instance, works such as Christopher Frank's *Mortelle*, Julian Barnes' *Metroland*, Jon McGregor's *If Nobody Speaks of Remarkable Things*, and films like Ben Wheatley's *High Rise* and Godard's *Two or Three Things I Know about Her* offer fertile ground for analyzing how these cities' mythic roles manifest in fiction and film.

The changes in the appearance of modern cities over the course of time – much like the changes of the human face; the transformation from a young face to an old one, and back again, as a dynamic and living entity – strengthen Charles Jencks' ideas, which revolve around a Darwinian idea of natural selection to produce a model for the development of the cities (Bentley 176). Jencks suggests that cities "develop through a perpetual change of structure and shape and survive by jettisoning dead tissue in order for new growth to emerge" (cited in Bentley 176). This dynamic interplay between urban evolution and mythic narratives underscores how cities' physical transformations – including architecture, signs, billboards, bridges, advertisements, skyscrapers, cathedrals, streets, gardens, parks, houses, and other urban elements – collectively form a myth-making entity that profoundly shapes literary texts.

Expanding on these ideas, David Spurr's definition of modern mythology as "the set of symbols and narratives through which society gives meaning to itself" (1) aligns with the idea that architecture plays a role in creating myths. Walter Benjamin further reinforces this idea by asserting that architecture "bears witness"

(zeugt) to hidden mythologies, rendering them interpretable in concrete form (1). Meanwhile, the role of a wanderer interpreting these spaces should not be forgotten. The wanderer or the flâneur or flaneuse – originally introduced by Baudelaire and later maneuvered upon by Benjamin – is not only the product of that space but also shapes the myth by interpreting the urban landscapes.

Nick Bentley, in "Postmodern Cities", also explains this interaction between the flâneur and the postmodern cities functioning as narratives encompassing overlapping histories. Working on the mythical, gendered, and emotional aspects of urban spaces and employing psychogeography, writers such as Haruki Murakami, Peter Ackroyd, Will Self, Iain Sinclair, Doris Lessing, and Angela Carter investigate how the interplay of diverse histories and identities shape urban spaces (176). Therefore, architecture and urban spaces serve as the sources of making mythic narratives, while the flâneur or flâneuse acts as the interpreter of these narratives by revealing their hidden myths and giving meaning to them.

Methodology

Cities, buildings, spaces, and different architectures are narratives telling stories and representing different myths; the cities we inhabit shape the narratives we create. Therefore, for many architects, form follows fiction, not function. Moreover, considering the role of space in literature, literary critics have paid little attention to urban theory until the 'spatial turn' of the 2000s and 2010s. In recent years, many researchers have been investigating literary texts by employing urban theories proposed by different scholars, such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau – who were under the influence of Michel Foucault – Gaston Bachelard, David Harvey, Amos Rapoport, Marc Augé, and Edward Soja.

Historically, from Plato's time, there has been a difference between space and place. In this context, the concept of space hides the idea of interaction. Kim Duff argues that "while a 'place' can be a library, an airport, a building in the city, or any other location that is materially measurable and locatable, space is the thing that produces identity" (8). Yi-Fu-Tuan also in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* differentiates between place and space: "if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place" (6). Similarly, a perspective central to Soja's *Postmodern Geographies* is that "today, however, it may be space more than time that hides consequences from us, the 'making of geography' more than the 'making

of history' that provides the most revealing tactical and theoretical world. This is the insistent premise and promise of postmodern geographies" (1).

Building on this, Henri Lefebvre explains that space actively produces and is produced by social relations. According to him, throughout history, from ancient Greece to the present time, every society is characterized by its mode of space production. Furthermore, the birth of the modern novel coincided with the emergence of cities. Lefebvre elaborates that the space of representations "has an affective kernel or center: Ego [sic], bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or, square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time" (42). He adds that space can direct and relate social processes since it is by nature empirically subjective, flexible, and vibrant (ibid).

To Lefebvre, each era shows "a logic of visualization" which is telling of the distinct features of that period of time: for instance, the gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages or the Baroque architecture of the seventeenth century show the spirit of the time. As another example, scholars have observed that "Gothic style embodied the influence of London's past …. That is why the Law Courts were constructed in Gothic style as a way of instilling the authority of time upon the judicial deliberations of the present; it is also the reason why London churches of the mid-nineteenth century were invariably in the Gothic style" (Ackroyd 712). Besides, Michel de Certeau states that "this is the way in which the Concept-city functions; a place of transformations and appropriations, the object of various kinds of interference but also a subject that is constantly enriched by new attributes, it is simultaneously the machinery and the hero of modernity" (95).

Based on the ideas of the scholars such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault, Edward Soja proposes Thirdspace as an inclusive and hybrid space of human experience. He explains that it is different from and at the same time incorporates the Firstspace (perceived, divided, designed, and mapped by an objective, rationalistic approach) and Secondspace (conceived, ideational, subjective conceptualization of the first). Soja notes that Thirdspace calls into question "all conventional modes of spatial thinking" (Soja 1996, 163). As he further clarifies, in Thirdspace, a range of different, sometimes contrasted, factors gather together: "subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" (56–7).

Therefore, in Thirdspace proposed by Soja, time is intermingled with space.

This idea resonates with David Harvey's concept of "time-space compression." He uses the term to emphasize the revolutionary processes that radically change the objective character of space and time and, subsequently, we have no other choice but to modify and revise the ways the world is represented (240). Harvey further argues that the word "compression" signals that "the history of capitalism has been characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us" (ibid.).

Similarly, the concept of psychogeography – coined by the Situationist International in the 1950s – also explores the interplay between space and human experience. Catharina Löffler argues that psychogeography, rooted in new urbanism, examines how urban spaces actively shape individual perceptions and experiences. Coined by the Situationist International in the 1950s as a response to mass consumerism, psychogeography emphasizes individual expression and awareness of the urban landscape. As the term suggests, emotional and psychological engagement lie at its core; when exploring urban spaces, psychogeography focuses on subjectivity as well as on human emotions and feelings. Although the Situationist International disappeared in the 1990s, psychogeography gained more attention in academic, artistic, and public spheres. Over the course of time, it has evolved into a versatile concept which has been widely recognized and applied to different contexts (Löffler 6,7).

In agreement with this perspective, Amos Rapaport's classification for understanding human interaction with the environment provides a useful framework for analyzing modern urban spaces. His classification aligns with the perspective that emphasizes the complex interplay between humans and their environments: (a) environmental determinism emphasizes how environment determines human behavior (b) possibilism focuses on the possibilities and limitations the environment offers along with the choices individuals make based on the cultural and environmental factors (c) probabilism puts emphasis on probabilities and the likelihood of certain choices within specific physical settings, rather than emphasizing the dictating force of the environment (2). These notions become more significant as the interaction between the environment and human agency grows increasingly complex.

This complexity is further illuminated by Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" describing spaces that defy conventional categorization, where "things are 'laid', 'placed', 'arranged' in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a common locus beneath them all" (Foucault xix). Another

unconventional categorization of spaces was proposed by Marc Augé. Augé's idea of "non-places" puts emphasis on the transitory nature of these places such as airports, where relations, history, and identity are rendered irrelevant. These two concepts highlight the fragmented and disorienting nature of modern urban environments often lacking historical identity and instead creating the myth of Frankenstein, piecing together disparate elements into a disjointed whole. Besides, for Koolhaas, junkspaces are also examples of non-places but in their extreme forms. He describes the junkspace of super-modernity as an excess of non-places; shopping malls, precincts, leisure space are some examples he suggests. Junkspace has appropriated the strategies proposed by the situationists for whom the ambiance is significant. In this context, Rapaport's classification helps us understand how individuals make choices within these heterotopic and non-place environments, where the physical settings paradoxically constrain and enable behavior and reflect culture and the society.

Argument

Cities often serve as myth-making agents, shaping literary texts and cultural narratives through their unique geographical, social, and historical characteristics. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Edinburgh plays a crucial role as the source of inspiration for Stevenson to explore duality in human beings. Geographically and socially, Edinburgh is divided into two distinct sections: on one hand, the upper ground and the underground, and on the other hand, the new and the old towns. Historically, the underground was plagued by crimes, robberies, and murders, including the infamous rumors of Burke and Hare, the serial killers, who sold corpses to medical schools. This division between the corrupt underground and the wealthy upper ground delineates the duality of the psyche of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Therefore, scholars studying Edinburgh and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, have shown, the city's structure and its history play a crucial role in shaping myths and narratives, often becoming a central character in the narratives they inspire. However, this phenomenon is not unique to Edinburgh; different cities create different myths, and their fictional and cinematic representations interact with the people who inhabit them. For instance, Walter George Bell, in *Unknown London*, observes: "I have climbed down more ladders to explore the buried town than I have toiled up City [London] staircases, which may lead to the impression

that there is more beneath than above" (qtd. in Ackroyd 691). This suggests that cities, with their structures, cultures and histories not only shape their people's psyche but also shape the myths and interesting narratives.

The importance of place in shaping cultural and national identity is further explored by Stefan Horlacher in his analysis of John Fowles' *Daniel Martin*. Horlacher argues that England is portrayed as a society that "flees from camera reality," presenting itself as a country where "all optical phenomena are deceptive" and where "the continual evasion of the inner self, the continual actual reality of saying one thing and thinking another, has become the national character" (2018, 709). In contrast, Horlacher notes that California's images "do not distort, they do not deceive, and they hide nothing" (2018, 711). As another example, Horlacher refers to Los Angeles portrayed in *Daniel Martin*, in *America*, and in "The Precession of Simulacra", as a flat, superficial place. It is like a never-ending camera pan or a huge stage set, similar to the sprawling, artificial town of San Narciso in Thomas Pynchon's *San Narciso*. This juxtaposition highlights how different places – such as Edinburgh, London, Los Angeles, England, California – function as myth-making agents shaping not only literary narratives but also cultural and national identities. These examples demonstrate the profound influence of place on the stories we narrate and the ways we understand ourselves and others.

Similarly, in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Victor Frankenstein, a scientist, creates an intelligent monster, evoking Victor's sense of regret and guilt. The core of the story lies in the discrepancy Victor sees between what he meant by creating it and what he has created, which is the cause of his disillusionment. This narrative is not unique; it is a very familiar story heard repeatedly in different literary texts. For instance, in Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*, Felix Hoenikker creates ice-nine, which is another example of creating an uncontrollable substance.

Much like Frankenstein's intelligent monster, the modern cities we inhabit are the man-made intelligent beings that frequently arouse feelings of guilt and regret because of the discrepancy modern man sees between what he meant by creating modern cities and what he sees in reality. These cities embody what Foucault calls "other spaces", or as he mentions in *The Order of Things*, "heterotopias". Bentley elaborates on this idea by proposing that "the cultural geographer David Harvey has stressed the unplanned and spontaneous nature of the postmodern city by evoking *modernist tropes of the metropolis as unpredictable and potentially dangerous, where crime is rife and the darker human desires find release*" (italics mine 2014, 176).

Despite their apparent rationality, modern smart cities – while showcasing the rational identity of modern man and his boastful talent – shape a new, foreboding myth. This myth is reflected in fiction and film, portraying man's guilt, regret, and disillusionment. David Spurr beautifully captures the tension between reality and imagination (art). His observation echoes Plato's ideas that the artisan is superior to the poet, whose work is at least two steps away from reality. According to this view, what the artisan has in mind is the Ideal, while with the embodiment of his ideas, he gets at least one step away from reality. In the same vein, the same story unfolds to the modern man who builds modern cities, which become the source of disillusionment and regret for him. As Spurr explains, modernist architecture, with its extreme rationality, functionalism, and rejection of the past, reflects the objective conditions of modernity that modernist literature often critiques. The rationalist and functionalist principles of 20th-century architecture seem fundamentally at odds with the emphasis on subjective, nonrational experiences in much of 20th-century literature. This contrast highlights the fragmentation of meaning within modernity itself, echoing Theodor Adorno's concept of the negative dialectic between art as imaginative creation and the experience of objective reality (*Architecture and Modern Literature* 2012, 5).

Tati's *Playtime* and the Myth of Frankenstein

Tati's film was released in 1967 when the situationist movement was active. The activity of this movement dates back to the late 1950s until the early 1970s when the dominant discourse was psychogeography, "a term that originated in the French postwar avantgarde" (Löffler vii), in which the influence of space on the psyches of the people was studied. That is why ambiance was a key term in the ideas suggested by the situationists and those who were working on non-place and junkspace.

This focus on space and ambiance was particularly relevant in the context of post-war France, which was undergoing significant transformations. Following the Second World War, France saw massive housing construction and a huge wave of modernization and Americanization. Moon argues that in France "urban and architectural planning during the second reconstruction (1945-) displayed mass-production, temporary houses, prefabricated buildings, grands ensembles, and American lifestyles" (92). After the Second World War, Europe had been invaded by American culture and France was not an exception.

The influence of American culture was not limited to consumer goods but extended to urban planning and architecture. After World War II, the culture of Western Europe was under the influence of American culture, specifically through the Marshal Plan and such events as "Exposition on American Techniques on Housing and Urban Planning" of 1946 and also a new wave of Haussmannization and urban renewal in France between the 1950s and 1970s. Postwar Paris was transformed into "neobourgeois space". Therefore, as Guen-Jong Moon defines "Americanization was the price paid for liberation. Among the commodities exported by the United States were not just refrigerators and washing machines, televisions and Coca-Cola, but also corporate architecture" (92). These were among the many other factors that undermined France's traditional culture, entrenched modernism, and sparked the May 1968 uprising.

This cultural and architectural shift is reflected in Tati's *Playtime*, where the ambiance of movement, transition, and mobility dominate. Hilary Powell like Tati emphasizes how surreal and comic is the city's condition: "Monsieur Hulot struggles to get to grips with the 'acquired culture' of movement in the city. The clumsy Hulot highlights the surreal nature of the city with comic assault" (Powell 207). As Tschumi suggests: "spaces are qualified by actions just as actions are qualified by spaces. One does not trigger the other, they exist independently. Only when they intersect do they affect one another" (130). Rapaport also emphasizes that "the built environment provides cues for behavior and that the environment can, therefore, be seen as a form of non-verbal communication" (italics are original 3) as demonstrated in *Play Time*.

In this context, the city itself becomes a central character, shaping the identities and actions of its inhabitants. In Tati's film, the main character is Paris and the other characters in the movie (like Mr Hulot, Barbara, …) are the peripheral characters manipulated by Paris and its structure and architecture. The protagonist is the city and the other characters are marginalized and their identities (in this film) are meaningful only in relation to Paris. The main role of the film is Paris and its modern space and architecture.

The theme of modernity and its effect on identity is also reflected in *Playtime* through the idea of *non-places*. The film, originally titled *Re-creation*, begins with a group of American tourists arriving at Orly Airport. The setting is deliberately ambiguous, leaving the audience unsure whether it is an airport or a hospital. Both spaces, as defined by Marc Augé, are examples of *non-places* – environments of transition where people pass through rather than inhabit. Augé argues

that such spaces are marked by a lack of permanence, which prevents the formation of identity, memory, and history.

The act of navigating these spaces is likened to reading, as proposed by De Certeau. In *Practice of Everyday Life*, De Certeau metaphorically compares walking in the city with reading the city. In the film, the camera or the flâneur narrates Paris filled with symbols of modernity, which often alienate its inhabitants. Tati's *Playtime* is replete with modern symbols in architecture. Skyscrapers and high buildings whose façades and even interiors are made of glass, frequently, operate as a mesh in which people are engulfed; it becomes comically complicated for them to find their way in or out of the buildings. The inhumanness and sterility of modern architecture and unfamiliar and inhuman interiors lacking regional uniqueness suppress human activities.

Tati uses these architectural elements to critique modernity and its dehumanizing effects. Tati uses mirrors to creatively show and emphasize the misleading aspects and social connections of the modern city (Powell 204). Mass produced buildings and lack of identity are the very problem Tati refers to in *Playtime*. Without the images of the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, and Sacré Coeur which are haphazardly reflected in glass windows, we do not understand that the city portrayed in this film is Paris and this is the very problem of the modern cities deprived of their history and their past. Like Paris, De Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* says that New York is a modern city ignoring its past: "unlike Rome, New York has never learned the art of growing old by playing on all its pasts. Its present invents itself, from hour to hour, in the act of throwing away its previous accomplishments and challenging the future" (91).

This critique of modernity is further emphasized through the metaphor of Frankenstein. Paris reflected in this film is like Frankenstein who cannot be controlled by its creators. Landrum states that architectural studies of Tati's *Playtime* have emphasized "the film's comic critique of modernity" (64). This modern Paris which is made by modern people is a living creature manipulating the lives of the characters who are living in or even better to say who are living with it. Although modern people have created Paris, Paris has also created them and there is an interaction between this newly born creature and the people. Therefore, the myth-making city of Tati's Paris and the characters living with it are mutually constructed.

The city's control over its inhabitants is both comical and tragic. Paris is comically controlling the characters by its architectural environment and the

restrictions it imposes on them. As Rapaport says, the restraining behavior of cities is more than their facilitating behaviors (3). People do not communicate well in *Playtime*; they are just moving and walking; they not only pass time idly but also pass the places, the same way. However, these moments of failure in modernity ironically lead to human connection. As we see, when examples of modernity and technology fail, communication begins. For example, when the facilities malfunction in the nightclub scene, people come together, start dancing, and real communication emerges. People are trapped in the hands of a manipulator – the city and its features – which have hoodwinked people and trapped them in their meshes. This paradox highlights how the very systems and structures designed to modernize and enhance the quality of life can sometimes isolate individuals, and their breakdown can foster genuine human interaction.

Similarly, the deceptive nature of modernity is exemplified by the use of glass in modern architecture. Glass act as an invisible wall, compromising privacy after dark, when interiors are exposed to outside view (Moon 95). Visitors constantly lose their way because of the transparency of the glass and their reflections. As Landrum notes, "Mr. Hulot strives to meet Gifford, a busy executive, but a barrage of modern conveniences impedes his pursuit" (65). This confusion and inefficiency, which are caused by the materials meant to symbolize progress and transparency, ironically lead to lack of communication. Just as the failure of technology in the nightclub fosters connection, the perplexing effects of modern architecture might also create moments where people are forced to interact, seek help, or confront challenges together. This way, they bridge the gaps that modernity has created.

This interplay between the deceptive qualities of modernity and its ability to foster connection in its failure is further highlighted by the way historical monuments are ironically and fleetingly integrated into the urban life. Landrum argues that grand Parisian monuments appear only fleetingly as reflections in glass and they get lost amidst the mundane, everyday activities of the characters. The Eiffel Tower, symbolizing 19th-century innovation, is glimpsed as Barbara enters an exposition of modern gadgets, while the Arc de Triomphe, honoring Napoleon's conquests, emerges as tourists arrive, reflecting neo-colonial tourism. The Obelisk at Place de la Concorde, tied to revolutionary violence and foreign plunder, appears when tourists leave for a nightclub, suggesting historical and future unrest. Meanwhile, the Basilica de Sacré-Coeur, a site of art and spirituality, is reflected when a deliveryman

and a street sweeper share morning greetings, blending monumental history with daily life (Landrum 74). These reflections of monumental history in glass surfaces highlight the deceptive transparency of modern architecture, creating an illusion of a narrative where past and present ostensibly coexist. However, these reflections are not of the genuine past; they are just distorted images and fleeting reflections of the past that distort and misrepresent the memory and historical context of the city. It seems as if the film conveys to the reader that there is no access to the past and the historical memory of this city, and its only accessibility is in/the reflections, illusions, and replication of the past, not the very past and history of this city. Therefore, the glimpses of fragmented historical symbols in glass reflections serve as a reminder that history is stripped of its substance. The erasure of the past reduces history to mere reflections and replications rather than allowing its genuine identity to show itself.

Landrum considers these reflections in the glass doors as the fusion of the past and the present in Paris. But how is it possible to call it the fusion of the past and the present when tourists do not visit these classical monuments and they are just reflections and illusions? These glass surfaces are the symbol of a modern city attracting tourists' attention and preventing them from visiting the classical monuments in Paris. How strange it is that tourists visit Paris but they do not see such places as the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Sacré Coeur, Seine River and Notre-Dame Cathedral. "The reflections are historical apparitions which have temporarily crossed the boundary into a modernist universe where they no longer fit" (Hilliker 326). This architecture functions as both a hindrance and an allure; while its absorbing, reflective surfaces captivate passersby, they also entangle them, diverting attention from the historical monuments of Paris. For example, in one scene, when Mr. Hulot tries to meet Gifford, he is misled by the building's reflections. In another, a stranger is obstructed by glass panels when he seeks a doorman's help to light his cigarette.

This playful yet critical depiction of modernity continues as the film explores how the collapse of modern facilities fosters human connection. It is shown that when the facilities collapse, people are released from the sterility of technology and modern architecture, and communication begins. Modern architecture is one of the obstacles which is beautifully shown in this film. As another example, when Mr. Hulot accidentally causes the ceiling and partition walls to collapse in the nightclub, the party begins; a new friendly space is created and the people cheerfully dance and communicate with one another.

A character without a past – or one whose past exists only as a faint, diluted echo – lacks a meaningful sense of self. Without the past, there can be no present. As Martin Heidegger argues in *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*), the past is always already part of the present: "'the past' has a remarkable double meaning; the past belongs irretrievably to an earlier time; it belonged to the events of that time; and in spite of that, it can still be present-at-hand now" (Heidegger 378). Landrum suggests that "conceived as a satire of postwar urbanization, *Playtime* depicts the city of Paris bereft of distinctive historic architecture" (64). Identity is shaped by fragments of the past – by history and memory. When these are absent, the character becomes incomplete, fragile, and vulnerable. In *Playtime*, Paris is depicted as a modern behemoth, a newly born creature forged by its modern inhabitants. Yet this Paris is stripped of its past, its memories, and its history, which are deliberately absent from Tati's portrayal. How formidable, foreboding, uncanny, and alien a character – or a city – becomes when severed from its past. Without history, there is no presence; and without presence, no coherent identity can emerge.

This identity crisis is further explored through the metaphor of Frankenstein, a creature devoid of history and memory. Myth-making modern city in this film is Paris, whose past, historical monuments and identity is purposefully disregarded to sarcastically make a creature which is much like Frankenstein, the newly born creature whose eerie identity is foreboding and can no longer be controlled by its creator. Landrum argues that "he [Hulot] is completely caught up in the midst of situations, while remaining strangely aloof from them; and the circumstances in which he meddles are not of his own devising – he is wholly involved, to be sure, but the scope of transformation is beyond him" (67).

This absence of identity and history raises the question of whether Paris, as depicted by Tati, can still be considered a heterotopia. In the preface to *The Order of Things*, Foucault describes heterotopias as spaces fundamentally opposed to utopias – sites that defy coherence and resist any singular order. He defines them as "the disorder in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately in the dimension, without law or geometry" (xix). In *Playtime*, the history and memories of Paris seem to glitter faintly in the reflections of glass doors and windows – isolated fragments, deliberately severed from the city's present, disconnected from the continuous flow of time and history.

The hindrances imposed by modern architecture extend beyond glass to the structures that obscure Paris's historical monuments and diminish the role of nature in this film. Not only is the past of Paris missing, but the natural world

outside the city is also rendered insignificant. As Mackenzie observes, "The natural materials of the old city, such as stone and wood, are absent" (Mackenzie 9), replaced by cold, artificial constructs prioritizing function over fiction and history. Paris is stripped of its organic elements; instead, artificial, man-made elements representing modernity are prioritized in the film. Mackenzie further notes, "Nature has become abject, resulting in its removal from the city" (2), leaving behind a sterile environment which is devoid of beauty.

That is why Tati's Paris does not align with the characteristics of Thirdspace as proposed by Soja. Paris is not created as a holistic creature; it is not conceived as a healthy, balanced entity, but rather as a fragmented space deprived of its past, its memories, and its connection with the natural world. The omission of nature and of historical structures reduce Paris to a fragmented and soulless space.

This depiction of Paris as a machine-like entity devoid of history underscores its fragility. This Frankenstein-like character is created without paying attention to its historical past and the deep layers of its nature, history and its genuine identity. The only significant feature in manufacturing this creature is its appearance and its body. It has no depth, no history, and no heart. That is why without history and memory, its exterior is fragile and superficial.

The city's playful yet disdainful interaction with its inhabitants highlights its monstrous nature. Paris, the Frankenstein-like character, reacts disdainfully to people by playfully impeding their ways and enmeshing them in these tasteless, cold, dull, rigid, formal, sterile, and uncomfortable spaces. Men and women creating this creature are now in the hands of Paris, a monstrous creature. The people are like puppets in the hands of this myth-making, Frankenstein-like figure.

The characters' aimless wandering reflects their lack of connection to the city and their own identities. Mr. Hulot as a flâneur wanders in the city along with the other characters and tourists. It is as if all the characters in this city were created without history and past and they, comically wandering through it, reflecting the confusion that is one of the significant features of modernity. The way they have made (played with) Paris is precisely the way Paris plays with them; the people's circuitous paths of wandering in the city show how Paris mutually plays with the people who have created it without paying attention to incorporating its past, its memory, and its history.

The film's depiction of office spaces further emphasizes the dehumanizing effects of modernity. How comical are the office cubicles! It is as if the people are lost in this mechanical city and they do not have the slightest sense of belonging.

Offices are shown as separate, partitioned boxes, in which people are working. Apart from offices, hotels, bars, nightclubs, restaurants, streets, buses, and airports, we see no glimpse of houses in Paris—no evidence of homes, permanency, stability, communication, interaction, warmth, or family.

From a psychogeographic perspective, Bachelard's insights poignantly reveal the catastrophic condition of Paris's urban landscape. In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard argues that the primary gift of the house is its capacity to shelter daydreaming, offering a space where the dreamer can withdraw and find peace. For Bachelard, human values are shaped not only by thought and experience but also by the profound, self-validating power of daydreaming – a joy that arises simply from its own existence. These spaces of reverie become vessels of new dreams, and because our past dwellings linger in memory as daydreams, they remain eternally within us (6). In contrast, the sterile, impersonal environments of *Playtime* deprive their inhabitants of such spaces, severing the intimate ties between memory, imagination, and place.

Thus, the film is replete with examples of non-places which are prime examples of modern places. Augé in *Non-Places* argues that "a person entering the space of non-place is relieved of his usual determinants. He becomes no more than what he does or experiences in the role of passenger, customer, or driver" (103). Signs of permanence are scarcely found in this film. Mobility, motion, temporality are the very features of this modern city. Like Frankenstein, a grown-up creature without his past and memory who is stitched together from disparate parts, modern Paris in Tati's *Playtime* is depicted as an accumulation of skyscrapers, airports, and modern structures, devoid of memory, and a past that would lend the city its genuine identity. Like Frankenstein, who craves love and affection, Paris yearns for intimacy, love, and the past. People's relations in Tati's Paris are fleeting and transient; even the love between Mr. Hulot and Barbara is short-lived, devoid of past and history. In a fleeting and symbolic gesture, Mr. Hulot offers Barbara a flower when, as a tourist, she is ready to leave Paris which is symbolically telling of a transient and fragile nature of their connection. While this scene of love, near the end of the film, offers a glimmer of hope, it is not enough to suggest that Paris, as a modern city, is truly alive with love. By showing this short-lived, tender scene, Tati tacitly suggests that for modern cities there might be little hope and a faint possibility of reclaiming their past, and history, though he vividly shows that modernity stamps out even the faintest hope.

Penelope Lively's *City of the Mind* and the Myth of Dr Jekyll Mr Hyde

> A city is an organic growth and here the profoundly arrogant as-
> sumption was being made that you can bulldoze the past, replace
> it with new constructions and expect the result to be anything other
> than the semblance of a place. (Lively 98)

The novel was published in 1991 and Mathew, the flâneur, is reporting on a city already undergone a 10-year gentrification of Thatcherism. Based on Thatcher's strategies, the Right to Buy Scheme passed in 1980 and it encouraged the tenants to buy their flats at low prices, but London was not yours if you were not an English citizen and homeowner. Duff recounts that "Margaret Thatcher's Conservative political policies during the mid-1980s radically altered the *use* of city spaces in Great Britain, and in doing so rewrote the British city for the postmodern era (4). Jerry White describes Post-Industrial London from 1980 to 1999; he says that the 1980s were London's most socially turbulent, dangerous, and paradoxical decade in the twentieth century. The city split into two stark realities: one of decline, with crumbling industries, neglected public spaces, and widespread unemployment, and another of prosperity, marked by booming finance, office expansions in the East End, and the rise of the affluent "yuppie" culture. These opposing forces created a deeply divided city. Only by the century's end did a tentative resolution begin to mend some of these fractures (111).

Matthew Halland is captivated by modern London and constantly drifts away into his memories of London's past. He is the flâneur who goes to different parts of London, reporting on what he sees. London is the city of his mind. London is portrayed through Mathew's lens – an architect equipped with the knowledge to interpret the city and its architecture. From the very beginning of the novel, the emphasis is on the relation of time and space and how these two are interwoven to shape a place, London.

> Driving through the city, he [Mathew] is both here and now, there
> and then. He carries yesterday with him, but pushes forward into
> today, and tomorrow, skipping as he will from one to the other.
> He is in London on a May morning of the late twentieth century,
> but is also in many other places, and at other times. (Lively 21)

As Mathew says, the city is shaped in our minds as a either a tamed or a wild creature. That is why the novel is entitled *The City of the Mind*. Johanna Fokken notes that "there are also ways of making the city your own. The enormous wild beast can be tamed into a space that, at least partly, feels like it belongs to one-self" (1). This reciprocal relationship between people and the city is further examined as the narrative reveals how the city, in turn, shapes its inhabitants. Not only do people shape the city, but the city also influences its inhabitants. "The city as… uncontrollable organic force. Sometimes it seemed to him as though the building rose despite him, despite all of them, that to commit a pattern of lines to a drawing board had been to unleash an unstoppable power" (Lively 31). This depiction of the city as a living, autonomous entity stresses its ability to grow and evolve beyond human control and to shape its inhabitants as much as it is shaped by them. This idea is further elaborated when he says: "the city feeds his mind, but in so doing he is manipulated by it; its sights and sounds condition his responses. He is its product and its creature. Neither can do without the other" (Lively 96). These statements reveal the city's dual role as both a nurturing force and a manipulative power demonstrating the complex and interdependent relationship between urban spaces and the people who live in them. The city, as an uncontrollable force, influences the minds and behaviors of its people. The city has the power of creating a dynamic in which neither the city nor its inhabitants can exist independently.

Lively extends this idea by personifying the city: "If the city were to recount its experience, the ensuing babble would be the talk of every time and everywhere, of persecution and disaster, of success and misfortune" (Lively 21). This personification of the city as an uncontrollable force is particularly evident in the construction of Frobisher House. Mathew and his team do not know whether people will like the project of building Frobisher House or not. They build it, and it takes on a life of its own, moving forward in an uncontrollable manner. Thus, the modern city becomes a creature which has its own life, and it has the power to construct or to destroy the people who are living with/in it. It becomes the Prometheus unbound with the only thing able to harness it is its head/mind, which is, symbolically, its past and its memories that give it identity; otherwise, it can be destructive if it is metamorphosed to a monster with a new body with no head/mind (past and identity), like how Paris is portrayed in Tati's *Playtime* or the way the newly rebuilt parts of London are delineated in Lively's *City of the Mind*.

The transformation of London during the 1980s and 1990s is depicted as a process of decay and resurrection. As Mathew reports in the novel, it is the time when

London is under construction and in the process of gentrification: "Bulldozers… dinosaurian monsters unleashed to wreak their mechanical will upon the London clay" (Lively 25), "the buildings have been stripped down to the bone, and are re-born" (Lively 186). Modern London of 1980s and 1990s is the embodiment of the myth of resurrection. "It is a landscape of simultaneous decay and resurrection; glass, steel and concrete rear from the mud and rubble of excavation" (Lively 30). It is resurrected the way Mr. Hyde is resurrected out of Dr. Jekyll. Lively says that London's past seemed to shrink and warp within the gleaming surfaces of its modern transformation (133). This duality of decay and resurrection mirrors the uncomfortable coexistence of the ancient and the modern in London. Philips argues that "the ancient and the modern live in uncomfortable proximity in the imaginary of London" (3). This explanation is very much reminiscent of the myth of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in which these two personalities are living in uncomfortable proximity in the imaginary of one person.

When the history and 'pastness' of the modernized city are ignored, humiliated or degraded, what emerges is a degraded, abnormal creature – an urban monstrosity. As Soja argues, "social being [needs to be] actively emplaced in space and time in an explicitly historical and geographical contextualization" (1990, 11). The past should be seen in all parts and layers of the city. It should be woven seamlessly into its present rather than being isolated as a separate domain. Memory functions as the head of the city controlling it, giving guidance and coherence. If the people cut it apart from the body, the body without head and memory, becomes an uncontrollable monster that harms the people living with/in it.

This loss of memory and identity is likened to the collapse of a massive star, creating a void in the city's consciousness. The modern part of London, in Lively's novel, forgets its past and its memories; it is without a head; in some parts of London, Mathew sees architecture dedicated to the abolition of time. Lively says that its landscape, a chaotic mix of brick and stone, merges styles from centuries and decades, defying the order of time. Past and present collide in a disorder that erases temporal boundaries (78). When the old buildings and old architecture are renewed in a way as if there was no great past and no memorable outstanding buildings, a huge dark hole is constructed in the head of the creature gradually being devoid of any meaningful identity relating it to its roots and origins. As Lively says in the novel, this situation is much like the situation of losing massive stars. "When a massive star collapses it creates the phenomenon known as a black hole" (92).

The contrasting perspectives of Mathew and his daughter Jane highlight the fragmented nature of the city as well. Mathew is wandering in the city with his child Jane, "a child of the city, street-wise in every sense" (Lively 95), a child who is wise of the present not the past and the memories of the city. Their viewpoints are totally different. One of the interesting issues in this novel is that the city is being looked at not only by an architect, Mathew, but also by a child with no background of the city, no history and memory. Lively portrays the father and child who ride through the city and each perceives it differently. Jane, who is unburdened by rationality and expectations, views the city as an anarchic, provocative playground, absorbing advertisements, signs, and logos while she is instinctively observing other children. Her world revolves around herself and is free from adult biases, which allows her to interpret the city on her own terms. Meanwhile, Matthew's perspective is shaped by experience and thus is inflexible, though he is wiser (Lively 95).

Like Tati's Paris, Lively's London is depicted as a heterotopia – a fragmented, contradictory space. Like Tati's Paris, which is an example of Foucault's heterotopia, Lively's London is another example of heterotopia in a different way. The deformed body of London is another caricature-like creature whose deformity is shaped by modern architects, materialistic ideologies and discourses which dominate modern Londoners' perspectives. Foucault in *The Order of Things* discusses that "a passage from Borges kept me laughing". It raises suspicion that not only does a deeper disorder exist there beyond mere incongruity, but unrelated things are also forced together. This is the chaos of the heteroclite where fragments of countless possible orders shine and glimmer independently while they are unbound by any law or structure. (Foucault xix).

The caricature-like London is a character whose members are "linking together of things that are inappropriate". The head and the body of London are parted from each other and a new sarcastic body is shaped by the so-called modern thought and modern people. This character has lost its holistic form; it is dichotomized into two different, opposing sections belonging to two different classes: wealthy and poor people. Therefore, London is differently defined by people who are living with/in it. For some, it is a source of joy and pleasure and for the others the source of suffering and grief.

The fragmented nature of London is further emphasized through its depiction as a city of binary oppositions. London is blown apart. It is a shattered parody of itself. London is a good example of what we see in modern linguistics and

in the Saussurian perspective. It is a city of binary oppositions: binaries between old and new, old quarters of the city for immigrants and the new gentrified parts for the rich. London is both. It is a myth-making city of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

The division of the city mirrors Mathew's personal struggles, creating a parallel between his life and the city's condition. Mathew's failed relationship and his recent separation from his wife, Susan, is very much reminiscent of the division of the city into old and new, past and present, history and the modern materialistic facades and architecture and generally speaking the separation of the head and the body of the city. Susan's and Mathew's split life is the reflection of the divided condition of the city. Chalupsky contends that "one of the most original narrative strategies in the British fiction of the 1990s is psychogeography, the literary mapping of the psychological effects a particular physical geographic milieu produces on the individual" (19). The very melancholic condition of Mathew is reflected in the condition of the city and the split modern city of London is reflected in his life. The identity of the city and Mathew's are mutually constructed. Fokken argues that the city deepens Matthew's melancholy, making it harder for him to recover. In its fragmented, dichotomized city, he loses not only his wife and his best friend but also his home and sense of belonging. Without that part of London, he once claimed as his home, he is left with only sorrowful memories (1).

In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Edinburgh's past is hidden underground. That is why the foreboding pastness of the city is blown up and shows itself symbolically in the form of Mr. Hyde. Like Edinburgh, London is the city of dualities – of underground and upper ground. It is well explained that "'certain it is that none who know London would deny that its treasures must be sought in its depths'; it is an ambiguous sentence, perhaps, with a social as well as a topographical mystery associated with it" (Ackroyd 691). Its history is recorded in *London Under London* by Richard Trench and Ellis Hillman. The city with this background is particularly vulnerable to division and new forms of dichotomy, and consequently manifesting the myth of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. London is the city of mysteries. Sebastian Groes recounts that "in a letter to Frank Budgen, Joyce wrote: 'London isn't a city. It is a wilderness of bricks and mortar and the law of wilderness prevails. All Londoners say, "I keep to myself."'" (6). Irving S. Saposnik, in his analysis of Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, portrays late Victorian London as an ideal backdrop for mystery and violence. He references Michael Sadleir's depiction of the1860s London

as a "three-part jungle", where danger lurks in every corner, alley, and shadow. Nighttime, in particular, transforms the city into a perilous space, as illustrated by characters like Oliver Twist, who face the risks of getting lost or harmed after dark. This urban nightscape underscores the city's duality – both alluring and treacherous (Giles 114).

London's fractured identity haunts Matthew, the architect who built its gleaming facades but now questions their cost and doubts the worth of his job as an architect. "The ancient and the modern live in uncomfortable proximity in the imaginary of London" (Philips 3). Mathew thinks that his job provides opportunities for rich people to make more money and the history and memories of the city are killed for the sake of gaining more money and he gets disillusioned.

The commodification of the city and its architecture leads to the loss of history and memories. Thus, the history of some parts of the city is removed and the city's condition profoundly affects the psyche of its inhabitants. As Philips notes, "the horror is accentuated when no origin is evident at all and devolves into myth and mystery" (6). This absence of clarity deepens the psychological toll on those who inhabit these spaces, as they see the modern parts of London that have lost their history, and their sense of belonging.

Mathew's disillusionment stems from his belief that modernization should not come at the cost of erasing history. Mathew is not against gentrification and refurbishment of the city, but he opposes the idea of gentrification that does not care about the history of the city and that does not embrace the past and the memories as part of the identity of the renewed city. For instance, he says that terraced houses identify the unique architectural feature of London and should not be eliminated from the urban spaces. Mathew in his own project in Dockland wants to renovate it in a way that the past is not eliminated. He, as an architect, is the advocate of modernity and refurbishment, preserving the past and remaining faithful to the historical parts of the city. By seeing the very dire situation of London, Mathew becomes disillusioned and he emphasizes refurbishing rather than constructing new buildings. He observes a resemblance between refurbishing and making over the old buildings and what his mother does with clothes:

> My mother used to do something with clothes called making over—turning collars and cuffs inside out, putting in new elbows. We're making over."

"We're making money, too," said Jobson, and roared again. "Making money for other people, that is."
"We're also keeping the place ticking over. Why don't we just pull the lot down and start again, after all?" (Lively 41)

This emphasis on preserving the past is exemplified in Mathew's admiration for Covent Garden. For Mathew, Covent Garden is an example of preserving the past while a new space is reborn:

He liked Covent Garden. You could not but warm to an area that had *so successfully been reborn* [italic is mine]. The place teemed with people, on this warm spring afternoon. It was international, multi-cultural, eclectic—*it was all the things you were supposed to be* [italic is mine], in this day and age. . . . For of course Covent Garden *was also doing what it had always done* (my italics, Lively 48)

The part of the city, devoid of its memory and history, becomes a body without a head; it becomes a monstrous and uncontrollable force. Sometimes, Mathew thinks that the city is against him and at any moment it has the power to rise up and rebel. He fathoms the city as "some uncontrollable organic force. Sometimes it seemed to him as though the building rose despite him, despite all of them, that to commit a pattern of lines to a drawing board had been to unleash an unstoppable power" (Lively 31). Thus, the architect, Mathew, feels alienated from the creature he has created and the city has taken on a life of its own.

The fragmented structure of the novel mirrors the fragmented identity of Lively's London and reflects the dichotomized nature of the city. The narratives within the book, much like the city's structure, are split between past and present; so, as Moran says "Lively's method is to play out the scene from the sub-narrative and then to return to the main narrative and pick up where it was left off" (113). This duality is encapsulated in Mathew's saying when he asserts that "this city is entirely in the mind. It is a construct of the memory and of the intellect" (Lively 25). Mathew refers to two forces shaping the city: on the one hand, the memory representing the city's history, past, memories, and, on the other hand, the intellect embodying modernity and the desire for gentrification and reform. However, these two elements do not blend harmoniously in Lively's London; they exist independently and are applied separately to the city. This

lack of integration leads to a threatening structure which is divided, with two identities reminiscent of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Therefore, the novel's fragmented structure not only reinforces the fragmented identity of the city but also underscores the tension between its historical roots and its modern aspirations. Lively's London is a city of the mind, a place where memory and intellect coexist but fail to unite.

Conclusion

These texts reveal that space is rendered meaningless without the dimension of time; the past must be interwoven with both space and the present to create an ideal modern city with a coherent identity. This research underscores the importance of integrating time and space in urban development, as cities without connection to their history risk becoming monstrous, alienating spaces. Tati's Paris, devoid of its historical identity, is a Frankenstein-like monster. It is a heterotopia manipulating and alienating its residents through its sterile and modernist architecture. In contrast, Lively's London is a fragmented city embodying the duality of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, where past and present coexist uneasily, exposing the social and spatial ruptures of a rapidly gentrifying landscape. Both works highlight the critical role of historical memory in shaping urban spaces and the dangers of destroying the past in the pursuit of modernity.

This division between past and present creates two distinct urban realities. When the past is eliminated from the space, cities like Paris in Tati's *Playtime* emerge. Conversely, when a space reflects only the past without signs of renovation, it often becomes deserted or inhabited solely by marginalized groups, such as the poor or low-income immigrants. In *City of the Mind*, there are some places in London that are inhabited by people with low incomes and London is portrayed as a city split into two distinct spaces: one that fully embodies the past, steeped in memory and history, and another that is entirely severed from it – an anonymous, modernized landscape devoid of identity, memory, or historical continuity. Accordingly, the split London with two personalities appears.

The modern cities of Paris and London, as depicted in these two texts, are rendered meaningless without the integration of time. In Tati's Paris and Lively's London, the modern cities take on their own lives and impose their powers on the people living with/in them. In Tati's myth of Frankenstein, modern Paris, a new Frankenstein, a new heterotopia, without its past, is created, and in Lively's myth

of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, a new Dr. Jekyll, split from but at the same time mingled with its Mr. Hyde, is reborn as a new form of Foucault's heterotopia. Finally, this study proposes a holistic approach to urban planning. For modernizing cities and urban spaces, it advocates integrating the past and the present by maintaining the historical monuments and keeping the memories by refurbishing the cities instead of removing the historical monuments completely. Following this approach, we have the cities which are not only functional but also soulful, humane and meaningful. By doing so, cities are not changed to foreboding monsters of modernity; instead, they become the spaces of connection, identity, and belonging.

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"My, you have a way of making me do things I don't normally do." The examination of the narrative (Un)Reliability of Joe Goldberg from *You* by Caroline Kepnes

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Abstract: Ever since Wayne C. Booth named the phenomenon of unreliability in narrative fiction, multiple attempts have been made to deepen the knowledge regarding its theoretical scope and practical implementation, resulting in two different approaches to its source and recognition. The initial association of narrative unreliability with the implied reader evoked a mixture of responses that included both approval and objections from narratologists worldwide, such as Greta Olson, Ansgar Nünning, or James Phelan, eventually leading to a significant shift that permanently regarded unreliability as multi-dimensional and dependable on diverse circumstances rooted both in the internal and the external contexts. The main objective of the essay is, therefore, to combine a set of textual and contextual narrative unreliability clues proposed by Nünning with Olson's comprehension of the fallible-untrustworthy distinction in order to examine an intriguing instance of a second-person narration provided by the relatively well-known today and obsessive storyteller Joe Goldberg, the protagonist of *You* by Caroline Kepnes. The study aims to make a practical and detailed analysis of the protagonist's narrative tendencies and peculiarities in order to enrich the dialogue regarding the matter of the complexity of the said literary concept and attempt to conclude the message that seems to be conveyed between the lines of his both reliable and unreliable discourse. By making a comparison of the narrator's utterances, acts, and verbal habits with the common understanding of both the ordinary and the questionable, I will address the implications, which might encourage the reader to deeply consider the amount of trust given to Joe's reports, additionally showcasing where his discourse should be placed on the (un)reliability spectrum.

Keywords: Literary studies, unreliable narrator, signals of unreliability, implied author, American literature

Introduction

Narrative unreliability as a literary phenomenon has been observed and analysed for over six decades, yet still seems far from being regarded as thoroughly examined, giving researchers a wide field for further investigation. Within that period, the knowledge regarding unreliability has expanded greatly, providing the reader with a wide range of responsibility in its recognition depending on the narratologist asked. Regardless of whether one perceives the concept as fully dependent on the values and norms of the implied author (Booth 1961, 158), leans toward the possibility of unreliability as a judgment-based phenomenon (Nünning 1997, 99) or does not believe in the rightfulness of restraining narrative unreliability to just one of the factors (Hansen 2007, 244), an ordinary reader with little to no narratological knowledge still faces it rather frequently and might be prone to trusting even if they should notn't. The main objective of the essay is to depict what recognising and evaluating unreliability might look like once put into practice through an examination of the credibility of Joe Goldberg, the protagonist of *You* by Caroline Kepnes, and to link his potentially uncovered unreliable tendencies to either deliberately made choices or unconscious acts of misreporting and misinterpreting his reality and surroundings, additionally suggesting a plausible reason behind his potential lack of credibility.

Theoretical framework

Since 1961, for at least two full decades, the successors of Wayne C. Booth's theory, subsequently considered the representatives of the rhetorical approach, concentrated on establishing the already introduced foundation more profoundly or amplifying the known unreliability model, which associated the phenomenon with discrepancies between the narrator's acts and utterances and the norms presented in the text by the implied author (Booth, 158). What they withdrew from was an introduction of substantial interferences that would either disprove or question the significance of the implied author in the very context. The said tendency was noticed and subsequently criticised by Ansgar Nünning (1997, 86), who argued that "most theorists and critics who have written on the unreliable narrator take the implied author both for granted and as the only standard according to which unreliability can be determined," emphasising that "everyone seems to be happy" with where it leads.

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Having taken into consideration the strength and emotionality of the statement, as much as the numerous definitions of both narrative unreliability itself and other related literary terms either following or making use of Booth's approach to the phenomenon, it does appear justified to assume that relatively everyone at that time, obviously excluding Nünning himself, seemed satisfied with the implementation. One such instance proving the palpable presence of the tendency might be the definition of a "persona" provided by Gareth Griffiths. His explanation of the term not only included the rhetorical approach to unreliability but also used it as evidence for cruciality of comprehending the concept of an implied author in literary studies, arguing that "Recognizing the persona[1] is therefore central to the act of effective reading, since the persona represents the sum of all the author's conscious choices in a realized and more complete self as 'artist'" (1990, 176-177).

Regardless of the tangible yet unspoken agreement to collectively lean towards the rhetorical approach, the room for potential debate was there for over twenty-five years due to the pioneering redirection of Tamar Yacobi (1981), which shifted the main focus from the implied author to the reader. In her essay, "Fictional Reliability as a Communicative Problem," the narratologist suggested five core mechanisms available when encountering textual discrepancies and displayed the idea that discovering their roots might actually depend on the reader and their (ideally) cautious judgment of the discourse (121). That concept introduced novelty to literary studies in the form of a more practically oriented approach, subsequently called cognitivist, later followed, deepened, and upgraded by other narratologists who felt just as strongly about the need for a significant redefinition. The new current not only offered the reader a much more significant role in the process of deciphering the narrator's more or less conscious tendencies to depart from the truth, but also made it easier to achieve. As once emphasised by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983, 101) and subsequently broadened by Nünning (1997, 86), the attempts to establish the values and norms of the implied author are often inseparable from notorious difficulties. Considering that, at times, even narratologists regard unravelling the intentions of the implied author as challenging, the cognitivist approach appears much more reader-friendly.

However, the possibility of stepping aside from the, at times, rather ambiguous concept of the implied author did not automatically erase all the

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1   Griffiths puts an equals sign between a "persona" and an "implied author."

difficulty in the recognition of an unreliable discourse. Nünning (95-100), addressing the issue, suggested a set of clues the reader may find helpful when encountering an instance of a questionable narrative. He introduced a clear foundational distinction of the phenomenon, primarily dividing its instances into inconsistencies detectable either on the textual or contextual levels. The former includes a wide diversity of examples, among which one may distinguish bizarre verbal tendencies of the storyteller, their abnormal behavioral patterns, stylistic and syntactic cues, such as incomplete utterances, noticeable hesitation, highly emotional language, or questionable memory. What Nünning considers the most evident among the said kind of unreliability signals, though, are the discrepancies within the very discourse and signs of misalignment between the narrator's reports and their actions.

Yet, despite the undeniably wide range of textual clues, "the question of whether the narrator is unreliable cannot be resolved on the basis of textual data alone. In addition to these intratextual signals, the reader also draws on extratextual frames of reference in the attempt to gauge the narrator's potential degree of unreliability (Nünning, 99)." The statement depicts an image of unreliability as a matter of not only textual peculiarities but also subjective judgments of the recipients based on their comprehension of the two encountered realities and the way they correlate, if at all. The reader's ability to detect contrasts between the picture of the world painted by the narrator and their general real-world knowledge or their conception of the ordinary remains inevitable to fully and reasonably evaluate the unreliability of discourse.

The number of traps set for a potential reader does not end here, though, as the complexity of narrative unreliability appears much more deeply rooted, as proven amongst other scholars by James Phelan and Mary Martin (1999), who, while examining the narration provided by Stevens in *The Remains of the Day*, brought to light the multi-dimensionality of the concept. Having taken a closer look at specific utterances of the narrator, Phelan and Martin detected a certain duality depicting the part of the narration provided as reliable but unreliable, since, on the one hand, Stevens' passage was undeniably faithful to his comprehension of reality, but on the other hand "reliable as far as it goes" and not any further. As they subsequently explain, "the problem is that it doesn't go far enough" (91), which enforces upon the narrator a certain level of unreliability regardless, additionally confirming that the nature of the concept is anything but one-dimensional.

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Greta Olson (2003, 100-102), fully supportive of the idea of displaying (un)reliability of a single discourse on a spectrum, argues for the initial differentiation of unreliable narrators between the fallible and the untrustworthy, separating the two with the crucial elements of their consciousness and intentionality. According to the theorist, fallibility should be associated with the narrators who "do not reliably report on narrative events because they are mistaken about their judgments or perceptions or are biased" (101). On the contrary, the foundation for the untrustworthiness of a storyteller is in their "ingrained behavioral traits or some current self-interest" (102). Subsequently, Olson emphasises another potential feature of the unreliability kind, stating that "at one end of the spectrum, untrustworthy narrators contradict themselves immediately or announce outright that they are insane" (104). The equals sign implied between "untrustworthiness" and "spectrum," once again, broadens the comprehension of how deep the nature of the narrative unreliability might actually run. That matter additionally introduces a very intriguing concept of a spectrum (of untrustworthiness or fallibility) within a spectrum (of [un]reliability per se), making one wonder whether a single narrator might be perceived as both fallible and untrustworthy depending on the context, since the spectrum of unreliability on its own allows one to perceive a storyteller as reliable and unreliable altogether.

The analysis

The multidimensional nature of unreliability requires each instance of a questionably credible narrator to be considered specifically through the lenses of their own verbal habits, storytelling tendencies, and actions. The broad spectrum of possibilities indicates that not every discourse will contain the same set of signals, and each distinctive mixture might point to a different level or kind of unreliability, followed by various degrees of difficulty in its recognition, leaving the reader potentially uncertain about the narrators they regard as intriguing or unsettling. An undeniable instance of a storyteller who might be perceived as both is a young bookstore manager, Joseph Goldberg, whose report seems completely fixated on his gradually evolving relationship with a girl who once happened to enter his workplace. For Joe, her presence appears intoxicating enough to utterly consume his attention the moment she opens the door, which results in his second-person, limited discourse concentrated on her and the

potentiality of their romantic involvement. As the plot continues, the narrative goes far beyond reports influenced by an ordinary, first-sight infatuation, reaching deep levels of complexity and darkness.

The opening of the novel on its own illustrates a rather fascinating instance of a narrative, catching attention due to the utterances, seemingly so raw and unfiltered that, at times, even unquestionably obscene. The said directness allows the reader to swiftly catch a glimpse of the essence of the plot, which is additionally emphasised by the repeated at the beginnings of the first five sentences, straightforward "you" - a direct address to the narratee, clearly not referring to the reader. The first line of his discourse: "You walk into the bookstore and you keep your hand on the door to make sure it doesn't slam"[2] automatically puts the reader in a peculiar yet rather intriguing position of a silent observer, who, despite being right in the centre of the action, remains heavily uncertain about their actual role in the narrative. Depending on whether the quiet presence of the reader remains undetected or simply ignored, they might subconsciously play the part of an unnecessary intruder or a witness, following each footstep that Joe is willing to admit to taking or depict as taken. The very issue, however, appears to lack any explicit or even vague answer, which results in the unresolved puzzle regarding whether what the reader actually does is not eavesdrop on a series of private, intimate, and, at times, unquestionably charged confessions and statements made by the narrator towards his initially unnamed narratee.

As the first chapter progresses, more and more about them is being uncovered, and the initially mysterious "you" reveals itself as a girl named Guinevere Beck, the source of Joe's swiftly upcoming obsession and his soon-to-be centre of attention. The engaging combination of second-person narration with first-person narration, fuelled by Joe's subjective, limited, and occasionally clearly emotionally-driven utterances, might, on its own, convince the reader to cautiously evaluate the amount of trust he should be given, if any at all.

The questionable reliability of Joe's discourse appears even more prominent once contrasted with the cues proposed by Nünning, as the range of the already present doubts swiftly seems to broaden. The first and foundational unreliability signal noticeable on the textual level refers to the repeatedly occurring instances of internal contradictions. On the one hand, deeply engaged, capable of sacrifices,

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2   The precise page numbers cannot be provided as the online version of the book accessed does not have them displayed. The link to the version used has been added to the list of references.

and emotionally involved, Joe, under the right circumstances, looks at his "you" and thinks one of the most vulnerable sentences one could ever think of – seemingly sincere "I love you." Such a sweet and candid confession, even if never made out loud, automatically indicates a specific kind of behaviour associated with the feeling, proving its truthfulness. Interestingly enough, Joe seems to prominently counter the left-for-the-narratee love confession under various circumstances, including their first official date, not only with his actions but also on the level of discourse itself. The very second he sees her "all so dressed up" for a night out with him, his mind runs in circles around both her outfit and its potential implications. He entertains these thoughts to such an extent that the conclusion about her body as "an offering, a payment for all those hands-off phone calls, those lunches" is an inevitable formality. As much as the need for physicality should be considered understandable, especially under the influence of a deep level of attraction, such a statement goes far beyond an ordinary need for intimacy and physical closeness. Joe's judgment does not appear rooted in love but in an unhealthy fixation on Beck's physicality, palpable since their very first encounter in the bookshop.[3] The thought of "hands-off phone calls" and "those lunches" that seemingly require compensation implies the narrator, in fact, lacks any deeper emotional or intellectual connection to his so-called beloved. Although he does appear to associate his feelings with love, what he truly seems to crave is a "payment" for all he has done for her – for the support, the attention, and even the time together, since unrelated to physical intimacy. The paradoxical discrepancy between his "love" towards Beck and his further acknowledgments, although already difficult to omit, is additionally reinforced by his clear objectification of her body. The implementation of the equals sign between it and "an offering" remains inseparable from the lack of respect toward her as a human being, and is in opposition to the idea of love. The evident inconsistencies within the very discourse strongly indicate the plausibility of utterances lacking reliability.

Another textual signal of unreliability recognised by Nünning refers to a lack of coherency between the narrator's reports and actions, which, in the

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3   The moment Joe observes Beck enter his bookshop for the very first time, some of his utterances already strike the reader as sexually oriented and include the following utterances: "[...] and your V-neck is beige and it's impossible to know if you're wearing a bra but I don't think you are." The intensity and the frequency of the unspoken remarks seem to increase as the story progresses, promptly reaching the point of a plausible obsession with Guinevere's physicality.

very discourse, might occasionally strike the reader as too easily noticeable. One such instance concerned Peach (allegedly), the closest friend of Guinevere, who, from the beginning of the initially one-sided relationship between the girl and the narrator, seems to neither support nor tolerate the idea of Joseph being someone significant to Beck. The narrator, fully aware of her, to say the least, non-existent sympathy, never even attempts to stop himself from admitting to his narratee the unquestionable mutuality of the unspoken hatred. Joe's lack of any positive emotions toward the woman is not directly rooted in her detectable coldness, though, but in his quiet suspicions regarding her real intentions toward Guinevere. His unspoken yet impossible to ignore accusations evoke his inner urge to understand her behaviour and its sources even more, reinforcing his willingness to devote his time to cautious and distant observation. According to the narrator, "if she saw me hanging out around her building, she'd go all nuts and start thinking that I'm a stalker." As much as such a careful judgment appears reasonable (under the very circumstances), it does introduce a lot of contrast to a different line of his report in which he admits: "[...] I have been tracking Peach for eight days now, and I have yet to experience the 'runner's high' that she talks about incessantly." Regardless of whether he aspires to protect Beck from her female friend or not, the act of observing her house, not to mention following her around, undoubtedly confers on him the label of a stalker. Although the report does not openly count him as one, his actions speak louder than his utterances, ingraining in the mind of a reader another thought about Joe's potential unreliability.

The third textual indicator of narratological unreliability mentioned by Nünning, hardly omittable in the very discourse, is much broader than the previous two, as containing a whole, unspecified spectrum of verbal habits of specific narrators, which would potentially, once again, make the reader wonder. Throughout the novel, Joe's storytelling appears rather stable in terms of a certain level of predictiveness in creating his utterances and reacting to specific situations involving either him or Beck. The set of behavioral patterns, potentially making the reader cautious about the amount of trust given to him, would include numerous traits, among which one of the most powerful seems to be very descriptive and persuasive language, plausibly aiming to shape the perspectives of everyone who shows susceptibility.

One aspect worth paying attention to about the man as a storyteller is his visible tendency to ensure the ideas he depicts are as graphic and detailed as necessary to leave a mark on those involved. Almost as if the precise and

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deliberately described thoughts and views were, by definition, supposed to ingrain an extraordinarily vivid image in the mind of a recipient, possibly aiming to (re)wire their minds with new lines of code written by Joe Goldberg himself. The unshakeable confidence, so undeniably present every time he attempts to use this "trick" on anybody, emphasises that he never seems to doubt his perspective, which alone holds significant psychological power. Such a deliberate way of creating thoughts or holding conversations indicates certain manipulative tendencies written in the very discourse. One such instance, hardly possible to omit, is encountered when Joe follows Beck around the city and observes her from afar in the subway. She is tipsy, he is a stalker, and there is one more man there, undoubtedly homeless, plausibly in a state of mind not allowing him to keep his sanity. Clearly, if we were to search here for an antagonist, the narrator would be the closest to the label, as he is fully aware of what he does and he deliberately keeps going after the girl. Yet, Joe would not be willing to allow anyone to make such a conclusion. As he openly states, "And the bullshit thing is, if someone saw the three of us, well, most people would think I'm the weird one just because I followed you here. And that's the problem with the world, with women." The certainty of the statement, strengthened by highly emotional language and a deliberately placed swearword, does draw an image of a narrator who does not need to go out of his way to ensure his discourse remains effortlessly persuasive. The use of direct and descriptive language plausibly aims at ensuring that the mind of one regarding him as the "bad guy" would be strategically rewired in the "right" way. The reappearing presence of such purposeful and calculated utterances undoubtedly reinforces the idea of Joe's narrative unreliability, proving the point made by Nünning that verbal habits might be another strong indicator of an unreliable discourse.

Nevertheless, before making the ultimate conclusion proclaiming the narrator unreliable, the reader should regard the equally telling contextual incongruities between the displayed world and their real-world comprehension of the ordinary. In that case, when is the right moment to begin questioning the narrator's reliability on the contextual level? One such breaking point might occur when the reader's "common sense" sparks potential doubts regarding the plausibility of the utterances (Nünning, 100).

Analysing the actions of Joe Goldberg and his already suspicious narrative, the reader encounters at least two of the four suggested contextual signals, which might put their common sense on standby. The first refers

to the undeniable presence of the abnormal moral and ethical standards of the narrator, easily put in question once compared to the very idea behind the generally shared perception of right and wrong. One such instance frequently observed in the book is Joe's deliberate and calculated lack of honesty, present regardless of whether the circumstances enforce its necessity. Throughout the novel, the narrator notoriously lies to those around him, yet seems to remain much more candid with his narratee, automatically putting the reader in the position of a not-directly-involved but not-so-distant observer fully aware of all the acts of (in)sincerity. What might appear rather intriguing, though, is that he repeatedly chooses dishonesty in his interactions with the character-Beck but confesses the truth to his beloved "you," keeping the reader wondering about the actual correlation between the two. During one of his phone calls with Beck, she informs him about a break-in at her friend's property and the girl's subsequent fear, to which he replies with a sharp "Of course." However, the longer and more genuine part of his response is shared only with the narratee, who hears Joe continue, "I say, and you go on, but it's not as dramatic as you're making it out to be. I didn't break in, and I didn't move her chaise." Both cases illustrate a neatly crafted web of lies or deliberate omissions aiming to hide every little detail of his personality that he is, deep down, fully aware of but does not want to put on display for those around him.

Interestingly enough, Joe's duality between the cautiously crafted answers and the seemingly more unfiltered discourse might trap the reader in between doubt and reassurance. On the one hand, one might be willing to give their trust to a narrator who, despite his insincere tendencies, actively admits to his acts of dishonesty to the narratee. On the other hand, the reader might face an extremely simple yet objectively reasonable concern – why even consider putting trust in a liar? Regardless of the reader's initial leaning, there should be one more thing considered. Although the actual correspondence between the character – Beck and the narratee – Beck might not remain fully transparent, the primary "you" never stops addressing the girl. The girl, whom Joe undoubtedly and repeatedly chooses to lie to so as to achieve his aims and, somewhat, wire her perception in the way he finds the most beneficial and convenient. Even though the narrator indeed seems much more candid with his narratee, the reader should keep in mind that since "you" still refers to Beck, his utterances might be heavily impacted. Regardless of the personal viewpoint of the reader on the said case, though, one matter leaves no room for doubt – deliberately

shaping the perspectives of people around the protagonist through cautious and calculated dishonesty clearly indicates a highly abnormal sense of morality and underscores the already profound unreliability of his discourse.

The said contextual cues in Joe's narration are detectable not only through the acts of conscious deception but also through other, much more unrestrained parts of Joe's behaviour. According to Nünning, another framework indicating the very type of unreliability signals involves the narrator's bizarre tendencies and actions, easily striking the recipient as being at odds with the standards of typical human behaviour, and considering the acts of the unfiltered self of the protagonist, their abnormality seems rather difficult to deny. At the end of the novel, as the truth about Joseph starts to fully unravel, the reader uncovers something much more unsettling than a bone-deep obsession ingrained in the type of narration used[4] – an image of pure madness. Although it appears rather difficult to determine with certainty whether the narrator's insanity remains is a constant condition or the result of temporary occurrences and heightened emotional undercurrent, the reader might lean toward the idea that Joe has not actually been a madman throughout the entire discourse once they witness the moment in which his insincerity finally seems to shatter. Not only does he reveal his illogical, unquestionably mad side, but he also pushes his emotional train of thought just slightly further, allowing the reader and the narratee to witness the point of his realisation. The very moment, although not immediately processed, makes him comprehend he is not a put-together protector, but a villain that even he is unable to understand. A villain who brutally took away the only life that truly seemed to matter to him in the previous months – the life of his beloved Beck. Right after her very last breath, the narrator makes a cold-blooded remark about her soulless body, saying: "You are not better than a doll now, and you do not react as the pages in your mouth take the blood that rises from your gullet." Yet, as the seconds pass, he allows his mind to wander, gradually altering his perspective, and when he takes into his arms what once was Guinevere, it finally strikes him: "How could I have done this? I never made you pancakes. What is wrong with me?" After that very moment, it remained beyond a reasonable doubt – the real Joe Goldberg should not be relied on.

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4 The used phrasing refers to the application of the second person narration throughout the entire novel.

Having navigated the narration provided by Joseph as frequently leaning toward the label of unreliability, the reader might start to question its causes, considering whether the said lack of reliability is rooted in cautiously filtered and altered storytelling or a set of circumstances and traits simply resulting in the narrator's inability to report accurately. In other words, one may wonder about the origins of the unreliability of the discourse, attempting to link Joseph's behaviour to unworthiness, fallibility, or perhaps even a mixture of both, depending on the context. When recalling the formerly examined aspects of his narrative, the reader might realise that Joe's notorious insincerity or tendency to depict his thoughts in such detail without a shadow of a doubt draws an image of a man way too deliberate in his doings to consider his discrepancies and misjudgements as mistakes easily avoided under different circumstances.

What might seem particularly intriguing is that the reader does not observe any signs of self-doubt in his judgment, even in the most objectively irrelevant cases, such as regarding nothing beyond his tastes. As he surely remarks himself: "I know music. I am smart. I think Martyr deserves to be scouted and worshipped." Such an unshakeable statement regarding a matter of such minor significance speaks volumes about his inner urge to be comprehended and perceived in a specific light – as someone worthy, capable, and relevant. That might make one wonder how badly he desires to have the upper hand when there is something greater at play, if being knowledgeable and in the right in such minor cases is of this significance. Unfortunately, it may remain unanswered. Nonetheless, throughout the majority of the novel, his general utterances still tend to appear both certain and very carefully calculated, regardless of whether they refer to the moments in which the stakes are undeniably high or just trivial everyday issues, with exceptions in the form of highly emotionally charged circumstances. Here, the protagonist seems to let down his guard of the deliberate and calculated storytelling and to allow his emotions to guide both his actions and reports, temporarily replacing his formerly implied label of "untrustworthiness" with clear "fallibility." The noticeably emotionally driven parts of his discourse, much more unfiltered than the rest, allow the reader to temporarily perceive Joe as "reliable as far as it goes" (Phelan & Martin, 91), hence, although unwilling to misinform, still not objectively credible either.

The narrator's emotionally driven reports keep appearing throughout the novel in various forms, including the occasional, yet undeniably present, unnecessary repetitions, such as "I get it. You are busy. You got class – I get

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it – and you got Peach – I get it – and you're not avoiding me – I get it – and you have pages due – I get it." The very instance might make one argue that the said repetitions should, in fact, be perceived as the narrator's purposeful attempt to convince his narratee, or possibly even himself, about the truthfulness of the illusion he aims to present, which would, once again, depict him as untrustworthy. To some extent, such an evaluation would seem more than reasonable. However, Joe's temporary but undeniable inability to present the events either the correct or the desired way heavily implies a moment of fallibility, illuminating that there is much more to Joe Goldberg than just pathological untrustworthiness. That instance on its own emphasises the complexity of his unreliable tendencies even more prominently, once again deepening the awareness about the real reason for the requirement of a scale as broad as a spectrum to display it thoroughly and accordingly.

Conclusions

The young bookstore manager demonstrates that an intriguing and layered character requires a coherently complex narrative matching the intensity of his inner world. The multidimensionality of Goldberg's nature and personality corresponds well with the broad scope of unreliability ingrained in his utterances. His narrative, both reliable and unreliable, just as much as untrustworthy and fallible, faultlessly exemplifies Phelan and Martin's statement that "narrators exist along a wide spectrum from reliability to unreliability" (96). Although his typically deliberately designed reports and responses reveal clear manipulative tendencies, they do not stop the occasional narrative fallibility, detectable every time his emotions leak through his carefully crafted pretence. The examined textual and contextual incongruities revealing Joe's leaning toward unreliability do not preclude him from allowing the narratee and the reader to witness the temporary collapse of his carefully built walls and his subsequent self-exposure. This duality clearly supports the claim that Goldberg occupies various positions on the unreliability spectrum. However, the occasional emotionally charged utterances combined with the carefully crafted manipulation and moments of unquestionable madness demonstrate additional fluid shifts detectable along a narrower spectrum of narrative fallibility and untrustworthiness.

Caroline Kepnes, the author of *You*, provided the protagonist with a rather baffling narrative, reaching far beyond cold calculations, obsession,

or momentary losses of sanity. His unreliability, aside from keeping the reader on their toes, paints a picture of an utterly broken soul who, despite the (usually) well-kept facade, lacks any solid ground upon which he could finally find his peace. Kepnes created an untrustworthy yet fallible, unreliable storyteller to illuminate the deep complexity of the human psyche, which may haunt everyone, including the mad and the calm and collected, indicating that they might be the same person if one reads between the lines just right. Joseph Goldberg exemplifies the concept ideally. He presents a flawless image of an individual calculated on the outside but shattered on the inside, desperately searching for a cure that would finally fix the broken and heal the wounds. This frantic inner urge eventually leads to a series of tragedies, which he likely perceived as the only opportunity to obtain what he has always lacked. That is, until the very last death he caused, as it irrevocably dismantled his fantasy of Guinevere Beck being his desired source of stability.

Joe's unreliability strikes the reader both on the levels of the text and the context throughout the entire novel via numerous discrepancies, misalignments, and suspicious verbal habits, just as much as odd tendencies detectable in his general demeanour or heavily questionable sense of morality. His calculated wiring, unnecessary and emotionally driven repetitions, or the never-present shadow of doubt about his own judgment perfectly complete a self-portrait of a narrator both consciously and subconsciously interfering with the reliability of his report. That being said, the reader might freely conclude that Joe Goldberg, indeed, cannot be fully trusted.

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The Myth of the American Dream in Imbolo Mbue's
Behold the Dreamers

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Abstract: This article analyzes Imbolo Mbue's debut novel, *Behold the Dreamers* (2017), in the context of the myth of the American Dream, i.e. the belief that in the United States of America success is possible for anyone regardless of their heritage or social class. The article analyzes the myth of the American Dream through a hybrid methodology of close reading and narrative analysis, sociological and economic data interpretation, and selected frameworks in cultural studies**.** The novel in tandem with the presented data suggest that although many believe they "will grow to fullest development" (Adams 1931, 333) in the US, the American Dream is "symbolic rather than substantive" (Wolak and Peterson 2020, 969). Faced with insurmountable difficulties, the protagonists of *Behold the Dreamers* find that this Dream is indeed a myth that can only be realized by mirroring the exploitation they themselves have endured and by leaving the US. At the end of the novel, the Jongas leave America, but America, with its Dream, has certainly not left them.

Keywords: Imbolo Mbue, *Behold the Dreamers*, the American Dream, immigrant fiction

In an interview with *Book Riot*, Cameroonian-American author Imbolo Mbue states that the inspiration for the title of her debut novel *Behold the Dreamers* comes from the 1936 poem "Let America Be America Again" by Langston Hughes, specifically from the line "let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed". Thus, the author reveals that dreams are the central theme of her novel (Cheesman 2017). In the poem, Hughes emotively speaks in the voices of all underprivileged Americans, outraged by the exploitive reality of what was to be their promised land:

> I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,
> I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.
> I am the red man driven from the land,
> I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—
> And finding only the same old stupid plan
> Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

In her own work, Mbue echoes some of these voices, particularly that of the "immigrant clutching […] hope", one of the many dreamers.

Currently, the word "dream" and its derivatives are an essential part of immigrant discourse (and have been for some time, as Hughes' poem exemplifies), the word "dreamers" being synonymous to immigrants, particularly those who are "illegal" or fighting to gain legal status. Wacker notes that former President Barack Obama refers to immigrants as "dreamers" in a speech covered by the CNN (2022, 234), and the new legislative act meant to supplement and provide a more permanent alternative to DACA[1] is named the "Dream Act" (FWD.us. 2023). Mbue (2017) heavily employs the dream trope; her characters are preoccupied with daydreams of a more promising future, while others are hounded by nightmares when that future becomes increasingly unattainable. With time, it becomes obvious to the reader that instead of being synonymous with hopes of a prosperous future, these aspirations are in reality far-fetched fantasies. Still, some characters naively cling to their dreams, willing to make great sacrifices in exchange for a miniscule chance of success.

This approach is unsurprising, as it is the American Dream, a dream of a land of equal opportunities for all, that entices individuals to migrate to the United States. James Truslow Adams, American historian and the "founding father of the American Dream" coined and defined the term in his monumental 1931 work *The Epic of America* (Wills 2015), describing it as

> not a dream of merely material plenty, though that has doubtless
> counted heavily. It has been much more than that. It has been
> a dream of being able to grow to fullest development as man
> and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been

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1   DACA is an abbreviation of "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals", a program which aims to delay and prevent the deportation of children and those who immigrated to the United States in their youth (FWD.us 2023).

erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class. (Adams 1931, 333–34)

However, the reality of this myth, so integral to the political, historical, and economic discourse of the US, differs substantially from that which Adams suggests. The United States has a centuries-long history of enslaving Africans and exterminating indigenous Americans; the remnants of this history are present to this day (Human Rights Watch). In modern times, approximately 400,000 individuals living in the US are involved in "forced and state-imposed labor, sexual servitude [or] forced marriage" (Helmore 2018)[2], and the rights of women, migrants, LGBTQ groups, and people of color are regularly violated (Human Rights Watch). The concept of agency, inseparable from "being able to grow to fullest development", is also questionable, although Americans feel "a sense of […] control over events" (Vega 2003, 99). To succeed, individuals do not solely require liberty and agency, but also "steady employment, salary, security, and a rising age-wage curve" (Gullette 2001, 101). Research by the French scholar Thomas Piketty suggests that even those criteria are not enough and that wealth will create even more wealth (2013, 571) and those in possession of capital will accumulate even more, leaving most of society in a perpetually disadvantaged position. This is especially true since the wage gap has been increasing for the past five decades (Wolak and Peterson 2020, 970; Piketty 2013, 15), leaving many with little means to better their life situation. In such conditions, the American Dream is clearly "symbolic rather than substantive" (Wolak and Peterson 2020, 969).

During his travels through the US in the 1980s, French postmodernist philosopher Jean Baudrillard notes that America appears to be a

[u]topia made reality […] [that] is built on the idea that it is the realization of everything the others have dreamt of – justice, plenty, rule of law, wealth, freedom: it knows this, it believes in it, and in the end, the others have come to believe in it too. (Baudrillard 1986, 65)

One of the strong believers in this "utopia made reality" is the novel's protagonist Neni, who debates whether to divorce her husband and marry an American citizen to gain residency, fully aware that this will cause turmoil in her personal life and sever

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2   As of 2018.

family bonds (Mbue 2017, 283, 319). She even goes so far as to consider offering her son, who is described by her as "a barely legal immigrant child, a mostly illegal one" (227), for adoption, so that he can remain in the US (Mbue 2017, 326). However, Neni represents the mindset of only some of the characters in the novel; others, particularly Jende (Neni's husband) and Vince Edwards (the son of Jende's employer), are greatly disillusioned with the US and the American Dream. Particularly the latter, despite his privileged social position and affluence is critical of the system (and, by extension, his parents) throughout the novel, which is exemplified in the following passage:

> [Vince's parents] are struggling under the weight of so many point-less pressures, but […] they continue to go down a path of achieve-ments and accomplishments and material success and shit that means nothing, because that's what America is all about, and now they're trapped. (Mbue 2017, 103–04)

Vince is in some ways an embodiment of hope for the future of America. In spite of belonging to America's elite, he withdraws from his privileged lifestyle to realize his own dream of a humble life in India – though it is worth noting that it is exactly his wealthy background that provides him with the means to do so. Conversely, Jende grows into this realization as he becomes unemployed, the financial crisis of 2008 hits hard and he begins to face the risk of deportation. In both physical and emotional pain, worn down by meagerly rewarded, never-ending workdays, Jende states at one point: "This work, work, work, all the time. For what? For a little money? How much suffering can a man take in this world, eh?" (Mbue 2017, 306).

Initially, despite Neni and Jende's low salaries,[3] the economic situation of the Jonga family is stable. Thanks to family connections, they are able to rent an apart-ment in Harlem, a district of Manhattan, instead of one of the outlying boroughs, for a nominal fee, and although it requires hours of hard toil, Jende is able to sup-port his family and even cover the $3000 tuition per semester for his wife to attend community college. When Jende is offered the position of Clark's chauffeur, the Jongas' quality of life significantly improves, and they live a relatively comfortable life on a combined income of $45,000 per annum, occasionally even eating at Red

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3   According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "In 2007, the median usual weekly earnings of for-eign-born full-time wage and salary workers were $554,
 compared with $722 for the native born".

Lobster (a popular sea-food chain restaurant), or doing their shopping at Target, a "fine white people store" (Mbue 2017, 32). The Jongas also have friends (besides Winston, who enjoys a corporate lawyer salary) who live in luxurious circumstances, i.e., they own large houses (thanks to zero-down payment mortgages) and drive SUVs, while working blue-collar jobs (81−82). However, upon closer inspection, this illusion of relative prosperity rapidly unravels. To bring his partner and son to the US in the first place, Jende had to work three different jobs and live in abysmal conditions (12). The apartment the Jongas live in is infested with cockroaches and has only one bedroom, which must accommodate Jende, Neni, and their two children. Even buying a suit for Jende's position as a driver absorbs a third of their savings (31). Admittedly, their financial situation fluctuates significantly, but even at the height of their prosperity they cannot afford health or dental care beyond what is provided by state aid programs, i.e., healthcare for their children and prenatal care during Neni's pregnancy (102, 303−04).

After Jende becomes unemployed, the family's situation deteriorates, and the couple struggle to buy basic necessities, such as diapers, clothes for their children, or proper nourishment (Mbue 2017, 258). Some of the Jongas' immigrant friends are also in dire straits, e.g., their acquaintance Arkamo loses his home in the 2008 housing crisis (308). Clark Edwards aptly sums up the economic situation depicted in the novel: "unless you make a certain kind of money in this country, life can be brutal" (148). Though many of these hardships are hardly a new experience for immigrants (and many Americans), there is one troubling element added to the equation: shame. Though Cindy Edwards ignorantly states that "being poor for you [Neni] in Africa is fine. Most of you [Africans] are poor over there[4]. The shame of it, it's not as bad for you." (123), the opposite is true in the case of Fatou, Neni's friend who has been struggling with for twenty-four years she has been in the US and is ashamed of this (11). This shame is unjustified, because, as Mbue herself states in an interview,

> The thing I want people to understand about the American Dream [is that] you need a lot of weapons to achieve it. […] To me, education is a big weapon. Education is a weapon. Your age is a weapon. If you're white, if you're Black, if you have a good education. The

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4   According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development website (2021), the economic situation in Africa is generally improving.

people that have made it and can say, "Oh this is an immigrant suc-
cess" — they had those weapons. The idea that "Oh, American Dream
for everyone," everyone that can get it, it's there for the taking — it's
like a mountain, right? Can we all climb that mountain? No. Some
of us can only get one mile up the mountain. It's a very difficult climb.
Yes, you can get there. But do you have what it takes to get there?
(Keifer 2016)

Mbue argues that one of the "weapons" (aptly named in a country with
rampant gun violence) that can be used to achieve the American Dream is ed-
ucation. Neni is well aware of this, as she says at one point to her son: "school
is everything for people like us. We don't do well in school, we don't have any
chance in this world" (Mbue 2017, 68). However, even this weapon proves insuf-
ficient. When Jende loses his relatively high-paying job, settling college tuition
costs becomes a pressing issue, leading her to seek a scholarship based on her
high academic achievements. For this reason, she visits the dean, who harshly
diabuses her dream of becoming a pharmacist – she cannot apply for an academ-
ic scholarship because of her lack of participation in extracurricular activities
(which she has no time for), nor can she apply for financial aid because she is not
a citizen or permanent resident (294–97). Neni's American Dream remains un-
attainable. She is not alone in this, as "foreign-born workers [in 2007] were less
likely than native-born workers to be high school graduates (with no college)
or to have some college" (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008).

In her novel, Mbue focuses both on the immigrant experience and the struggles
of "non-immigrant" Americans, thus painting a broader picture of the problematic
myth of the American Dream; as Toohey states in her review of *Behold the Dream-
ers*: "[Mbue shows that] there's lots of collateral damage to go around" (2016, 24).
This widespread destruction, which renders inaccessible not only the American
Dream but basic survival for many, is also showcased by Mbue via the character
of Leah. Although she has been a loyal employee to Lehman Brothers and is near
retirement age, she faces unemployment, with little hope of re-employment, in the
wake of the 2008 financial crisis (Mbue 2017, 182–83, 216). Similarly, in both Ramin
Bahrani's *99 Homes* (2014) and Sean Baker's *The Florida Project* (2017), non-immi-
grant Americans struggle with poverty and are made to commit crimes to sur-
vive (fraud in the former work, multiple forms of soliciting in the latter). Matthew
Desmond's Pulitzer-Prize-winning non-fiction work *Evicted* (2016) also relates

the stories of destitute American-born individuals who, largely due to systemic inequalities, face homelessness. In her review of *Evicted* for *The New York Times*, author of *Nickel and Dimed* Barbara Ehrenreich comments that "that the world [the characters of *Evicted*] inhabi[t] is indeed hell, or as close an approximation as you are likely to find in a 21st-century American city". Though set in a fictional world, Todd Phillips's *Joker* (2019) also portrays a mentally-ill, but initially harmless individual growing into a violent predator as a direct reaction to an economic crisis (in this case, the economic crash in the early 1980s). *Behold the Dreamer*'s features a similar occurrence, when Jende, previously a caring partner, physically attacking his wife Neni after the family suffers hardship[5] (Mbue 2017, 333–34).

Behold the Dreamers appears to suggest that this situation is unlikely to change, as those in the upper social classes are either relatively unconcerned by the mayhem taking place in the lower-middle class (e.g., the antagonists, Clark and Cindy Edwards), not in the US (like Vince Edwards), or are powerless and unwilling to change the system, like Winston, who states that "[he] cannot do anything. And even if [he] could, [he] probably wouldn't, because [he] like[s] the money, even though [he] hate[s] how [he] make[s] it" (Mbue 2017, 323). Ultimately, those who have the education and money to make a difference do nothing, partly because it would require the desire to help, which they do not have, but mostly because the system suits them.

While Mbue draws attention to a multitude of troubling occurrences, she does not neglect to mention some positive changes occurring in American society, particularly in the area of social and racial integration, by marking the presence of several interracial and intersocial relationships. Despite being vastly different in age, race, class, and lifestyle, Jende and Vince are able to learn from each other and establish a close bond – so much so that Vince maintains contact with the former after moving to another continent. Neni also forms a long-term connection with Mighty, Vince's younger brother, adopting a maternal attitude towards him. Finally, when faced with the fiasco of her American Dream, Neni wanders into a local church and establishes an unlikely friendship with the white female pastor who offers sympathy and whatever guidance she can provide for Neni's precarious situation. Pastor Natasha and her (mostly white) congregation,

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5   Interestingly, the idea that the inaccessibility of the American Dream can trigger violent behaviors is also present in real-life; some specialists claim that this could have been one of the driving factors of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, as mentioned in a recent documentary on the subject (Russ 2023).

though naïve in some of their beliefs (e.g., that America was previously more open to immigrants [Mbue 2017, 364]), appear to be sincere in their indignation at the contemporary treatment of new Americans. Though these relationships and changes are perhaps just beginning to graze the surface of profoundness, Mbue leaves the reader with the hope that true integration may be possible.

However, the Jongas will not be in the US to further this integration, as *Behold the Dreamers* ends with them being effectively forced to leave the US, thus completely dashing Neni's dreams of becoming a pharmacist and the family's prospects of living in America. Nevertheless, it seems as though their life of prosperity is not ending but beginning, because:

> [the money Neni and Jende acquired in the US] would make them millionaires many times over. Even after buying their airline tickets and making all the necessary purchases, they would have enough money for Jende to become one of the richest men in New Town. (Mbue 2017, 352)

Upon closer scrutiny, however, this occurrence is far from simply felicitous, as most of the Jongas' funds were extorted from Cindy by Neni, who threatened to publicize the former's photo taken when being intoxicated (Mbue 2017, 265–69). Neni feels justified in this blackmail because she believes Cindy was responsible Jende's loss of his job as Clark's chauffeur and rationalizes her actions as a means of protecting her family, stating, "I knew what I had to do" (Mbue 2017, 274). The fact remains, however, that she indeed did not have to do this as her family, though not wealthy, was not destitute. What Neni did was use a frail, deeply unhappy, possibly mentally ill woman (shortly after being blackmailed, Cindy overdoses and dies) for her own personal gain. Jende is complicit in this crime, as he ultimately agrees to appropriate the extorted funds. Thus, Mbue subverts not only the American Dream, but also the identity of the immigrant, who is not always benevolent but at times succumbs to the deleterious "dog eat dog" reality of America to survive.

In an article in *The New York Times*, Cristina Henríquez states that "[the situation depicted in *Behold the Dreamers*] struck [her] as a fresh take on the immigrant experience – providing not simply the jolt of being in a new place but also the jolt of taking on a new identity because of that place". This assumption of a new identity certainly occurs in *Behold the Dreamers*, though is hardly a change for the better. For instance, Jende transforms from a loving partner and father, who

works for years to be able to marry Neni and support his family, to a controlling, aggressive man who batters his wife during an argument (Mbue 2017, 334). One could take Henríquez's line of thinking a step further and say that it is the deteriorating situation in America that forces many to adapt to the difficulties they must face irrespective of whether they are immigrants. Even the now rich Cindy Edwards originates from an impoverished background, in which she suffered malnourishment and humiliation (123−24), and from which she escaped not only through hard work, but also via learning to "fit effortlessly in this new [affluent] world so [she] would never be looked down on again" (124).

Equipped with a new identity and a small fortune (saved from their many jobs, donated by Pastor Natasha congregation, but mostly stolen from Cindy) and all their "necessary" purchases, i.e., numerous boxes containing a mixture of fake and real "luxury" garments meant to exhibit their superiority (Mbue 2017, 381), the family return to Cameroon. Upon their arrival, they will move into an opulent rental house, with a garage for their imported car and a maid at the family's service. Additionally, Jende plans to establish a company whose catchphrase is to be "Jonga Enterprises: Bringing the Wisdom of Wall Street to Limbe" (353) – but what exactly this wisdom is supposed to be is left to the reader's imagination. Somewhat ironically, their American Dream is realized outside of US borders, but in a truly capitalist fashion. As Chibundu Onozu notes,[T]he Jongas are not simple Africans who eschew materialism and can teach the Edwards' how to live a contented life. Both Jende and Neni rejoice in the consumerism of America and grasp at all that capitalism has to offer.

This is apparent from the first pages of *Behold the Dreamers*; during Neni's first appearance in the novel, she and her friend Fatou wander around Chinatown looking for "make believe Gucci and Versace bags" (11), presumably made by underpaid workers in or outside the US (Perry 2022). The way the Jongas gain and spend their wealth, namely, through the exploitation of others, is akin to the practices of Cindy and Clark Edwards to the extent that Neni and Jende could be interpreted as their Cameroonian versions. At the end of the novel, the Jongas leave America, but America, with its Dream, has certainly not left them.

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The Construction of Authority
in the Old English *Judith*

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Abstract: The present article investigates the representation of Judith, the protagonist of the Old English poem preserved in the *Beowulf* Manuscript, based on episodes from the Old Testament Book of Judith. It argues that *Judith* makes significant additions to the biblical source with the aim of presenting the heroine as a figure of wisdom and justice. It also argues that such a representation of Judith is significant given the historical context of the composition of the poem. If the poem was composed in tenth-century England during Viking invasions, the way the text crafts Judith as a figure of wisdom and good counsel is evocative of some political ideas circulating in poetic, homiletic texts as well as in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The Chronicle's representation of decision-making as a joint venture of the king and witan can especially help to elucidate the concept of authority presented in the poem, as Judith develops the antagonist Holofernes as an example of an ill-counselled and unwise leader, while depicting Judith as a figure of authority representing divine justice. The *Judith* poet manipulates the feast scene that he finds in the biblical source with a view to enhancing its representation of Holofernes as an example of unwisdom and bad counsel. Another significant addition to the source is the poem's emphasis on Judith's wisdom as well her physical and spiritual radiance. In fact, the poem's manipulation of light imagery and its recurrent contrasting of wisdom with unwisdom reflects the pressing concerns of the era regarding hierarchy, authority, obedience, and faith, all of which came to be considered key concepts in the unification of an England in crisis. The poem's imagery of light is directly linked to the poem's theme of justice and wise action. The sustained imagery of light and radiance underlies the poet's account of Judith's violence as a performance of divine justice. The imagery of light also creates a structural connection with the account of the Bethulian army victory over the Assyrians in the second half of the poem, enhancing both the poem's artistic unity and its political purpose.

The Old English *Judith*, found in London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius A.xv (henceforward the Beowulf manuscript), is a versified alliterative adaptation of chapters 12.10 to 16.1 of the Old Testament Book of Judith. The existing text is fragmentary as it lacks the beginning, and its first sentence is incomplete. What survives from the entire poem brings the focus on Judith and her heroic defiance of the enemy in the first half of the poem and the heroic stance of the Hebrew army against the Assyrian enemy in the second. When it comes to the relationship of *Judith* with its biblical source, scholarship views the Old English poem as a simplification rather than an amplification of biblical matter when it comes to streamlining the narrative structure of the story and reducing the number of characters involved. Jackson J. Campbell claims that the Old English adaptation aimed to "minimise the unique and emphasise the typical" (Campbell 1971, 155). There are, however, important thematic and poetic additions to the source material, additions that include the imagery of light and the theme of the triumph of wisdom over unwisdom. As Campbell observes, while the Vulgate describes Judith as chaste, the emphasis placed upon her wisdom is an innovation introduced by the Old English poet (Campbell 1971, 155). The *Judith* poet also removes from Judith the blemish of deceptiveness that characterises the protagonist in the source. She does not participate in the feast to which Holofernes invites his retinue. She does not intoxicate him with alcohol. The poem presents Holofernes as succumbing to his own lust rather than to Judith's seduction, and most importantly, as I will show in the article, Judith is presented as a figure of justice and authority to a greater degree than in the source.

The argument of the present article is that the *Judith* poet makes a significant investment in Judith as an emblem of authority by reshaping the heroine as a vessel of wisdom and good counsel. I argue that *Judith*'s light imagery and its thematic vocabulary highlighting the contrast between wisdom and unwisdom respond to the topical concerns of the era regarding hierarchy, authority, obedience, and faith, all of which came to be considered key concepts in the unification of an England in crisis. The poem thematizes wisdom as an ability to be guided by wise counsel (*ræd)* and warns against following

bad counsel (*unræd*). While scholarship detects an implicit anxiety over Judith in Anglo-Latin and Old English writings, I would like to demonstrate that against this background the *Judtih* poet depicts the protagonist as a figure of military authority. I would contend that the reason why *Judith* makes its female protagonist more important, heroic, and wise than either the character found in the Bible or in those other English texts in which she features is to demonstrate that authority cannot be conceived of in exclusively secular, military, or heroic terms. I would also like to claim that the poem is aligned with the criticism of authority and figures of power in late tenth-century England. Judith demonstrates, as I would like to show, a unity of wisdom and action that appears to be idealized in some of the poetic and historical writings composed in England around the time of the poem's composition.

The poem *Judith* has been subject to various interpretations in modern scholarship. The first, and most obvious, focus of the scholarship was on the protagonist herself. The interpretation of the character was often allegorical, a take on the poem suggested by the exegetical work of Remigius of Auxerre and Hrabanus Maurus, who viewed her as a figure of the *ecclesia* at war with Holofernes, an impersonation of the devil or *hostis antiquus.* Such a reading is supported by Campbell, who claims that "while Judith represents a concept as complex as *Ecclesia*, she still was, for the poet, a woman, acting, reacting and feeling in a simple sequence of plot event" (Campbell 1971, 165). The allegorical interpretation of Judith as *ecclesia* might be dismissed on the grounds that, as Paul de Lacy suggests, unlike the protagonist of the biblical source, the poem's heroine accepts the spoils with which she is rewarded (de Lacy 1996, 405). The feminist scholarship's restorative work abandons the allegorizing approach to reveal the significance of Judith as a flesh-and-blood character but still inflected through medieval gender ideology as well as the poem's political context. Alexandra Hennesey Olsen argued that the poem changes the story to present Judith as facing the "danger of being raped and spiritually defiled by the diabolical pagan" (Olsen 1982, 290) and that her violence against Holofernes in the poem is an inversion of rape because *Judith* was composed during Viking invasions "to galvanize the men into action by shaming those noblemen in the audience who have watched the abuse of their wives" (Olsen 1982, 293). The problem of Judith's gender and sexuality has been further addressed by feminist and gender scholars who have analysed Judith's action not only as sexually subversive, but also as a subversion and expansion of her

gendered identity, especially by stressing that she transforms herself from an objectified *spolia* into a subject who subverts Holofernes's masculinism.[1]

Such historicist readings of the poem as exemplified by Olsen, situating it in the context of the Viking invasions in the late tenth century, represent another important strand of criticism. Olsen has built her argument on David Chamberlain's view that "the most appropriate occasion in Anglo-Saxon history for the political and religious exemplum of this poem is the crisis under Æthelred from 990 to 1010 (Chamberlain 1975, 158). The approach to *Judith* as a political poem, adopted in this article, is supported by critical agreement that the poem was composed in the tumultuous tenth century.[2] Some evidence that *Judith* was composed, or at least read, in these times can be found in Ælfric's *Letter to Sigeweard*, a work also known as *On the Old and New Testament*, where he makes a brief reference to a vernacular work based on the Book of Judith, which, he says, was translated into the vernacular "eow mannum to bysne þæt ge eowerne eard mid wæmnum bewerian wið onwinende here" (as an example to our men that they should defend our homeland against the army of the invaders) (Marsden 2008, 127).[3] Unless Ælfric refers to his own homily on Judith, it is plausible that Ælfric references the poem now extant in the *Beowulf*-Manuscript. In addition, the poem's inscription in the *Beowulf*-Manuscript, which happened not earlier than around 975, further corroborates the view that the poem arose in the time of a major military crisis caused by the Viking invaders. In the *Beowulf*-Manuscript, *Judith* is placed directly after Beowulf, a poem in which the ancestors of the Danes who attacked England in the late tenth century are very important characters.

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1 See Karma Lochrie's reading of "the decapitation of Holofernes [as signifying masculinism's] reversal and spoiling" (1994, 9). Erin Mullally uses gift exchange theory to argue that "Judith's transformation in the poem is not solely from passive to aggressive nor from 'feminine' to 'masculine', but rather explicitly from 'possessed' to 'possessor'" (Mullally 2005, 257). Even though his reading is not strictly feminist, Denis Ferhatović also elucidates the heroine's transformation from an object to subject in his object-oriented reading of Judith (Ferhatović 2019, 126-127).

2 Pringle claims that Holofernes and the Assyrian soldiers are an echo of the Danes in England, framed as an embodiment of evil (Pringle 1975, 91). See Griffith's edition for a detailed discussion of the poem's date. Griffith arrives at a tentative conclusion that the poem was probably composed in the late ninth or in the tenth century (Grifith 1997, 47).

3 The translation from Marsden's edition is my own. Ælfric composed his own homily on the Book of Judith, in which he reads Judith as a figure of chastity.

Another historizing reading suggested that the poem was composed to honour Æthelflæd, Lady of Mercia, as a military figure, who, in concerted effort with her brother Edward, reclaimed for the West-Saxon rule much of the territory defined as the Danelaw after the death of her father, King Alfred the Great. The theory was advanced in 1892 by T. Gregory Forster, who suggested that

> Æthelflæd, then, is Mercia's Judith, for she by no ordinary strategy, we are told, raised her Kingdom and people to their old position. She, like the Hebrew Judith, abandoned the older strategy of raid and battle, not indeed to murder the Danish chief, but to build fortresses and beleaguer her enemies (Forster 1892, 90).

The theory has been mostly dismissed nowadays,[4] but it was revived in Bernard F. Huppé's edition and analysis of *Judith* (Huppé 1970, 145-7) and, as Michael Bintley remarks, "one should not assume that *Judith* need not have been written with direct reference to Æthelflæd for it to have called to mind her actions" (Bintley 2020, 162). Even though Æthelflæd was not a warrior-woman, but a political figure, her activity may have presented the poem's audience with an important historical and English precedent for female military leadership. Judith is, in fact, not only a warrior-woman who beheads the enemy. It must be stressed that the poem insists that the continuity between masculine, or manlike, strength and action is as important as the continuity between wisdom and action. Judith, who is wise and courageous, is a vessel of authority who directs the Bethulian men's heroic actions.

While in the poem Judith appears to be associated with brilliance and justice, one can surmise from other writings produced in early medieval England that, as a character, she generated some controversy. This is detectable in Aldhelm's Prose *De Virginitate.* While excusing Judith's employment of beauty and adornment to deceive the enemy and secure her people's victory, Aldhelm repudiates the impudence and wantonness of the "stubborn and insolent woman in Proverbs

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4   In his edition of the poem, Timmer gives two reasons why the theory should be dismissed. The first is that Æthelflæd was never celebrated as heroine in early medieval English writings. The second is that the poem is religious and "this makes it very unlikely that a religious heroine like Judith would represent a secular queen" (Timmer 1966, 7). Pringle suggests the reason why Æthelflæd is not celebrated in Old English writings is the West-Saxon conspiracy of silence regarding Mercian rulers (Pringle 1975, 84).

who foreshadows the figure of the Synagogue" (Aldhelm 2009, 127) in a section that directly follows his account of Judith's defeat of Holofernes. Heide Estes argues in her reading of Aldhelm's account that "he finds Judith an ambiguous figure, not entirely in alignment with his vision of chaste femininity" (Estes 2003, 330). In her reading of Ælfric's homily on Judith, Mary Clayton claims that Ælfric glosses over ethical problems raised by Judith's lies and sexual seduction of Holofernes (Clayton 1994, 220). Both English authors, Aldhelm and Ælfric, independently viewed Judith as an imperfect heroine. Heroic and worthy of praise though she is, she is in constant need of justification or glossing over. Estes concludes her essay with a statement that the poem demonstrates "incapacity to transform the biblical figure of Judith into a fully acceptable Anglo-Saxon Christian heroine" (Estes 2003, 349). Similarly, in his detailed account of the retellings of the story of Judith in the Old English period, Simon C. Thomson contends that "this is a story that demands to be told so strongly that it cannot be set aside, but must instead be tamed" (Thomson 2021, 122). Against this critical background, however, it will be demonstrated here that the poem's investment in Judith as a figure of uncompromised authority is manifested in its treatment of the source. The poet unifies the episode of beheading with the episode of Judith's return to Bethulia and the actual battle through the imagery of light and mental clarity that enhances its retelling of the biblical source as a story of divine judgment and justice performed through Judith and the Bethulian men.

The poem's juxtaposition of Judith's wisdom as effecting the military action of the men of Bethulia with her nemesis' self-destructive ill counsel should thus not go unnoticed, because *Judith* is resonant of important issues raised in the tenth- and early eleventh-century England. In late tenth-century England, *ræd*, good counsel,[5] was an important ideological concept. In his recent reading of Old English biblical poetry from MS Junius 11, which was compiled around the time when *Judith* was inscribed in the *Beowulf*-Manuscript, Cark Kears argues that "OE *ræd* and OE *unræd* evoke early medieval cultural ideas about successful and unsuccessful governance,

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5   The Bosworth-Toller Dictionary of Old English presents five meanings of the word: (I) counsel, advice; (II) counsel, prudence, intelligence; (III) counsel, course of action that results from deliberation, plan, a resolution taken after deliberation, ordinance, decree; (IV) what is advisable, benefit, advantage; (V) a council. In this paper I will translate the word as 'good counsel'. Its opposite, *unræd*, will be translated as ill-counsel or unwisdom. The Boswoth-Toller Dictionary defines *unræd* as (I) evil counsel, ill-advised course, bad plan, folly; (II) disadvantage, prejudice, hurt.

but also suggest how these were linked to interpretation and misreading in political thought" (Kears 2023, 5). As Kears observes, the link between governance and wisdom is a recurrent theme in Old English Alfredian literature, in which royal authority is supported by Solomonic *sapientia* (Kears 2023, 6). Kears finds an expression of the notion that good counsel is essential to ruling effectively in the verse preface to Alfred's *Old English Boethius,* in which Alfred says, "Ic sceal giet sprecan / fon on fitte, folccuðne *ræd* / hæleðum secgean" ("I must speak out, / engage in poetry, tell men / well known *advice*" (Kears 2023, 6).[6]

Following good counsel was synonymous with virtue and good policy; being led astray through *unræd* was synonymous with failure. The notorious failures of late-tenth-century policies of the English authorities had caused King Æthelred II to be remembered as *Æthelred Unræd*, that is, Æthelred the Unready, or the Ill-advised. Modern scholarship objects to such a negative assessment of the king, pointing to a complexity of factors that led to the subsequent rise of the Danes in England.[7] Regardless, this crisis led to Æthelred II's loss of power and exile in 1013, and occasioned Cnut's ascendance to the English throne in 1014. As Courtnay Konshuh points out in her recent discussion of ruling and policy making in Æthelredian England, "the importance of *ræd*, advice, is a topic which can be found in many of the texts produced during Æthelred's reign and it figures strongly in the annals for his reign" (Konshuh 2016, 140).

Ruling and decision-making was a burden to be shared between the king, his secular advisers as well as ecclesiastical authorities, as is testified in the famous 991 annal in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* recording the death of Ealdormann Byrhtnoth at Maldon.

> Her wæs Gypeswic gehergod, and æfter þam swiðe raðe wæs Birhtnoð ealdorman ofslægen æt Mældune. And on þam geare *man gerædd*e þæt man geald ærest gafol Deniscan mannum for þam mycclan brogan þe hi worhtan be þam særiman. Þæt wæs ærest X þusend punda. Þæne *ræd gerædde* Siric arcebiscop (O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001, 86)

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6 The Old English text and the translation used here is taken from Irvine and Godden (2012).

7 See Keynes (1980), Stafford (1989), Konshush (2016) for important reevaluations of the representation of rulership and policy-making in Æthelredian England.

> In this year Ipswich was ravaged, and very soon afterwards Ealdor-
> man Birhtnoth was killed at Maldon. And in that *it was determined*
> that tribute should first be paid to the Danish men because of the
> great terror they were causing along the coast. The first payment
> was 10,000 pounds. Archbishop Sigeric *first advised* that course
> (Whitelock 1955, 235).

The annal starts with describing acts of destruction: Ipswich is ravaged and
Byrhtnoth killed, the latter event soon to be commemorated in the poem
Battle of Maldon. It also says that *it was determined* ("*man gerædd*e") that the
English should pay tribute to the Danes. Konshuh remarks, referring to a se-
quence of annals pertaining to the years 983-1016 of King Æthelred's reign,
that "in a time of personal rule, it is perhaps surprising to find a text laden
with impersonal constructions and circumlocutions surrounding the person
of the king" (Konshuh 2016, 145).[8] The careful phrasing may have been em-
ployed in the annal to impress upon the reader that political authority is not
identical with Æthelred's personal rule. The last sentence of the annal says
that it was the bishop Sigeric's counsel, rather than solely the view of the
king and his advisers from military circles, which argued that tribute should
be paid to the Vikings.

The 991 annal makes an important association between counsel and action.
While paying tribute would generate a sense of shame, a sound and socially
cohesive justification for the policy of purchasing peace is found in the wis-
dom of the counsel that comes from the bishop's authority. The Anglo-Saxon
chronicle annals of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries lay emphasis
on a relationship between good advice and political action, bad advice and fail-
ure. Major decisions and policies in various versions of the Chronicle in which
these annals are recorded demonstrate the use of new vocabulary marshalled
with a view to justifying policies based on wise counsel to a greater degree
than in earlier annals. The use of the verb *rædan* and *gerædan* makes more fre-
quent appearances in the Æthelredian annals than in the annals pertaining

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8 Konshuh claims that the sequence demonstrate unity and "show evidence of central direction"
(Konshuh 2016, 141) and that "the section of annals for the years 983–1016 copied into Chronicles C,
D and E are notably a unit,41 and foreshadowing contained within them allows their time of produc-
tion to be dated between the years 1017 and 1023.42" (Konshuh 2016, 153).

to the reigns of earlier kings, as Konshuh demonstrates (Konshuh 2016, 142).
When the Danes ravaged England in 999, for example, the Chronicle says that
"ða rædde se cyning wið his witan þæt man sceolde mid scypfyrde and eac
mid landfyrde hym ongean faran" (O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001, 88) [Then the king
with his councillors determined that they should be opposed by a naval force
and also by a land force (Whitelock 238).] In 1002, "se cynning gerædde on his
witan þæt man sceolde gafol gyldan þam flotan, and frið wið þon þe hi heora
yfeles geswican sceoldan" (O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001, 89) [In this year the king
and his councillors determined that tribute should be paid to the fleet and
peace made with them on condition that they should cease their evil-doing
(Whitelock 1955, 239)]. The annal of 1003, which gives a scathingly critical
account of Ealdroman Ælfric's treachery, complains about the irresoluteness
of the English against the Danes as the opposite of good counsel.

> Þa sceolde se ealdormann Ælfric lædan þa fyrde, ac se teah ða forð
> se ealdan wrencas sona swa hi wæron swa gehende þæt ægðer
> here on oþerne hawede. Þa gebræd he hine seocne and ongan hine
> brecan to spiwene and cwæð þæt gesicled wære and swa þæt folc
> becyrde þæt he lædan scolde, swa hit gecweden ys, þonne se here-
> toga wacað þonne bið eall se here swiðe gehindrad. Þa Swegen ge-
> seah þæt hi anræde næron and þæt hi ealle toforan, þa lædde he his
> here into Wiltune, and hi þa buruh geheregodon and forbærndon"
> (O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001, 90).

> Then Ealdorman Ælfric was to lead the army, but he was up to his
> old tricks. As soon as they were so close that each army looked on the
> other, he feigned him sick, and began retching to vomit, and said that
> he was taken ill, and thus betrayed the people whom he should have
> led. As the saying goes: "When the leader gives way, the whole army
> will be much hindered." When Swein saw that they were irresolute,
> and that they all dispersed, he led his army into Wilton, and they
> ravaged and burnt the borough (Whitelock 1955, 240).

The annal lays blame on the English not being "anræde," that is, "in agreement,"
"unanimous" (Toronto Dictionary of Old English A-Le). Lack of agreement
is thus presented as the direct cause of the destruction of Wilton.

Another interesting example can be found in the 1011 annal of the C version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (the text in italics is found in the C version only, the remaining part is also found in D and E versions).

> Her on þissum geare sende se cyning and his witan to ðam here, and gyrndon friðes, and his gafol and metsunge beheton wið þam ðe hi hiora hergunge geswicon. Hi hæfdon oferga (i) Eastengle and (ii) Eastsexe and (iii) Middlesexe and (iv) Oxenfordscire (…). *Ealle þas ungesælða þuruh unrædes*, þæt man nolde him a timan gafol beodan oþþe wið weohtan; ac þonne hi mæst to yfele gedon hæfdon, þonne nam mon frið and grið wið hi. And na þe læs for eallum þissum griðe and gafole hi ferdon æghweder flocmælum, and heregodon ure earme folc, and hi rypton and slogon (O'Brien O'Keeffe 2001, 95)

> In this year the king and his councillors sent to the army and asked for peace and promised them tribute and provisions on condition that they should cease their ravaging. They had then overrun: (i) East Anglia, (ii) Essex, (iii) Middlesex, (iv) Oxfordshire (…) *All those disasters befell us through bad policy* [lit. bad counsel], *in that they were never offered tribute in time nor fought against*; but when they had done most to our injury, peace and truce were made with them; and for all this truce and tribute they journeyed none the less in bands everywhere, and harried our wretched people, and plundered and killed them (Whitelock 1955, 245).

In her discussions of the representation of King Æthelred's reign in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Renée R. Trilling detects in several other such accounts of treachery on the part of the English "the chronicler's disgust with the English leadership" (Trilling 2009, 154). Konshuh supplies a more nuanced understanding of the chronicle's representation of policy-making in Æthelredian annals. She argues that "rather than vilifying the king for making bad decisions, the text puts distance between Æthelred and the tribute payments, military defeats and internal problems by concentrating on the actions of others, and direct criticism of Æthelred is not obvious" (2016, 142). She claims that the emphasis on the necessity to use good advice in Æthelredian annals

appears to have been a conscious attempt of Æthelred to portray
himself as a 'good' king, and was probably also a reaction to the
increased size of the realm; on the one hand, a wise king takes ad-
vice from others in order to make informed decisions, while also
needing their advice to maintain his grip on a political area which
had not been unified for very long (2016: 143).

In the late tenth century, the inability to follow wise counsel and listen to the voice
of authority is represented as a virtue. Successes and failures in the Chronicle are
evaluated implicitly through references to the circumstances in which decisions
were made and by stressing that actions resulted from careful deliberation.

In Old English homiletic literature and biblical verse, bad counsel accumulates
even more sinister connotations through association with the devil. In some Old
English poems and texts, especially the biblical poetry of Junius Manuscript 11,
Genesis A and *Genesis B*, the devil embodies a more particular kind of evil, name-
ly, rebelliousness against authority. In *Genesis A*, the fall of the angels happens
because they do not follow good counsel: "noldan dreogan leng/ heora selfra
ræd, ac hie of siblufan /godes ahwurfon" ("they no longer wished to act for their
own advantage, but they turned away from God's intimacy", 23b-25a). For Kears,
these lines in the poem imply "the dreadful consequences of not working for 'ræd'
as it relates to both the stability of a kingdom and the relationship of that kingdom
to the divine creator" (2023, 44).[9] Kears claims that such passages in *Genesis A*, *Gen-
esis B*, as well as in *Exodus* and *Daniel* "make clear that to operate through *unræd*
obscures God-as-creator as he exists within the text of the world" (Kears 2023, 45).

Kears has also suggested that there are striking parallels involving the con-
cepts of *ræd* and *unræd* between Ælfric's commentary and the account of the fall
of the angels in *Genesis A*.[10] For example, "Ælfric, like the poet of *Genesis A*, does

9   There are other passages in *Genesis A* that establish a link between pride and the refusal to follow
good counsel. For example, "Him þær sar gelamp, /æfst and oferhygd, and þæs engles mod /þe
þone *unræd* ongan ærest fremman, /wefan and weccean" ("A sorrow befell them there, the envy and
the arrogance and the mind of the angel who first began to fabricate, weave and awaken the *deceit*
[lit. bad counsel]" (28b-31a), quoted and commented by Kears (2023, 45).

10   Kears' main argument in his book is that there is a persistent contrast between *ræd* and *unræd* in all
the texts of the manuscript, both in those which are based on books of the Old Testament (*Genesis A,
Genesis B, Exodus,* and *Daniel*) and also in *Christ and Satan* (the last poem in the Junius MS, which draws
on themes from the New Testament): "Examining such thematic language in conjunction with the subject

describe Lucifer's influence over those who follow him as a form of bad counsel that leads them to hell" (Kears 2023, 47). In *De Initio Creaturae,* Ælfric of Eynsham depicts the devil as an embodiment of bad counsel:

> Þa gefæstnode he þisne ræd wið þam werode þe he bewiste, and hi ealle to ðam ræde gebugon. Ða ða hi ealle hæfdon ðysne ræd betwux him gefæstnod. þa becom godes grama ofer him ealle (…) ða ða hi wolde mid modignysse beon betera þonne he gesceapen wæs, and cwæð þæt he mihte beon þam ælmahtigum God gelic (Ælfric 2023,16)

> The he confirmed his plan with the host that he ruled, and that they all agreed to that council among themselves, God's anger came over them all (…) when in his pride he wanted to be better than he was created and said that he might be equal to the almighty God (Ælfric 2023,17).

Ælfric expressly identifies the devil, not God, as the source of bad counsel: "ne næfre se yfela ræd ne com of Godes geþance. ac com of þæs deofles, swa swa we ær cwædon" ("the evil counsel never came from God's mind, but from the devil's, as we have said" (Ælfric 2023, 18-19).

Judith is also resonant with such representations of examples of good and bad counsel. The *Judith* poet manipulates the feast scene that he finds in the biblical source with a view to enhancing its representation of Holofernes as an example of unwisdom and bad counsel. In the source, the party does not involve excessive drinking on the part of Holofernes' men. In the poem, however, Holofernes makes his men excessively drunk, which is to have disastrous consequences when they will be facing their enemy "medowerige" [weary with wine] (229a):

> hie on swiman lagon,
> oferdrencte his duguðe ealle, swylce hie wæron deaðe geslegne,
> agotene goda gehwylces
> they lay unconscious, his entire staff drowned with drink, as if they
> were struck dead, drained of all good (28b-32a).

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matter of these poems draws us to a consistent interest across the Junius poetry in the application of good counsel and in warning readers about the perils of ill-counsel and misinterpretation" (Kears 2023, 4).

Holofernes' men are in stupor. Foreboding is also the association of the drinking party with night and darkness. Night does not bring a peaceful end to the party, but seems to overcome the partying men, as Holofernes' men are drinking "oð þæt fira bearnum /nealæhte niht seo þystre" [until the murky night overtook the sons of mortals] (33b-34a). By contrast, drinking in most Old English poetic representations of feasts is more commonly associated with social order and wisdom rather than sin (as feasts present their participants with an opportunity to be exposed to the art of poetry and poetic performance). As Hugh Magennis argues, "the Germanic feast is an expression of admirable social order and cohesion: the particular feast which is described in *Judith* is deliberately presented as a travesty of such order and cohesion" (Magennis 1983, 332). It is notable, though, that when the Hebrews approach the Assyrian camp in the second half of the poem, Bethulia is referred to as "medobyrig" (167a). Since the Assyrians are nonetheless called "medowerige" (229a) during the battle, the poem inverts the traditional symbolism of drinking and feasting only with respect to the enemy (Magennis 1983, 332).[11]

A particularly negative connotation is evoked by the collocation "modig and medugal" (proud and drunk with mead") (26a) that describes Holofernes during the feast. The pairing of "modig and medugal" is resonant of a similar collocation found in two Exeter poems, *The Seafarer* and *The Ruin*: "wlonc ond wingal".[12] In line 34a of *The Ruin*, the collocation may generate positive associations as Magennis claims: "the image is of the hall as the place of feasting, the place of drinking together and of the joys of society" (Magennis 1983, 43). Such a positive association may, however, be compromised by the word *wlenco,* whose semantic range includes "arrogance" (The Bosworth-Toller Dictionary of Old English). The collocation is unambiguously negative in line 29a of *The Seafarer*, where it characterizes a hypothetical landlubber who does not know the sufferings to which the poem's lyric speaker is subjected.[13] Both *wingal* (drunk with wine) (*Daniel* l16b) and *medugal* (drunk with mead) (*Daniel* l. 702a) are used to characterize Nebuchadnezzar in the Old English *Daniel* of the Junius MS. What is important here is the similar association of Nebuchadnezzar and Holofernes' drunken state with their bad conduct.

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11 Magennis lists conventional elements in Old English poetic depictions of feasting that are inverted by the *Judith* poet (1983: 336).

12 The Old English text and translation of *The Seafarer* and *The Ruin* come from Bjork (2014).

13 "Forþon him gelyfeð lyt, se þe ah lifes wyn /gebiden in burgum, bealosiþa hwon, /wlonc ond wingal, hu ic werig oft /in brimlade bidan sceolde" (*The Seafarer*, 27-31).

In addition, the introductory lines of *Daniel* demonstrate that the fall of Jerusalem is caused by the Hebrews' inability to follow good counsel. The connection between bad counsel and drinking is as explicit in *Daniel* as in *Judith*.

> þenden hie þy rice *rædan moston*,
> burgum wealdan, wæs him beorht wela.
> (…)
> oðþæt hie wlenco anwod æt winþege
> deofoldædum, druncne geðohtas.

> While they were able to *guide the kingdom*, rule the cities, their glory was bright (…) until pride invaded them with devilish deeds at the feast, drunken thoughts (*Daniel*, 8-9; 17-18).[14]

In *Daniel*, drunkenness and pride are paired as a symptom of moral decline that blurs one's judgment and causes inability to rule and guide (*rædan*) the kingdom. Like the English ruling classes in the eleventh century, the Hebrews in *Daniel* are unable to rule their kingdom and lose it to the invader. Both the description of the feast in *Judith* and the reference to the drunken feasts and thoughts of the Hebrews in *Daniel* have fatalistic overtones. The passage from *Daniel* establishes an important analogue for the causal link between ill counsel and loss of prosperity. In *Judith,* similar fatalistic overtones accompany the death of Holofornes at the hands of Judith as well as the destruction of his army by the Hebrews in the battle that occurs the next morning.

The *Judith* poet represents Holofernes' feast as a symbol of social disorder. Drinking and drunkenness become a shorthand for unwisdom. The function of the episode is to exemplify the political failure that is inevitable when authorities are in moral decline. When Holofernes dies killed by Judith, the poem seems to imply that he is defeated through his lack of wisdom: "nyste ræde nanne / on gewitlocan" [he knew no good counsel in his wits] (69a). The word *gewitloca* is associated with several Old English compounds referring to the mind in which the *-loca* element is related to the Old English *loc* which denotes "a lock, bolt, bar, that by which anything is closed, an enclosed place, enclosure, fold" (Bosworth-Toller Dictionary of Old English). The Old English poetic idea of the mind as a chamber or enclosure

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14   The Old English text and translation come from Anlezark's *Old Testament Narratives* (2011).

is exhaustively described by Britt Mize who argues that the idea is predicated upon "an interior/exterior model of personal mentality and its inaccessibility to others, expressed lexically as an analogy between the mind's 'contents' and material possessions that may be confined in an enclosure and protected or hidden" (Mize 2006, 59).[15] When an associated compound *ferhþloca* ("enclosure of the spirit, breast, i.e. thoughts, feelings, heart conceived as locked in the breast," Toronto Dictionary of Old English A-Le) is used in "The Wanderer" or Cynewulf's *Juliana*, it suggests that wisdom, locked and hoarded within in the mind's treasure-chest, is conceived of figuratively as precious mental content.[16] Mize describes many examples of the metaphorical representations of the mind as a treasure chest filled with wisdom, which he designates with a schema *mind holds*.[17] The mental material contained in the treasure-chest must be protected because either its release might incur shame or its content is too precious to be shared (Mize 2006, 73-74). The latter possibility must be presupposed in *Judith*, since the Old English version of the story fills Judith's mind with wisdom and counsel. In the case of Holofernes, however, the application of the schema is of course ironic, as his *gewitloca* is empty of such precious

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15   The concept of the mind as container is related to the hydraulic concept of the mind more thoroughly examined in Leslie Lockett's *Anglo-Saxon psychologies in the vernacular and Latin traditions.* The hydraulic model refers to "a loose psychological pattern, in which psychological disturbances are associated with dynamic changes of pressure and temperature in chest cavity. These physical changes resemble the behaviour of a fluid in a closed container, which expands and presses outward against the walls of the container when heated, threatening either to boil over or to burst the container if too much is applied. When the moment of intense emotion or distress passes, the contents of the chest cavity cool off and are no longer subject to excess pressure, just as if a heat source were removed from a container of boiling liquid" (Lockett 2011, 5).

16   In "The Wanderer", an elegiac lyric poem in the Exeter Book, the speaker remarks that a wise man must "his ferðlocan fæste binde, /healde his hordcofan, hycge swa he wille" (bind fast his soul enclosure, /hold his treasure chamber, think as he will) ("The Wanderer," lines 13-14). The quote from "The Wanderer" and the translation come from Bjork (2014). In Cynewulf's *Juliana*, the narrator commends the protagonist because "hyre wæs Cristes lof in ferðlocan fæste biwunden" (the praise of Christ, an inviolate power, was firmly enclosed in her heart) (*Juliana*, lines 233-234). The quote from Cynewulf's *Juliana* and the translation come from Bjork (2013).

17   Mize identifies four types of the metaphor. "The mind's aspect of containment, combined with impermeability and permeability respectively, can be designated by the schemata *the mind holds* and *the mind releases*; in its aspect of exclusion, we may designate the combinations with impermeability and permeability as *the mind repels* and *the mind admits*. All four of these theoretical combinations describing the mental enclosure's capabilities are attested in the extant Old English poetic corpus, at least in the form of a stated potential" (Mize 2006, 73).

content. Holofernes in the poem dies without, and because of his lack of, wisdom.

While Holofernes's mental state closes him off from wisdom and good counsel, he is also isolated from counsel in social terms. The most important symbol related to Holofernes is his flynet, an object that appears in the source, but which *Judith* makes more complex as a physical object and symbol. The importance of the flynet has been explicated in different ways. Campbell suggests that the poet's amplification of the Vulgate's description of the flynet is inspired by Hrabanus Maurus' commentary: "et conopeum hoc est rete muscarum, insidias significat dolosae cogitations."[18] He explains that "the flynet symbolizes the deceitful mental attitudes which are not accurately revealed to physical sight" (Campbell 1971, 163). According to Cart T. Berkhout and J. F. Doubleday,

> the significance he gives it is that of the 'two-way mirror,' something the Vulgate never suggests. The poet specifically states that the purpose of the net is to allow Holofernes to see everyone without being seen himself. He thereby implies Holofernes' suspicion and distrust of his men, a part of his character that the earlier sections of the poem had not suggested (Berkhout and Doubleday 1973, 631).

Like Campbell, they also detect the influence of Hrabanus Maurus's commentary (Berkhout and Doubleday 1973, 633). Karma Lochrie, in her feminist and psychoanalytic reading of *Judith,* claims that Holofernes exercises his symbolic power through masculine gaze that objectifies both his men and Judith (Lochrie 1994, 9). I would claim that the *Judith* poet expands the source's description of the flynet to associate Holofernes's policy with secrecy and unreceptivity to counsel. The flynet limits his physical vision and further impairs his ability to make good judgment because he is spatially, psychologically, and socially isolated from his men. The Chronicle annals discussed above portray King Æhelred in a different way. Æthelred is implied to be close to his witan, as the decision-making process is viewed in the annals as shared, distributed, and eventually under the scrutiny of chroniclers, scribes, and readers. In *Judith*, Holofernes' decision-making is obscure and involves deliberation in secret.

Judith is associated with good counsel, righteousness, and effective action. When she is to confront Holofernes, God inspires Judith's courage.

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18 The text comes from PL, 109, col. 573.

> Hi ða se hehsta dema
> ædre mid elne onbryrde, swa he deð anra gehwylcne
> herbuendra þe hyne him to helpe seceð
> mid ræde ond mid rihte geleafan. þa wearð hyre rume on mode,
> haligre hyht geniwod

> Then the highest judge inspired her straightway with courage,
> as he does every earthly sojourner who seeks his help with good
> judgment and with true belief. Her spirits were then lifted, the con-
> fidence of the saintly one restored (94b-98).

In the Vulgate, Judith utters a prayer to God that he should strengthen her.[19]
The *Judith* poet elaborates upon the source to showcase Judith as exemplary
in that she approaches God with wisdom and faith. Judith receives from God
such wisdom, *ræd,* as Holofernes does not possess in his *gewitloca.* The word
gewitloca in the poem indicates mental unreceptiveness, as such a mind, being
locked, can never be exposed to the influence of divine wisdom. Judith is the
opposite of that, her mind heeding good counsel. While Holfernes' mind is de-
scribed ironically as a travesty of the schema that Mize designates *the mind
holds*, Judith's mental state corresponds to a different schema which he names
the mind admits: "sometimes the mind's interior should be, and in this case
it must be, opened to something outside of it" (Mize 2006, 87). Mize does not
provide any examples of the schema from *Judith*. However, illustrating the
schema with references to other Old English verse, he explains that "wisdom
or spiritual understanding can be represented in Old English poetry as some-
thing originating outside of the mind that should be voluntarily received
into it" (Mize 2006, 87). It can thus be said that the *Judith* poet presents Judith
as an exemplary figure of authority in that she receives courage from God
because she seeks and prays for it, being wise (having *ræd*).

Judith, in contrast to Holofernes, is a vessel of wisdom. The poet's

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19 In the Vulgate, Judith addresses God praying, "dicens confirma me Domine Deus Israhel et respice
in hac hora ad opera manuum mearum ut sicut promisisti Hierusalem civitatem tuam erigas et hoc quod
credens per te posse fieri cogitavi perficiam" ("Saying: Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, and in this
hour look on the works of my hands, that as thou hast promised, thou mayst raise up Jerusalem thy city:
and that I may bring to pass that which I have purposed, having a belief that it might be done by thee").

emphasis on Judith's wisdom is, in fact, one of the most significant additions to the source.[20] As Mark Griffith demonstrates in his edition of the poem, "a system of contrasting repetitions is seen in the pervasive use of compounds containing elements meaning 'mind' or 'spirit' (28 instances of 22 different compounds)" (Griffith 1997, 89). Judith is "gleaw on geðonce" (brilliant in her plan) (13b) and "ferhðgleawe" (sage of spirit) (41a).[21] She is also "seo snotere mægð" [a wise young woman] (125a) and "searoncol mægð" [a prudent-minded woman] (145a). In addition, Judith is radiant, as is brought into relief on the night that falls after the feast. She is "ides ælfscinu" [a lady of elvish beauty] (14a) and "torhtan mægð" [a radiant young woman] (43a). While the association forged in the poem between night and the spiritually benighted fulfills the poet's purpose to reinforce the contrast between good and evil, the *Judith* poet also introduces to the story an association between radiance, wisdom and good counsel.

The fact that Holofernes knew no good counsel ("nyste ræde nanne") thus enters the set of important associations established in the late tenth-century literature, in which both *ræd* and *unræd* are critically important words in the vocabulary of poetic and historical writings. Read in light of the broad historical and literary context, Holofernes emerges as a warning to authorities that the inability to follow sound counsel results in both spiritual death and military defeat. By contrast, Judith emerges in the poem as a figure whose authority is based on wisdom and right faith. Holofernes, as an example of bad leadership, might be of great interest to tenth-century poets who wanted their audience to be exposed to examples of leadership worthy of emulation and warned against becoming the opposite. In addition, the theme of kingship and lordship was of significant interest to whoever compiled the texts of the Cotton Vitellius A xv, as all texts feature kings, especially earthly pagan princes. While a number of critics view monsters as the central interest of most of the texts found in the *Beowulf*-Manuscript, a different suggestion is made by Kathryn Powell, who argues that the choice of texts in the manuscript

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20 That emphasis is accounted for by Astell as a possible influence of Ambrose's commentary on Judith, who identifies Judith with sobriety and Holofernes with drunkenness (Astell 1989: 123).

21 Other compounds in the poem that emphasise Judith' wisdom, which Griffith lists in his discussion, include "ferhðgleawe" (41a), "searoðoncol" (145a), "gleawhydig" (148a), "gearoþonclorne" (341a, "higeðoncolre" (131a), "ðancolmode" (172) (Griffith 1997, 89).

reflects "an interest in rulers and rulership, particularly in the ethical conflicts that arise in their interactions with foreign peoples as those rulers defend and expand their kingdoms" (Powell 2006, 10).

As an earthly prince, Holofernes is presented as benighted and pervasively contrasted with Judith, who is *beorht ides*, "a bright lady," and possesses wisdom. In the poem, the imagery of light and radiance is essential to the poem's representation of Judith as a figure of authority. The poet's technique of simplification and polarization makes Judith a figure of authority to a greater degree than the source. Such a positive investment in Judith's wisdom is also unprecedented in Aldhelm and Ælfric. Mental illumination and the light bestowed on Judith invest her actions with supernatural and spiritual legitimacy. Holofernes is thus contrasted with God as the giver of light and with Judith as *beorht ides,* whose actions perform divine justice in the material world. The radiance that characterizes Judith is not biblical in origin; the sources emphasise her beauty, but radiance is a feature attributed to Judith only by the *Judith* poet. Judith is "ides ælfscinu" [the lady of supernatural beauty] (14a) and "beorhtan idese" [the radiant lady] (58b). Helen Damico has argued that Judith has been modelled on Valkyrie-brides and that the source of light imagery is Germanic (Damico 1990, 185).

Whatever the source of this imagery, the *Judith* poet invests this imagery with the poem's political purpose. Most importantly, the sustained imagery of light and radiance informs the poet's account of Judith's violence as a performance of divine justice. Judith addresses God as "torhtmod tires Brytta" (93a) when she prays to him before striking and killing Holofernes. The moment when the imagery of radiance is used especially exuberantly is when Judith presents Holofernes's head to the Bethulians on her return from the Assyrian camp. When Judith has come with Holofernes' head as a sign of victory, she says to the Bethulians that

> "Ic eow secgan mæg
> þoncwyrðe þing, þæt ge ne þyrfen leng
> murnan on mode. Eow ys metod bliðe,
> cyninga wuldor; þæt gecyðed wearð
> geond woruld wide, þæt eow ys wuldorblæd
> torhtlic toweard ond tir gifeðe
> þara læðða þe ge lange drugon."

> I can tell you something worthy of gratitude, that you no longer
> need have anxiety of mind. Providence is kind to you, the splen-
> dour of kings; it has been revealed throughout the wide world
> that resplendent, glorious honour has befallen you and glory
> is given you, redemption from the trials you have long endured
> (*Judith* 152b-158).

The word *tir* makes another appearance in the final part of her speech:

> Fynd syndon eowere
> gedemed to deaðe, ond ge dom agon
> tir æt tohtan, swa eow getacnod hafað
> mihtig Dryhten þurh mine hand"
>
> our enemies are sentenced to death, and you will have honour and
> glory from the encounter, as the mighty Lord has revealed to you
> through my hand (195b-198).

Judith's speech to Bethulians, delivered at the city walls, contains a confluence of themes and brings together the imagery of light, mental clarity, and revelation. She displays the head as a clear sign of glory. Now the Bethulians can "sweotole … heafod starian" [clearly … see the head] (177-179).

The word occurs for the fourth time in a critical moment of the poem, when the Assyrian army is defeated by the army of the Bethulians. The defeat is presented as a manifestation of God's judgment: "þa wæs hyra tires æt ende, / eades ond ellendæda" (Their glory was then at an end, their prosperity and their prowess) (272b-273a). The artistic and thematic purpose of the collocation serves thus to unify the two parts of the poem, presenting Judith's single-handed defeat of Holofernes and the heroism of the Bethulian men in the same light, that is, as an expression of divine justice, and figuring Judith as the conduit of wisdom and counsel. The function of the imagery of light is to present a causal relationship between Judith's counsel and wisdom and the heroic action performed by the people of Bethulia.

The collocation of "torhtlic" (glorious) and "tir" (glory) is thus an important addition to the poem, and the poem's exuberant collocating of light, justice and mental clarity is consistent and therefore significant. John M. Hill has made

insightful observations regarding the collocation of "tir" with light in other Old English verse. While the meaning of "tir" may appear quite transparent, seeing as the basic meaning of the word is "glory" and "honour" according to Bosworth-Toller Dictionary of Old English, Hill suggests that the collocation is a reflection of a pre-Christian association of the pagan Germanic god of justice, *Tir* or *Tiu*, with light, an association which, as argued by Hill, is operative in the account of Beowulf's fight with Grendel's mother (Hill 1995, 64). Inspired by Georges Dumezil's theories about Germanic paganism, Hill suggests that the origin of the collocation is pagan.[22] The critic lists a number of examples from Old English verse in which the word *tir* appears in the context of battle and light and points out that

> similar associations in *Beowulf* and elsewhere in Old English poetry suggest that when terms for brightness and glory fall together with 'god', 'drihten', and 'metod' within a context of judging the outcome of battle or of binding the terrible and undoing bonds of terror, then a cluster of terms and attributes appears which parallels our recon structed sense of Tiu or Tyr as the original sky god and god of war as law, as settlement (Hill 1995, 69).

Hill only briefly refers to the passage in *Judith* quoted above, suggesting that *Judith*'s "torhmod tires brytta", which refers to the Christian God, maintains such an association (Hill 1995, 69). Considering the textual analysis demonstrated above, however, it would be fair to argue that the *Judith* poet makes a far more complex use of the collocation than the *Beowulf* poet, and integrates it intricately into the poem's narrative structure, theme, and imagery. The *Judith* poet makes use of the theme with a view to presenting Judith as a figure of authority whose wisdom guides her actions as well as inspires the actions of her community.

Moreover, such an addition to the source strengthens J. E. Cross's suggestion that *Judith* introduces into the story the concept of just war. He points that while

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22 Hill argues that Tiu's chief function resided in granting victory in battle and this function is attested in Old English poems like *Beowulf* and *Widsith* (Hill 1995, 65). Hill does not argue for the presence of Tiu in *Beowulf*. Rather, he makes a valid claim that the traditional vocabulary was shaped by the concept of Tiu as a god of law and had become a residual element in Old English poetic tradition (Hill 1995, 66).

the biblical source presents the Bethulians as putting the Assyrians to flight, the poem makes it clear that their role is to defend their homeland, designating them as "eðelweardas" (line 320a) (*eðelweard*: "guardian of the realm, defender of the native land", Toronto Dictionary of Old English A-Le) (Cross 1971, 275). Cross observes that in engaging the Assyrians in the battle, "Judith's people have now really shown themselves to be 'guardians of the people'" (Cross 1971, 275). Ælfric of Eynsham, in his adaptation of the Old Testament Book of Maccabees, defines just war as defensive warfare against the Danes who have infringed upon the English territory: "*iustum bellum* is rihtlic gefeoht wið ða reðan flot-menn /oþþe wið oðre þeoda þe eard willað fordon" (*iustum bellum* is just war against the fierce seamen or against other peoples who intend to destroy our land) (Ælfric 2019. Lines 709-710). As Cross argues in his discussion of the ethics of war in early medieval England, English authors from Bede to Ælfric agree that the only justifiable kind of war is "defensive war" (1971, 273-274). In the poem, the justice of the defensive battle that the Bethulians are rallied into by Judith is manifest, since they are dedicated to defending their territory. Samantha Zacher, in her reading of war in the poem, argues, however, that the war the Bethulians choose to fight is not only just, but also an exemplary holy war on the grounds that God intervenes and assists Judith in killing Holofernes (Zacher 2013, 135-136). It is thus important that Judith emerges in the poem as a figure of both wisdom and justice. The significance of the poet's emphasis on wisdom and counsel lies not only in presenting Judith as wise, but, first and foremost, in creating an identity between her righteous action and the heroism of the men whom she inspires to fight. The imagery of light creates a relationship between Judith as a vessel of wisdom and the Bethulian army, whose obedience to divinely inspired authority is presented as exemplary.

I would like to conclude that the poem is political in that it introduces the issue of policy and counsel into the biblical narrative. It is especially important to see that it demonstrates the complexity of the concept of authority as negotiable and shared. Victory in the poem is presented as a social effort inspired by authority, both military and spiritual. Perhaps, it was the intention of the poet to choose the story of Judith to express this political purpose. That investment in Judith as an embodiment of such important virtues as wisdom and righteousness, in addition to heroism, demonstrates that the concept of authority was under heavy scrutiny in the late tenth century.

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Guyanne Wilson, Michael Westphal, eds., 2023. *New Englishes, New Method*s (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company)

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The reviewed volume belongs to the "Varieties of English Around the World (VEAW)" monograph series, which focuses on linguistic approaches to English in the global context, including its regional, social, stylistic, and diachronic variation. As stated in the "Acknowledgements", the work results from eight workshops held from 2018 to 2022 within the research network "New Englishes, New Methods".

Guyanne Wilson and Michael Westphal introduce the concept of New Englishes as those varieties which originate in colonial contact situations and are spoken in countries where English holds an official role, although it is typically acquired as a second or later language by the population. As the editors themselves acknowledge, the wording of the term may be seen as somewhat problematic: "something of a misnomer" (3), revealing a certain chronological inaccuracy, given that some New Englishes have existed for as long as, or even longer than, certain Inner Circle (L1) varieties (Kachru 1985). Nonetheless, they consider this term the most adequate compared to the alternatives, that is, *World Englishes* and *postcolonial Englishes*, which are too broad for their analytic purpose. The editors employ Brunner's (2017) four criteria used to classify given varieties as belonging to New Englishes: the origin in British colonialism, their functioning in multilingual settings, mostly official functions they serve, and nativisation they undergo at lexical, grammatical and phonetic levels. Interestingly, the above-mentioned criteria allow the authors to include also some non-traditional New English varieties, e.g. the second language (L2) variety of English spoken by Old Order Mennonites in Ontario. Although the already mentioned Kachru's (1985) Three Circles Model remains a significant foundation in the discussion of New Englishes, the reviewed volume significantly draws on Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model of postcolonial Englishes and their sociolinguistic development, divided into five phases (*foundation, exonormative stabilization, nativization, endonormative stabilization, and differentiation*). Another crucial

model is Mair's (2013) World System of Englishes and its attempt at establishing a hierarchy of standard and non-standard varieties (divided into *hyper-central, super-central, central, and peripheral*).

Yet, the volume's primary focus and theoretical orientation lie in the methodological approaches applicable within a given model to explore the under-researched area of New Englishes. Current research in this field often adopts methodologies from general linguistics, such as corpus analysis and Matched Guise Techniques. It is crucial to note, however, that these general linguistic methods, predominantly developed for Inner Circle Englishes (primarily British and American English), often require significant adjustments to be culturally and contextually appropriate for New Englishes. The editors illustrate this point with examples such as the need for culturally appropriate stimuli in elicitation experiments (Mohr and Agyepong 2022) and contextually relevant labels in attitude studies (Wilson and Westphal 2021). Furthermore, the methods employed in phonetic and phonological research frequently draw heavily on Inner Circle varieties, highlighting the need to develop best practices tailored to New Englishes. Perceptual dialectology (folk linguistics) approach also remains underused in this domain, despite its potential to offer insights into the underlying language ideologies. Consequently, the central aim of this work is to fill this gap by focusing on the aforementioned areas and aspects.

The first part of the volume comprises four chapters which demonstrate the continued relevance and evolving applications of corpora, particularly the International Corpus of English (ICE). Axel Bohmann and Adesoji Babalola's "variationist compound vision", adopted in their analysis of Nigerian English verbal past inflection, highlights the benefits of combining diverse datasets, such as spontaneous conversation and sociolinguistic interviews. Muhammad Shakir's work on code-switching in online registers of Pakistani English further emphasises the importance of context-specific analysis, in particular – the need for multilingual corpora. Finally, Theresa Neumaier's Conversation Analysis of Caribbean and Southeast Asian Englishes and Michael Westphal and Guyanne Wilson's use of Critical Discourse Analysis in their investigation of Jamaican and Trinidadian legal-cross examinations, both show the utility of ICE corpora for detailed qualitative analysis of New English variations.

The second section, dedicated to phonetics and phonology, includes only two chapters; yet, it addresses a critical gap in New Englishes research: the systematic study of suprasegmental features. Folajimi Oyebola and Warsa Melles' exploration

of question intonation patterns in Nigerian English, using audio recordings from the ICE Nigeria, provides a model for large-scale phonetic analysis. From the sociolinguistic perspective, it is also important to note that the authors show how intonation varies depending on gender and ethnicity, apart from the question type. Robert Fuchs addresses the distinction into syllable-timed vs. stressed-timed varieties (with most New Englishes belonging to the former type, and most L1 varieties – to the latter one). His development of a step-by-step guide for measuring speech rhythm, applied across diverse varieties, such as Pakistani, Nigerian, Philippine, and British English, is a significant methodological contribution, which may increase consistency and rigor in subsequent phonological research.

Language attitudes constitute the subject of the third section, in which innovative methodologies for exploring the perceptions of New Englishes are presented. Kingsley Oluchi Ugwuanyi's use of Acceptability Judgement Tasks (AJTs) provides insights into the nuanced ways speakers process and evaluate linguistic features in Nigerian English. Additionally, the author shows the benefits of using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The potential of mixed-method approaches is further foregrounded by the next two chapters. Giuliana Regnoli investigates language attitudes towards accent variation in Indian English among the Indian diaspora in Germany, drawing also from the methodology offered by perceptual dialectology and showing the diverse linguistic perceptions within New Englishes communities. Mirjam Schmalz's application of map drawing tasks (of St Kitts and Nevis), combined with sociolinguistic interviews, demonstrates the complex variation within a small geographical space, at the same time showing the ways in which the sociolinguistic research toolbox may be enriched.

The final section, dedicated to ethnography, comprises two chapters which provide a wider frame of reference for the earlier sections. Miriam Neuhausen's discussion of ethnographic fieldwork, drawing from her experiences with an Old Mennonite community in Canada, underscores the role of intercultural awareness. The author emphasises the significance of "a critical assessment of the sociolinguistic situation and an understanding of one's biases" (239) while researching New Englishes. Theresa Heyd's exploration of digital ethnography is particularly timely, recognising the growing importance of online spaces in shaping language contact and variation. Her discussion of ethical issues surrounding online data collection is crucial in an increasingly digitalised world.

The editors' reflection at the end of the volume is a valuable addition, emphasising the importance of critical reflexivity and researchers' positionality, so that

not only "the researcher's questions, but also the participants' realities" (273) are considered. They also point towards promising avenues for future research, including the continued development of multilingual corpora, the role of social media as a source of data, and the integration of digital ethnographic methods.

Overall, *New Englishes, New Methods* is a significant contribution to the field. It successfully highlights the cutting-edge aspects within New Englishes research, presenting the innovative ways scholars are addressing the complexities of these varieties. Furthermore, it is vital that it features some lesser-studied, peripheral – in Mair's (2013) terms – varieties (e.g. St Kitts English), alongside the emerging contexts for their investigation. The book's strength lies in its diverse range of methodological approaches, its focus on some under-researched areas, and its commitment to ethical and reflexive research practices. Thanks to the above, it serves as a valuable resource for researchers interested in New Englishes, sociolinguistics, and language variation.

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Petr Chalupský and Tereza Topolovská, 2024. *Of Spaces and Ideas: The Novels of Jim Crace and Simon Mawer* (Prague: Karolinum Press)

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The "spatial turn" in the contemporary humanities – a term coined by Edward Soja in *Postmodern Geographies* (1989) – marks an interdisciplinary approach to the multifarious connections and interactions between humans and the geographical, material and social features of the places and spaces that they inhabit. In *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Soja claims that "we are becoming increasingly aware that we are, and always have been, intrinsically spatial beings, active participants in the social construction of our embracing spatialities" (1996, 1). Ina Habermann and Daniela Keller, the editors of *English Topographies in Literature and Culture: Space, Place, and Identity*, highlight the numerous critical perspectives afforded by the spatial turn in literary studies: "Space […] emerges as the common denominator which allows us to study seemingly diverse topics in conjunction: social practices such as gardening, engaging in literary tourism, or watching television, artistic depictions or textual negotiations of landscapes or cityscapes, responses to planning and building, which add up to a distinct cultural topography" (2016, 2).

The monograph *Of Spaces and Ideas: The Novels of Jim Crace and Simon Mawer* (2024), co-authored by Petr Chalupský and Tereza Topolovská, draws on contemporary spatial studies with a view to closely examining the treatment of space in selected novels by two contemporary British authors, Jim Crace and Simon Mawer. Of the two, Crace enjoys more critical recognition. Apart from Chalupský and Topolovská's study, two monographs on his fiction have been published: *Jim Crace* by Philip Tew (2006) and *Jim Crace: Into the Wilderness*, edited by Katy Shaw and Kate Aughterson (2018). Neither of them, however, focuses specifically on the writer's representation of space. Simon Mawer has published fourteen novels to date, two of which, *The Fall* (2003) and *The Glass Room* (2009), have been nominated for the Man Booker Prize. His Second World

War novel *Tightrope* (2015) won the Walter Scott Historical Fiction Prize. Nevertheless, Mawer, although quite well recognised, has attracted little sustained critical attention so far.

One of the objectives of Chalupský and Topolovská's book is to make up for this deficiency by offering an extensive analysis of each author, with a special interest in how places and spaces are represented in their fiction and what role they play in the plots, character construction and, as the authors put it in the Conclusion, the writers' contemplation of "human spatial experience" (249). Whereas the content of *Of Spaces and Ideas* has been determined by its preoccupation with spatiality and the selection of novels has been made accordingly, the book is in fact a comprehensive double monograph on Crace and Mawer, with the wide-ranging analysis highlighting characteristic features of their fiction. As a result, especially in the case of Mawer, the scope of the discussion extends far beyond the question of space. *Of Spaces and Ideas* consists of two fairly autonomous parts, devoted to Crace and Mawer respectively. Each part begins with its own introductory chapter on the given author, in which his biographical background and writing career are outlined and an overview of his fiction is presented.

An obvious challenge that Chalupský and Topolovská faced in writing this monograph was to justify the grounds for their comparative analysis of these particular novelists. The authors address this problem in the Introduction, claiming that while there is no question of collaboration or mutual influence, Crace and Mawer share a number of thematic and aesthetic preoccupations, especially their interest in places and spaces. Hence, the starting assumption is that spatial representation is "a productive instrument of their narratives" (9).

The theoretical framework of the monograph is constituted by several concepts widely used in debates about the question of space in fiction. The first, introductory chapter entitled "After the Spatial Turn" presents an overview of the main theoretical approaches, affirming that the study of space became a prominent trend in critical theory and practice in the second half the twentieth century and continues to inspire literary criticism. This chapter is well researched, supported by numerous references and demonstrates the authors' competence in the chosen field. The concept of psychogeography, Yi-Fu Tuan's distinction between place and space, Betrand Westphal's geocriticism, Robert T. Tally's notion of literary cartography and Eric Prieto's *entre-deux* places are highlighted as being especially relevant in the subsequent analyses of particular novels. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the significance of space in Crace's

and Mawer's fiction, emphasising the combination of the issue of space and the trope of transition (however, as can be seen in the analytical chapters, this trope appears more pertinent in the study of Crace's works than in Mawer's).

The main part of Chalupský and Topolovská's book is a detailed discussion of selected novels by Jim Crace and Simon Mawer. In the first half of their study, which comprises chapters 3-6, Chalupský and Topolovská analyse seven books by Crace (and make a brief reference to an eighth). Each chapter is subdivided, but the authors have eschewed mechanical parallelism in the structure of particular chapters by choosing to distinguish several aspects in the writer's representation of space, each of which is illustrated by two novels and discussed on its own terms. In Chapter 3, *Continent* and *The Gift of Stones* are read as narratives exploring both "imaginary landscapes," defined by the authors as "the spaces produced by the author's, and his characters', imagination" and "landscapes of the imagination," which refer to the structure of the characters' imagination and the impact of their experience of space on their "imaginative creativity" (44). The latter category is convincingly exemplified in the analysis of *The Gift of Stones*, in which the seascape provides the narrator both with material for his stories and with a story-telling impulse. The function of landscapes as correlatives of the transition experienced by the prehistoric community is emphasised.

In Chapter 4 the authors' interest shifts to the role of landscape in character construction. Places and spaces are meaningful in both *Signals of Distress* and *Quarantine* since their protagonists experience displacement, and it is claimed that the landscapes depicted in both novels mediate between the characters' minds and the external world. While the settings in Crace's fiction may have realistic features, they also acquire "a larger symbolic or even mythic dimension" (81-82). The analysis of *Quarantine* repeatedly foregrounds the correlations between physical and mental topographies, but, intriguingly, also puts forward the claim that landscape is additionally endowed with the role of a moral agent.

The cityscape of *Arcadia*, one of Crace's best known novels, is the subject of analysis in Chapter 5. The authors again indicate the transitory nature of the depicted space, which is linked here to the tension between the urban and the rural. Yet, rather than being opposed, the two milieux are shown to be inextricably interrelated, making the resultant space unstable and changeable. Departing from postmodern readings of the novel, the authors suggest that it is illustrative of the transmodern paradigm shift. Like Crace's other fiction, *Arcadia* manifests a serious concern with ethical issues, such as human relationships, encounters

with the other-than-human and the environment, while also engaging with a critique of certain aspects of globalisation and capitalism. The extensive discussion of *Arcadia* is supplemented by a − disappointingly brief − section on *The Melody* as another urban novel. Instead, the reader is referred to Chalupský's article for an in-depth interpretation of this book.

The last chapter on Jim Crace deals with the "literary cartography" of *The Pesthouse* and *Harvest*. The latter novel stands out in Crace's fiction because, in addition to the processes of mapping real and imaginary places, it portrays a literal cartographic project, which, as the authors argue, leads to the destabilisation and transformation of a space that was initially strictly homogenous. Hence *Harvest* portrays yet another community in a state of transition, affected by historical changes which are imprinted, among other things, on the space that it inhabits. Physical, mental and emotional mapping also takes place in *The Pesthouse*, set in a dystopian American landscape marked by "entropic disorder" (127). Since the plot of the novel is based on the characters' journey and subsequent encounters with different environments, *The Pesthouse* is categorised as a multilayered "mapping narrative" (135).

The first part of the monograph is an impressive in-depth analysis of the chosen novels, offering their detailed and thorough interpretations. The shared focus on places and spaces in Crace's fiction inevitably results in a certain overlap in the readings; nevertheless, it is to the authors' credit that they managed to offer a variety of approaches.

The second part, devoted to Simon Mawer's fiction, is also based on a selection of novels with a focus on the role that spatial elements play in them. Two of Mawer's World War Two books, *The Girl Who Fell from the Sky* and *Tightrope*, are discussed in one chapter; otherwise, each chapter revolves around one novel: *Chimera*, *Mendel's Dwarf*, *The Glass Room* and *Prague Spring*, respectively. In comparison with Crace's fiction, the places depicted in Mawer's books are realistic rather than imaginary. Whereas "transition" is one of the key concepts in the Jim Crace part of the book, the authors foreground the notion of liminality as a defining element of Mawer's stories (152); however, the application of this concept in the actual analysis of particular novels is limited.

The Glass Room (2009), which remains Mawer's most successful novel, is perhaps the most obvious example of the writer's interest in space. Underlain by the conceit of narrating history through the story of a house – which is manifestly modelled on the famous Tugendhat House in Brno – *The Glass Room* becomes

a prime example of what Chalupský and Topolovská term Mawer's spatial poetics. This, in fact, tends to be intertwined with the temporal aspect. All the novels by Mawer chosen for analysis may be categorised as historical fiction, which arguably makes time in his stories just as important as space. Therefore, even in the interpretation of *The Glass Room* and *Chimera* (which depicts the palimpsestic landscape of an archaeological site), the authors could not fail to include a detailed examination of the role that time and history, in addition to space, play in the respective narratives. Indeed, in *Prague Spring* (discussed in Chapter 11), the historical component appears to overshadow the spatial poetics of the novel. The section on mapping in the relevant chapter employs the idea of mapping in a metaphorical sense, but has little to do with geographical space. Also, the short chapter on *Mandel's Dwarf* prioritises the issue of science rather than space. The section on "The Space of Central Europe" which concludes this chapter does little to expound on the importance of this space in the novel. Generally, the blurring of the expected focus on space in the second part of the monograph reflects the fact that Mawer's preoccupation with spatiality is less prominent and less consistent than that of Crace. As a result, the chapters on particular novels in the second part offer comprehensive, almost all-inclusive analyses, at the cost of a clear focus on spatiality. This, however, may be an advantage from the point of view of a reader who looks for an overall, wide-ranging introduction to Mawer's fiction. An added value is the competence that the scholars bring to the discussion of the three novels by Mawer with Czech settings: *Mendel's Dwarf*, *The Glass Room* and *Prague Spring*.

In the Conclusion, the authors sum up their main findings. The actual comparative component is relatively short but earlier, in the analyses of particular narratives, the authors occasionally highlight shared elements and as well as contrasting aspects in the two writers' representations of space. The monograph also includes an impressive bibliography. Chalupský and Topolovská's monograph will be of interest to scholars researching the treatment of space in contemporary English fiction. It provides new insights into the criticism on Jim Crace, and makes a pioneering contribution to the analysis of Simon Mawer's work.

Jerzy Jarniewicz, 2024.
Frotaż. Szkice o literaturze anglojęzycznej
(Wrocław: Ossolineum)

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Frotaż (which is Polish for frottage, a surrealist art form developed by Max Ernst in 1925) is a volume of literary essays written by Jerzy Jarniewicz, professor of English literature at the University of Łódź, awarded poet and literary translator. The volume, published by the Wrocław-based publishing house Ossolineum, is a collection of essays published mostly in periodicals over the last twenty years, edited, expanded, and supplemented by several new texts. The older essays are brought up to date with additional sections, entitled "Postscriptum" ("Postscripts"). The essays offer a most valuable and a very private overview of English-language literary fiction from the mid-19th century to the early 21st century.

The selection of writers and their works clearly reflects private fascinations of the author. One must admit, however, that the list includes a majority of the best-known works of English, Irish, and American fiction. We start with Charles Dickens and George Eliot, move on through Robert Louis Stevenson, H. G. Wells, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, George Orwell, and James Baldwin, to finish with Zadie Smith and Ta-Nehisi Coates. Jarniewicz addresses his essays to a reader who is keenly interested in literature, ready to embrace new literary challenges. The book is certainly not intended as an academic manual. The author seems to assume that the readers already have some basic knowledge of the biographies and oeuvre of the writers he discusses. His essays, however, constantly invite readers to expand the scope of their interest and embark on an individual quest for further literary knowledge.

Jarniewicz attracts the attention of the readers, feeds their curiosity, by offering new approaches to and new readings of quite canonical works, partly forgotten perhaps, and, more often than not, little known in Poland. As a result, *Frotaż* is an attractive book both for readers with only a general knowledge of English language literatures and those well versed already. Both groups – and anyone in between – are quite certain to enjoy the collection.

Jarniewicz points out how books which may seem outdated or be considered mainly period pieces, as is the case of the novels of Dickens or Eliot, speak of matters that are still current and surprisingly contemporary. He invites his readers to return to writers once famous but now unjustly forgotten, such as Ernest Hemingway or H. G. Wells. In the case of the former, he states that the most common perception of the writer was largely false, as it was proven by the more recent biographers and new editions of his works. In the final section entitled "Tęcza" ("Rainbow"), which quite tellingly starts with an essay about Baldwin, he moves on to such contemporary writers as Mantel, Coates, or Smith, who deserve to be better known in Poland.

Jarniewicz successfully maintains a balance between his roles as an academic lecturer, a literary scholar who shares his impressively broad knowledge with the reader, and an essayist-populariser, whose task is to arouse readers' curiosity, incite them to reach for the discussed books. However, there is a third role at play here – that of an individual reader whose reception is influenced by the time and place, historical moment, as well as personal experiences.

After all, Jerzy Jarniewicz is also a poet with a particular, personal, subjective, and keen way of observing the world and expressing the observations. The volume is a pleasure to read not only because of its content but also its form. The essays are written in a language that is energetic and full of enthusiasm, lively and attractive. The reader has no doubt that the author loves books and wants to share the love with them. There is a lot of humour, playful allusions to literary texts, and quotations not necessarily from the ones under discussion in a given essay, such as a line from "The Sound of Silence" by Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, which appears unexpectedly in the description of New York in an essay about Paul Auster.

Jarniewicz looks at the discussed books through the eyes of a literary scholar but also through the eyes of a poet. It is a probable source of his touching sensitivity to their physicality. Books do not interest him merely as texts subjected to critical literary analysis. He sees them also as physical objects which communicate with the reader through their graphic designs and points out the various possible approaches to the same book, which are caused by different cover designs.

He notices the texture of paper, which fades with the passage of time, and the cheap bindings of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which fall apart and require the immediate and careful attention of a bookbinder. He shares his personal

memories brought back by the changes that afflict the books with time. The alteration of old books (though not necessarily costly or valuable, Jarniewicz often mentions cheap mass-market editions which made it possible for him to read English classics such as a 1948 Polish edition of *Our Mutual Friend*) brought about by time becomes a metaphor for the changes that their readers undergo. And yet books have one superhuman quality: even when one copy ceases to exist, worn out by too many insatiable readers, the book can always return in a new edition or a new translation.

Frotaż combines texts originally published in various places; most of them were written for cultural magazines, but there are some published in dailies or theatre programmes, as well as afterwords to editions of novels. The original places of publication, however, are immaterial as they are connected by their author and his love of literature. It is an excellent collection of essays, combing as it should be expected of literary essays, the quality of the content with exquisite literary form.

Krzysztof Puławski. 2025.
Stworzone w przekładzie.
Opowieść o tłumaczeniu poezji
[Created in Translation.
A Story About Translating Poetry].
Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku

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Would you believe that a 506-page translation studies monograph which begins with the sentence: "The various definitions of translation […] tend to focus on the fact that it is the 'transfer' (*translatio*) of a text from one language into a text in another language" (12), followed by quotations from Olgierd Wojtasiewicz, Eugene Nida and Krzysztof Hejwowski as well as a footnote that is longer than the main text, could be a book that you would find very difficult to put down? Please take a look into Krzysztof Puławski's newest publication then and have a try for yourself.

This book is an absorbing read most likely for two reasons: 1. the theories and typologies presented/reminded here are illustrated with plenty of excellent exemplifications – to mention just a few: from limericks, songs by Jeremi Przybora, Michael Flanders, Tom Lehrer, Frank Sinatra and Patti Smith, through *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to William Butler Yeats, of course – all brilliantly narrated; 2. the entire argument stems from the author's own extensive literary translation and teaching practice. "The primary impetus for writing this book was my work on *Wiersze wybrane* [Selected Poems] by William Butler Yeats and the essay 'O tłumaczeniu poezji' [On the Translation of Poetry], which opens that volume. "I tried to gather there remarks on translating poetry and in the course of writing it I realised that I knew a great deal more, and I would gladly continue. In fact, I have been circling around the subject for many years", states Puławski (506). This book's matter "relates to my experiences – all that I have participated in or witnessed over the last forty years of my translation activities and a good dozen years of my academic activity." *Stworzone w przekładzie* is a piece (a fair chunk!) of applied translation criticism, theory-based and 'self-tested', confirmed by the author's own literary translation experience.

A scholarly monograph like this is evidently very difficult to read cold. The author's voice is so personal, clear and evocative that reading turns naturally into an internal dialogue with that voice – even if we are not always willing to agree fully with the presented diagnoses, opinions and interpretations.

"I confess that the first words of this book were meant to sound different. I wanted to start with the sentence: 'Forty years I have worked in poetry translation and this is my love story'" (82). [*Ha! That's what I suspected!*]

"I can't imagine a lesson on William Blake's 'The Tyger', during which pupils could read any translation of the work, and then in the course of it the teacher would not refer to the original text" (31). [*Neither do I. But how does this case relate to Billy Collins' poem 'Introduction to Poetry', presented to us only in Polish translation (by the Author?), a thorough reading of which "should be a prelude to all literary translating" (28)? And to the highly controversial typology of prestige, which is supposed to determine the degree of interference with the translated text (329−330)?*]

"The Polish translation of *Finnegans Wake* […] has not, as far as I know, received any comprehensive translation criticism or review. This is probably due to the fact that the translator knows much more about the text itself than any of his potential critics" (42). [*touché!*]

"I am, however, inclined to forgive translators of poetry for interpretative errors, provided, that they use them creatively" (49, footnote). [*we give thanks unto thee, o gracious sir!*]

"When I was translating Tracy Chevalier's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, my attention was drawn to two passages that were quite far apart:

> She turned up the hallway again and opened a door into a large room, where light streamed in from the front windows and across the red and grey tiled floor.

And later:

> The red and brown floor tiles were cracked or missing in places.

Both descriptions were of the same room, but in the first the tiles on the floor were 'red-grey' and in the second 'red-brown'.

Surprised by this discovery, I corrected the discrepancy in my translation. Fortunately, I had enough time to think this decision through and eventually I backed

out of it. It's not just that thirteen years had passed between the two descriptions and the tiles may have become discoloured, not even that the first description was made in the morning and the second in the late afternoon (in different light), but after all, the meaning of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is that colours are not an objective value and we can perceive them differently" (325–326). [*O!*]

From the long line of metaphors of literary translation, Puławski favours Ireneusz Kania's metaphor of the circle – the original into which we patiently inscribe the polygonal figure of our translation. Yet his own circle is rather a wheel of fortune than a wheel of torture, one may think. The theme of sheer fun, joy and satisfaction comes through his book quite frequently: in chapter two we read about the "joy and obsession of translation" (81), the final chapter "deals with an issue that is rarely addressed in translation studies, namely that translating poetry is a real fun for many translators, without which it would be much more difficult for them to face the challenges involved in this kind of translation, and that the enjoyment they derive from it can have a major impact on the translation of poetry" (474).

 "Poetic translation is difficult, but it can give a lot of joy. It requires work and causes problems, but overcoming them provides the translator with more satisfaction. It is full of life and light, but it also involves bad weather and everyday life" (477).

"Poetic translations are both difficult and pleasant, with the proportion between these sensations varies from translator to translator. [...] Nevertheless, the satisfaction experienced is so great, that we all feel the journey is worthwhile" (478).

While preparing to write this short review, I could not find the official English-language title for this monograph. In the end the title *Created in Translation. A Story About Translating Poetry* (as any other excerpts from the book quoted here) is my – I hope relatively adequate, but what's the word from the Author? – suggestion. However, having written what I have written, I believe that this book is a tale, a tale of poetry and its translation. The true heir to the best traditions of literary translation storytelling – the comparison with Stanisław Barańczak's *A Small but Maximalist Translatological Manifesto* comes to mind, and is not unjustified. Puławski also illustrates his argument with vivid examples, citing various translations: by amateurs publishing on the Internet, by his students, by more and less renowned translators of literature and sometimes by himself (the bravado of *Ciche mieszkanko*! The taste of his *guilty pleasures*!)

A fervent, fascinating tale. Fabulous.

The 32nd Annual Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English, Warsaw, 27-29 June 2024

Wojciech Drąg, University of Wrocław, Poland

The 32nd annual conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English was hosted by the SWPS University in Warsaw on 27-29 June 2024. The Organizing Committee was composed of Prof. Agnieszka Pantuchowicz, Dr Thomas Matusiak, and Dr Małgorzata Waśniewska. The Advisory Board was constituted by Prof. Hanna Komorowska, Prof. David Malcolm, and Prof. Piotr Skurowski.

The theme of the conference was "Interspecies Friendships and Non-human Companionships." In the call for papers, the organizers invited participants "to de-center traditional humanisms by addressing the problem of being with, rather than in, the world from a broad spectrum of fields and methods." They noted that our world is shaped by "a network of (in)organic and (im)material agencies," including "animals, plants, and fungi," as well as "ecosystems, machines, and algorithms." The conference sought to examine the various affective relationships that humans forge with such non-human entities. Among the many proposed research areas, conference organizers included human, animal, and plant entanglements; queer kinships; deep time and the temporality of kinship; decolonial critiques of humanism and nature; philosophies of friendship and enmity; biopolitics and disability aesthetics; post-nature and critiques of ecology; applications of AI models in the humanities; learning analytics and computer-assisted pedagogy; corpus tools for linguistic research; digital literacies and computer-mediated communication.

The conference gathered 34 participants from three countries: Poland, the United Kingdom, and Greece. There were twelve parallel sessions: three titled "Posthuman Relations," two called "Beyond the Anthropocene" and "Literature, Visual Culture, and the Non-human," and one each of the following: "Archives and Justice Beyond the Human," "Translating/Communicating Beyond the Human," "Friendship and Companionship in the Americas," "Speculative Kinships" and "Interspecies Kinships." There were also three plenary lectures. Prof. Andreas H. Jucker (University of Zurich), the outgoing President of the European Society for the Study of English, delivered a lecture titled "Courtesy Request Markers in the History of English: The Long Diachrony." Prof. Jucker presented the history of courtesy request markers

"pray" and "please" and explicit performative speech acts such as "I beg you" and "I beseech you." He concluded that current forms are rooted in a more egalitarian politeness system. The second linguistic plenary – "Learning English in the Age of AI: Will Dictionaries Become Obsolete?" – was delivered by Prof. Robert Lew (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań). The talk examined the effectiveness of various new chatbots in assisting language learners and speculated on the capacity of Generative Pre-trained Transformers to successfully replace traditional dictionaries. Finally, Prof. Tadeusz Rachwał (SWPS University, Warsaw) gave a lecture titled "All Critters Great and Small: On Terrapolis and Crittership." Prof. Rachwał considered Donna Haraway's decategorization of a humanist vision of the world in the Anthropocene as an indication that it is possible to exit the Anthropocene while avoiding self-destruction. The organisers also scheduled a literary reading by Prof. David Malcolm (SWPS University, Warsaw), who read several of his short stories to the audience's great applause. When he finished, many conference participants gathered around him to purchase copies of his collected stories.

At the end of the first day of the conference, there was a General Assembly of PASE members, which was held both at the SWPS University and online (via Google Meet). All members listened to the reports presented by PASE President, Prof. Jacek Fabiszak, the Secretary, Dr Izabela Curyłło-Klag, and the Treasurer, Prof. Wojciech Drąg. Afterwards, the financial report on the Association's activities in 2023 was unanimously accepted by the members. The final part of the meeting involved the election of the new President and Board for the term 2024-2027. PASE members decided unanimously that Prof. Drąg would act as the Association's new President. It was voted that the Board should be expanded to include new members: Dr Anna Cholewa-Purgał (Jan Dlugosz University, Częstochowa), Prof. Katarzyna Więckowska (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń) and Dr Ewa Wiśniewska (University of Lodz). On the other hand, Prof. Ryszard Wolny (University of Opole) and Prof. Michał Lachman (University of Lodz) decided to step down from the Board. During the conference dinner, which followed directly after the General Assembly, Prof. Drąg presented the outgoing President Prof. Fabiszak and Deputy President (as well as long-term Treasurer) Prof. Wolny with little tokens of gratitude for their service to the Association.

During the official closing ceremony, Prof. Fabiszak thanked the organisers – especially Prof. Agnieszka Pantuchowicz – for their excellent preparation of the conference and announced that next year's conference would be hosted by the University of Białystok.

Biodata:

Wojciech Drąg is an assistant professor at the Institute of English Studies, University of Wroclaw. He is the author of Collage in Twenty-First-Century Literature in English: Art of Crisis (2020) and Revisiting Loss: Memory, Trauma and Nostalgia in the Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro (2014), and co-editor of The Poetics of Fragmentation in Contemporary British and American Fiction (2019), Spectrum of Emotions: From Love to Grief (2016), War and Words: Representations of Military Conflict in Literature and the Media (2015). In 2018 he attended a scholarship at the University of Utah, funded by The Kosciuszko Foundation. Poland's Ministry of Science and Higher Education has awarded him a stipend for outstanding young scholars for the years 2020-2023. His academic interests focus on the contemporary novel and on experimental literature in Britain and the US.

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Krzysztof Fordonski, born in 1970, studied at Adam Mickiewicz University Poznań and University College Galway. He gained his MA in English studies in 1994, PhD in 2002, and D.Litt. in 2013. Associate Professor at the Faculty of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw. Main fields of interest are English literature at the turn of the 20th century, history and sociology of literary translation, and history of Great Britain. The author of monographs of the American novelist William Wharton (2004) and E. M. Forster (2005), co-edited the English language translations of the poetry of Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (2008 and 2010), and wrote numerous scholarly articles. Active literary translator, author of translations of over thirty books, both fiction and non-fiction, as well as over fifty audiovisual translations.

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