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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE – CULTURAL MEDIATION – ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD



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Vol. 4

Mimesis and Beyond in Fictional Worlds

REDAKCJA / EDITED BY
DOROTA KOŁODZIEJCZYK, STEPHANIE BRANSON,
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In memory of Margarita Slavova

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Mimesis and Beyond in Fictional Worlds. Introduction

Don Quixote searching for the world he knows from the epic tradition launches the modern novel. The text determines the world, not the other way round – don Quixote is looked at as a madman by the world around, but in the context of the novel he is simply an earnest reader – an ideal addressee of the literary text. [Foucault *The order of Things*]

1. REPRESENTATION IN THE NOVEL – BETWEEN ONTOLOGY AND RHETORIC

The novel represents the world, or a world – this is the only definitive answer to the question about the referent of fiction. But the status of fictional world poses a hermeneutical dilemma that makes novel reading ever so exciting. The mimetic constituent in the novel cannot be expunged – the genre presupposes representability of the world. Another question is whether “reality” can be substituted for “the world” as fictional referent. It seems that the inquiry into how fiction represents, comprising the formalist tradition of reading, and the inquiry into what constitutes the referent of fiction, are largely disjunctive areas of investigation. The first examines the novel as a complex structure of intertwining levels - the character, plot, voice, discourse, imagery, etc. resulting in a signifying totality. The second aspires to determine the object of fictional representation. While this disjunction ultimately promises a balanced hermeneutical model (an assumption that any study of the form reaches out to determine the nature of representation and thus its content, and the encompassing awareness that the split in the concept of representation is itself irrevocable), the separate development of each attenuates the signifying potential of the novel. Ontological questions about what fiction represents cannot be answered separately from investigating fiction as a dynamic signifying structure. The present volume, offering a range of approaches to fiction, specifically targets the problem of referentiality of fiction and aspires to show that the array of non-realist subgenres of the novel, although themselves challenging various conventions of realism, does not provide evidence for the novel's withering

rooting in the world. Indeed, if realism is to be read, as it is by many critics, as an epitome of the West's hegemony, then what to do with a long tradition of anti-hegemonic, postcolonial, for example, responses to the Western canon, which are realist in themselves, more often than not?¹ Sustaining the realist/non-realist divide as mutually hostile literary politics, one hegemonic, one rebellious, does not seem tenable. After all, magical realism for Latin American writers was the core realist form for their particular cultures and narrative traditions. Quite the reverse, the underlying ambition of this volume is to reiterate the concept of realism to its cognitive base and thus to expose its basic mode of operation in the novel – that of a device to sustain the novel's continuum with the world, no matter how askew of what can be established as core reality that device may be.

But the fiction-world continuum should not be understood solely as a representational problem. Mimesis is not a device to measure the degree of text-reality correspondence; it is, rather, an array of rhetorical devices providing models of intelligibility of the world based on "reality effect" that the novel creates². Mikhail Bakhtin defines the novel as a worldly genre – an imitation of the polyphony of the world³ – stressing thus that mimesis is a function of the language in the novel, and, as such, it is the condition of the genre's literariness. Bakhtin's contribution to the theory of the novel cannot be overestimated, considering his ingenious combination of formalism (the novel as verbal work of art, the object of interest of semiotics in general and poetics in particular) and contextualism (signification is always rooted in the social world, itself polyglot and dynamic). The language in Bakhtin's theory, and, along with it, the novel as the manifestation of the modern world's social polyphony, is not yet a text, but a live heteroglossia, opening up zones for a dialogic discourse with the world.

Such vision of the novel invalidates the concept of realism as some straightforward and transparent rendering of reality. Despite the long history of realism as a style whose impressive development in the novel has been underscored

¹ The realist novel as a brand name for the Western fiction stands both for the hegemony of realism, and for the novel's potential to evolve. When Fredric Jameson in his widely commented essay "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (*Social Text*, 1986) stated that the Third-World literature is realist in the way that the Western novel is not any more, he made a risky suggestion that the western reader experiences the non-western (realist) novel as already read – belated in form. Jameson is of course not entirely right about ascribing certain belatedness and simplicity of form to the Third-World literature *en masse*, but it must be noted that what he misses in the western novel and finds in the Third-World fiction is the critical potential of realism and the power of realist fiction to engage in collective endeavors (and thus to build up "national allegories").

² See, for example, Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics. Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975, 193.

³ Mikhail Bakhtin, "The Epic and the novel" in Michael Holquist, ed.: *Mikhail Bakhtin. The Dialogic Imagination*, Austin: University of Texas press, 2002, 12-13.

by cognitive thirst to show the ways of knowing, perceiving, and, perhaps most importantly, discoursing, the reductive understanding of realism as a style depicting “consensus” or “normal” reality surprises as a popular attitude in large areas of novel studies. The novel is thus divided into mimetic and non-mimetic, where “mimetic” stands for “imitative” in the negative understanding of the word (“non-creative”)⁴. Realism comes to signify an unproblematic (“consensus”) vision of reality that succumbs to the dominant aesthetics (mainstream or canonical literature). Realist fiction, although obviously comprising only a certain period and part of fiction as a genre, namely the second half of 19th century, is attacked for its alleged hegemony in the canon, as if it had not been dethroned many times already⁵. Frequently, critics see magical realism or fantasy as genres resisting the limitations of realism, by implication the mark of “mainstream” literature. While such non-realist styles should by all means be seen as a way of probing reality and disturbing our potentially dulled perception of it, realism is not their enemy. They all contain elements of realism stronger than critics are willing to admit; yet another issue is whether realism representing reality unproblematically is possible any longer (if it ever existed in the first place), considering the protean form of the novel and its tendency to play with the possibilities of form.

More accurately, if challenging the set order of reality is at stake, the novel as such, including realist novel, and novelistic genres which invest the world represented with an anti-realist tenor, should be studied along the lines of their agonistic relation to the world. In short – it is not realism that blocks broader, deeper, or truer representation – it is always the calcified convention and its underlying ideology that is. Consequently, representation cannot be conflated with a varying degree of realism in the fictional text (thus from realist to non-realist genres of the novel). Only when realism features as one of the possible styles of fictional representation can we start ordering theory of the novel according to its comparative potential of diverse aesthetic and stylistic engagements with the problem of representation. Bakhtin points out that envisioning reality in an active dialogue with the present is the novel’s condition of possibility: “The novel as a developing genre is especially fitting to reflect the reality in the process of unfolding. It best of all reflects the tendencies of a new world still in the making”⁶. Reality in a state of flux remains the constant horizon of reference for any novel, and asserts the genre’s ineluctable worldliness. How-

⁴ See Henryk Markiewicz: *Teorie powieści za granicą*, or Roland Barthes’ division of texts into texts of pleasure and texts of bliss in *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973), New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, 51-52, and 55.

⁵ Roman Jakobson in an essay “On Realism in Art” classifies types of realism concluding that each type of realism has a tendency to claim the “true” grasp of reality for itself against other types of realism (in: Krystyna Pomorska and Stephan Rudy, eds.: *Roman Jakobson: Language in Literature*, Harvard University Press, 1987. 24).

⁶ Bakhtin “The Epic and the Novel”, 7.

ever, it should not be understood that the novelistic genres can be classified according to the load of reality they carry: it is not the ontology of reality that determines a given novelistic type, but a style of representation. The novel constantly elaborates and enhances conventions applied to construct the necessary elements such as the narrative, or subject/character/voice; altogether they aggregate to the repository of devices by which fiction operates. As Richard Walsh writes: “The significance of narrative is not latent in the data of experience or of imagination, but fabricated in the process of subjecting that data to the elemental rhetoric of the narrative itself”⁷. Both realism and non-realism represent then the same ontology of the fictional world that is disjunctive from the real. We need to operate with categories allowing us to grasp the process of transition in which the real, entering “the contact zone with the present”⁸ – the discursive realm of the novel – is translated or transferred into the fictional. It is important to remember, though, that this transition into fictionality does not transgress the foundational cognitive horizon of fiction within which the novel performs its dialogue with the world.

Delimited by this horizon, the novel can never escape an engagement with reality or the world, but, what might seem to be a confinement, should be viewed as the genre’s potential to shape our understanding of the world and ourselves in it. We have stated before that realism should not be treated as the qualifying category for all possible styles of the novel. Magical realism, cyberpunk, realism, fantasy or the Gothic fiction are autonomous styles, not various points on the scale of realism. However, for a thorough understanding of the uniqueness of the novel’s place amongst other literary genres, we need to consider another aspect of realism that solicits the novel’s appeal to our sense of reality – not as a mimetic reflection, but as a test to our sense of being in the world. This meaning of realism pertains to the novel which is a genre embedded in the world. It is not precisely a style – this meaning is reserved to a more technical understanding of the word – but rather a discursive environment saturating the novel. Roman Jakobson was one of the first to notice the extreme relativity of realism as style in the arts: realism is either a purely intentional matter, when the author declares his or her work realist, or a matter of the reader’s perception⁹. What Jakobson implies by splitting the levels in which realism may be defined, is that although the style of a literary work of art may be far removed from what we might technically deem a reflection of reality, realism remains the warrant of truth and engagement with the real. Making a reservation that verisimilitude in a verbal work of art is a concept without

⁷ Richard Walsh: “Fictionality and Mimesis”, *Narrative*, 11.1, 111.

⁸ Bakhtin, *ocit.*, 7.

⁹ Roman Jakobson in an essay “On Realism in Art” classifies types of realism concluding that each type of realism has a tendency to claim the “true” grasp of reality for itself against other types of realism (in Krystyna Pomorska and Stephan Rudy, eds.: *Roman Jakobson: Language in Literature*, Harvard University Press, 1987).

much sense, because there is no “natural” correspondence between word and referent, Jakobson notes how each consecutive move in literature seeks a better realism, and does so by refreshing the language repository of the preceding style, thus by resisting the conventionalized form of expression¹⁰. Realism as a style is then a dynamic rhetoric: a field of forces which do not allow a given realist formation to set for long. Realism as a declaration of engagement with reality seems to be, however, what makes the “contact zone with the present” ever open and urgently involving for the novel. It makes it possible to speak from the position of truth variously sought and realized – as knowing, intuiting, or imagining.

Realism as discursive environment of the novel underscores Bakhtin’s theory of the genre, whose ingeniousness lies in a unique combination of formalism and Marxism (or, more broadly, social semiotics). The live social tissue on which the novel thrives determines the key features of the genre, of which its dialogic potential is crucial. The novel’s meaning lies in its relation to the “polyglot world” of individual social utterances in specific contexts of class, values, and other variables - Bakhtin recognizes the discursive constitution and vigor of the novel. An orthodoxly formalist analysis of the novel is not able to fully unravel the novel’s dynamic signification whose effect is that of an orchestration of the polyphony of social voices. In the light of Bakhtin’s theory all novels are realist in the sense of participating, by way of literary heteroglossia, in the world of social utterances. Realism understood as the discursive horizon of the novel is a performative category: a means of enacting verbal communication in the fictional text, it opens up space for the interaction of social forces. The novel in Bakhtin’s theory is not tested for its “mimetic truth” – it does not mean that he, or other formalists, “brackets reference”. The only and true reference of the novel is the language, albeit in its specific social idiom and context. Realism understood as a style whose best effect is a perfect referential illusion (thus “mimetic truth”) of a complete and objective representation of external world cannot be confused with discursive realism theorized by Bakhtin and the Russian Formalists.

The habitation of language of the novel in the immediacy of social life endows Bakhtinian formalism with a force lacking sometimes in later structuralist studies which have a tendency to sacrifice the context for the sake of pristineness of the narratological model. This tendency to link the novel directly with the social world is manifest in philosophies of the novel that locate the genre in its historical environment. Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Engl. trans. 1953) is one such comprehensive vision of realism as novel’s condition, and, notably, in Marxism-derived literary criticism. In Auerbach’s magisterial study realism is a two-fold concept falling into a rhetorical category of mimesis (ways of imitation in a literary text,

¹⁰ Jakobson, 21-22.

both in the Aristotelian and modern sense of the concept), and a discursive category whose task is to confront the antinomies of social reality in the narrative form. The two are of course inextricably linked, but each produces a different mode of analysis. As a rhetorical category, mimesis is traced through the poetics of the text. As a discourse, realism is a certain cognitive horizon emerging with the onset of modernity – symptomatically, Auerbach locates the beginning of contemporary realist tradition in Montaigne’s “La Condition Humaine”, championing self-cognition as the chief objective of representation in narrative writing. The object of representation – the self – as Auerbach writes in his archeological reading of Montaigne, is devoid of a stable core and can be grasped only in the process of constant change or becoming. There is, subsequently, no method – and no rhetoric – that could fix such a changing object to render a complete representation. The object has to be approached through a variety of stylistic means, always contextually, in contrast to others, never as a generalized concept. The process of writing (and, by extension, the very act of thinking the self) itself generates more indeterminacies splitting the subject into voices and producing subject (author) – object (self) polarity. This early instance shows that realism as a cognitive aspiration simultaneously determines the ethical appeal of the novel. It is this genre which is particularly apt to represent modernity – the mass experience of history¹¹ – dramatizing it in the narrative of individual lives situated in social contexts, and, ultimately, fostering the discourse of democratization. In Auerbach’s work realism is thus a sum total of the author’s experience of a certain historical *milieu* and a discursive and aesthetic fulfillment of the form.¹²

The historicist perspective, highlighting the dynamic of change operating in the style and discourse of the novel, develops in Marxist criticism as a project of “ideal realism” implicit in the works of György Lukács¹³ and proposed by Fredric Jameson in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act* (1981). In his elaboration of the aesthetics of the novel, Lukács sees the genre in its realist form as an ideal means for mediating the totality (*Totalität*) of reality. In his early essay of 1914/15, *The Theory of the Novel*, when Lukács was not yet constrained by the pressure to provide an ideological framework to his

¹¹ Żabicki, „Wstęp”, In Erich Auerbach: *Mimesis: Rzeczywistość przedstawiona w literaturze Zachodu*, Warszawa: PIW, 1968, vol. 1, 20.

¹² Walsh, op. cit., 117; Walsh considers Auerbach a “modernist historicist”, noting that for him fiction and history are largely synonymous, however, in the Introduction to the Polish translation of *Mimesis*, Żabicki stresses that Auerbach’s historicism is a way out of the Romantic (German) tradition of reading literature as the emanation of the national spirit. Consequently, Żabicki sees Auerbach’s historicism modern in that it acknowledges the immanence of history in the life of societies and individuals, yet withdraws from a totalizing, all-embracing history (and theory) of the genre in question.

¹³ György Lukács: *The Historical Novel*, (1938), Nebraska University Press, 1983; *The Theory of the Novel: a historico-philosophical essay on the form of great epic literature* (1920), MIT Press, 1974.

philosophy of the novel, he links the epic and the novel as founded on the same presupposition of totality (although totality in each functions differently): “in the epic the world at any given moment is an ultimate principle”¹⁴, and further: “[t]he indestructible bond with reality as it is . . . is a necessary consequence of the object of the epic being life itself”¹⁵. The novel, in turn, is “the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality”¹⁶. The problem and, at the same time, the condition of possibility of the novel as the modern epic is the implausibility of totality otherwise than in a utopian projection. Since modernity is predicated on the “fragile and incomplete nature of the world”¹⁷, the novel form seeks to contrive this incompleteness as its ultimate reality. Thus, the novel develops as a projection of totality operating as a resolution of the “dissonance of life”¹⁸. Logically, since the novel dwells in the contradictions of the world (e.g. the dissonance between the individual and the social), the totality is accomplished as the “subject’s return home to itself”¹⁹, a possibility not arising in the bourgeois culture. Lukács remains helpless in the face of contradictions presented by the great novelists of the 19th c., who, being “true realists”, able to grasp contradictions founding the capitalist society – represent at the same time the conservative world view. But the true – realist – sense of totality, Lukács argues, should result for them in a “true” ideological formation, and lead them to the level of revolutionary critique of the capitalist society. The lack of such remains for Lukács an unreconcilable contradiction. Where Auerbach productively links the aesthetics of realism with its underlying ethical appeal, showing how the cognitive urge of realism produces the high modernist novel (and, possibly, opens up the genre for further developments), Lukács entraps himself in an ideological, historicist projection of the novel’s ultimate, revolutionary horizon.

Fredric Jameson in *The Political Unconscious* draws a project for a Marxist hermeneutics. *The Political Unconscious* is founded on a thesis that the ideological and the utopian coexist in literature in a dialectical relationship²⁰. The great realist novel which, like for Lukács, serves Jameson as representative of the emancipatory functions (both conscious and latent) of every artistic text, postulates an “ideal realism”: a narrative discourse unifying the experience of everyday life with a properly cognitive mapping²¹. The fundamental feature of

¹⁴ György Lukács: *The Theory of the Novel: a historico-philosophical essay on the form of great epic literature*. MIT Press, 1971, trans. Anna Bostock, 46.

¹⁵ Ibidem, 47.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 56.

¹⁷ Ibidem, 71.

¹⁸ Ibidem, 71.

¹⁹ Ibidem, 128.

²⁰ Fredric Jameson: *The Political Unconscious*, 271-290.

²¹ Ibidem, 90.

19th c. realism that Jameson labels “first great realism” is the exhilarating versatility of its raw material and the corresponding versatility of its narrative apparatus²². Aesthetic and representational productivity of the novel prevents reducing the genre and the style to the “merely subjective”²³. Confronted by antinomies of social life, the novel creates their illusory (imaginary coming down to symbolic through the working of narrative fantasy latent in the novel) solution. For Jameson, the novel becomes a specific hermeneutic device for embracing the inevitable dialectics of necessity and freedom operating in the social. Jameson finds 19th c. realist novel exemplary for his thesis of the emancipatory function of realism not because this novel is especially faithful in imitating reality, but because it is able to express the richness and heterogeneity of reality. Although Jameson highlights in *The Political Unconscious* the especial value of 19th c. novel, it seems that his praise of the genre for its emancipatory potential extends to the modernist novel as well, because, although the modernist novel features an individual at odds with the encroaching social forces, the Marxist reading allows for wrenching the modernist narrative from the purely subjective, rephrasing it as alienation within the capitalist society. The modernist novel can be thus salvaged for the purpose of social critique, as it still retains its “political edge”, the genre’s condition for a critical objectification of the society and of a utopian scenario completing the critique. In Jameson’s study, realism is the discursive mode of the novel not because of its ability to reflect reality better than any other narrative. Combining Althusser and Lacan, Jameson asserts the fundamental inaccessibility of the Real – that which resists symbolization, an absent cause²⁴. The narrative in the novel reconstructs reality “after the fact”, making it presentable precisely as text. Realism in Jameson’s theory is thus not a set of formal practices to reflect reality in the narrative, but a postulate of a totalizing discourse able to transcend the immanence of the social in the “final horizon” of History, the “untranscendable limit of our understanding”²⁵. The novel ultimately manifests the political unconscious as its latent narrative form. In the light of his later *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991), where Jameson mourns the loss of historical consciousness as detrimental to the enterprise of criticism (as he identifies criticism with the properly dialectical historicizing perspective), the novel loses its political drive – becoming a commodity fetish, it takes part in tautological reification of signs.

Jameson’s disappointment with the postmodernist culture at large, and with the disappearance of an “accountable” realism in the novel in consequence of postmodernist “waning of affect”²⁶ marks an interesting moment in the his-

²² Ibidem, 90.

²³ Ibidem, 104f.

²⁴ Ibidem, 170.

²⁵ Ibidem, 100.

²⁶ Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1991, 10.

tory of the novel in which the genre boldly invades the terrain of theory and merges with it in one intertextual cross-referencing. This transgression calls for a theoretical commentary which would embrace fiction not only as a semantic whole, but as a cultural phenomenon of some borderless textuality. The violent disassociation of text from the referent is nothing new in the history of the novel – the genre has undergone an undulating intensity of self-reflexive autotelism, characterized by Bakhtin as the potential of the genre to parody other genres and itself²⁷. The newness of what can be termed tentatively postmodernist fiction, or, we should say, its difference, lies in its intensive dialog with theoretical discourse. While this aspect of postmodernist fiction has been widely covered, to the point where we do not know sometimes whether the novel does not work solely as thematization of theoretical paradigms, the specifically postmodernist nostalgia ensuing from the sense of loss of any trace of positivity inscribed in the concept of representation has not received a sufficient critical attention.

The nostalgic tenor of postmodernist novel situates the genre in the split between contradictory categories. Andrew Gibson identifies it as the split between Vattimo's elation in the "weakened mimesis", leading to the "erosion of representation" for the sake of the inaugural force of world-founding²⁸, and Baudrillard's (and Jameson's) "simulacrum" – "the panic-stricken production of the real and the referential"²⁹, where the real ceased to be. The postmodernist novel is an interstitial genre more than other types of the novel, because it dwells in the contradiction not to resolve it, but to foreground its necessity and inevitability. And the question is not how to valorize this fiction – for example, is it an expression of the late-capitalist decadence, inscribed in the overall sense of cultural depthlessness, or is it, perhaps, an inevitable stage of the development of the genre into more and more sophisticated forms (just to mention two possible opposing evaluations)? The question is, rather, that such fiction, peeling away what Valéry calls the "realist illusion"³⁰, locates its chief motive force not so much in representation of what is, as in self-representation of the language.

In case it looks like another confirmation of that the bracketing of the referent in postmodernist fiction is a symptom of exhaustion of the novelistic form, we need to make a disclaimer: such eschatological tone derives from a persistent need to order the form diachronically into a linear historical narrative. If we followed this line of thinking, the outburst of popularity of fantasy from the 80s onward could feature in this narration as a genre of replenishment after the

²⁷ Bakhtin, op. cit., 5.

²⁸ Andrew Gibson: *Towards a Postmodern Theory of Narrative*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996, 89.

²⁹ Jean Baudrillard: *Simulacra and Simulations*, in Mark Poster, ed.: Jean Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, 169-187; and Gibson, ibidem, 71.

³⁰ Gerard Genette: *Paul Valéry: Literature as Such*, "Style", Fall 99, Issue 3, 475 – 486.

loss of the referent. The loss is irrevocable – the real will not return – but the replenishment of the alternative worlds might be seen as a compensation for any such losses. However, genres and styles do not add up to form a neat historical narrative – as Genette points out in his comment on Valéry: “the succession of forms is not a history (cumulative and progressive) but simply a series of accidental modifications”³¹. Bakhtin’s theory of the working of the language in discourse, and novel specifically, as a field of centripetal and centrifugal forces, lends a more suggestive metaphor here. Postmodernist fiction necessitates deconstruction of representation not so much to contribute to the discussion of representability of or nonrepresentability of the real/the extralinguistic, but in order to attract attention to the sheer process of creation and writing. Andrew Gibson proposes to oppose mimesis to inaugurality as two contrastive modes or energetics at work in the narrative. This is Heidegger and Benjamin in opposition to Aristotle, Kant and Hegel. Disorientation constitutes art; art is not driven by a reflection that points to an origin or empirical data. Drawing on Deleuze: “invention gives being to what did not exist”, and on Vattimo: “art does not represent but inaugurates or founds the world, in that it represents itself as a new historical event or ‘opening’ of Being”³², Gibson argues that fiction is a form of art tending to “efface the traces of its own ‘inaugurality’”³³. The narrative form seeks a relation to the already founded, thus developing what Walsh calls “the rhetoric of veracity”³⁴ whose effect is by and large to hide its condition of disclosure. Interestingly, calling for a theory which will be able to stake poetics against representation (the theory of creativity against mimesis), Gibson reiterates theory back to the beginnings of contemporary formalist thought on literature as to the source whose critical potential was, according to him, obliterated by the later developments of narratology as a positivist pseudo-scientific discourse. Estrangement, the key-concept of Russian Formalism, is that which escapes pure semantics – “a mode of showing not reducible to representation”³⁵.

Creative act inaugurates a world that estranges – disorients our knowledge and sense of being in the world. Not surprisingly, Gibson, like so many other postmodernist critics, appreciates the possible-worlds theory which accentuates the non-mimetic character of representation in fiction. Fictional worlds are “non-actualizable other worlds”³⁶ constructed with a varying degree of correspondence to or departure from the world that constitutes the reader’s

³¹ Genette, *ibidem*, 88 - 90.

³² Gibson, *op. cit.*, 89.

³³ *Ibidem*, 91.

³⁴ Walsh, *op. cit.*, 111.

³⁵ Gibson, *op. cit.*, 89.

³⁶ Marie-Laure Ryan, *Possible-worlds theory*, in David Herman, Manfred Jahn, Marie-Laure Ryan, eds.: *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

“encyclopedia”³⁷ from which the reader draws propositions about the text (Doležel calls it “inference”³⁸). Gibson values the possible-worlds theory because it gives a new stimulus to analyzing fiction beyond the confines of imitation³⁹, but is ultimately dissatisfied with the theory, because, circumscribing the actual world with the category of inference, it prioritizes the referent back. Indeed, although it is difficult to overestimate the role of the possible-worlds theory in wrenching fiction free from the realist/ non-realist binary, and for broadening the scope of fictional semantics, the problem of mimesis and the poetics of fabulation remains a space of ambiguity in this theory.

Possible worlds in fiction are both independent from and heteronomous in relation to the world. Thus, fiction creates a space of alterity that neither allows a complete autonomy of the world created, nor does it make possible for a total correspondence between the fictional and actual worlds, whether it is a realist text of maximum completeness or an impossible world defying any logical semantics (e.g. some examples of *nouveau roman*). This is not a substantive alterity – the ontological status of a fictional world is in fact exhausted by the preliminary statement of being a non-actual world. So, the focus of possible-worlds theory is semantic: the link with the actual-world encyclopedia⁴⁰ and the degree of in/completeness of the fictional world determine the process of interpretation. However, as Walsh implies criticizing possible-worlds theory for its redundant duplication of mimesis smuggled into the concept of inference and encyclopedia, the possible-worlds theory lacks a reflection on the poetics of fiction. For Walsh, the possible-worlds theory does not answer the crucial question of what founds the rhetorical distinctiveness of fiction, of fictionality and literariness as opposed to other narrative forms, like prose and history. Walsh, reminding that for Ricoeur “mimesis is inseparable from the plottedness of the narrative”⁴¹ proposes to think of a poetics of fiction in which mimesis is not a matter of correspondence but of configuration – “[it is] an aspect of the construction of the narrative rather than its representational content or referential world”⁴². If mimesis, as Walsh insists, is theorized as rhetoric, then its function is to articulate the particular in the narrative form (the general). However, it must be observed that possible-worlds theory, itself versatile in approaching the issue of “accessibility relation” to the actual world in the world of fiction, manages to shun the hegemony of the actual world and show that inference does not have to be a device for linking the actual to the

³⁷ Umberto Eco: *Lector in Fabula* (1979), 1.

³⁸ Lubomir Doležel: *Fictional worlds: Density, gaps, and inference*, “Style”, Summer 1995, vol. 29, issue 2, 201- 215.

³⁹ Gibson, op. cit., 89.

⁴⁰ . Lubomir Doležel, op. cit., np.

⁴¹ Walsh, op.cit, 118.

⁴² Ibidem., 118, see also Umberto Eco *Lector in Fabula*, on the necessity of conceptualizing a possible world for positing of a model reader, 179.

possible world in fiction, but, rather, that it should be understood as a semantic device for locating the operation of fictionality in the narrative. Doležel, identifying incompleteness of the possible world with the core of fictionality as a creative act or process, states that it is incompleteness that regulates strategies of disclosure and hiding in the narrative⁴³. In this way mimesis, disassociated from substantive understanding, becomes a vehicle mediating imaginative data (the condition of fictionality) through the narrative articulation.

The issue of representation in fiction should be discussed alongside the issue of the rhetoric of fictionality distinguished from other rhetorics of narrative⁴⁴. The consequence with which any narrative theory and novel study finds way to poetics testifies to the fact that there is no possibility of procuring a satisfactory interpretation without a very close engagement with the text, including an analysis of the language and the ways in which it structures the narrative. It does not mean, however, that the theory of fictionality can be reduced to a pure narratology – such a reduction has never been possible simply because a strictly semiotic analysis will always seek to find the locus of literariness ineluctable from signification of a literary text. Shklovsky, who supported his concept of defamiliarization as specifically linguistic operation in a verbal work of art with Aristotle's statement that "poetic language must appear strange and wonderful"⁴⁵; Barthes, who restricts structural analysis to finding the locus of meaning: "it speaks the locus of meaning but does not name it"⁴⁶, and thus defines literature as "mantic activity"; Kristeva, who points out that semiotics is always at the same time its own critique; or Eco, who argues fervently that the knowledge of how the text works cannot hamper taking pleasure in it⁴⁷ – all of those semioticians do recognize that literariness needs a theory of excess – whether it is the postmodernist interest in "*energeia*"⁴⁸, the aesthetics of the "sublime", the phenomenology of incompleteness in possible-worlds theory, or the rhetoric of fictionality, the imaginative investment of fiction founds it on the rhetoric of difference.

The rhetoric of difference locates fiction in the framework of heterology that is paradoxically founded on reality principle. The gap between reality and the fictional creation is constitutive for understanding the problem of representation as exceeding the criteria of verisimilitude. The primary purpose of the present volume is to contest the opposition of realism and anti-realism either explicitly deployed in novel studies⁴⁹ or implicit in the concepts of mimetic (Aristotelian) and non-mimetic novel. Such a division obscures the critical significance of re-

⁴³ Doležel, op. cit., np.

⁴⁴ Walsh, op. cit., 116.

⁴⁵ Viktor Shklovsky, 63.

⁴⁶ Roland Barthes. *Critical Essays*, trans. Richard Howard, Northwestern UP, 1972, 219.

⁴⁷ Umberto Eco. *On Literature*, trans. Martin McLaughlin, Orlando:Harcourt, 2004, 1-12.

⁴⁸ Andrew Gibson, op.cit., „Narrative Force”, 32 – 68.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Kathryn Hume, *Fantasy Fiction*.

alism, which, as I have argued, should be studied as a discursive environment of the novel rather than a way to determine the correspondence of fictional text to reality. Realism is not a device for transposing reality into text, but a discourse operating on many levels of novel construction, and as such, it is an element of the overall rhetoric of difference (fictionality) structuring the novelistic text. It does not so much approximate reality in the text, as it makes this reality a great deal problematic and unsettled. Most discontents with realism testify in fact to a disappointment with mimetic conventions, and attempts to innovate forms of representation stem from the novel's generic hybridity and prevent any possibility of subordinating mimesis to verisimilitude. Realism dissimulates as much as it appears to assimilate, developing through sometimes a violent restyling of mimetic principles. In this sense, returning to Jakobson, we can say that any kind of fictional text establishes its specific conditions of imitation that will be contested as soon as they calcify into a convention.

The issue of representation in fiction, underscored with the contested concept of realism, demonstrates that the novel needs a methodology which would consolidate the study of rhetoric and the study of epistemological, ontological or ideological discourses saturating a fictional text. Such consolidated study would make possible a comparative reading of fiction between genres, because the intra-generic dialogism of fiction is manifestly one of its most striking features, codified in the genre's parodic tenor. We would think that several decades of the formalist tradition in literary studies (the tradition inaugurated with the onset of structural linguistics) have institutionalized literary theory conceived of as diverse propositions of analyzing fiction as a signifying system. But the debates on the usefulness, applicability, legibility and practicality of theory have become more heated recently. The critics of formalism point out that theory often generalizes literary texts to abstracted empty models eradicating the uniqueness of an individual text. But of course what is at stake with such an accusation is the question how we understand the pragmatic use of theory, thus at the core it is the problem of applicability, not of rightness of wrongness of theory as such. Indeed, some attempts of applying theoretical paradigms to interpretation of a fictional text result in a mutual blunting: theory is brought down to a mere interpretive matrix, and the fictional text, likewise, serves to accommodate a given theoretical paradigm. In point of fact, a critique of formalism is more often than not a critique of the metalanguage, in its radical forms coming down to some textual gnosis exuding the secrets of the text only to those untainted by the formalist rationale. However, the proponents of formalism, Umberto Eco being among them one of the most passionate semioticians, make the case for poetics as the only guarantee of discerning the fine working of the text⁵⁰. Theoretical investment in an interpretive act secures multi-dimensionality of signification in the text fully substantiated

⁵⁰ Eco, *op. cit.*, 236-254.

only within the complex system of interaction with other texts of culture. Eco convincingly argues that knowledge can only enhance the pleasure of reading - to fully understand how we perceive a text we need to know its principles of operation⁵¹. Endorsing Eco's defense of semiotics as an instance of theory by which he understands a tradition as long as the awareness of literature, and thus much broader than the historically defined structuralism, we want to advocate a poetics of fiction which, while attuned to the differences and varieties of novelistic genres, subgenres and yet unnamed idiosyncratic instances, enables a communicable and compatible reading of a fictional text, which is always actively discursive.

2. "REALITY AND BEYOND" – "FANTASY GEOGRAPHY" AS AN ELEMENT OF IDENTITY FORMATION IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Since fantasy fiction is addressed more often than not to children and young adults, and its popularity among adult readers is a continuation of childhood and adolescent fascination, we need to briefly offer a survey reflection on that subgenre of the novel, focusing on fantasy as a distinctive imaginary, cognitive and representational category.

In literature, reality and fantasy function on various levels⁵². Research on how narrative fiction represents reality (treated also as a historical-philosophical category identified sometimes with realism), has developed a range of notions and definitions, e.g. mimesis, replication and repetition, imitation, reflection, similarity and difference, verisimilitude and truthfulness, referentiality and representativeness, closeness and distance. For the sake of our considerations, we will refer to a frequently cited definition formulated by J. H. Bornecque and P. Bogny: „realism consists in precise, complete and truthful reproduction of a social milieu, an epoch we live or lived in, because its in-

⁵¹ Eco, op. cit., 161-179.

⁵² Theory of literature perceives this issue as a complex one. The methodological intricacies caused by the overlapping layers of reality and fantasy have been tackled by such eminent theoreticians as, among others, H. Markiewicz, Zofia Mitosek, J. H. Bornecque and P. Bogny, L. Nochlin, Alina Brodzka, Erich Auerbach, and R. Wellek. See e.g. *Mimesis w dyskursie literackim* ed. by Cz. Niedzielski and J. Speina, Toruń 1996 (there in J. Madejski, *Współczesna teoria literatury w Polsce wobec mimesis*); Z. Mitosek, *Mimesis. Zjawisko i problem*, Warsaw 1997 and her *Realizm* entry in: *Słownik literatury polskiej XX wieku*, ed. A. Brodzka, Wrocław 1993; H. Markiewicz, *Realizm, naturalizm, typowość* in: *Główne problemy wiedzy o literaturze*, Cracow 1966; J. H. Bornecque, P. Bogny, *Réalisme et naturalisme*, Paris 1958; L. Nochlin, *Realizm*, trans. by W. Juszcak, T. Przestępski, Warsaw 1974; A. Brodzka, *O kryteriach realizmu w badaniach literackich*, Warsaw 1966; E. Auerbach, *Mimesis. Rzeczywistość przedstawiona w literaturze zachodu* vols. 1-3, with an Introduction by Z. Żabicki, PIW, Warsaw 1968; R. Wellek, *The Concept of Realism in Literary Scholarship*, *Neophilologus*, January 1961, vol. XLV, 1-20.

quiry is motivated by reason, needs of intellect and social demand as well as because it is free from lie and any tricks [...] Such reproduction should be as simple as possible for everybody to be able to comprehend it" (qtd. in Mitosek 1997, 80). Polish scholar Zofia Mitosek, the author of *Mimesis*, claims that realism „was a reaction against classicist tendencies in art; it rejected imitation understood as following acknowledged models and artistic rules in the name of re-producing the world, its representation unmediated by the traditional models, the world as such which emerges in a spontaneous, momentary, actual experience.” She also adds that „realist works represent reality the way it appears in the current experience at the level of common cause-effect logic [...] [and] the processual character of the circulation of literary representation makes a writer select data that reality imposes on him; the classical hierarchy of themes is opposed by the search for the phenomena typical of a given historical moment...”⁵³.

These relations are given another dimension in children's literature, especially in texts set in fantasy worlds (e.g. fairy-tales, science-fiction, fantasy). There, the real world blends with the fantasy one on numerous levels, and using signs of space (here: overlapping elements that belong to the real and the fantasy “geography”) and journeys of the protagonist⁵⁴, which are significant for the identity formation, it often refers to the sphere of cultural identity. (cf. Z. Bauman, A. Giddens, A. Smith, Ch. Taylor, C. Calhoun, A. Kłoskowska)⁵⁵.

According to Roger Caillois, in the world of fantasy:

“Magic and everyday phenomena mix together, and the conflict of rationally explainable phenomena with the ones that are unexplainable causes fear and anxiety. Magic is associated with a terrifying aggression of the real world; therefore the fantastic world appears in the imagery of ghosts, demons, specters, vampires, etc. It is not a projection of dreams or a utopia created by authors, the vision is closer to the truth of real life. Fantasy is a capacious form, ready to tackle various issues, allowing it to refer to both tradition and modernity, use a variety of narrative techniques, mix realism with wonders, natural-

⁵³ Z. Mitosek, *Mimesis. Zjawisko i problem*, Warsaw 1997, 80.

⁵⁴ Ch. Taylor, *Etyka autentyczności*, transl. A. Pawelec, Warszawa 1996; D. Bühler – Niederberger *The Radicalization of the Self – from „Totzkopf” to „Julia Nobody”. Individualization and Aestheticalisation, the Change of the Self Ideal in the Children's Literature* w: *Metodyka a nauka o literaturze i nauka o języku*, ed. by D. Michułka i K. Bakula, Wrocław 2004.

⁵⁵ Z. Bauman, 2000: *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press (Polish edition: *Płynna nowoczesność*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2006; A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. „Ja” i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności*, Warszawa 2001 and *Europa w epoce globalnej*, Warszawa 2009; A. Smith, *Kulturowe podstawy narodów*, Kraków 2009; Ch. Taylor, *Multiculturalism and The Politics of Recognition: An Essay with Commentary*, Princeton University Press 1992; C. Calhoun, *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*. Wiley Blackwell 1994; A. Kłoskowska, *Socjologia kultury*, Warszawa 2007.

istic exaggerations with symbolism, magic of everyday life with allusions and metaphors.”⁵⁶

Such a level of representation of reality must intrigue a child. The characteristic features of the fantasy genre, crucial for the reception of the text from the perspective of a child-reader, are: the overlapping of real world and the world of fantasy (parallel and alternative worlds) with the transfer of the protagonist between both of them, and moral and ethical dimensions. According to the fantasy genre indicators, it is a child (children) who fights evil, often saving the world from a complete annihilation. This element often refers to critical events important to the country or world. That is why fantasy is close to a mythical way of thinking and, although “its origin is in fairy tales, mythology, legends, medieval chivalrous poems and adventure novels (...)” it still: “goes to the structural territory of mythology (...), and one of the dominating features of the genre is that every element of the fictional world is visibly ethically marked”⁵⁷ and is connected with independent decision of the protagonist, who is ready to make a sacrifice of himself if needs be to rescue people.

The fact that young protagonists voluntarily leave their homes and families rests on a promethean imperative. They believe in their predestination for the mission and they focus on completing it⁵⁸. What is important from the didactic perspective is that the protagonist taking part in the events should complete a lofty goal and act according to moral and ethical principles (follow the values of good, justice, righteousness, and love). Protagonists of fantasy literature often tread the path of religion and refer to *The Bible*, as a text of culture, comprising a variety of symbols, metaphors, codes, and signs⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ R. Caillois, *Od baśni do Science Fiction w: Odpowiedzialność i styl, eseje – wybór* Macieja Żurowskiego, introduction Jana Błońskiego, transl. Jan Błoński i inni, Warszawa 1967; see also K. Kuliczowska, *W świecie prozy dla dzieci*, 1983; K. Makowiecka, *Postać dziecka w literaturze fantasy – rekonesans*, in: *Kultura literacka dzieci i młodzieży u progu XXI stulecia*, ed. J. Papużńska and G. Leszczyński, Warszawa, 2002.

⁵⁷ See P. Dębek, hasło *Fantasy w: Słownik literatury popularnej*, Wrocław 1997, s.103. See also: G. Lasoń, *Baśń a fantasy – podobieństwa i różnice*, in: “Fantastyka” 9 (1984); *Magiczne źródła baśni i fantasy*, in: “Fantastyka” 2 (1990); A. Niewiadomski and A. Smuszkiewicz, *Leksykon polskiej literatury fantastyczno – naukowej*, Poznań, 1990; M. Skórska, *Powrót wyobraźni symbolicznej*, in: “Nowa Fantastyka” 2 (1990); *Totalna animizacja*, in: “Nowa Fantastyka” 6 (1990); A. Sapkowski, *Piróg albo nie ma złota w Szarych Górach*, in: “Nowa Fantastyka” 5 (1993); *Spór o SF. Antologia szkiców i esejów o science fiction*, ed. R. Handke et al., Poznań, 1989; A. Niewiadomski, *Literatura fantastycznonaukowa*, Warszawa, 1992.

⁵⁸ See: works by Philip Pullman, especially his famous trilogy titled *His Dark Materials*. See also: M. Oziewicz, *Człowiek, anioł i Bóg w trylogii Philipa Pullmana “Mroczne materie”*, in: *Anioł w literaturze i kulturze*, ed. J. Ługowska, Wrocław 2004.

⁵⁹ About cultural indexes of the sacred and the profane, including the cultural role of holiday, see: R. Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, trans. by Meyer Barash, New York 1960.

As we can see, the structural axis of fantasy for children and young adults text includes, first and foremost, the protagonist's journey, emphatic creation of the world s/he traverses, and his/her mission to save the world which is often also a beginning of a new era (see e.g. J. R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, P. Pullman, *His Dark Materials*, J. Rowling, *Harry Potter*). These fantasy novels have at the same time a deeper, philosophical dimension, which is that of human lot understood as Fate, Fortune, or Chance. In this perspective, protagonist's adventures – even if s/he is active and inventive – are not always his/hers to control. Especially important is the group of characters who support the protagonist, which leads to interpreting fantasy texts in the social context and treating the motif of journey as a metaphor of social life: “a metaphor of primacy of social life over isolationism”⁶⁰ Also the category of time calls for broader interpretations as it assumes different meanings: apart from plot time (linear time of subsequent events), one can find also mythic time, biblical (religious) time, and historic time. After all, looking for one's identity means also drawing on the past (antiquity), history, and legacy of traditions⁶¹.

Fantasy literature for children and young adults often contains space descriptions that can be categorized as “fantasy geography” (cf. U. Eco) or a “map – mind” (mental maps, thought maps, imagination maps, maps of associations), meaning territories and lands that depict Arcadia, utopia, illusions or simply “landscapes of imagination” (according to M. Ende – *Fantastica*).

Such imagined worlds, representing, in a sense, the actual reality, create poetics of space and place (geopoetics)⁶² that is characterized in terms of history (or metahistory⁶³) and socio-culture as well as morality and ethics⁶⁴.

⁶⁰ See: A. Gemra, E. Rudolf, the entry *Fantasy* in: *Słownik literatury popularnej*, ed. by T. Żabski, Wrocław 2003.

⁶¹ See: M. Oziewicz, *One Earth, One People: The Mythopoeic Fantasy Series of Ursula K. Le Guin, Lloyd Alexander, Madeleine L'Engle and Orson Scott Card*, Jefferson 2008; tenże, *Magiczny urok Narnii: Poetyka i filozofia Opowieści z Narnii C. S. Lewisa*, Kraków 2005; A. Zgorzelski, *Fantastyka. Utopia. Scienc fiction. Ze studiów nad rozwojem gatunków*, Warszawa 1980; H. Dubowik, *Fantastyka w literaturze polskiej. Dzieje motywów fantastycznych w zarysie*, Bydgoszcz 1999; *Fantastyka w obliczu przemian*, ed. R. Kochanowicz, D. Mrozek, B. Stefaniak, Poznań 2012 (here: A. Smuszkiewicz, *Problemy periodyzacji współczesnej fantastyki* i P. Czapliński, *No future*).

⁶² E. Rybicka, *Zwrot topograficzny w badaniach literackich. Od poetyki przestrzeni do polityki miejsca*, w: *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*, t. 1, ed. T. Walas, R. Nycz, Kraków 2012, s. 311–343 lub tejże *Geopoetyka. O mieście, przestrzeni i miejscu we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach kulturowych*, w: *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*, t. 1, ed. M. P. Markowski, R. Nycz, Kraków 2010, s. 471–490.

⁶³ See: Hayden White, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination In Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 1973. See also: *Poetyka pisarstwa historycznego*, ed. by E. Domańska i M. Wilczyński, Kraków 2010).

⁶⁴ On mental landscapes see K. Stępnik, *Z zagadnień poetyki krajobrazu w literaturze polskiej połowy wieku XIX*, w: *Z problemów poetyki historycznej*, ed. by L. Ludorowski,

What is symbolic for many works of that kind, the hero's journey not only creates such space, but also is the key element that holds the story together; in this case such a journey refers to both mythical and archetypal sources (e.g., S. Lagerlöf's *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, *Hobbit* by Tolkien, or Ursula K. Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*).

Peter Hunt claims: "Fantasy journeys take place in a landscape: whether **physical** or **emotional**, **literal** or **figurative**—or most likely, all four"⁶⁵.

Through the hero's journey, Polish fantasy for children, similarly to English fantasy, - cf. Peter Hunt - "explores [on different levels] a **national psyche**; the "objective correlative" of a place is projected onto the fundamental patterns of growth. To take this point one stage further, it is not surprising that English fantasy/Polish fantasy so often finds itself using maps (England must be, after all, the most minutely-mapped territory on Earth) - nor that these maps are both reductive and suggestive; they stabilize the fantasy, while releasing a greater imaginative potential—and, one may say, they also symbolize the tension that exists for the writer between the real landscape and the fantasy which inhabits it"⁶⁶.

In the Polish literature for children and young adults, one can find two models of "fantasy geography" and space creation (geopoetics). Both of them are firmly based in the poetics of Romantic travel writing and the Romantic approach to nature in depicting the identity-seeking protagonist. The setting (as "a telling space") here is symbolic or allegoric and becomes a great metaphor of changing of the world.

Both these models often contain the motif of patriotic journeys connected with the history of Poland, seen as a national myth, a native "mental geography" (here: places of national remembrance, such as "holy places" of historical battlefields, tombs of historical heroes, ruins of exceptional historical castles, extraordinary Polish landscapes, like the Mazowsze region, the Tatra Mountains - a part of the Carpathian Mountains (cf. the fairy-tale of *Little Orphan Mary and the Gnomes* by Maria Konopnicka - 1895)

The first model is anti-utopian in character and offers social diagnoses. Here one can refer to J. Korczak's works, namely *King Matt the First* (1922) - understood as a story about ruling a country - and *King Matthew on Desert Island* (1923).

The other model offers poetic lessons on national geography, or in other words: "ethical geography". It presents "vistas" that unveil ideological and axiological connotations to the reader, and "landscapes" that highlight aesthetic meanings. This model is also a framework for discussions and issues about re-

Lublin 1984, p. 19–31 and A. Kowalczykova, *Pejzaż romantyczny*, Warszawa 1982.

⁶⁵ Deirdre F. Baker, *What We Found on Our Journey through Fantasy Land*, in: „Children's Literature and Education” 2006: 37, p. 237–251.

⁶⁶ P. Hunt, *Landscape and Journeys, Metaphors and Maps: The Distinctive Feature of English Fantasy*, "Children's Literature Association Quarterly" 12/1, 1987:1

lations between tradition and modernity (we will consider here Dorota Tera-kowska's *The Daughter of Witches* and *The Loneliness of the Gods*).⁶⁷

In the methodological description of space, we refer to: 1/. The stylistic and semantic category, on the level of language, e.g. geographical proper names; 2/. The image of space as a scenery/background for events and characters; space becomes here also an objective exponent of a certain communication strategy that is assumed within a work (for example, points of view, perspectives of observations, marking centres and peripheries of "spatial orientation", etc.); 3/. Space as a sense enhanced – "a telling space", symbolic, allegoric, possessing a meaning of "a great metaphor"; space treated as, among other things, an equivalent of protagonist's emotional states, a part of – according to Y. Lotman and his semiotics of culture – the concept of protagonist's moral and spatial domain.

In this case, the quest of young protagonists, who may be maturing while searching for the meaning of life and their identity or who are trying to understand the identity of their nation, also turns into their "inner journey", acquires universal features and becomes a metaphor of everybody's destiny.

3. THE AUTHORS

The present volume comprises studies in the novel across its generic spectrum: magical realism, postmodernist fiction, documentary/pseudo-documentary fiction, children's literature, and fantasy. This division is meant to be rather provisional, because it shows not so much a clear division between styles (and we have to understand that these styles function more as landmarks for criticism rather than authentic modes of fiction) as, first, the rich stylistics of the novel *per se*, and, second, and most importantly, the tendency inherent in the novel to hybridize the modes of expression and representation. That is why some categories will inevitably overlap – why should magical realism be separated from postmodernist fiction, if it shares with it the high level of self-consciousness and intertextual intensity, not to mention the persistent ironical mode? Critics like Fredric Jameson or Linda Hutcheon, each for different reasons, included magical realism in the category of postmodernist dominant (Jameson), or postmodernist fiction (Hutcheon). However, equally convincing reasons for separating mag-

⁶⁷ See T. Watkins, *Space, History and Culture: The Setting of Children's Literature*, in: *Understanding Children's Literature: Key Essays from the Second Edition of the International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, ed. P. Hunt, Routledge 2005; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955; G. Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolas, Beacon Press, 1994; P. Hunt, *Landscape and Journeys, Metaphors and Maps: The Distinctive Feature of English Fantasy*, "Children's Literature Association Quarterly" 12/1, 1987:11; U. Eco, *The Book of Legendary Lands*, transl. A. McEwan, Rizzoli Exlibris 2013.

ical realism from postmodernism issue from postcolonial criticism and, inspired by it, ethnic literature studies in the US. Magical realism cannot be conflated with postmodernism, because it should be seen as recuperative discourse seeking to supplement reality where the modes of description are lacking⁶⁸ [Simpkins?]. Or, for that matter, why should fantasy be strictly separate from magical realism, if quite often fiction classified as magical realism can also be analyzed as fantasy (Amitav Ghosh *The Calcutta Chromosome*), and vice versa, fantasy is not alien to the overt blurring of the border between the real and imaginary, the strategy characteristic of magical realism (here Rowling's *Harry Potter* could be considered quite an example). Or, continuing in this vein, what is the difference between cyberpunk novel and fantasy, if both types of fiction foreground the alternative possibilities of world building? These questions are to be provocative, in order to make us aware that the definitive difference between the types of fiction mentioned seems to be strongly thematic and rather weakly formal, and the most interesting problem arising from this is how to translate this thematic difference into the rhetorical study of fiction that would ultimately tell us something revealing about fictionality that still remains a mystery bearing upon any formalist or contextual study of the novel.

MAGICAL REALISM – ENHANCEMENT OF THE REAL

The discussion is open by two essays on Louis Erdrich which fathom how magicorealist text sets out to offer a radical difference from the constraining social and cultural majority discourse by installing an active alternative of the minority culture.

Barbara Kaletka-Leftih (1) in “The volatile nature of the real in the North Dakota cycle of novels by Louise Erdrich” finds Erdrich’s interest between speech and writing determining for the novelist’s ingenious representation of reality that nurtures resistance and dissent as the condition of survival for the minority ethnic culture through, among others, textualization of the oral ways of storytelling. What we can call an imaginative transcript of alterity has ultimately the potential to render reality mutable and heterological, inscribed with the local forms of discourse and imagination that resist generalization to empty anthropological and theoretical paradigms. In “[P]Reservation Art[i] F/Acts: *The Painted Drum* by Louise Erdrich” **Marta Łysik (2)** reads Erdrich’s novels through the category of magicoreligious realism, underlining the important implication of this sub-category of magic realism – its ideology, we might say, is that of anti-essentialist representation whose strongest message is against confining such novelists as Erdrich within the culturalist category of ethnic literature. Łysik argues, analyzing Erdrich’s text as a way to recuperate and reunite the forgotten cultural and communal entities, that the novel-

⁶⁸ Simpkins. *Magical Strategies: The Supplement to Reality*. “Twentieth Century Literature.” Summer 88, Vol. 34 Issue 2, 140.

ist's notable aspiration is to promote American writing as diversity founded on multiple loyalties, thus a way to unite over and with recognition of differences, rather than essentializing it to an overarching and nondialogic particularity.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND FANTASY WORLDS

Junko Yokota (3) in her "Realism in Picture Books for Children: Representations of Our Diverse World" analyzes the strategies of world representation (possible and fantastic) in children's book, taking diversity as the touchstone of the book's fairness and openness. The author strongly advocates working on a responsible critical literacy policies in creating curricula and in parental choice and reader education agendas for their children. So, even if a favorite classic turns out racially biased or exclusive of diversity, the way it is read today, including reprinting, transposition into other media etc., should be reoriented toward a more diversity-conscious and-representative cultural text.

Riitta Kuivasmäki (4) in "Reality and Utopia – Power in Finnish lullabies: Past and Present" describes reality and utopia as a power in Finnish lullabies in the past and in the present time. The Finnish scholar combines an analysis of lullabies' function (transfer of emotions from mother to child, keeping fears in check, calming the child down and helping to fall asleep) and themes (work songs, the mysterious bringer of sleep, the land of the afterlife) with a personal memory of her lullaby experience as a child and as a grandmother.

Kaisu Rättä (5) in "On metafiction in Finnish Children's Literature" states that the Finnish young adult novel became post-modern and metafictional during 1990s. Critics ask, the author reminds us, whether young adult readers are able to cope with these metatextual and/or self-reflexive levels of fiction. Rättä argues, however, that the metafictional and self-reflexive turn in young adult fiction has been necessitated by changes in the target reader's perception of identity.

Margarita Slavova (6) and Spiridon Kaloshev in "'Time No Longer' or the Key to the Fantasy World of Tom's midnight Garden by Philippa Pearce" analyze the eponymous novel focusing on initiation motives in fantasy literature as constitutive of child development. Emilya Ohar and Dorota Michulka's article, "The Child and the Modern World of 'Digital Resources' (Manners of Perception)", considers the problematic of virtual reality as a reader's resource for children.

Emilya Ohar and Dorota Michulka (7) argue that in the digital age today a child living in the world of media convergence encounters a particular manner of social communication. Communication is understood here as an interaction between sender and recipient and as generating meaning, equalizing the status of a sender and a recipient. The category of a message is equaled to a text, hence open to interpretation. The authors discuss the child and the modern world of "digital resources" in the perspective of manners of perception.

The two essays on fantasy fiction by **Marek Oziewicz (8)** and **Justyna Deszcz (9)** are distinguished by a strongly valorizing approach to this genre.

Justyna Deszcz in her essay “You will meet the naked truth in there (...) and you will be naked before the truth’: The Consequential Other World in Dave Duncan’s *Rose-Red City*” posits that fantasy, a genre offering a “more” fictional world than fiction with a stronger realist referent, plunges the reader into a refreshed experience of reality (experience of defamiliarization) opening up venues of perception by the radical difference of the fantasy otherworlds. Deszcz analyzes in her essay the conditions for such an enhanced and fortified perception that should ultimately provide the reader with a more critical awareness of the world and reality around him/her. These are, she states, the metaphoric import of imaginative creation, and the ordering effect for our unstable and disoriented grasp of reality. After Kathryn Hume, Deszcz proposes to see fantasy as a redeeming conceptual breakthrough which makes fantasy an epistemological tool for negotiating reality and complexities of human life, e.g. when she shows how Duncan’s text reverses the hierarchy between the “normal” reality and fantasy, exposing the delusional order and ethics of the former, and granting the latter with the logic, sensibility, and truth value lacking in delusional reality.

Marek Oziewicz sets out in his essay: “Everything Possible to Be Believed Is an Image of Truth’: Fantasy as a Way of Deeper Realism” to prove that fantasy fiction, when read appropriately, exposes a deeper understanding of reality because it shows, through storytelling neglected in other fiction and the symbolic and metaphorical investment, that reality is more than what we can experience empirically. Fantasy, through its mythopoeic power, is uniquely able to recuperate our sense of the loss of spirituality from the rationalistic civilization. Oziewicz proposes, in place of contemporary theory he somewhat totally rejects as biased against fantasy, a “holistic approach” embracing fantasy as a generic unity of storytelling (with myth as the underlying reality) and of creativity emanating, through pure imagination, the truths otherwise unavailable in spirituality-ridden world.

Maria Ihonen (10) in her “The Moral Imagination in Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials*” links the moral requirements to imagination characteristic of fantasy novels with the nature of narrative fiction as such. In her reading of Pullman’s series the author traces how the imaginary worlds of fantasy offer alternative, morally clearer and more intensive, models of moral choices and behavior for young readers.

POSTMODERNIST SUBVERSION OF BORDERS

Ona **Fahey-Renner (11)** compares in her essays the poetics of two fictional texts – “The Dybbuk”, a short story by Hanna Krall and *The Body Artist* by De Lillo – testing them for Todorov’s classification of the fantastic as the genre of fluid borders. Fear of forgetting links both texts with the motive of the uncanny past materializing in indefinite presence: of the dybbuk – the restless soul

of a kid brother perished in the Holocaust (Krall), and a stranger in the house puzzling widowed Lauren with an ability to mimic her recently deceased husband (de Lillo). In both novels, as Fahey-Renner points out, the uncanny resides in the house, or is housed in the body.

In “Complete Veracity of Expression. Reassessing Realism in Ludmila Ulitskaia’s *Daniel Stein, Translator*” (2006) **Marja Rytkönen (12)** focuses on the narrative composition of the Ulitskaia’s novel. The text, which Rytkönen identifies as pseudo-documentary, includes some 170 documents (letters, diary entries, memoir texts, conversations, interviews, news articles), partly, if not entirely, composed by the author. The author claims that the textual composition is reminiscent of a postmodernist *pastiche*—mimicry of different types of texts derived from different sources and compiled into a non-chronological whole. However, as Rytkönen stresses, the pastiche is a strategy to reinforce the ethical dimension of realism and to continue the tradition of moral pathos of the classical Russian poet by its urge to express the “absolute veracity” and its defence of individual people in the whirlwind of history.

Jaroslav Kusnir’s (13) essay ponders the ontology of fiction versus reality in Bartheleme’s “Angry Young Man” considering at the same time the usefulness of possible-worlds theory for textual analysis. Kusnir shows the effect of self-conscious overlaying of ontological levels in one fictional field of reference for the arodic effect. The fictional field of reference contains frames of reference (Hrushovsky) that are conflicting and thus confusing our encyclopedia (Eco), or “knowledge of the world” (Hrushovsky). So, the realistic status of the character (underlined exaggeratedly by dictionary definition, which makes him a textual construct anyway) is overlaid with the fairy-tale language. Hybridized ontologies are imbricated in heavily self-reflexive metadiscourse with an effect that is, Kusnir claims, both parodic (with the critical edge) and allegorical (supplemental).

The essays by **Toyotaka Ota (14)** on Borges’ [title], Patrycja Poniatowska’s on intertextual play as didactic tool in fiction for adolescent girls by Małgorzata Musierowicz, the best-selling author of the Rojek family saga [foot. Bibliography], and Jaroslav Kusnir’s analysis of Bartheleme’s Angry Young Men through possible-worlds theory all reassess the premises of postmodernist fiction and theoretical discourse pervading it.

Toyotaka Ota reads Borges’ text as an opposition between duplication and infinity that resolves itself contradictorily when duplication becomes a promise of infinity. Sifting through Borges’ multiplication of contradictions, Ota probes the conceptual (linguistic) impossibility of infinity which is inevitably caught in its own contradiction – if delimitation is the only way to express/represent totality, then infinity can be rendered only as non-total fragments – duplication (mirroring), differentiation, and delimitation. In this sense, Ota states, reality and existence do not coincide in the library: infinity evades the library’s infinite classification, being the non-differentiation of existence.

Patrycja Poniatowska (15) in “Outside Athens, Outside Poznań: Intertextuality in Małgorzata Musierowicz’s *Nutria i Nerwus*” analyzes with minute precision the intertextual play with Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* operating in Musierowicz’s novel. Poniatowska shows in her brisk ride across intertwined routes of literary texts how the novel foregrounds literacy and cultural competence as chief factors in what we might term, after Bourdieu, cultural capital of young people in Poland of the post-communist, or, should we say, early capitalist, transition. Apart from providing an exciting narrative framework, the intertext of the powerful drama serves as an important ideological token of resistance against the encroaching flatness of consumerism and popular culture pulp.

CONCLUSION: RECONCILING GENRES

The reflection on representation in fiction that our volume shows a wide spectrum of critical engagement, including a passionate castigation of contemporary theory for its alleged rationalism and empiricism [sic]. Especially the valorization of fantasy as more ethically interventionist than other genres seems quite contentious. Indeed, in what way does the radical difference of other-worlds of fantasy make it a *sui generis* imaginative text of ethical import? In other words, how do we theorize the connection between imagination as tendency toward alterity and ethics? All these questions appear in fantasy fiction criticism, and, interestingly, are approached with the language of excess – fantasy is more imaginative than other novelistic genres, its alternative worlds bear a stronger difference from our reality, its ethical sense is more acute. Is then the difference only a difference of degree or an ontological difference as fantasy criticism posits? The search for a new metaphysics infused with spirituality may be the chief value and innovation of fantasy, but it should be noted that, typically of the novel, such innovation always bears the traces of the previous transformation – after all, each new style of the novel sought a more radical and engaged expression than the previous one, waned in conventionality and inertia.

The crucial difference within fiction studies today is not between the seemingly unengaged and objective narratology and contextual studies focusing on the politics and ideology of the novel as a cultural phenomenon. It is, rather, a deepening rift between “secularist” approaches whose common denominator is an agreement that text is open to many interpretations providing that interpretation is based on a rigorous textual and contextual reading of the text, and the “post-secularist” approach, in which the text is a repository of hidden truths belied and obliterated in a disenchanted critical discourse. And this rift seems to introduce and institutionalize polarity where it does not have any reason to emerge. Genres may be mutually competitive, but do they have to be seen as adversaries? Criticism may have a history of disengaged and deperson-

alized dissection of texts, but a much longer and empirically provable history of affect-strewn reading. After all, the alternative worlds of fantasy fiction differ from alternative worlds of realist fiction only by a bit different, cognitively, use of imagination.

The essays brought in the present volume, although different in subject matter and theoretical premises, have one common denominator - they all show that representation of reality in fiction, being of course a problem for textual analysis, rhetorical study etc., does not cease to be an urgent, philosophical and ethical, problem. All of these essays seek to prove that fiction they analyze aspires to be an interventionist discourse critical of cultural, social and political institutions conditioning or determining our perception and understanding of reality. In the very least, these essays show that fiction is premised on a dissent from habituated reality; that an act of imaginative creation inaugurates a new world to inhabit and, thus, to keep refreshing and renewing our world through it. However, it is of course the focus on what particular forms of dissent a given author or type of fiction assumes and thus what areas of reality are being reworked, criticized and reformulated as a result. It is interesting to note that these essays also show that representation of reality in fiction is not an isolated rhetorical or aesthetic problem - it determines the novel's (and, largely, interpreter's) ideological orientation, and is most likely to incite a debate about the rightness of this particular proposition of reality in the novel as opposed to the "wrong" ones. And such a debate is a welcome one, as it testifies to the agonistic aspect of fictional creation and theoretical discourse. It shows that representation is never merely an aesthetic problem, so much less is it a problem of veracity.

The main problem remains how to locate the heterodoxy of fiction in our understanding of the world. In this way even the most scholastic narratology will show symptoms of a hermeneutical desire to explain the text so that the text explains the world (reality) to us. Bare analysis of a literary text is as improbable as an interpretation devoid of any textual formalist analysis. Ultimately, all of the essays in this collection show that fiction, being a "worldly" genre⁶⁹, perpetuates and enhances the critical investment of representation and in this way it always seeks a deeper and augmented understanding of the world - whether it seeks to "mirror" reality faithfully, to represent an alternative "secondary world" (and thus somehow to negate reality), or whether it seeks to supplement other modes of representation where they seem incomplete. In all of these essays the novel proves once again to be first and foremost a dialogic genre actively conversing with the world - it seeks to represent reality via or against realism. Antagonistic to any even potentially fixed and closed form of reality, the novel seeks ever new ways of representation, remaining, though,

⁶⁹ The concept of „worldly” criticism, and, in my extension, of worldly fiction, is taken from Edward Said's work, especially *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, 1983, and *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage, 1993.

within the horizon of realism as response to the world as its natural discursive environment that, at the same time, it seeks to broaden and change for a more innovative mode of expression. And this incessant internal contestation, also bearing on critical approaches, betrays recently a new anxiety. I would like to term it a “new metaphysics”: an explicit or tacit search for the referent beyond text, so much more interesting that mostly aware of the textual problematic of referentiality in general. Such “post-postmodernist” novel, formally sophisticated, highly self-conscious, but also in many ways engaged in some recuperative form of narrative, and not prioritizing the element of textual play (rather, incorporating it as the “natural” feature of the text), is manifestly present in magical realist novel, in ethnic novel, in the new post-colonial novel, it seems to be natural to the cyberpunk, and often permeates fantasy fiction. We dwell in a liminal stage of the novel studies – the pandemonium of textualism waned considerably, but the old positivity of representation impossible to return to, the new novel calls for attitudes mixing belief with irony, which, on the level of criticism, is best qualified as an interplay between formalism and gnosis. Concluding, today’s development of the novelistic genres prove the necessity to approach the novel from the perspective of cognitive studies, as novel is, most of all, a genre of knowing – inscribing and imagining the world actively, and, more often than not, accountably, with a distinct ethical edge.

Studies

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The volatile nature of the real in the North Dakota cycle of novels by Louise Erdrich

Louise Erdrich entered the literary canon with the publication of *Love Medicine* (first published in 1984, revised in 1993) – the first novel of the North Dakota cycle of novels¹ – and swiftly became one of the most successful Native American authors. The North Dakota cycle of novels comprises *Love Medicine*, *The Beet Queen* (1986), *Tracks* (1988), *The Bingo Palace* (1994), *Tales of Burning Love* (1996), *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* (2001) and *Four Souls* (2004). Apart from the cycle, Erdrich has published poetry, non-fiction, books for children, and other novels, which are either only distantly or entirely not connected by theme, place or characters with the North Dakota cycle. The remaining novels are *The Crown of Columbus* (1992) in collaboration with Michael Dorris, *The Antelope Wife* (1998), *The Master Butchers Singing Club* (2003) and most recently *The Painted Drum* (2006). The cycle focuses on the life of four generations of Chippewa families, the Kashpaws, the Nanapushes, the Lamartines, the Lazarres, the Morrisseys, and some non-native characters who inhabit the fictional Little No Horse Reservation throughout the twentieth century. Erdrich chronicles their births, marriages, affairs, deaths, human foibles, struggles for economic survival, and negotiations between the Euro-American way of life and the traditional Ojibwa culture and worldview. In the North Dakota cycle Erdrich, like many other Native American writers, uses her insider knowledge of the Ojibwe culture to deliver a complicated portrait of the native community and imbue the text with the traditional Ojibwe oral storytelling techniques, beliefs, customs, humor, which constitute a powerful ingredient of Erdrich's creation of the real in her cycle of novels.

Apart from using the elements of the traditional Ojibwe culture in her novels, Erdrich shows some other affinities with contemporary Native American writers. The first, somehow natural, resemblance is the setting and themes.

¹ In Louise Erdrich: *A Critical Companion* (1999) Lorena L. Stookey suggests that the narrative structure of the cycle should be applied to other novels by Erdrich, not only *Love Medicine* in the analysis of which it was first used, as they all form a wider narrative sequence. In *The Old Lady Trill, the Victory Yell: The Power of Women in Native American Literature* (2004) Patrice E.M. Hollarh uses the concept "North Dakota cycle of novels" as an established literary term.

Many contemporary Native American novels, such as N. Scott Momaday's *The House Made of Dawn* or James Welch's *Winter in the Blood* take place on the reservation; however, writers are becoming increasingly interested in the urban setting and Native American experience in the cities, as exemplified in Sherman Alexie's *Indian Killer* (1997) and Erdrich's own book *The Antelope Wife*. One of the most pronounced themes of Native American literature, which is also present in Erdrich's fiction, is the homecoming theme, which has been used by D'Arcy McNickle, Momaday, Welch, Silko (Silberman 101). Other important themes include the search for identity and the commentary on political or historical events (Silberman 115). According to Robert Silberman, what links many Native American writers is the preoccupation, which Erdrich also shares, "with the relation between speech and writing" (102). It stems from the authors' attempts to incorporate elements of oral storytelling into their fiction and thus makes them experiment with the form of the novel. Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* or Gerald Vizenor's *Bearheart* are acclaimed examples of including traditional oral storytelling or mythology into a novel.

The form Erdrich uses in order to incorporate the oral storytelling tradition into the text is a short story cycle genre, as critics, such as Lorena L. Stookey, Rocio G. Davis or Roberta Rosenberg, claim. As I will discuss later, the genre characteristics influence profoundly the elements of reality in Erdrich's narratives. Forrest L. Ingram, a major theoretician of this genre, defines a short story cycle as "a book of short stories so linked to each other by their author that the reader's successive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his experience of each of its component parts" (qtd. in Lynch 37). In Erdrich's case each story stands on its own, but simultaneously all stories fuse together to create a fluid whole wherein every story has the potential to twist, alter, create cognitive gaps, or add new meaning, which significantly changes the perception of reality.

The characteristics of a short story cycle include episodic structure, diminished importance of a unified plot, chronology, and the protagonist, and finally the use of multiple narrators whose stories are tinted by their subjective visions (Stookey 32–35). Subjective visions are susceptible to gaps within stories; therefore, "the genre, as with the oral narrative, intensifies the normally participatory act of reading by insisting that we [the readers] 'fill in the blanks' as we go along; the discovery of connections is transformed into the reader's task" (Davis, 3). The consolidation of short story cycles is attained by the setting, recurrent characters, the specific authorial style, or the repetition of themes (Lynch, 38).

Rocio G. Davis, in her article "Oral narrative as short story cycle: forging community in Edwidge Dandicat's *Krik? Krak*", contends that such characteristics make the genre resemble oral narratives: "The short story cycle looks back to oral traditions of narrative while embodying signs of modernity (...). Moreover, the narrative structure of short story cycles mirrors the episodic and un-

chronological method of oral narration" (1). In the article "Ceremonial healing and the multiple narrative tradition in Louise Erdrich's *Tales of Burning Love*" Roberta Rosenberg, in order to emphasize the intricate links between Erdrich's narrative strategies and storytelling, puts forward a different term for a short story cycle, namely, a storytelling cycle (1). Lorena L. Stookey offers Erdrich's own clarification of the correlation between storytelling and the writer's choice of the genre: "her technique 'reflects a traditional Chippewa motif in storytelling' wherein an account of one incident 'leads to another incident that leads to another' in an unfolding cycle of tales" (qtd. in Stookey 33).

Both Davis and Rosenberg point to the genre's rich literary tradition as exemplified for instance by Boccaccio's *Decameron* or Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* and more modern Western examples such as James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914), Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses* (1942). Erdrich's choice of a short story cycle as a genre for her North Dakota novels situates her strongly within Western storytelling tradition. However, the critics diverge in their interpretation of Erdrich's use of this tradition. Rocio G. Davis positions Erdrich's writing within a tradition of ethnic authors, such as Amy Tan, Gloria Naylor, or Julia Alvarez, who, by use of oral narratives recorded as short story cycles, oppose mainstream discourses and render their own portraits of the community or establish identities devoid of hegemonic intrusions: "By appropriating and transforming this narrative genre as established and defined by 'mainstream' writers and critics, (...) [Erdrich] intervenes in the dominant Euro-American literary tradition" (1). Undoubtedly, Erdrich, through the use of the short story cycle structure underpinned by storytelling strategies, for example in *Tracks*, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* or *Four Souls*, as if revives silent photos of American Indians from the beginning of the twentieth century and gives voice to those people who at that time were largely excluded from the ruling European American discourse. On the other hand, Rosenberg suggests a less conflicting relationship between Erdrich and the Western literary tradition, as she argues that Erdrich combines in her novels, especially *Tales of Burning Love*, both the Western European tradition of storytelling cycles and Native American storytelling traditions "in order to create a highly innovative, postmodern voice which harmonizes instead of disconnecting and atomizing" (1).

However, Erdrich does not automatically accept the genre, but moulds it significantly to suit her authorial needs and expands the short story cycles into the cycle of novels composed of stories. With the publication of each new novel, a singular story cycle fuses with other cycles and evolves into the cycle of novels linked by place, characters, and themes. Stookey observes that "the interesting patterns of repetition and variation of theme among the (...) books seem to invite a different kind of criticism, one that regards the separate novels as parts of the design of a larger whole, a multivolume work" (24–25). Each new novel is endowed with the capacity to add new meaning, generate and an-

swer questions, or transform the reader's perception of a character when new details from the character's life are revealed or a new narrator appears and offers his or her subjective account of events. Following Rosenberg, a cycle of novels composed by Erdrich becomes a storytelling session deferred in time and delivered by multiple narrators who link their stories with the stories of the predecessors by either responding to them directly or drawing attention to some other details previously unmentioned.

Analyzed separately, the North Dakota novels seem to conform to the short story cycle pattern: each book begins with an opening story which introduces the main theme and ends with the concluding story which tries to provide a sense of closure. Nevertheless, it must be noted that not all North Dakota novels have such an experimental form as for example *Love Medicine* and progress more or less chronologically. The first chapter of *Love Medicine* introduces the character of June Kashpaw and describes the circumstances of her death. Most of the *Love Medicine* stories, told by multiple narrators who are the members of the Kashpaw family, are either filled with June's family's memories of her or linked by the themes of mothering and mourning the loss of a beloved person. Still, the book includes stories which diverge from the main themes and intensify the impression that Erdrich records the communal experience. In the concluding story Lipsha, the son June abandoned, struggling throughout the book with his lack of belonging, finally learns the identities of his true parents, meets his father, and comes to terms with his complicated family history.

In *Tracks* Nanapush's opening story about Fleur Pillager and her family's struggle to hold on to the land sets the frame for the entire book. The purpose of Nanapush's stories is to explain to Lulu, Fleur's daughter, why her mother sent her off to the boarding school, and thus to facilitate their reconciliation. He closes the book with the story of Fleur's departure from the reservation, which paves the way for *Four Souls*, and Lulu's return from the government boarding school. *Four Souls* again opens with Nanapush's story about Fleur's preparation for the revenge on the man who took away her land and ends with her return to the reservation and the restoration of the land to the Pillager family. *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* begins with the story about Agnes DeWitt's life and her transformation into Father Damien who will minister to the reservation families for about eighty years. The book finishes with Father Damien's death and the pope's answer to the letters he was sending in vain all his life.

The storytelling process comprising all the novels of the cycle develops in a circular way, which differentiates the larger pattern of the cycle of novels from the short story cycles in the separate novels. There is no opening story or concluding story as a new story preceding or summarizing the ones already present might spring up from whichever source. Father Damien states, "each name you hear on this reservation is an unfinished history. A destiny that opens like a cone pouring out a person's life" (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 145). The quote implies then an infinite possibility of storytelling.

This article will explore how Erdrich's use of her plural cultural heritage and her choice of the cycle of novels as a genre fosters reality in the North Dakota novels. I will attempt to examine how the fusion of the cycle of novels with oral storytelling techniques affects Erdrich's construction of time, characters that form a larger Little No Horse community, and place.

One of the premises on which Native American stories are based, as delineated by Lois J. Einhorn in *The Native American Oral Traditions*, is the perception of the universe as a circle, which influences heavily the nature of time (15–19). Time in the storytelling session, as Einhorn contends, progresses in cycles and fuses the past, present and future (18–19). Louise Erdrich's novels, with embedded storytelling tradition mediated through a short story cycle structure reflect to a great extent the circular perception of time. However, Erdrich does not entirely abandon linearity and subjects the construct of time to experiments which sometimes alter the circular pattern. Erdrich's reality is characterized by fluid timelines, the lack of the chronological development of the story cycles, the inclusion of the first person narratives which are contingent on the narrator's memory and vision of the story, and finally sequences of episodic events occurring one after another.

Apart from *The Bingo Palace* and *Four Souls*, most stories in the North Dakota novels are dated, which exemplifies Erdrich's attempt to situate the novels in ordinary time. However, on close inspection, it turns out that the timelines are not always reliable. In *Love Medicine* Marie Kashpaw states that she was around fourteen in 1934. This would mean that she was born in 1920. However, *Tracks* and *The Last Report* suggest that she was born two years earlier. Sister Leopolda's/Pauline Puyat's age is similarly contradictory (Barton and Beidler 31). These discrepancies stem from the fact that the stories are told by first person narrators whose memories or knowledge might be inadequate and highlight Erdrich's use of storytelling in her cycle of novels.

In *Tales of Burning Love*, Erdrich uses another strategy: the greater part of the novel takes place at night between the 5th and 6th of January 1995. The wives of the presumably dead Jack Mauser are stranded in a snowstorm and, in order to survive, they tell one another stories about their husband, which span many years and encompass the present and past. One night is expanded beyond recognition by means of storytelling and ordinary time is blurred by the storytellers. Blurring time suggests that the given timelines are only a matter of convention, which moreover differs from culture to culture. In *Tracks* the stories are dated in three ways: they are preceded by years and English months, an Ojibwa expression for a given period, and an English translation of the expression. Such practice undermines the dominant measurement of time and its validity.

The use of storytelling not only expands time but also impedes the chronological development of events in Erdrich's cycle of novels. Storytellers narrate their stories as they deem fit and shuttle back and forth in time. The effect is

readers' impression that they might join the storytelling session at any time: the past is as important as the future or present, hence it does not matter which temporal aspect of the character's life the reader will learn first. As the novels comprise a structural cycle, at some point the reader will get to know all the aspects. Chronology is rejected as a way of presenting characters' life. In *Love Medicine* and *The Beet Queen*, the first and second published novel of the cycle, Fleur Pillager is a medicine woman revered and feared by the community. Only in *Tracks*, the third novel, are her youth and troubled adulthood presented; in *The Bingo Palace* she is already an aged woman called Mindemoya and we witness her passing away at the end of the book, but she resurfaces as a young woman once again in *Four Souls*, which finally discloses the mystery hinted at in all the previous novels. The reader pieces together her life, scattered throughout almost all of the books, by reading/listening to stories which disrupt the linear passage of time.

Another instance of Erdrich's experimentation with time and also with the nature of events and connections between characters is sequencing of unbelievable occurrences. It brings to mind postmodern tactics, but, in fact, reflects, in Erdrich's opinion, the Ojibwe storytelling technique. An episodic, almost cinematic, structure of a short story cycle lends itself perfectly to picturing the rapid flow of singular events which converge only to trigger another event. In *The Bingo Palace* Lipsha Morrissey and his father Gerry Nanapush, a convict on the run, steal a car to provide a means of escape for Gerry. They do not notice a child at the back of the car who is Jack Mauser's son by his fourth wife Marlis. (Jack and Gerry share the same love, June Kashpaw, who is Lipsha's mother, and wife, Dot Adare, who in *Tales of Burning Love* marries Jack without divorcing Gerry. Moreover, *The Last Report* hints that not only Gerry but also Jack might be Fleur Pillager's grandson). The runaways become stranded in a snowstorm. In the same snowstorm, in *Tales of Burning Love*, four women mourning Jack's presumed death, among them Dot and the mother of the kidnapped child, are trapped. Suddenly, Gerry leaves the car because he sees the ghost of June. He is later picked up by the women, but only Dot knows his real identity, the women are rescued by the snowmobile squad, and Jack saves Lipsha and his baby.

Another sequence, which resembles an action movie, comprises the events leading to Agnes DeWitt's transformation into Father Damien Modeste in *The Last Report*. Sister Cecilia, Agnes, quits the convent as she is no longer allowed to play Chopin. On her way she encounters Berndt Vogel's farm and starts a love affair with its owner. One day, when she is in a bank, she is taken hostage by robbers and wounded. The robbers are escaping through Berndt's fields; Berndt notices the bandits carrying away Agnes and pursues them. He dies trying to rescue her. Recovering from the wounds, grieving Agnes meets the real Father Damien who tells her about his mission. Later comes a flood which washes away Agnes's whole property. She remains alive by clinging to the pi-

ano lid. She is fished out of the river by someone that seems to her Christ the Savior. Next, she encounters Father Damien's corpse, changes her identity, and travels to the reservation to minister to the Indians. The proliferation of episodic coincidental sequences in Erdrich's cycle of novels points to the writer's experiments with causality and the nature of reality. The real appears to be unpredictable, kaleidoscopic, and dreamlike, and the characters interconnected in a myriad of almost improbable ways.

Still, ordinary linear time, even though disrupted by Erdrich's tricks, becomes enormously significant on the larger plane of the North Dakota cycle of novels. Dating stories enables Erdrich to chronicle the entire Native American experience of the twentieth century. *Tracks* presents the aftermath of the Allotment Era and boarding schools, *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* portrays, apart from other things, the disintegration of the tribal life when the external influences made bolder inroads into the Anishinabe culture, the Vietnam war has its victim in Henry Lamartine who undergoes a post-war trauma. Gerry Nanapush, a perpetual runaway, is portrayed as one of the leaders of the American Indian Movement. "The Tomahawk Factory" in *Love Medicine* is concerned with the commercialization of Native American material heritage; *The Bingo Palace* in the same vein pictures the advent of the bingo palace to reservations and the community's reactions. Although historical and political events are rarely clearly defined in the cycle and are mediated through the life of the characters, as Silberman asserts, the political discourses become even more visible when the storytelling session progresses and in consequence the reality turns out to be inherently political (113–115).

The lives of the characters are then as inextricably intertwined with history and politics as with one another. Interconnectedness is another premise underlying Native American stories (Einhorn 19–20) and a structural device in the short story cycle genre. All characters are situated within the community, their lives are intertwined with communal life, and everybody is related in some way, as Father Jude reflects in *The Last Report*: "Everything was connected, loop upon loop. That child was, in fact, someone known to Jude in his later life. There was no doubt in his mind that some greater power was at work" (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 142). The recurrence of characters is one of the devices which allows Erdrich to bind the novels and to create a portrait of the community: individual lives fuse with the larger life of the community, and subsequently communal storytelling transforms into creating the history of the community.

Almost all characters are storytellers who themselves create other characters and the real through their stories. Erdrich uses the third-person narrative with an omniscient narrator, but the first-person narrative predominates. The characters narrate events from their own points of view and provide insights into their thoughts, feelings, and the perceptions of other characters. Each storyteller is unique and offers some part of the knowledge about events or char-

acters not available in other stories. The reality seems to be created through the act of storytelling. In Erdrich's writing stories are offered in several versions as the story of June's death, Lipsha's birth, or Lulu's paternity. New memories appear which shed different light on an event, or the storytellers who previously were less prominent step to the limelight. But if the storytellers present their idiosyncratic visions, there is no unified reality, but multiple realities; there are no stable characters, but multiple images. No final truth about a given event or character is attainable (Reid 2); there is always only a version of reality available. This suggests that Erdrich designs the real to be multifaceted and volatile, which reflects another premise of Native American storytelling as discussed by Einhorn – fluidity (15–19).

Lulu, a very controversial character for her community, given her numerous love affairs and commanding behavior, creates a completely different portrait of herself than that the community holds of her. What emerges from her narrative is the portrait of an abandoned daughter who is not able to forgive her mother and who will never again allow anybody to hurt her:

You can go up to a certain point with me and I with you, giving, giving, but then the line might snap. My loving goes very deep unless you cross that boundary, do to me what I will not tolerate. I am not an all-forgiving person, not Lulu. Even when Nanapush and then Father Damien went to work on me shortly after, in regard to my mother, they had no success. The line had snapped. I had no interest. Even if I love you, the way I am, Father Jude, if you hurt me, I'll turn cold on you. Turn away like a cat. (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 253)

Contrary to Lulu, two other powerful women, Fleur Pillager and June Kashpaw, are almost entirely created by other characters; they exist mainly in the storyteller's memories and, interestingly, they are never allowed to speak by themselves. In *Tracks* Fleur is presented through Nanapush's and Pauline's stories. Again in *Four Souls* Nanapush and Polly Elizabeth narrate Fleur's revenge on John James Mauser. In *Love Medicine* Fleur exists in Marie Kashpaw's story about her difficult child bearing. In *Bingo Palace* she appears in a story told by Lipsha. The reader not only has to piece together the facts from Fleur's life, but also sieve through the stories and the storyteller's intentions to interpret Fleur's character. In *Tales of Burning Love* the character of Jack Mauser is created by his four wives who tell stories about him to one another – from each story emerges a different person, a Jack Mauser of four identities.

Identities in Erdrich's cycle of novels are never stable and undergo surprising changes. In *Tracks* Father Damien is a young priest devoted to and respected by the inhabitants of the reservation. Only in *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* he turns out to be a woman, Agnes de Witt, who took on the identity of the real Father Damien Modeste killed by the flood and has served as a priest on the Ojibwe reservation for three generations. In *Tracks*, the priest is often described as a bit effeminate, but the fact can be overlooked as Father

Damien is very young. Erdrich augments the confusion by implying that Nanapush knew about the true identity of the priest from the very beginning. In a conversation over a game of chess Nanapush questions the priest's identity: "What are you? (...) A man priest or a woman priest? Why (...) are you pretending to be a man priest?" (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 232). After a while Agnes-Damien realizes that bringing up the subject was meant to be a distracting ploy, as a result of which Nanapush wins the game. Still, Nanapush appears to know more than the reader who has been misinformed. In Erdrich's reality, which is constantly in the making, the reader frequently seems to be less knowledgeable than the characters and depends on the storytellers for hints, whereas they sometimes refuse to divulge the truth². In *Love Medicine* Lipsha overtly states, "I'm sorry but I just don't trust to write down what he answered, yes or no. We have entered an area of too deep water" (Erdrich, *Love Medicine* 364).

Nanapush and Lipsha are frequently identified by critics as embodiments of the Ojibwe trickster figure – Naanabozho. Trickster upsets order, shifts shapes, mediates, is sexually undetermined, embodies both heroism and foolishness, and tells stories (Babcock and Cox, 99–105). Both Nanapush and Lipsha, and some other characters in Erdrich's novels, have these characteristics. Such identification exemplifies Erdrich's strategy to use the Ojibwe traditional culture not only to shape the cycle's narratorial pattern but also to create her characters, kinship links between them, and the plot development (Stokes 1). Apart from the trickster, the figure of the two sisters, Oshkikwe and Matchikewis, is also present in Erdrich's cycle of novels, as Karah Stokes argues in her article "What about the sweetheart?: The 'Different Shape' of Anishinabe Two Sisters Stories" (1). The younger sister is always loyal and tactful, whereas the older sister is covetous, instinctive, and insolent; still, despite differences in character, neither of the sisters is privileged or less loved and in the traditional stories they remain allies (Stokes 1). Stokes identifies the sister figure in the relationship between Marie Kashpaw and Lulu Lamartine in *Love Medicine* (a wife and a lover of Nector Kashpaw) and Dot Adare and Eleanor Schlick in *Tales of Burning Love* (the fifth and the second wife of Jack Mauser) (1). Erdrich's female characters follow the sister pattern: they have similar characteristics to the traditional sisters and, in spite of the fact that they love or used to love the same men, they form relationships which appear to be even more important than the one they had with the men (Stokes 1).

Another trick which Erdrich uses to complicate the real is pairing and juxtaposing narrators. In *Tracks*, placed in a position of dialogue, Nanapush and Pauline Puyat, later Sister Leopolda offer a bipolar perspective of the events as they subscribe to two distinct views of Native American culture at the begin-

² For a discussion of the position of the reader in Erdrich's fiction, and by implication in ethnic literatures, see Catherine Rainwater's "Ethnic Signs in Erdrich's *Tracks* and *The Bingo Palace*" in *The Chippewa Landscape of Louise Erdrich* edited by Allan Chavkin and E.Shelley Reid's "The Stories We Tell: Louise Erdrich's Identity Narratives".

ning of the twentieth century; therefore, their stories diverge widely³. Nanapush is a traditionalist who never forsook Ojibwe beliefs and customs, a repository of cultural knowledge, and a trickster in one. Pauline longs to be white, embraces Catholicism and becomes a nun bent on converting Indians to her new religion. Their conflicting, as it seems, worldviews affect their accounts of Fleur's life. In Nanapush's stories Fleur is a survivor of cultural annihilation and stands for tradition; in Pauline's stories Fleur is the embodiment of the old ways and forces Pauline wants to eliminate from her life.

I would contend that on the larger scale of the North Dakota cycle of novels, Erdrich's universe turns another circle; she not only pairs narrators but also novels. This repetition of the narratorial strategy and theme serves as another device unifying the cycle of novels. In *Four Souls* once again we are presented with a pair of narrators who this time seem to be more complimentary. Nanapush relates Fleur's behavior from the angle of their earlier experience in *Tracks* and Polly Elizabeth Gheen interprets Fleur as she might have been seen from within the white world. Only towards the end of the book a third narrator, Margaret, appears.

To understand the way in which *Tracks* is paired with *Four Souls*, a brief summary is needed. *Four Souls*, which covers the years from 1921 to 1933, starts where *Tracks* leaves the reader/listener. Due to outstanding taxes, Fleur loses her land and tries to regain it by working in the city of Argus. To earn more, she takes to gambling with her co-workers; she wins, but the enraged men rape her. After that event she returns to the reservation. Even though she is able to pay the taxes for her land, this experience leaves her scarred. Pauline, spreading gossip about the identity of Fleur's first-born child, Lulu, is a frequent visitor to Fleur's cabin. Once she visits Fleur and her mother-in-law, Margaret, as a self-mortifying nun. Fleur and Margaret, unable to stand the odor of Pauline's unwashed body and possibly trying to purge her of external influence, give her a purifying bath. After the bath Fleur gives premature birth to her second child. To save the child Fleur gambles with the ghosts for the life of her newborn baby, but she loses and the child dies. The tragedy intensifies: Fleur once again loses her land as more payments are overdue. Fragmented and grieved, she leaves the reservation in order to take her revenge on the man that stole her land.

In *Four Souls* Fleur enacts the revenge only to learn that her land is in the possession of an Indian agent because of her white husband's debt. She uses a gambling trick to get her land back and outwit the agent, and through him the entire system of oppression which held her people down. This time she wins, regains her inheritance and undergoes a purifying ceremony. Margaret gives her a healing bath to purge her of alcohol addiction, external influence, and tells her to fast. The circle turns and the healing process is completed –

³ For a more detailed analysis of the dialogue between Nanapush and Pauline see "Tongue-Tied Rhetoric and Relations in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks* by Sheila Hassell Hughes (ME-LUS Fall-Winter, 2000).

Fleur changes her name into Four Souls and becomes a medicine woman. The same symbolic events that earlier contributed to her tragedy, gambling and bath, now have restoring power. In *Four Souls* Erdrich as if rewrites the story of defeat and dispossession into the one of victory and wholeness even though it might have some bitter undertones.

The strategy of rewriting, used frequently in magical realism, might be seen as an example of “ex-centric” writing – “creat[ing] an alternative world *correcting* so-called existing reality, and thus (...) invad[ing] and tak[ing] over the dominant discourse” (D’Haen in Faris and Zamora 195). Symbolically, Fleur’s revenge exemplifies the refusal to become subdued in the time when Native Americans as a group had at their disposal a relatively modest array of resources in order to argue for their rights. Fleur’s victory, an intervention into the historical power relations, stands for the possibility of their reversal and the power of the oppressed to strike back against the oppressors. However, as I have mentioned before, victories in an uneven struggle are not unproblematic. Fleur has a son with the man she wanted to kill and, what is more, her victory comes at an enormous price – she loses Lulu, her daughter, whom she sent to a boarding school in order to leave the reservation and enact her revenge.

Nevertheless, *Four Souls*, as the whole cycle of novels, abounds in acts of resistance. For example, Nanapush, in a trickster-like fashion, rebels against being treated like an ethnographic exhibit. White tourists to the reservation spot him while after another quarrel he is parading in Margaret’s medicine dress. Taking him for a woman in a traditional costume, something they were hunting for, the tourists ask him to take a picture with them:

“You’re the first one we’ve met wearing a colorful costume!” cried the woman. “Would you mind standing still?” I had no choice, as two large children suddenly gripped me by the shoulder and arms, pinning me upright. I felt the young boy startle as he saw me close up.

“She’s an ugly old woman though, isn’t she, Mama!

“Hush,” the mother said.

“Ugly?” I am embarrassed to say this, but the boy’s remark hurt my vanity.

“Get your hand off me, I cried (...)” (Erdrich, *Four Souls* 152)

Unable to wrestle away the hands of the children, Nanapush asks Zoed Bizhieu to count out loud and take their picture. At three, he turns, lifts up the dress and bares his buttocks to the camera. Next he dances a cancan dance exposing male genitals to the children and escapes. Nanapush’s hilarious refusal to have a photo taken might be interpreted as an opposition to the mainstream perceptions of authenticity, Nanapush seems authentic only in a traditional dress, and refutes the tradition of photographing Native Americans for ethnographic purposes, such as Edward Curtis’s images of the Vanishing Indian.

Erdrich’s community of storytellers corrects reality, or rather renders it from the non-dominant perspective, and strives to “counteract the invisibility

wreaked by cultural imperialism” (Ferrari 3). According to Nancy Peterson, “[t]he new historicity that *Tracks*, [I would contend that all the North Dakota novels] inscribes is neither a simple return to historical realism nor a passive acceptance of postmodern historical fictionality. [It] (...) creates the possibility for a new historicity by and for Native Americans to emerge” (Peterson in Ferrari 1). Moreover, “the evocation of the oral in the written text implies [a] counterhistory in the historical narrative [constructed through documents] that it seeks to displace” (Peterson in Ferrari 1). Therefore, the North Dakota novels can be interpreted as a counterhistory which finally gives voice to those points of view that previously might have never been heard.

As the storytellers create themselves, their community and history, they also create, by means of stories, the space they inhabit, namely, the fictional Little No Horse Reservation, the name of which we learn only in *The Last Report*. It is set in North Dakota, and surrounded by both real (Williston or Fargo) and fictional places (the towns of Hoopdance or Argus) (Barton and Beidler 9–11). As Lorena L. Stookey writes, “Like William Faulkner, she [Erdrich] creates a fictional world and peoples it with multiple narrators whose voices commingle to shape her readers’ experience of that world” (14). Erdrich’s characters infuse the space with Ojibwe beliefs and worldview, which gives the place a “hybrid” quality, a characteristic of magic realist fiction (Wilson 220). Hybridity of the space “becomes evident when you observe the ease, the purely natural way in which abnormal, experientially impossible (and empirically unverifiable) events take place (...). The narrative voice bridges the gap between ordinary and bizarre, smoothing the discrepancies, making everything seem normal” (Wilson 220). However, as Stookey suggests, the bizarre in Erdrich’s fiction “is typically grounded in familiar knowledge or received belief”⁴; therefore, differs significantly from the spaces of magical realism (15). For Ojibwa characters certain events or the appearance of ghosts are part of their worldview and as such are not treated as something unusual.

Primarily, the reservation consists of three important parts: the convent and the church up the hill, the central residential area, and Matchimanito Lake with an island – the land of the Pillagers everybody fears. The lake, the rumor goes, is home to a monster called Misshepeshu, which only Fleur is able to control:

He’s a devil (...) love hungry with desire and maddened for the touch of young girls, the strong and daring especially, the ones like Fleur (...) [h]e takes the body of a lion, a fat brown worm, or a familiar man (...) He’s

⁴ Critics frequently suggest that one of the sources of the marvelous in Erdrich’s novels is Catholicism, which for reasons of space has not been discussed in this article. Karla Sanders in her essay “A Healthy Balance: Religion, Identity, and Community in Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine*” analyzes the intersections between Ojibwa culture and religious beliefs and Christianity as presented in *Love Medicine*.

a thing of dry foam, a thing of death by drowning, the death a Chippewa cannot survive. Unless you are Fleur Pillager. (Erdrich, *Tracks* 11)

What is more the bush surrounding Matchimanito is filled with windigos who are waiting for the unwary and the souls of the dead. Father Damien senses their presence when he visits this place for the first time:

And then the wind stopped. Everything stopped. The stillness was profound (...) A voice cried out. She whirled. No one. Now a piping child's voice, laughing, but again no source. She felt a mutter of presences, rustling and arguing on all sides, and she froze in place as their voices, speaking incomprehensible words (...). She tried to regulate her breathing, not to panic, but a vast weakness swallowed her and she thought she heard, maybe knew, could no be sure – were there spirits beyond the experience entrusted to her so far? (...) Making the sign of the cross, she burst through the door of the lonely cabin into the stink of ghosts. (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 79)

The souls disappear when Fleur and Nanapush decide to join the living after Father Damien's visit. Later Nanapush, by means of his drumming and singing, guides Eli through the winter bush to hunt a moose. When Fleur gives premature birth to her second child, she gambles for the child's life in "the heaven of the Chippewa". Moreover, people believe that she has the power to transform herself into a bear and to cause storms. The characters have visions, encounter ghosts, use love medicine – in Erdrich's fiction all these seem to be compatible with the Ojibwe beliefs and customs and are treated by native characters as a legitimate element of reality, not fantasy. The space has two overlapping dimensions – one which is tangible, the land on which the reservation is located, and the second, which is supernatural, a parallel world of visions and beliefs, like the Chippewa heaven, which seems to be very similar to the reservation itself, but exists in Fleur's and Pauline's visions.

The customs and beliefs are carried over to the present. *The Bingo Palace*, set in the late nineties, celebrates the strength of the traditional Native American cultures – powwows, grassdance tournaments, sweating lodges, naming ceremonies, medicine men and women are inherent parts of the community life. In this novel the reservation seems to be a place thriving with Ojibwe culture adapted to modern times and the community a powerful force to reckon with – the narratorial voice in the first person plural embodying the community appears in three chapters. What is significant is that Erdrich more and more frequently, especially in *The Last Report*, incorporates into the narrative sentences in the Anishinabe language which are not translated into English. It certainly functions as a defamiliarizing device excluding some readers as the storytellers are not willing to translate, but it also seems to be a political statement and a celebration of culture – native languages are not entirely extinct and attempts are made at their preservation.

Still, Erdrich does not shy away from picturing the social layer of the reservation reality. To some extent, the mythic and cultural dimension of the reality rendered in poetical language might overshadow the social; however, the social undercurrent is very strong in Erdrich's writing. *Tracks* and *The Last Report* capture the calamities which befell Native Americans at the beginning of the century: separation of families, diseases, loss of land, poverty, and violence. Both Fleur and Nanapush lost all their families to a disease. They are survivors who need to struggle with extreme poverty in order to stay alive. In *Love Medicine* and *The Bingo Palace* several characters have alcohol problems and Lyman is characterized by Lipsha as "an island of *have* in a sea of *have-nots*" (Erdrich, *The Bingo Palace*, 16). Lipsha himself seems to be a problematic character: the community disapproves of his drifting lifestyle which they judge as an example of "sad reservation statistics" and too similar to the behavior of his father, always on the run from the police (Erdrich, *The Bingo Palace*, 7).

Driving back home from the city where she studies to become a doctor, Albertine, Lipsha's cousin, a powwow dancer who in a naming ceremony received the name of Four Souls, observes, "The policy of allotment was a joke. As I was driving toward the land, looking around, I saw as usual how much of the reservation was sold to whites and lost forever" (Erdrich, *Love Medicine* 12). One of the most important sociopolitical themes of the North Dakota cycle is dispossession and the fight to hold on to the land – the tangible part of Erdrich's space. The characters, especially the older generation pictured in *Tracks*, *Four Souls*, and *The Last Report*, are viscerally connected to the land. Nanapush says to Lulu, "Land is the only thing that lasts life to life. Money burns like tinder, flows off like water" (Erdrich, *Tracks* 33). Fleur, on learning that she is going to lose her land and the trees are going to be cut, tries to drown herself in Matchimanito Lake in order stay on her land. Saved for the third time, she decides to take her revenge on the man who stole her land.

The reservation allocated to Erdrich's characters by the government "was the end of the world to some. Where the maps stopped. Where God had only half a hand in the creation. Where the Dark One had put in thick bush, liquor, wild dogs, and Indians" (Erdrich, *Love Medicine*, 45). The forgotten land of Marie's story was nevertheless of outmost importance for the outside world interested in financial gains. The borderless space became reinvented by the government – it was located on the maps, its boundaries were set, its ownership defined. Under the Allotment Act, designed to assimilate the Indians, the land was divided among native families.

However, the Ojibwe, not used to the Euro-American definition of ownership and frequently forced by the circumstances to sell it, lost control over the land. Surveyors, lumberjack companies, white farmers entered the land when the native families either sold their parcels of land or were unable to pay the tax on them. The boundaries shifted again:

The reservation at the time was a place still fluid of definition, appearing solid only on a map, taking in and cutting out whole farms sometimes on the say-so of the commissioner, or the former agent, Tatro, and other times attempting to right itself according to law (...). As with most other reservations, the government policy of attempting to excite pride in private ownership by doling parcels of land to individual Ojibwe flopped miserably and provided a feast of acquisition for hopeful farmers and surrounding entrepreneurs. So the boundaries came and went, drawn to accommodate local ventures – sawmills, farms, feed stores, the traplines of various families. (Erdrich, *The Last Report* 74)

The hybrid land, in which the dead were buried, which the ghosts roamed, and which held the monsters, was turned into a private enterprise and defined in legal terms: “that spring outsiders went in as before, and some of us too. The purpose was to measure the lake. Only now they walked upon the fresh graves of Pillagers, crossed death roads to plot out the deepest water where the lake monster Misshepesu hid himself and waited” (Erdrich, *Tracks* 8). Nanapush’s words underline the difference in perceiving the land in the Ojibwe and Euro-American culture. For Nanapush it is impossible to own the land, for John James Mauser, the entrepreneur who acquired Fleur’s allotments, land is property. This “conflicted consciousness” haunts the entire North Dakota cycle of novels (Wilson 222).

For Mauser, “the reservations are ruined spots and many as well be sold off and all trace of their former owners obliterated. That’s my theory. Let the Indians drift into the towns and cities or subsist where they will. Thinking their tribes will ever be restored is sheer foolishness. There’s nothing left” (Erdrich, *Four Souls* 127). Mauser’s thinking influenced by the Vanishing Indian ideology is refuted by each novel of the North Dakota cycle wherein the reality is pointedly political. It is Fleur, not Mauser, who wins. Fleur regains the land, even though it is destroyed by the lumberjack company; her descendants still inhabit the reservation (Lulu bore nine children) and the Ojibwe culture has not been forgotten – in Erdrich’s cycle it permeates the lives of many young characters who skillfully weave it into their modern existence.

What is more, Fleur attempts to shift the boundaries of the reservation once again. In his vision Lyman Lamartine, Fleur’s grandchild and a skilful tribal businessman, hears Fleur’s words about the significance of buying land for bingo money. Although *The Bingo Palace* reflects some ambiguity among Native Americans concerning the erection of casinos on the reservations, Nancy J. Peterson perceives Fleur as a trickster who found another way to get back her land⁵:

Because of the revolution in Indian gaming over the past decade, tribes are now poised to demand or buy back some of the land forcibly taken from them in

⁵ For the discussion of Indian humor and its significance in Native American literature see “Indi’n Humor and Trickster Justice in *The Bingo Palace*” by Nancy J. Peterson.

the nineteenth century.... Fleur is surely thinking several moves ahead in the game; she is foreseeing conditions beyond the story told in the novel, conditions under which contemporary legal tricksters have been able to effect a kind of bingo justice. (171–172)

Shifting boundaries enacts postcolonial justice: the reservation will be defined once again, but this time by the insiders.

The reality that the fusion of the cycle of novels genre with the storytelling techniques fosters appears to be multidimensional and fluid. Erdrich balances on the edge. Time is subjected to a number of experiments: timelines are blurred, but recognizable, an accumulation of coincidences undermines causality, but never entirely disrupts it; chronology is both pursued and rejected. The characters/ storytellers offer plural versions of reality, which engenders gaps and supplies multiple interpretations of events, but the recurrence of narrators to some extent attenuates the chaos provoked by ambiguous stories. The place constructed by the characters' stories has a hybrid nature: it comprises two overlapping dimensions – the mythical and the ordinary which is used to deliver social and political commentary. Constant mutability is perhaps the phrase which characterizes Erdrich's construct of reality best.

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Reservation Art and/or Preservation Artifacts: *The Painted Drum* by Louise Erdrich

Authorial imagination can yield insights for interpreting reality. How does Louise Erdrich's fiction define reality and organize it so that it is possible to overcome its vagueness? Is her prose unreal, magicorealist, or simply unpredictable? In her most recent novel, she continues to combine the old American Indian legends with contemporary lives, history with fiction, myths with realism, the ordinary with the marvelous, the sacred with the profane, the spiritual with the rational, art with the quotidian, nature with culture, the personal with the public, the dream-like with the real, female with male elements. She weaves a tale of art and religion, spotlighting the practice of the Drum Religion, which epitomizes but a particle of American Indian experience. I have chosen *The Painted Drum* by Louise Erdrich and dubbed it a magicoreligious-realist¹ narrative for its employment of magicoreligious practices, and its obfuscating of the borderlines across the binary divides of real/non-real; magical/realist and so on. This essay will examine the undergirding *raison d'être* of magic realism, namely, the intersection between the poetics: the art, as expressed both through narrative aesthetics and actual artifacts, and the politics: factual issues like religion and liberation in general, and Native American women's theology in particular. Quizzed whether she sees herself as a religious writer, Erdrich answered enigmatically: "it depends upon how that is defined. If I take it to mean a person whose characters ask questions about their origins in space and time, well, yes, and of course someone is often bumping up against crucial church dogma. Life is religious, I think, and that includes writing" (Chavkin and Chavkin 228).

THE POETICS OF MAGICORELIGIOUS REALISM

The hybrid mode of magic realism (MR) perfectly accommodates the experience of multicultural ethnic US subjects shuttling between cultures, religions, and histories. Erdrich possesses multicultural sensibilities which she har-

¹ I define magicoreligious realism as magic realism saturated with a non-Western religious perspective of e.g. American Indian religious beliefs, combining magicoreligious and healing practices.

nesses in her writing. Magic realism, as I try to argue, is not mere escapism or celebration of the exotic but a method of approaching, processing, reflecting, and evaluating the reality. Though many scholars are obsessively protective of MR, I want to suggest that the mode, as employed by ethnic American women writers in general, and Louise Erdrich in particular, is a part of a cultural and literary continuum initiated in the continent of South America, but transplanted onto the contemporary North American context. I maintain that this cosmopolitan mode does not reflect any particular cultural essence, nor does it belong exclusively to any one collective literary heritage. The mode has been initially attributed to painting, then to literature and recently also to cinematography. The ambiguous nature of the term, as well as definitional confusion, spurred Spindler² to attempt to capture its elusive nature in 1993 essay "Magic Realism: A Typology." Spindler discerns metaphysical, anthropological, and ontological magic realism.³ The metaphysical magic realism resorts to the method of defamiliarization insofar as it "presents reality from an unusual perspective without transcending the limits of the natural, but which induces in the reader or viewer a sense of unreality" (78). The anthropological magic realism merges two viewpoints, the magical and the real, whereas these two categories can shift and switch and are difficult to pinpoint once and for all. Attesting to the hybridity of the mode, I argue that Erdrich combines both kinds, the metaphysical⁴ and the anthropological magic realisms, magicoreligious realism constituting a subtype of the latter.

The authors themselves eschew and dismiss MR as a mere label, although many, among them Erdrich, do admit to revere the prose of García Márquez or Toni Morrison. Branded "a magical realist" by Joyce Carol Oates, she responded: "a great compliment, but I think now that the rage to imitate Márquez has declined; probably your word unpredictable is more accurate. It is certainly the reaction I'd like. The thing is, the events people pick out as magical don't seem unreal to me. Unusual, yes, but I was raised believing in miracles and hearing of true events that may seem unbelievable" (Chavkin and Chavkin 221). I want to offer my own vision of magic realism, coining the term *magicoreligious realism* for I have felt that the existing designations, even Spindler's propositions, were incomplete and failed to bring to the fore the gravity of religion, and, more broadly, spirituality in magic realism. Several viewpoints, not exhausting all, yet addressing selected important qualities of Erdrich's writing, are worth analyzing here.

² I would like to thank Dr. Aitor Ibarrola-Armendariz from Universidad de Deusto in Bilbao, Spain for suggesting the reference and mailing me a copy.

³ I will not elaborate on the third type of magic realism, the ontological variation, for it is not relevant to the narrative I discuss.

⁴ This paper focuses solely on the anthropological MR under the guise of the magicoreligious realism. An analysis pertaining to the metaphysical type in her writing deserves a separate chapter.

Chavkin argues that Erdrich's prose focuses on "the juxtaposition of the mundane and the fantastic, gritty realism and dreamlike hallucinations, the conversational and the lyrical, and existential bleakness and slapstick exuberance. This yoking of the natural and the supernatural [...] is ascribed to the magical realism of the postmodernists" (1–2). Yet, the juxtaposition implies a contrast, perhaps even a potential conflict, whereas I want to argue that Erdrich solicits coexistence, a peaceful side-by-sidedness, a reality merger which leaves the reader clueless whether definite oppositions still exist.

Rosenthal maintains that Erdrich writes "factional" narratives and creates "factional" identities situated between the factual, the real, and the fictitious, thus creating liminal and ambivalent, ancestral, spirit-filled literary spaces. According to Rosenthal, Erdrich's fiction serves many purposes, it is "about negotiating differences, about setting up and subverting binary oppositions, about playing with stereotypical representations of woman and Indian in order to represent fluid identities" (108). Erdrich toys with the categories magical vs. real, American Indian vs. Anglo-American cultures, probing the boundaries and conventions of literary mimesis, and by representing an anti-essentialist stance, contests a single coherent vision of the world and the mankind some might expect of her work. I disagree with Rosenthal when she explains why she is weary and critical of the term MR: "it implies that there is a cross-cultural, coherent, and definite notion of what is real and what is magic" (109). I believe Erdrich is a magicorealist author, magicoreligious–realist author to be precise. My assumption is based on the scenario presented in the canonical magico-realist text, namely García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (1967) which set the standards for all subsequent magical realists. According to the guidelines, magic is not too distant from reality, for "in the world of magical realism, the marvelous often has a prosaic explanation" (Stam 316) and the mundane often can be explained in extraordinary terms. In *Cien años de soledad* the narrator reverses the realities, thus flipping the script and disturbing the preconceived Western order of dichotomies, as he introduces technological gimmicks, such as magnifying glass, false teeth or even ice, as magical and unbelievable, whereas ghosts and resurrections are seen as belonging to the quotidian. What is magical and what is real are carnivalesque, not finite markers depending on what viewpoint one chooses to adopt. Erdrich portrays magical aspects of lives and magicoreligious practices along real-life vicissitudes.

[P]RESERVATION ART[I]F/ACTS

Erdrich is interested in contesting the divides that base our perception of reality on a consensus that may be functional, but threatens with exclusions of difference. The relationships between the imagined and the factual, culture and nature, "superstition" and religion, craft and art, material and spiritual, and, on the most general level, Western and American Indian worldviews are only

therefore problematized in narratives by Erdrich, because these encounters were of conquest and colonization.

One of these divides pertains to art vs. ethnographic containment. Bernstein notes that “there have been attempts throughout the century to move American Indian arts from ethnography to art” (57), and view the Indian-made objects as art, not as curious objects and souvenirs. Initially classified as primitive or naive, they have been promoted to art, whether religious and ceremonial, historical (rare or antique art objects) or contemporary. This ethnic art, as it is nowadays perceived, is profoundly religious and spiritual. The artistry of the drum is for example to enhance the religious purpose of calling the spirits and ancestors and procuring a successful mediation between the living and the dead. *The Painted Drum* (PD) distills but a chapter of American Indian diversity and spotlights the Drum Religion. The practice of the Drum religion, also called Dream Dance, was practiced among Ojibwe and Winnebago tribal groups, its date of origin falls in the second half of the 19th century (Hirschfelder and Molin 71).

The protagonist Faye Travers, an antique buff and collector of American Indian artifacts, lives in New Hampshire with her mother and together they run a company and appraise house contents after one’s death. Faye is not a particularly spiritual or religious person. One day she is called to John Jewett Tatro’s house after his funeral to appraise his belongings. As she sets out on her task, she feels excitement and apprehension at the same time, for she realizes that “the contents of a house can trigger all sorts of revisions to family history” (PD 29). This particular assignment is bound to cause stir and reveal stories from the past:

there is also, in my eagerness to take on the Tatro estate, a thread of personal connection that reaches back several generations. It is nothing my mother or I would have pursued while either of the Tatro brothers was alive, although it has to do with our specialty – Native American antiquities [...] Jewett Parker Tatro was an Indian agent on the Ojibwe reservation where my grandmother was born and where she lived until the age of ten, at which time she was taken east and enrolled at Carlisle Indian School, in Pennsylvania. (PD 29–30)

Indeed, the house nestles numerous interesting and valuable American Indian artifacts the present owner is ignorant of: a doll, beadwork, clothing, tobacco pouches, a cradle board, baskets, footstool and a drum. Faye sees the neglected drum in all its glory:

The head of the drum glares out, huge, three feet across at least. The buffalo or moose skinned to make it must have been a giant. In spite of its size there is something delicate about the drum, though, for it is intricately decorated, with a beaded belt and skirt, hung with tassels of pulled red yarn and sewn tightly all around with small tin cones, or tinklers. Four broad tabs are spaced equally around the top. Into their beaded tongues of deep indigo four white beaded

figures are set. They are abstract but seem to represent a girl, a hand, a cross, a running wolf. On the face of the drum, at the very center, a stripe is painted in yellow [...] The figurative detail, the red-flowered skirts, the tinklers, combined with the size of the drum, give it an unusual sense of both power and sweetness. (PD 39–40)

Against better judgment, not being able to resist the temptation, she steals the drum feeling compelled to do it. Her mother is able to interpret the magicoreligious artistry and purpose:

the drum is the universe. The people who take their place at each side represent the spirits who sit at the four directions. A painted drum, especially, is considered a living thing and must be fed as the spirits are fed, with tobacco and a glass of water are set nearby, sometimes a plate of food. A drum is never to be placed on the ground, or left alone, and it is always to be covered with a blanket or quilt. Drums are known to cure and known to kill. They become one with their keeper. They are made for serious reasons by people who dream the details of their construction. No two are alike, but every drum is related to every other drum. They speak to one another and they give their songs to humans. I should be careful around the drum. (PD 42–43)

She plans to return it to “the rightful owner” (PD 67), after Tatro the Indian agent took it away from Ojibwes. But Faye is in no hurry: “I want the drum for myself, at least for a while. I’ll keep it off the ground. Already I’ve got a wooden tobacco box set on the windowsill beside it” (PD 70). She grows attached to the drum and keeps it in her bedroom: “I touch or gaze upon it every time I enter. The drum exerts the most connective hold upon me, and it even starts to influence my dreams” (PD 76). In addition, she is reluctant to part with it, for in affecting her dreams and thoughts, it helps her grapple with childhood traumas: the death of her sister, dysfunctional family life, and reconcile with her mother.

One day Chook asks Bernard Shaawano to help her dig out her husband’s corpse. The reason being that “he had the tobacco box, even the scrolls of all the songs that went along with that drum your grandfather made, the one that took the sickness out of people” (PD 100). Because they regain the drum brought by “two ladies from out east” (PD 101) who “are connected to an old branch of the Pillagers through a girl who escaped sickness here by going to that eastern school, Carlisle” (PD 102), they need the things that accompany the drum when it will be used during religious and spiritual activities. Bernard is the only one who knows its origins: “many people were affected by this drum. Many people know part of the story. But I know all or most of the history of this drum. I know because my father talked once he got sober, talked like his own father had, endlessly, hoping to be redeemed by the story” (PD 100–101). What occurs is what I named the phenomenon of preservation of art and/or reservation art, i.e. a tribal story and an artifact are saved from oblivion and further appropriation, literally and metaphorically. We learn that Ana-

quot had an affair with Simon Jack Pillager, bore his child and left her husband Shaawano (Bernard's grandfather) and son behind, taking with her the older daughter and the baby Fleur. Introducing into the story the character of little Fleur, who "is an enormous spiritual force in Erdrich's novels" (Lundquist 109), procures continuity initiated with the *Love Medicine*. Knowing fragments of her life of a young girl in *Tracks*, elderly woman in *The Bingo Palace*, bold woman in *Four Souls*, we finally learn the mystery of her origins - the tragic and unusual story of her survival. On her way to Pillager's house Anaquot and her daughters were surrounded by hungry wolves and the mother sacrificed her older daughter to them. She got to the house and was welcomed only by a woman with children, for Simon Jack was away hunting. The woman turned out to be his wife Ziigwan'aage, trying to poison Anaquot and her baby girl by means of plants, as she was a medicine woman. Anaquot outsmarted her plot and impressed by this Ziigwan'aage spared them and the two women gradually befriended each other and began sewing an outfit for Simon Jack in an attempt to avenge the adulterer.

The night Anaquot and the children left, old Shaawano and his son went to the woods and found a shawl that belonged to the daughter, along with her bones, which helped them to figure the story out. Ghosts start visiting the father, all strangers, however. The sense of guilt is overwhelming and one night he dreams of his little girl and learns there is wood which is ready to be turned into a drum. He does not feel worthy of making a drum. An old recluse Gee-shik urges him to listen to the little girl and make the drum and fulfill the prophecy: "this was the fourth generation, this is the time, and it was said that our drum would be brought to us by a little girl" (PD 168).

Eliade claims that shamanism dominates the religious life of the community in North America, and the drum constitutes an integral element of shamanism (297). The shamans believe they have control over weather phenomena and are able to tell the future and know things others do not know (299). The drum is of pivotal meaning, it

has a role of the first importance in shamanic ceremonies. Its symbolism is complex, its magical functions many and various. It is indispensable in conducting the shamanic séance, whether it carries the shaman to the 'Center of the World,' or enables him to fly through the air, or summons and 'imprisons' the spirits, or, finally, if the drumming enables the shaman to concentrate and regain contact with the spiritual world through which he is preparing to travel. (168)

The shamanic experience is directed toward the "transcendence of the profane condition, re-establishment of a 'paradisaal' existence lost in the depths of mystical time" (171). Usually oval in shape and made of reindeer, elk, or horse hide (171), "the body of a drum is a container for the spirit, just as if it were flesh and bone [...] The drum waits with the patience of unliving things and yet it heals with life itself" (172).

Old Shaawano sets out to make the drum whenever he is sober, his son observes and helps. The drum had powers and helped people, it helped Bernard survive his father's drinking bouts

for in the rare times he was sober he sang those songs and made me learn them too [...] The drum was powerful. People searched it out. This drum was so kind that it cured people of every variety of ill [...] All of the people who lived close to the drum and dreamed up its songs or helped the drum somehow – repaired it or gave it gifts or even helped the people who came to see it – we grew strong. That's what the drum is about – it gathers people in and holds them. It looks after them. But like a person, things can go wrong in spite of all the best care. And this drum had its own history and sorrow. (PD 179–180)

We learn how powerful the drum is when we read how once Simon Jack Pil-lager misused the drum and died in consequence. The drum is to be stored away and be cared for, then “restored to use after forty winters” (PD 186). Bernard's father inherits the drum and sells it to the trader Jewett Parker Tetro to satiate his alcohol addiction. Reclaimed and recovered by Faye, the drum returns to its home and is used again saving the lives of three children whose mother, a single unemployed parent, is away trying to find some food and money to heat their house. The drum is in regular use now and people come together to practise Drum Religion and nourish the immediate community this experience produces. In fact, the displaced object is put back into its magical context, which, however, exceeds the cultural/geographical confines of its original life – the drum is magical and powerful in all locations, one only needs to know how to use it – thus, it's not merely an ethnic object, but a key opening spirituality to anybody willing and sensitive to its allure.

THE POLITICS BEHIND MAGICORELIGIOUS REALISM: NATIVE WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Feminist theology has been accused of not including the priorities of women of color. Therefore particular ethnic groups have made an effort and formulated their own theologies and manifestoes. Smith delineates Native women's theology based on her own experiences, e.g. activity at and association with Women of All Red Nations (WARN), a grassroots organization. Bearing in mind the diversity of American Indian traditions, and the varied experience of American Indian women, the objective of the theology directed to them is uniform: survival as a whole, both mental and physical. The spirituality/liberation praxis has to correspond with the reality and cannot be debated in the ivory towers behind closed doors of the academe (54–55). It must stem from American Indian women's activism. The problematic encounters between the indigenous and Catholic religions have created oppressive atmosphere of intolerance and feelings of superiority enacted by Christians. Therefore “native

liberation also requires a decentered Christianity” (56). Of her previous work and intersections with religion, Erdrich says: “*The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* was a spiritual search, very much what I am involved in now, a search for origin, a search for spiritual truth, a search for a way to humanize Catholicism so that I can stand it.”⁵ Erdrich was raised and indoctrinated into the Catholic Church theology and the memory of that experience has been present in her writing under a guise of creative but troubled polemic.

Surprisingly enough, unlike Jewish or African American feminist theologians, American Indian women activists have slightly different priorities and agendas, “the reason is that, prior to colonization, Indian societies for the most part were not male-dominated. Women served as spiritual, political, and military leaders. Many societies were matrilineal and matrilocal” (Smith 59). What they do grapple with, however, are “issues of change and transformation within their traditions. In times of genocidal danger, the idea of transforming traditions to meet current needs can seem particularly threatening” (60). Contemporary “spiritual/cultural appropriation” translating into selling Indian American artifacts and gaining profit from it by non-American Indians, or annexation of American Indian shamanism and healing practices by the New Age theology, reminds one of the centuries old scenario of land thievery and alerts to possibilities of repeated acts of colonization in different political, historical, and economic contexts.

The issue of land is central to the spirituality/liberation theology and praxis (62). The need for a separate designation stems from the fact that “Native women activists have often been reluctant to call themselves feminists because they generally experience colonialism, rather than sexism, as their primary mode of oppression” (63). The oppression initially deriving from colonialism and land deprivation has escalated into a state where one has to “heal from the psychological effects of colonialization. Sexual abuse, domestic violence, alcohol abuse, and teen suicide – the legacy of colonization, and particularly of Christian boarding schools – have devastated Indian families” (66). Grass-roots organizations and local activists have the task to fight the oppression coming from the outside but also from the inside as the victim has internalized the harmful scenarios. *The Painted Drum* in particular, and Erdrich’s prose in general, addresses the issues of conquest and colonization in order to provide survival texts for the supposedly vanishing, but in reality badly ailing American Indian.

Certain binaries have been listed and addressed and the artificial chasm between them blurred and obscured. What about the truth vs. lies dichotomy? Where is the truth? Is there a truth or are there truths? While advising prospective writers on developing originality and truth in their writing, Erdrich

⁵ This quote is taken from “Lunch with Louise Erdrich: An Interview” by Leslie Gee published under the following web address <http://www.iaiaichronicle.org/archives/Lunch-withLouise2005.htm>, which has by now unfortunately expired.

warns that there will be criticism which is an integral part of the process: "you have to be very confident in your version of the truth [...] Your art has to be your truth. A very mediocre vision seems to please a broad range of people, so, in a way; strong criticism is a positive thing. If you're pleasing a huge segment of the country, what are you? You're reality tv or you're the 'Bridges of Madison County,' " (Gee's interview). While taken aback by the success of her novels, she does not believe in compromises when writing. As a writer, she has been praised for her "skillful weaving of Ojibwe ethnohistory into her narratives, masterful use of oral tradition and multi-layered stories, powerful portrayals of characters (particularly women), hilarious humor that ranges from mock heroic battles to survival jokes, unerring depictions of popular culture, and lyrical descriptions of nature" (Ruoff 183). Erdrich situates her novels both inside and outside of reservation, so as to be accessible to a broad range of readers and be seen as an American writer writing about the American experience, as diverse as it is, and eschews being pigeonholed as a writer and narrator of Ojibwe history, culture and life. By employing the hybrid and elusive mode of magicoreligious realism, she not only combines the poetics with the politics, i.e. literature and art with ethnicity, gender, and religion, but also manages to escape some of the essentialist claims critics and audience impose on her, and remains a fascinating writer of multiple loyalties committed to mimicking the reality as she perceives it, and, judging by the popularity of her books, as others see it or are prepared to see it as well.

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Realism in Picture Books for Children: Representations of Our Diverse World

Abstract: Realistic representations of our world in books for children need to include authentic depictions of diversity through texts and images. When readers are faced with absent, outdated, or otherwise misrepresentative depictions of cultures, it leaves them with impressions of inaccurate worlds. Most often, such works are well-intentioned, but may be unintentionally misguided, or simply outdated perceptions and interpretations. Problematic depictions can lead to stereotyping, or condescending and patronizing attitudes. Critical race theory calls for the recognition of power relations among races, and how literature can offer inclusive and even corrective impressions of culture. This paper explores the role of critical literacy in learning to read with an analytical lens.

Keywords: multicultural, diversity, critical literacy, critical race theory, picture books

Realistic ways of representing our world to readers serve many purposes. Among those purposes is the ability to offer them a truthful depiction of varying places, people, and the enormous range of lives that are lived. Some depictions may be safe and comforting; some exotically different and enticing; still others unsettling and dangerous. These varied representations of reality are done through both words and illustrations, which, separately and together, offer a way of seeing ourselves and seeing others. Children need opportunities to see the range of realities in the world, whether they live in the midst of that reality, or it is in some distance from them and perhaps even unseen. Realism in literature affirms the worlds with which children have direct contact while also expanding their conceptualization of the world so they can stretch to understand experiences beyond their own (Temple, Martinez & Yokota, 2014).

There are many ways to consider the range that is included under the umbrella concept of “realism”—it may be through nonfiction, longer works of fiction, poetry, picture books, and it can encompass quite an extensive range of formats. In this paper, I focus specifically on depictions of diversity in contemporary times, or “modern realistic fiction” as played out in the texts and the illustrations of books for children. Literature that offers cultural diversity as part of that realism gives children both “mirrors and windows,” a chance to

see their own lives reflected, as well as to see into the lives of those whose lives are inconceivably different (Yokota, 1993). One interesting aspect of this metaphor, first coined in reference to multicultural literature by renowned scholar Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) is an analysis made by Lee Galda (2000) who commented that, “windows are interesting in that we look out of them to see the outside, but when the light changes, we begin to see reflections of ourselves.” Especially in places where there is less diversity in day-to-day relationships, literature may be a child’s first place to encounter diverse people and their lives. Inclusion is the first step.

Curriculum Concerns. When diversity is missing from the stories children have available to read, the people who are not portrayed are invisible. When, for example, entire school curriculum books have no representations outside of Europe, the people from Asian, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas are all not included in the idea of “internationalism.” The stereotyped Native American in comic strips (i.e., “Lucky Luke”, a Belgian import), the token Asian folktale of long ago and far away, and other such problematic inclusions marginalize the people of the world. Even authentic but historical stories cannot represent the realism of cultures of today. Where are the depictions of the contemporary lives of people outside of Europe, or perhaps more imminently, where are the depictions of diversity within Europe? Canonization in school reading materials eliminates the possibility of including more contemporary stories because, in schools, time is limited, and students prioritize reading what is put in front of them first.

AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATIONS

Simply stated, the features of contemporary realistic fiction are:

- They resemble real people.
- They live in a place that is or could be real.
- They participate in a plausible, if not probable, series of events.
- They are presented with a dilemma that is of interest to children.
- They discover a realistic solution.

(Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2014)

When applying these basic understandings to multicultural literature, the qualifying descriptors of “real,” “plausible,” “probable,” and “realistic” require cultural representation analysis. Often, reviews are written by intelligent, well-meaning critics, analyzing books from a well-informed literary perspective, but without attention to the need for *cultural* authenticity. Thus, stories that are well written, illustrations that are skillfully rendered, and also cultures that are misrepresented or viewed in patronizing ways, continue to be recommended.

The concept of “authenticity” in representation is often discussed in multicultural literature (e.g., Temple, Martinez, Yokota, 2014). Authentic depiction is recognized as representation of culture in ways that those who are inside that culture recognize as genuine and potentially possible. Not only could the places described be real, but the emotions, thoughts, and behaviors of the characters also ring true. Characters face moral questions that could arise in real life and react in ways that are culturally conceivable. When cultures are authentically represented, it avoids exoticism, romanticism, and ways of showing “others” as not dimensionally developed. Flat characters, stereotyped situations, and so forth are avoided; and the tone is not patronizing, condescending, or unrealistically optimistic.

What benefits are there for readers when encountering stories of cultural authenticity, well written?

- They may come to feel that they are not alone.
- They may learn to reflect on the choices in their own lives.
- They may develop empathy for other people.
- They may see life experiences beyond their own.

(Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2014)

When realistic stories are set in a real or potentially real place of current times, they give glimpses into worlds of readers’ contemporaries. Komako Sakai’s books often depict a young child’s experiences that are somewhat universal, such as in *Hanna-cha ga me wo sametara* (*Hannah’s Night*, 2013) in which a little girl awakens during the night, finds her parents already asleep, so she and her cat go about the house stopping at the bathroom, having a snack, and eventually returning to bed. The absence of cultural specificity in the illustrations adds to the sense of universality, and child readers are left with images of a contemporary portrayal.

Emotional realism. It is especially important to have emotional realism when depicting a perspective that is out of our own experiences. The situation may be the coming of age that all go through, or struggles and experiences that fewer readers may personally experience but nevertheless offer stories depicting rarer-than-usual experiences and consider these perspectives as broadly as possible. Child readers thus can consider their own emotions within settings that may or may not be familiar; seeing how others deal with their situations allows the reader to consider how they might have responded. In *Els patins del Sebastià* (*Sebastian’s Roller Skates*) (2005) a young boy is too shy to express his many thoughts but finding an abandoned pair of roller skates leads to practice and even adventure, as the illustrations parallel his growth in self-confidence and courage. This kind of emotional realism will resonate with children across country lines.

Culturally specific with details that ring true. Cai (1995/2006) brings to consideration the role of imagination in depicting worlds outside those of the author's or illustrator's own cultural experiences; yet he recognizes the role that careful research and observation allows in authentically depicting as an outsider to a particular culture. For the picture book 外婆住在香水村 (*Grandma Lives in a Perfume Village*, 2014), German illustrator Sonja Danowski researched carefully the ways in which she would illustrate a book set in China, having never been there. Working with her Chinese editor, she was able to create illustrations for the Chinese publisher. Although it is likely that Chinese people will recognize the illustrations as created by an "outsider", they would also likely find them to be artistically representational of a Chinese story, a blend of imagination based on careful research. Of course, when a book is written and illustrated by cultural insider who has lived the portrayed culture and can represent it well, the resulting book rings true very naturally. One such example is *Harlem* by Walter Dean Myers (1997), illustrated by his son, Christopher Myers. Through poetic text and collaged illustrations, the pair depict an insider's perspective on stories about Harlem that comprise the book, thus offering readers a unique sense of place.

PROBLEMATIC REPRESENTATIONS OF DIVERSITY

However, problems are readily found in existing children's literature, problems that range from underrepresentation and misrepresentation to downright omission (Myers, W.D., 2014). Christopher Myers (2014) calls for the need to be more about diversity of representation, but diversity in the ways in which we tell stories. Discussions of canons of literature revolve around the notion that these so-called "classics" have given roots to a cultural history. That is, when outdated images and portrayals appear in such literature, objections are dismissed as "those were the depictions at the time, and we have to be historically accurate." Thus, when newer interpretations, understandings or corrective images are available, they may not be made as readily available to readers due to the emphasis on "classics." As a result, we run the likelihood of continuing damaging representation without corrective newer interpretations.

Often, parents and teachers nostalgically look back on books from their childhood and don't even recognize the racist representations because they are focused on how fondly they remember that book and their emotional experiences with it in childhood. In a September 25, 2014 "Fuse 8" blogpost at *School Library Journal*, Elizabeth Bird uses the title, "Surprise! It's Racist! Unwanted Children's Book Surprises." She discusses reading a book published long ago (*If I Ran the Zoo* by Dr. Seuss, 1950) yet of continuing popularity to her daughter, commenting on her surprise in not remembering how racist it was. The same has been true for other parents, to the point that Nick Glass of TeachingBooks.net said to his daughter that he could no longer continue to read to her a par-

ticular book he discovered as an adult to be racist in the midst of a read aloud session. But, these are two very enlightened parents when it comes to perceiving racism. What about other well-intentioned but less-informed parents and adults?

In the United States, there have been decades of addressing such issues, with mixed success. We continue to ask the question of why representation of diversity in children's literature is not even close to its representation in society; yet there are some who believe that having elected an African American president indicates that the U.S. is already in a "post-racial society." Such an attitude has, for all intents and purposes, spurred a new type of "Racism 2.0." This dangerous belief that U.S. society is now post-racial takes away the need for attention to diversity and instead pretends that there is no longer discrimination due to racial lines. Those who claim that they don't discriminate ("I don't even see color." "We are really all the same.") privilege the parallels of humanity without considering that not all people have the same access to power that others have.

When time changes historical perceptions.

Times change, and events that were recent when a book was published eventually become history. *La Composición* (*The Composition*, 2003) is set during the time of Chile's dictatorship when people were often taken away by the military police and "disappeared" for engaging in political activities like listening to the radio. Although the country, year, and other such details are unnamed, and without a doubt dictatorship continues today in other parts of our world, the fact is that this particularly story is rooted in a particular country's past. This is an important book sharing a specific slice of history in a way that children can understand; yet if children did not also see other books portraying contemporary realistic images of democratic Chile today, they would be left to remember only this particular slice.

But what happens when, decades later, the sense of place in a book requires new descriptions to reflect the changes in the setting? In a popular series by German illustrator, Ali Migutsch (e.g., *Rundherum in meiner stadt*), the children represented are entirely racially homogeneous. Although the original book was published in 1968, it was recently digitized into a clever app that kept the original non-diverse illustrations. The Germany of today is very different, with many immigrants, some who have been born in and lived in Germany for decades. Moreover, what is to be done about books that have condescending attitudes toward the "others" in post-colonial years? This brings to the question the "right" to update text/illustrations as the depiction of human relations also deserves to be reconsidered. Would authors choose to keep their own words, written and illustrated in a context of its time, historically? Or if the author/illustrator were living today, would they want their words/illustrations to reflect current thinking? And what damages are inflicted on children's perceptions of

self and others when outdated images and attitudes are perpetuated in contemporary times?

READING CRITICALLY

After years of emphasis on inclusion and acceptance in professional publications on children's literature in the United States, children's literature scholar and social critic Jack Zipes said to me, "It's not enough. Just choosing good books is not enough." My coauthor, Charles Temple, has long urged me to face the problems of advocating for diversity. What I have come to realize is the need for us as readers to go beyond the need for exposure to multiple perspectives and being widely informed to the reality of confronting adversarial perspectives. We must recognize embedded power relations: "Critical Literacy is concerned with critiquing relationships among language use, social practice and power. It is an analytic process that is mediated by one's worldview . . . draws attention to inequities and calls for rethinking ideas and social assumptions considered "natural" . . ." (Stevens and Bean, 2007).

Critical reading, critical thinking, critical literacy: these are lenses through which readers may view the world they are reading. But what happens when readers choose to not read critically, and instead intentionally avoid critical reading? Here is a quote from such a reader: "I know this book is controversial and not authentic but I don't care. I still love it." The lens of critical race theory (e.g., Ladsen-Billings & Tate, 1995) asks readers to recognize the role of race in relations and to consider whether the portrayal of race relations in the material being read is divisive, destructive, or corrective? What is meant by "white privilege"?

Unintended bias is not even recognizing when what is said or how something is viewed is, in fact, showing bias. Claiming not to be prejudiced because we don't want to be and don't intend to be, we fail to recognize nuanced behaviors and statements that show bias. It is particularly difficult to discern unintended bias in books because the overall thematic intent of the author or illustrator may be to be inclusive. An example is the American picture book *One Green Apple*, a well-intentioned book that is a victim of unintended bias. A scarf-wearing newcomer (from an unnamed country) arrives in the USA and doesn't speak English. Her school class goes on a field trip to an orchard, and she chooses a hard green apple from a tree that has stopped growing. When all the children put their red apples into a cider press, she puts her hard green apple in while the teacher looks on with a patronizing look, and the children try to stop her "but it was too late." She concludes that she will be like her apple – and blend in with the rest. This notion of "melting pot" has long been discarded by multicultural theorists in favor of cultural pluralism, retaining cultural distinctness while moving beyond tolerance to acceptance and understanding (e.g., Banks, 1988).

Nurturing the Development of Critical Reading. Young children may not automatically develop the ability to read critically. As they encounter books, it is adults (parents, teachers) who mediate such experiences and hone children's ability for how and what they take away from the book experiences. Adults' scaffolding of children's interactions with books sets them on the developmental trajectory by which children become critical readers.

Addressing critical literacy through picture books feeds on the concept of a shared reading experience within a specified community and offering a common point to begin discussions. The more a book portrays a situation that differs from children's everyday, the more the reading aloud of such books affords adult scaffolding at a maximum, allowing for effective use of think aloud strategy and close monitoring of children's responses. The advantage of picture books as a format is that the length is appropriate for an entire group to address the theme together, yet individuals can contribute through unique backgrounds and perspectives while the teacher can moderate and guide discussion. Appropriate book choices for such experiences are ones that have cognitive depth and engage child readers with issues that matter. But what is most significant is how we think of ourselves in relation to others. How do we ask questions that matter? How do we scaffold students' responses?

An example of a well-intended book is Jeannie Baker's *Mirror* in which the premise is to show two children from varying cultures (Morocco and Australia) going about daily life, with the story intertwined in its telling. On the author's website, it says, "The simple truth is that even with all these differences we are all the same." What the website says about our similar needs for loving families, belonging to community, are true. But when analyzed from the lens of critical literacy, what we find is the depiction of rural versus suburban, differences of socioeconomic class, romanticization of storytelling (the Australian family buys the rug made by the Moroccan family and the boy draws a picture fantasizing the rug as a flying carpet) and other such relations of power and agency in ways that perpetuate misunderstandings. This book is beautifully illustrated, interestingly conceptualized, and has won critical acclaim. Adults taking a critical literacy perspective when scaffolding the story experience with children would see this as an opportunity to discuss how we think of ourselves in relation to others.

Reading Against the Grain. One way to employ a critical stance when reading books of contemporary realistic fiction is "to examine the unexamined, question the unquestioned, and hold up to scrutiny the unspoken assertions the text is making about the way lives are lived in our society" by "reading against the grain" (Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2014). Such a way of approaching a realistically portrayed story may not be as apparent or expedient as "reading with the flow" but can be rewarding for the deep thinking and insights that may be discovered.

MEETING THE CONTINUING CHALLENGES

It's not easy to be inclusive, corrective, and both broad and deep when reading across cultures of our world. That is particularly true of worlds that are less frequently represented, and for which we have access to limited depictions. For example, *Sosu's Call* by Meshack Asare has often been recognized for its sensitive portrayal of those who are differently abled. In this picture book by an author originally from Ghana, a boy who cannot walk is kept inside his house while his siblings go to school and his parents go to work because some believe it is bad luck to have a person like him in their village. But when he uses his ingenuity to effectively warn villagers of impending flood danger by drumming, he is hailed for his heroism and rewarded with a wheelchair. The *School Library Journal* review states, "this story of overcoming a serious physical challenge and achieving acceptance may offer hope and inspiration to young readers." But when do we address the injustice of the situation, the not-so-common ways by which such cases are dealt, and what do we do if this is the only representation of Ghana in books for young children?

Another challenge facing all of us is our ability to know what literature the world has available; we seek recommendations that have been vetted by some trust-worthy organization. The International Federation of Librarians Association recently released an updated version of its project of having librarians around the world recommend their favorite books. Such a project is focused on a specific goal—that of recognizing what has popularity potential among readers. When it comes to reading internationally, the United States has been among the English-speaking countries that have been satisfied with having enough of their own publishing and not recognizing the richness of importing books from outside the country and diversifying the voices.

We live in a world that ranges from embrative of diversity to racist hatred. The messages around us in the media, popular culture, and day-to-day encounters are filled with this range. Even when well intended, diversity as naturally inclusive does not happen without conscious intention to address it and without stumbling. Sometimes the images of happy, diverse children in artificially posed situations seem to be quota-driven, at other times, end up coming across as patronizing. But how we position ourselves and young readers to think about what this means—to interpret the various messages and respond to them—can be influenced by what we read and how we think about it. In conclusion, offering children realistic images of our world involves depicting people of diversity in a range of experiences. And it is through these depictions that readers affirm their sense of self within the wider world, the roles they might play in it, and the decisions they might make. Because this is the case, our young readers deserve to see the most authentic depictions of realism they can be offered, through engaging text and enriching illustrations.

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Reality and Utopia – Power in Finnish lullabies: past and present

I will sing of what I know
Things I know and understand
Things my old dame once told me
My old parents taught me when
I was a milk-bearded scamp

A curd-mouthed toddler

1. CHILDREN'S POETRY, A DYNAMIC GENRE

I remember the way my own mother used to bless me as I lay down at night ("Now I lay me down to sleep, Lord, of Your mercy keep me safe. If I should not wake up in the morning, Please take me to Heaven to be with You"), but I do not recall that she ever sang to me. Maybe she or my elder sisters did sing to lullabies to put me to sleep, but so far back in time it was that I no longer remember. For how else would I have learned the melodies and the many fragments of lyrics? They have been meaningful and powerful, for later on they surfaced from somewhere inside me, so that I could sing them to my own three children and five grandchildren. So, you could say that I am standing one foot among the oral tradition of old lullabies, and the other, a researcher's foot, among written poetry.

Poetry for children has been a fairly dynamic genre in Finland. No doubt this is due to our rich indigenous folklore, particularly its oldest and most widespread genre, the lullaby tradition. Just as the old lullabies, the new ones also contain references to their times and to those who created them or recorded their observations in song.

Lullabies created during the agrarian period (18th and 19th centuries) were sung by women and mothers; these were poems that sometimes touched upon the basic issues of life. The life of a mother was not easy, but at least she was near her sleepy baby, present, even if tired. The poems born in more recent times are lighter in tone. The baby may be sung or rocked to sleep by its mother or father, aunt or uncle, or perhaps there is no one to sing. Evenings may not

be peaceful as a matter of course. Today, and particularly today, the carers are tired and pressed for time, and the children are less secure than before.

I will present some examples to describe the lullabies that have been and are still used to sing Finnish children to sleep, and to justify my argument.

2. A MOTHER'S WISHES

The old lullabies convey an image of the lives of women and mothers, and also of little children, during the agrarian period. Women had to divide their time among indoor and outdoor tasks, the large families with many childbirths and illnesses strained the mothers' health, child mortality was high, but mothers also died and left orphans behind. The reality of life was tough even for the children, and quite small ones were given chores to do, minding their younger siblings at least. The gender differences remind us of the problems we see in today's India or China. It was not all the same whether the baby lying in the cradle or in its mother's arms in a farmhouse or cottage was a boy or a girl. This is shown by the words used to speak of the baby. When a daughter was born, "nothing was born", but with a son, "an heir was born". Also: "I will sing my daughters to sleep / Even better, I'll sing to my sons, / my boy will bring me a daughter-in-law / She will heat up the sauna for me".

In her lullabies, a mother will wish the best things for her children that she knows of. She also has some wishes related to herself: "I am singing my child to sleep / Swaying my bird / Cradling my child to be my support". She hopes that her son will do well in the world, perhaps become a judge, and she would like the son to bring a good and hard-working daughter-in-law to help his mother. For her daughter, she often wishes a better life than she has had herself. This would be a certainty if the daughter married into a rich family or became the wife of a merchant.

3. SWEET WORDS AND CRADLING

When a child's mother can spare some time from her hard work and spend a while with her baby, the lullaby can be full of nicknames or diminutives, mostly taken from nature. The child may be called a red-skinned apple, a bird-cherry flower or heather blossom, and a strawberry, a bird or a baby duckling. These diminutives become more common as their original recording localities come closer to the eastern border of Finland, the province of Karelia. The mother is speaking to her child, but the content of the words comes from the mother's life and often reveals melancholic longing and perhaps the need to comfort oneself. The moment of singing may be the time of contentment, and the unhurried cradling movement also brings comfort to the singer.

Finnish lullabies make a free use of the poetic metre used in the *Kalevala*, that is, the trochaic tetrameter, and of alliteration. The melodies are simple,

and anyone singing them has easily been able to modify both the lyrics and the melody to suit the occasion. This is what I did, too. Many lullabies begin with words that refer to the motion of the cradle: “Tuu, tuu tupakkarulla” (Bye, bye, my little bundle), or “Aa, aa, allin lasta, / pientä linnun poikaa. / Ei ole isää, ei ole äitiä, / joka sitä hoitaa.” (Bye, bye, little long-tailed duck, / Little baby bird. / You have neither a father or a mother / To look after you.) This song is actually longer, but I only know these two couplets. When I was singing my grandchildren to sleep, I inserted the names of Aino, Iida, Miina-Maija, Aatto or Aaro-Pekka instead of the bird’s name, and sang in the parents of each child and added that sometimes they were only looked after by their grandmother (mamuli). My lullabies have been often powerful and successful and children have fallen peacefully asleep.

4. WORKING SONGS

Many lullaby lyrics resemble working songs. So does this, familiar to many Finns, at least as regards the first two lines: “Nuku, nuku nurmilintu, / väsy, väsy västäräkki”. I assume that this poem has originally come into being during a berrying trip into the forest, where the littlest one must take a nap and needs to be sung to. This is how the poem has been translated into English: “Sleep, little birdling. / Let tiredness take you, little wagtail. / Lay your head on the grass, / Lay down on the white ground. / [and?] I slept until the berry ripened / And then woke to pick it. / The strawberry cried: ‘Maid, come and pick me / Before the snails eat or the boys snatch me!’”

5. THE MYSTERIOUS BRINGER OF SLEEP

Lullabies often speak of a mysterious, personified creature of sleep, Mr. Nod from the next house, Old Man Sleep or Sandman, who is asked to tie the children’s eyes shut, maybe with a silken thread, or sometimes even to give them a tap so that they fall into their cradle. The magical Old Man Sleep sometimes comes from on top of the stove or even from abroad. In some parts of Finland children have been warned that Old Man Sleep will fetch away children who do not behave. And if the nanny has been bored with her monotonous work and the continuous wail of the child, the lullabies may have contained even harsher tones: “Bye, bye, baby, Death, come and meet us, / Take a stick and beat us both, / Nanny and the child.” The use of fantasy has been scant, the richness of imagination is best seen in the names used to address the child and in motifs related to death.

As our children’s literature underwent a reorientation in the 1950s, the personified Sandman was found to be a useful creature, and fantasy was let loose. The new times are reflected in the new variation of lullabies. Even fathers began to appear in the poems. Martti Haavio’s Sandman drives a blue car, eats

ice-cream with his little teeth and carries a sleepy book under his arm. Haavio's Sandman takes the children to the Land of Sleep, while Arvid Lydecken's Sandman takes them to the Land of Fairytales. The modernist of Finnish children's poetry, Kirsi Kunnas, varies the ancient tradition of beautiful diminutives in her lullabies: "Tiitiäinen metsäläinen / pieni menninkäinen / posket tehty puolukoista / tukka naavatuppuroista / silmät on siniset tähdet.", or "Bouncy little forest creature / little roly-poly gnome / cheeks are made of whortleberries / hair of a hank of tree-moss / eyes are a couple of blue stars". In another lullaby she also brings in the father to comfort the child: "Nuku nuku lapsikulta / isäs menee metsään / Hakee sieltä pupujussin, / pupun taskusta paperipussin / ja pussiin pannaan surut sulta" or "Go to sleep, my little baby / Your daddy'll go to the woods / He'll fetch a bunny rabbit there / Find a paper bag in its pocket / And that's where we'll hide your sorrows." In the 1990s, Jukka Virtanen, a father himself, lets the children ride on a rhyme train. His lullaby ends like this: "Now let's lay our heads on the pillow. / Good night. All nod off."

6. KEEPING FEARS IN CHECK

Old lullabies generally strive to create a feeling of safety, that is, to soothe the child into sleep and to dispel all fears. This is probably the case everywhere in the world: "Lullabies help ring-fence that inhospitable world" (Warner 1998, 2). [The lullaby collections that I have used include only one poem that contains slightly humorous 'scary' lyrics: "Go, go, go to sleep, / We are surrounded by peace. / We'll not be bitten by flies / Nor disturbed by skulking mice." (VII, 1583/Lipponen 2001, 93). The song reminds me of the Mother Mouse's Lullaby, published by Tuula Korolainen in 2005, which goes as follows in Finnish and in English:

[Pöllö ei tule / nukkukaa nyt.
Kissa ei tule, / nukkukaa nyt.
Käärme ei tule, / nukkukaa nyt.
Äiti on hiukan / väsynyt.../
Mikään ei tule / NUKKUKAA NYT!]

There is no owl, / go to sleep.
There is no cat, / go to sleep.
There is no snake, / go to sleep.
Mummy is so tired.../ tired deep..
There is no one!
GO TO SLEEP!

Children's poems often make use of animal figures. The fears of the mouse child are those that a real mouse would have, but a small child may also experience the same fears in the deep of the night, or perhaps something else. In the printed version of Korolainen's poem the stress is expressed by means of

typography, as “loud”. As in the poem by Jukka Virtanen, Korolainen’s poem also refers to parents who are busy and tired. Neither of these poems speaks of quiet evenings or calm, and they both stress the parent’s impatience: **Now put your head down at once!** I wonder whether this actually helps children to fall asleep, for, as we know, children are very sensitive to the mood around them.

7. LAND OF THE BLESSED BEYOND THE GRAVE, TUONELA

Researchers of Finnish folk poetry have noted that there is one thematic field in Finnish lullabies that is different from those in other countries. We have a rich tradition of oral lullabies with the theme of death. They describe a wonderful place where the child will be at ease. Here is part of a typical description in Finnish (with soft vowels u and o and pretty animal-symbols):

Tuuti lasta Tuonelahan
Uuteen tuonelan tupahan.
[Siell’ on santa sammalina
Hieta pieni permantona
sivuseinä sirkan luusta
peräseinä peuran luusta...]

Bye, bye, my child,
You’ll be taken to Death’s new house,
[Where the moss is made of gravel,
Floors are made of sand,
Side walls of the bones of crickets,
Rear wall of the bones of deer...]

The description goes on. One of Tuonela poems ends as follows: “Better the girl should be taken by Death / Than by a bad husband.” Another promises: “You’ll not hear the cocks crow there / Nor the drunkards make a noise. / There you’ll have blessed peace / And you’ll hear no storms / You’ll have fun thus lying there / Seeing you’re such a good child.” The temptation is made stronger by describing how the child will be able to rest “while Death’s maids will cradle you”.

It is worth pondering where these lullabies come from, with their fascination for death and descriptions of the Land of the Blessed beyond the grave (Kuusi 1970, 123–132). Finns resemble the Slavonic people in that they are inclined to melancholy, and the old lullabies actually speak more of the mothers’ tiredness with life and their calm attitude even in the face of their children dying. Perhaps the resignation is also partly based on the Christian conviction that a small child is innocent and pure, and it is only a blessing if they can die young, for they are sure to go to Heaven. In those times it was generally thought – as is described in the fairy tales by Zacharias Topelius – that children who die are transformed into angels that protect and guard other children and lead them in the right direction.

7. SONG OF MY HEART

In conclusion, I will discuss one of the finest descriptions in the Finnish literature of the Land of the Dead. It was created by Aleksis Kivi in his novel *Seven Brothers* (1870/1873). The poem shows that Kivi was thoroughly familiar with the death imagery of the old, orally-transmitted lullabies. The child will feel well in the Valley of Death, he will be given a golden cradle to sleep in and can listen to the birds singing. All persecution and conflict is gone, for gone is also the world with its devious ways. This poem was set to music by Jean Sibelius, and the composition is part of the staple repertoire of Finnish male choirs. [I hope that you will one day be able to listen to the final stanza, sung e.g. by some Finnish choirs, e.g. by the Madetoja Upper Secondary School Choir (Oulu)]. In the novel, the religious mother Anna sings this song of her heart to her baby lying in the cradle:

Aleksis Kivi: *Sydämeni laulu* /The Song of my Heart
(Translation by Alex Matson, 1952)

Grove of Tuoni, grove of night!
There thy bed of sand is light,
Thither my baby I lead.

Mirth and joy each long hour yields
In the Prince of Tuoni's fields
Tending the Tuonela cattle.

Mirth and joy my babe will know
Lulled to sleep at evening glow
By the pale Tuonela maiden.

Surely joy the hours will hold,
Lying in thy cot of gold
Hearing the nightjar singing.

Grove of Tuoni, grove of peace!
There all strife and passion cease.
Distant the treacherous world.

We no longer sing or write poems to our children about death and this song, *Sydämeni laulu*, is most often heard at funerals. Nowadays death has slowly and very gently been taken away from our epic tales for children.

My presentation ends on a very sombre note. Or a light one, for that was how the Land of Death was described in this lullaby. It was a place where "all strife and passion cease", and that is probably what we all look for in our lives. However, to return to the word 'power'. I hope I have been able to convince you that in Finland at least, lullabies have had power and have been powerful and alive enough to make it to modern days. I certainly hope that they will con-

tinue to live long. But, dear friends – what sort of lullabies do we need today, or do we need any?

Which kind of historical or modern lullabies do you have in Poland? Are they telling more about the reality of our life or do they escape it, to give more room to fantasy?

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On metafiction in children's literature

According to the earlier research on children's literature, the Finnish young adult novel became post-modern and metafictive during 1990s (see Loivamaa 1996 and Grün 2003). These critics claim that there is no "perfectly self-reflexive" young adult novel and that there are some novels, which only apply metafictional techniques. My aim in this article is to look closer at these interpretations, continue the search of metafictive young adult novels, and find more examples of metalayers in Finnish children's and young adult literature.

Children's literature critic Ismo Loivamaa has picked up two metafictional young adult novels in his book *Nuortenkirjan villit vuodet* (1996). According to him, Jukka Parkkinen's *Mustasilmäinen blondi* (1990, The Black-eyed Blonde) and Riitta Jalonen's *Enkeliyöt* (1990, Angel Nights) are the examples of metafictional young adult novels, which are worth mentioning. The same works are taken along also in the new history of children's literature *Pieni suuri maailma* (2003) in Karl Grün's article about the latest children's and adolescence literature. Both Loivamaa and Grün justify the metafictionality of novels with several narrational layers in Parkkinen's and Jalonen's novels. In their presentations, Loivamaa and Grün do not concentrate on defining the term metafiction or refer to the theories of metafiction but they focus on the contents and narration of novels. In *Mustasilmäinen blondi*, the main plot is mixed with an embedded detective story - à la Raymond Chandler, which the protagonist writes. *Enkeliyöt* reveals the history of the protagonist with a story told by narrator, diary sections and an embedded story.

Metafictionality is a common feature in modern children's literature, if we understand metafiction as fiction about fiction, authorship or processes of creating. The difference between metafictionality in adult literature and in children's literature lies in the audience. In children's literature, metafictionality is addressed for two audiences: children and adults. (Nikolajeva, 1995, 167–168; 1996, 192–193.) Along these abovementioned two novels, only few books have been described as metafictional Finnish young adult novels. This might depend on the small number of research which discusses the narrative techniques of Finnish children's literature. However, among Finnish children's books and picture books also Tove Jansson's and Kirsi Kunnas's works have been referred as metafictive (see Hollsten 1993, Kivilaakso 2004, Niemi 1995, 83–89, Westin 1996).

The emphasis in this article is mainly in young adult fiction. First, I will follow the questions what the (international) research of children's literature has posed when discussing metafictionality or metaliterary layers in fiction. Secondly, I will introduce more examples of metafiction in Finnish children's literature and I will finally analyse self-reflexivity and metafictionality in four Hannele Huovi's novels.

RESEARCH ON METAFICTION IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Among the first researchers who discuss the relationship of metafiction and children's literature is American Anita Moss. Her article "Varieties of children's metafiction" was published in *Studies in the Literary Imagination* in 1985. The theme number concentrates on children's literature and narrative theory. Anita Moss defines as metafictional those texts in which the narrative process and the description of it are essential part of the novel. Since Moss, the research on the field has concentrated mainly on analysing the process of telling or writing of stories in stories. Moss draws her conclusions from Paula Fox's *How Many Miles to Babylon* (1967) and Nathalie Babbitt's *Knee-Knock Rise* (1971), which she compares with the narration of two novels from the 19th century (Charles Dickens: *A Holiday Romance* 1868; Edith Nesbit: *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* 1899). She discusses, for example, how the characters function as listeners or narrators and how the stories mingle. Moss does not refer to any special theory of metafiction – except for Inger Christensen's *The Meaning of metafiction* (1981). She cites neither Linda Hutcheon, Patricia Waugh, nor William Gass when she defines the term metafiction.

After Anita Moss, the British Geoff Moss (1990, 1992), and David Lewis (1990) as well as Australians John Stephens (1993) and Robyn McCallum have been interested in the issue. Robyn McCallum wrote her article "Metafictions and Experimental Work" in *The International Companion Encyclopedia for Children's Literature* (1996). McCallum (1996) condenses in her article the relationship with metafiction and the reader or the postmodernism as well as she discusses different experimental narrative techniques. These techniques are 1) intertextuality and parody, 2) narrational and authorial intrusions, 3) narrative forms: mystery, fantasy, games, 4) narrative disruptions and discontinuities, 5) mise en abymes and self-reflective devices, 6) the linguistic construction of texts and the world (styles, puns, anagrams, clichés, print conventions, footnotes, letters, journals, historical documents, 6) multistranded and polyphonic narratives, and 7) postmodernist historiographic metafictions. McCallum explores the covert and overt metafiction, linguistic and diegetic metafiction, after Linda Hutcheon.

In Scandinavia, children's literature researchers Lena Kåreland (1997), Maria Nikolajeva (1995, 1996) and Mette Trangbaek (1999) have focused their interest on young adult novels, which can be described as metafictional. They

turn to Patricia Waugh's ideas of metafiction. The authors these critics emphasize are Norwegians Jostein Gaarder and Tormod Haugen and Swedish authors Bernt Danielsson, Peter Pohl and Mats Wahl. Tormod Haugen has perhaps taken metafictionality the farthest in his novels. In his *Romanen om Merkel Hanssen og Donna Winter og Den store flukten* (1986) the metafictional layers include thoughts of meaning of forewords, citations and for whom the novel should be devoted. The text comments on the author's and narrator's decisions how to continue the story.

Some of the researchers of children's literature - like David Lewis, Geoff Moss and Canadian Roderick McGillis (1999) - have also discussed metafictionality in the texts and pictures of picture books. The most analysed picture book is Jon Scieszka's and Lane Smith's *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (1992). In this post-modern book, ten fairy tales or stories have been revised, revisited and converted. The narrator-Jack and Little Red Hen comment the narration in the text and in the pictures. For example, the order of the pages is presented as if Jack would have the control over them:

"Shhhhhh. Be very quiet. I moved the endpaper up here so the Giant would think the book is over. The big lug is finally asleep. Now I can sneak out of here. Just turn the page very quietly and that will be The..." (Scieszka & Smith 1992, 41.)

Following Hutcheon's (1980, 9) characterization of postmodernist metafiction, this text overtly presents itself as narrative and not just in and with paratexts but also with pictures. On the end cover, the Little Red Hen is pointing to the ISBN number label:

"What is this doing here? This is ugly! Who is this ISBN guy? Who will buy* this book anyway? Over fifty pages of nonsense and I'm only in three of them. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

The Stinky Cheese Man includes several strategies whereby the texts can function as linguistically self-conscious (McCallum 2004). This picture book parodies on specific fairytale style; it draws attention to the physicality of texts with different printing conventions, fonts, layout and jackets.

HOW THE FINNISH NOVELS REFLECT THE FICTION AND NARRATING

The most discussed metafictional Finnish young adult novels or ironic novels have probably been Jukka Parkkinen's *Mustasilmäinen blondi* and Riitta Jalonen's *Enkeliyöt*. They both are books in which writing plays an essential part and is itself one of the key themes.

Enkeliyöt is a story about an adolescent girl Vilja. She writes her secrets in her notebooks. Drafts or quotations of her thoughts are scattered across the main plot and they are titled according to months "Vilja writes in her notebook of March".

Vilja also writes a story, and she calls it Story. In the main plot, she refers to her writing of the story from time to time. Parts of the Story are printed in italics, but in the end of the novel, the last version of Vilja's Story is complete. She passes the Story to her boyfriend. The novel and the Story both tell about the mental illness of Vilja's mother and how that affects the young girl's life.

Jukka Parkkinen's *Mustasilmäinen blondi* can be described as a parodic young adult novel. The first person narrator writes a detective story and ponders upon how to start the novel and how to build the story. In *Mustasilmäinen blondi*, one more, paratextual, layer can be found in the covers. They contain a printed story of the birth of the novel. The description has been signed by the author Jukka Parkkinen. This text reveals that one intertext for the novel is fiction by Raymond Chandler and that novel is a book in a book.

The earlier research has referred to these novels as not-complete metafictional novels because the border of fiction and reality does not break at every level (Loivamaa 1996, 77–84). As the earliest theoretical text on metafiction claim, the question in metafiction is about the relationship between fiction and reality. However, Hutcheon and Waugh do not draw explicit lines where the borders of completeness of metafictionality should or could be. The point is not to specify the grade of metafictional features but to examine different variations (overt, covert) of it. And Waugh (1984/1988, 18) remarks that metafiction is “an elastic term which covers a wide range of fictions”. That has been also the idea for Stephens, McCallum, Kåreland and Trangbaek. I find it interesting to look at the Finnish young adult fiction and try to explore differences in metafictional writing. For my mind, these two novels are not the only metafictional young adult novels that have been published in Finland.

I think that several novels emphasize and draw attention to their fictionality. According to Waugh (1984/1988, 117), the ‘most minimal form’ of metafiction appears in novels where the artist functions as a protagonist and fictionality is the theme. Jukka Parkkinen's *Mustasilmäinen blondi* was not his first book what elaborates and plays with linguistic and narrative codes and conventions. Parkkinen is known for verbal puns, jokes and intertextual allusions since his first children's book in the end of 1970s. I would describe Kari Levola's *Kattohaukka* (1982, The Roof Hawk) and *Blankko, mä kirjoitan sulle* (1989, Blankko, I'll write for you) as well as Timo Parvela's *Poika* (1989, Boy) as having self-reflexive and metafictional features when containing threads of writing and narrating. Especially in the male authors' novels, the protagonist's enthusiasm to write stories and detective stories is interesting.

Kattohaukka is a story about a boy who writes a notebook and tells how he ends up with a drug dealing gang. He starts his story a following way:

“Mä haluan omistaa tämän tarinan kattohaukalle, joka sitten alkoi leikuttaa niin että mun oli pakko kirjoittaa tää kaikki. Toiseksi mä haluan omistaa tämän mun kiinalaiselle muistikirjalle, sillä vaikka siitä paloi sivuja, ilman sitä ei läheskään kaikki olisi muistunut mieleen.” (Levola, 1982, 5.)

I want to dedicate this story for a roof hawk which then started to flap so that I needed to write all this down. Secondly, I want to dedicate this for my Chinese notebook because though it was partly burned I could not remember the things without it.

The I-narrator refers to writing, telling and detective fiction. He points out that he knows the genre and its most famous authors, the typical narrative strategies and characters. Similarly, Levola plays with the genre characteristics in his *Blankko, mä kirjoitan sulle*. Here he exercises with letter writing, with clichés and with polyphonic dual narration. The two protagonists joke for example with signing the letters with various (intertextual) pseudonyms. Among the letters, there is a story which functions as a *mise en abyme*, embedded narration, though the end of the story is not ready yet.

In Timo Parvela's *Poika*, already the title "Boy" captures the reader's attention. *Poika* is a general name, not a personal name. When the story goes on, this anonymity opens up to the identity theme and the fictionality of the story; it does not go beyond the individuality. Simultaneously, the story parodies and comments the genre of young adult novels and its Salingerian undertone. Parvela's narrator also speaks directly to the readers. So does Esko-Pekka Tiitiäinen in his book *Parempi valita susi* (1991, Better to choose a wolf), which begins with narrator's comment that he will just jump over the dedications and forewords for the readers and gets in to the history. The novels (or the narrators) in this way recount the progress of the structuring process and the authors frame the story with addressing the readers directly. By doing so, they accentuate the level of fiction and comment on *The Catcher in the Rye* novel. Linda Hutcheon (1980, 97–99) and Patricia Waugh (1984, 4) discuss on overt linguistic narcissism and how the novel can be a play on a certain mode of writing and surprise the readers and their genre expectations.

Same year as *Enkelijöt* and *Mustasilmäinen blondi*, 1990, appeared also Kari Hotakainen's *Lastenkirja* (Children's Book).¹ As the name tells, it is not a young adult novel but a children's book or actually a collection of stories for children. Hotakainen's production is all-age-fiction and so are these stories. The narrative levels and reflections on them are visible already in the title of the book. The book starts with a chapter titled "Lastenkirjan synty" (The birth of a children's book)

Lastenkirja syntyy litistämällä, typistämällä, keksimällä, hukkaamalla, kolisten, tuprahdellen, ahtaista paikoista se vierii alaville maille ja nousee jäykistä juurista puitten latvoihin. Sieltä se huhuilee lapsille ja Aikuisille: Tulkaa tänne kansiin väliin, lupaan etten mene kiinni. (Hotakainen 1990, 5–6.)

¹ In the new history of Finnish children's literature, Marja Suojala (2003) has presented Kari Hotakainen as a post-modern author who uses metafictional features in his children's books.

(A children's book is born by flattening, pruning, inventing, loosening, clattering, puffing, and from the cramped rooms it rolls down the hillside and whizzes up to the trees passing the stiff roots. There in the tree, it hoots to children and to the Adults: Come here, come into the book, I promise that I will never close.)

The first section has a title "Tyypit tulevat" (The characters come) and the section tells how the characters one by one come along and how they are introduced. The characters ask questions like "No, tästäkö se Lastenkirja alkaa?" (Well, is it here the Children's Book begins?) (p. 10). In between, the narrator or narrators of embedded stories intrude into the narration and pose questions: "Muistatko tollohkko?" (Do you remember the dummy?) (p. 68) "tarina ei kerro miten miehen kävi, joten minun on se kerrottava". (The story does not tell what happened to the man, so I have to tell it). (p. 20). The book consists of small stories told by the characters. The book ends up also referring to the process of narration. The last title is "Lastenkirja loppuu" ("The Children's Book ends").

Lastenkirja loppuu litistämällä, typistämällä, hukkaamalla, kolisten ja tuprahdellen se liukuu keskeneräisenä ulos huoltoaseman hallista tai kopahtaa kadulle synnytyslaitoksen ikkunasta. Ahtaista paikoista se vierii alaville maille ja nousee jäykistä juurista puitten latvoihin. Sieltä se huhuilee lapsille ja Aikuisille: täällä minä nyt olen, tyhjänä ja täytenä, tulkaa toistekin lukemaan ja kirjoittamaan!

Ja lapset luiskahtelevat sen sivuilta omille teilleen, uusiin kertomuksiin ja maailman tuuliin. jotkut jäävät kirjanmerkeiksi tai ihan oikeiksi saduiksi, toiset eivät tykkää tapahtumista ja keksivät itse parempia. (Hotakainen 1990, 128.)

(A children's book ends with flattening, pruning, loosening, clattering, puffing, and unfinished it slides out from the hall of service station or drops on the street through the window of maternity hospital. From ramped rooms it rolls down the hillside and whizzes up to the tree passing the stiff roots. There in the tree, it hoots to children and to the Adults: "Here I am now, as empty, as full, return here, come back to read and write!

And then the children slip from the pages on they own paths, into new stories and the winds of the world. Some will stay as bookmarks or true stories, the others do not like the plot and invent better ones.)

Hotakainen, like later Lane Smith and Scieszka, make it explicitly clear for readers that the text itself is aware of its medium. Hutcheon calls this a static form of overt linguistic narcissism (Hutcheon, 1980).

Kari Hotakainen wrote a young adult book, which reveals the processes of narrating, telling and writing. The book is short prose. A short story collection *Näytän hyvältä ilman paitaa* (I look good without shirt) was published 2000. It parodies the world of young adults in 17 stories. In the introduction the first person narrator addresses the readers "Sammuttakaa savukkeenne ja hilatkaa ne sääliittävät käsimatkatavaranne jalkatilasta sinne yläpesään. Nyt tää kirja al-

kaa.” (Hotakainen 2000, 5.) “Please extinguish your cigarettes and lift your pathetic hand luggage up to the luggage rack. This book starts now). The narrator is called Pete. According to him, “reliability is essential. A book must tell the things as they are, not as they should be. That’s why so many stories pushed for young are so slack.”

/ “uskottavuus on kaiken perusta. Kirjan pitää kertoa asiat just niinkun ne on, ei niinkun niitten pitäis olla. Tän takia melkein kaikki nuorille tyrkytetyt tarinat on niin löysiä” (s. 6).

Mut mitä mä tässä jaarittelen, mä oon nyt samassa tilanteessa kun ne nöösit. Mun pitää kertoa teille tarina. Hyvä on./ Lähetään alusta./ - - Ei saatana. Mä en kerro tarinaa, vaan tarinoita./ Saatte kerralla 17 tarinaa. / Seitsemäntoista tarinaa yhden nuortenkirjan hinnalla. Pete on nyt reilulla päällä./ Nää kaikki tarinat kertovat tavalla tai toisella minusta, vaikka vaihdan nimeä niinku niissä huumedokumenteissa. Mut mä en kerro huumehelvetistä, se on niin kulunu aihe. Mä kerron siitä, kun huumeita ei ole. Se se helvetti on. Olla samanlainen nuori selvinpään Suomessa. (Hotakainen 2000,s 7–8.)

But what’s worth chattering, I’m in the same train as those losers [drunken authors]. I gotta tell you a story. Ok.

Let’s start in the beginning.

No, fuck.

I won’t tell you a story, but stories.

You’ll get 17 stories in one book.

Seventeen stories for the same price. Pete is fair now.

All these stories tell about me on a way or another, although I change my name like in those drug documents. But I won’t tell you about the drug hell, it’s so worn-out. I tell you about that when you don’t have drugs. That is the hell. To be a similar young but sober in Finland...

After the introduction, follow the stories of Pete. I found Hotakainen making parody of Salinger’s protagonist who really wants to tell one single story. In between there have been placed ‘adult’ comments about young adolescence, like this author from Parkano

Yritin kuvata nuoria.

Tein nuortenromaanin yli puoli vuotta.

Urakka kusi. Ei niitä saa romaanin sivuille.

Nuoret ovat tulikärpäsiä ja lepakoita,
ne on kuvattava videolle, eivät ne tallennu sivuille.

Helpompi on kuvata luonnon heräämistä
ja maan kahtiajakoa.

(Kirjailija, Parkano)

I tried to describe young people.

I worked with a novel over half a year.

It sucked. You won’t get those into the pages of a novel.

Young are fire beetles and bats,
 You got to film them on the video, you cannot save them in the pages.
 It is easier to depict how the nature awakens
 And how the land splits.
 (Author, Parkano).

In this fictional citation, you can find an allusion to Hotakainen's *Lastenkirja*, where the narrator invites the listeners and how they come and how the characters stay in the pages.

Similarly as Kari Hotakainen, Jukka Parkkinen also plays with metafictional features in his books. Before *Mustasilmäinen blondi* he had published several books for children, which are described as intertextual and can be included and placed in Robyn McCallum's post-modern strategies as parodic plays. For example, his trilogy about *Suvi Kinos* (1995–1999) mixed many ways the expectations of memoirs, autobiography, girls' stories and other genres. He plays with the levels of fiction and reality. The second book, *Suvi Kinos ja puuttuva rengas* (*Suvi Kinos and the Miss Ingring*) starts with the greetings from Suvi (Parkkinen 1998, 5):

Haluan muistuttaa lukijalle, että kaikkien tässä kirjassa esiintyvien henkilöiden nimet on muutettu, samoin heidän ammattinsa, kotipaikkansa, ikänsä, sukupuolensa ja heitä kohdanneet tapahtumat. Kaikki muu on kuvattu niin todennukaisesti kuin tämän kirjoittaja on sen kokenut ja muistaa.
 Villa Landessa
 Suvi Kinos

I want to remind the reader that all the names of the characters in this book have been changed, as well as their professions, hometowns, ages, genders and the events they have met. Everything else has been described as truthfully as the author has experienced and remembers.
 In Villa Lande
 Suvi Kinos

It is the blending of genres and text types and intruding or interrupting narration which point another direction for Finnish young adult fiction since 1980s. Before Parkkinen's and Jalonen's novels, other authors also used several varieties of fictional narcissism, as Hutcheon would be willing to call it. The metafictional traits do appear in young adult fiction already years before it was mentioned in the earlier research.² In the following, I will continue by looking more thoroughly at chronological changes of metafictionality in one author's production.

² In the point of view of metafiction, other interesting works are for example Tove Jansson's *Mumin* books, Kirsi Kunnas's *Kani Koipeliinin kuperkeikat* (1979), Riitta Nelimarkka's *Iso ja pieni universumissa* (1982), Harri Manner's *Eräs herra sanoi kerran* (2001) and Katri Kirkkopelto's and Suna Vuori's *Hirveää parkaisi hirviö* (2005).

SELF-REFLEXIVITY AND METAFICTIONAL TRAITS
IN HANNELE HUOVI'S NOVELS

The subjects of my study are Hannele Huovi's novels *Madonna* (1986), *Vladimirin kirja* (1988, The Book of Vladimir), *Tuliraja* (1994, Fireline) and *Lasi aurinko* (1996, Glass Sun). The works chosen were published in the middle of 1980s and 1990s. Unlike the novels by male authors, Huovi's works do not grow up from the reflection of detective stories but from fairy tales and storytelling.

MADONNA

Hannele Huovi made her début on young adult fiction year 1986 when her novel *Madonna* was published. The novelty of this text is the theme: anorexia and mother-daughter-relationship. Not just the theme but also the experimental narration with rich scale of modes, citations and intertextuality established the author's name in the literary history. (Heikkilä-Halttunen 2003, 224, Härkönen, 2003, 297.)

Huovi interlaces the story of an anorectic girl with a Finnish national poem of Marjatta. This Kalevala poem is a folkloristic version of Virgin Mary and the story tells how Marjatta becomes pregnant of a lingonberry and gives birth to a boy (Jesus). Huovi uses the poem in the beginning of the chapters but she breaks the chronological order of the poem. For the reader who knows her or his *Kalevala* this means that the reader has to gather the story from the pieces. This is one way to focus the reader's attention to the narration.

The story of Kalevalan Marjatta is interwoven with a young girl's story. The girl's mother is pregnant but she thinks that her own daughter is with the baby because she throws up and feels sick. The story is about the identity of a young female. Her explorations of and struggles with her corporeal and sexual self is combined with the relationship drama in the family.

The metafictionalness in the novel lies in the intertextuality and the self-awareness in the construction. *Madonna* comments on the fictional mode of *Kalevala*. Same time the quotations of the poem function as mise en abymes. In addition, a wooden statue of Madonna, which Marjatta inspects in a museum, mirrors the theme. Her description of the wooden Marjatta, which carries a red berry in her arms, illustrates the emotional bind between them.

Veistos-Marjatta katsoi Marjattaa vakavana ja väsyneenä, kuin olisi pidellyt kipua sisässään. Mutta hän oli päättänyt kantaa puolukkinsa, oli päättänyt jaksaa. Ja vaikka marja neitsyen kädessä oli ihmeellinen – suuri, punainen ja kruunua kantava – ei neitsyt riemuinnut sen löytymisestä, mutta ei kärsinytkään. Hän kuljetti sitä käsissään kuin kohtaloa. (Huovi 1986, 139.)

Marjatta statue gazed on Marjatta serious and tired as she had kept the pain inside. However, she had decided to carry on, to survive. Moreover, even

though the berry on virgin's hand was miraculous - big, red and crowned – the virgin did not rejoice that it was found, but neither did she suffer. She carries it in her hands like a faith. (Huovi 1986, 139.)

The lingon berry symbolizes both the fertility and the Son of God to be crowned. The scene refers to Marjatta's wakening and her realisation that she will change, she will become a fertile woman, she will sense her body. When Anna, Marjatta's friend interrupts Marjatta's pondering and points out how similar these two Marjattas look alike, Marjatta realises her feelings:

Marjattaa kouraisi. Annakin oli ymmärtänyt. Marjatta ei hajonnut maailmaan, ei kuollut. Hänet oli mahdollista veistää, piirtää, kirjoittaa. Hänen tunteillaan oli muoto. Joku sen joskus löysi. (s. 140.)

Marjatta felt a gripping pain. Also Anna had understood. Marjatta did not vanish in to the space, she did not die. It was possible to carve her in the wood, could draw her or write her down. There was a form, a shape for her feelings. Someone would come and found it some day. (Huovi 1986, 140.)

This scene cuts across the border of fiction and reality. Simultaneously, when Marjatta understands that her feelings can be presented in an artistic piece, the reader is offered the interpretation that the feelings of a young mind can be written down on paper, in fiction – as Huovi does in *Madonna*.

VLADIMIR'S BOOK

Two years later Huovi's *Vladimirin kirja* (1988) changed decisively the Finnish young adult literature. First, it questioned the genre characteristics in a directly postmodernist way. The story of Vladimir crosses over the conventional expectations of the age of the protagonist. The novel follows Vladimir's lifespan from his birth to his old age – not just the peak moments or adolescent years as the modern young adult novel has usually done (Rättyä 2005, 26–30). Secondly, *Vladimirin kirja* spans a range of genres, it has been called a fantasy or fairy tale novel and a historical novel. The adventurous moments are placed in a non-specific Eastern milieu and time, where the tzars and princes and princesses have their palaces and sceptres. Regarding the local and temporal indefiniteness, there are analogies to the end of the empire of the Russian tsardom at the turn of the 20th century. Together with the historical features Huovi expands her novel with fairy tales and folk tales as her own stories as embedded narrations which multiply the framing and interlacing process.

In the main framework of the novel, the book (Vladimir's book) alludes to the fictionality (compare with Haugen's *Romanen om Merkel Hanssen...* or Hotakainen's *Lastenkirja*). The first pages frame out the self-consciousness of the identity as a text and fiction. In the frame story Vladimir explains his motifs of writing for his son Miiron.:

... olen ajatellut kirjoittaa sinulle elämästäni, sillä arvelen, ettet paljoakaan siitä tiedä. Jos yrität selvittää vaiheitani kirjaston arkistoissa tai historiankirjoitusten avulla, niin voin sanoa, etteivät ne tiedot pidä paikkaansa. Minun kirjurini ovat kirjoittaneet paljon valheita, he ovat nuoleskelleet valtaa, ja olen itsekin mahtikäskyin kirjoituksia karsinut.

Sen minkä nyt olen päättänyt kirjoittaa, koetan tehdä hyvin puolueettomasti. Silti sinun on koko ajan mietittävä, miltä kertomus sinun näkökulmastasi vaikuttaa tai mitä äitisi siitä sanoisi, jos eläisi. Jokaisella on oma totuutensa, joskin erakkona eläessäni olen oppinut, että meillä kaikilla on myös jotain yhteistä. Sen olen oppinut lintuni lauluista. (Huovi 1988, 6.)

... I have been thinking that I should write my story for you because I think that you do not know so much of it. If you try to follow footprints in the archives of the library or with the help of histories, I can tell you that they are not correct. My scribes have written many lies, they have licked the power and I have loped off the writings with my mighty orders.

What I have now decided to write I will do objectively. However, you have to constantly think how you see the story from your point of view or what your mother would say if she would be alive. Each of us has their truth, even though as a hermit I have learned that we all have something common. My bird has taught me that (Huovi 1988, 6.)

Huovi's novel ends with Miiron's afterword, which is followed by comments from the author. Author's comment consists of the background information and explanations of the fairy tales used in the novel. The narrative hierarchy in the novel is made clear for the readers. The most internal section is Vladimir's voice and the story of his life. That is framed by the letter for Miiron and Miiron's own afterwords and author's explanations. Inside the story there are also fairy tales as Chinese-box narrations. The 11 embedded stories function also as thematic mirrors repeating and reflecting such issues as: faith, faithfulness, knowledge, power and the relationship between an act and its consequences.

The framing texts direct reader's attention to the act of narration and to the base of the story. The frames double the theme of the novel, the truthfulness of the told history. According to Linda Hutcheon (1980, 9, 23, 54), it is the question about an overt diegetic narcissism. The explicit thematization proceeds with the help of plot, metaphors and comments by narrators. Both the acts of reading and interpretation are important. The reader witnesses both old Vladimir's writing and his career as a rewriter of the history of the tzar. And old Vladimir reflects his own writing and what kind of wisdom he now has. Autobiographical mode of writing constitutes another narrative frame in the novel. When narrating Vladimir's own life, the I-narrator uses and plays with the conventions of memoirs. But all these turn out to be but minor differences within the overall in ambiguity of facts and fiction.

Sodan kovettamana minun oli helppo kirjoittaa se uusi historia, mitä keisari vaati. Ja minä jos kuka osasin sen kirjoittaa! Tiesin jokaisen taistelun kulun

paremmin kuin keisari. Tiesin joukkojen määrät ja menetykset. Hyökkäyksistä ei niissä papereissa puhuttu mitään, vain sankarillisesta puolustamisesta. Omat tappiot olivat aina pienemmät kuin vihollisen menetykset. Istuin taas arkistoissa, kävin lävitse asiakirjoja, muutin ja väärensinkin niitä tarpeen mukaan. Oma-tuntoni oli kivetynyt ja jähmettynyt käytön puutteessa. (Huovi 1988, 214).

After the hard experiences in the war, I was able to write a new kind of history, the kind that pleased the Tzar. I knew better the line of the battles, I knew what we lost and how big the troops were. The attacks were not mentioned in those papers only our heroic defences saw the light. Our losses were always smaller than the attacker's losses. I sat again in the archives and went through documents, changed and falsified them when needed. My consciousness was stoned and frozen because it was not needed. (Huovi 1988, 214).

Tämä valehteleminen oli todellista valtaa ja se maistui yhtä aikaa kitkerälle sekä makealle niin kuin parhaat herkut aina. Vain minä yksin tiesin asiakirjojen virheet. Sain kirjurit vapisemaan ja jos he joskus eivät määräyksiäni totelleet, heidät saatiin äkkiä kiinni pienistä virkarikkeistä. Jos mieli ei muuttunut, he löysivät kohta itsensä vankilan kivilattialta.

Olin kuin jakautunut kahdeksi eri ihmiseksi. Toinen valehteli ja väänteli totuutta keisarikunnan eduksi, toinen pilkkasi hovin hajuvesiä ja muodollisia tapoja ja etsiytyi rahvaan joukkoon satamakaduille ja toreille. (Huovi 1988, 216–217.)

This lying was real power and it tasted simultaneously sweet and bitter as the best delicacy ever. Only I was aware of the falsifications and mistakes in the documents. I made the scribes shiver and if they did not obey my orders, they were quickly caught by the minor misdemeanours. If they did not change their minds, they soon found themselves on the stonely floors of prison.

I had split in two different persons. The other lied and wrestled the truth for the empire, the other made a mocking of perfumes and etiquette in the court and found his path to the streets and market places of the harbour. (Huovi 1988, 216–217.)

Vladimirin kirja can also be regarded as a historiographic metafiction. As Hutcheon defines it, in historical metafiction the fictive and historical notions mix and the borders of fiction, history and reality are questioned (Hutcheon 1980).

TULIRAJA

As a contemporary novel, *Tuliraja* (1995) appears like a complement to *Madonna*. *Tuliraja* presents a young boy and his relationship to his family, specially his demented grandmother. The omniscient narrator focuses his attention to Janne, who in some chapters also functions as a I-narrator. Other different perspectives are grandmothers' diary sentences, which bring another level to the story as well as a new narrative voice who ponders his or her own motifs and the question who actually is the real narrator for the story of a human.

Voin olla kertoja, enkeli tai se joka hänet on luonut. - - - Kertoessani minun on mahdollista liikkua missä haluan niin kuin häinkin voi liikkua kertoessaan, ja kyselen itseltäni onko ihminen sittenkin vain kertomus, joku tarina. Ja kuka tarinaa kertoo? Hän voi kertoa oman tarinansa minun tarinani sisällä ja me olemme kuin venäläiset nuket toistemme mahassa. (Huovi 1994, 140–141.)

I can be a narrator, an angel or the one who has created him. - - - When I narrate, I can move wherever I want to as well as he can move when he is telling. And I ask myself if the human is still just fiction, a story. And who tells the story? He can tell his story inside my story and we are like Russian dolls in each other's bellies. (Huovi 1994, 140–141.)

The interlacing narrative voices make the novel a kind of collage. Same kind of multivoice narration offers Riitta Jalonen's *Enkeliyöt* and Kaarina Helakisa's *Lumikki Valkonen* (199*). The quotation brakes strongly the illusion of reality, when narrator starts to question of the narrators of this story. Patricia Waugh (1984, 130–135) believes that questions like here, and use of pronoun *us*, reveals the third level of metafictionality.

The frame structure in *Tuliraja* is strengthened also with the citations from Peter Handke's novel **Kivun kiinalainen*. The two citations refer to the thresholds: "My story is a threshold story" and in the end "The narrator is the threshold". This border refers also to the name of this novel *Tuliraja* (Firezone). During the narrated time, Janne is working with a school project on art education. He and his classmate are creating a concrete zone area of petrolin cans and will burn them in the snow. Janne is inspired in his work with fire as that element which never stays the same in one form. The goal of the project is to show that making a border means to separate two sides. And the threshold is a place for natural and unnatural things to meet.

On the other hand, Janne has been thinking about the symbolic meaning of threshold when he listens to his mother. After this, Janne speculates on his relationship to his mother, her absence and also his own being:

Olin loihduttu tähän kertomukseen enkä enää ollut varma oliko se minun kertomukseni ollenkaan. Tämä tarina tuntui vieraalta, se oli outo ja arvaamaton. Maa-ilma näyttäytyi äkkiä huokoisena ja hauraana rakenteena, kaikki oli kummallisesti sidoksissa kaikkeen ja maan kamara ja ilma niin ohutta ja särkyvää etten voinut liikahtakaan. Tiesin, että jos liikahtaisin kaikki säләhtäisi rikki. (s. 157)

I was bewitched in this story and I was no longer certain if it was my story after all. This story seemed strange, it was weird and unexpected. The world appeared suddenly as a porous and frail structure, odd how everything was connected to everything and how the skin of the earth, the air was so thin and breakable that I could not move. I knew that if I would move everything would splinter. (Huovi 1994, 157.)

According to Waugh (1984, 90–91), the authors, when probing the borders of fiction and reality, are interested in two special problems: the identity of per-

sons and the problem of referentiality. In *Tuliraja*, the emphasis is placed on Janne's identity and the ontological doubt, and, in the earlier quotations, on the problem of freedom that the narrator encounters. The interpretations of experiences and observations are strongly highlighted and valued. In this way the novel considers the question of truth, like *Vladimirin kirja*.

GLASS SUN

In the following adolescence novel, Huovi continues discussing the same theme: otherness and fragility. The historical young adult novel *Lasiaurinko* was published in 1996, two years later than *Tuliraja*. *Lasiaurinko* tells a story about Maria. She is an Estonian girl who has to escape from her homeland to Finland because of the heated political situation. Maria arrives to her uncle's home and starts her life there. Maria's uncle owns a glass factory, which becomes a crucial place and symbol for Maria and her otherness.

The story is complex and it has several different layers. Manslaughter in the glass cabin is the combining link in the novel. The centre for the narration is the house where the trial proceedings are placed. Maria sits in the hall and waits her turn to witness, same time she examines her own mind and the background before the crime. *Lasiaurinko* is a sort of a crime fiction, in which while during the novel the background and the actual deed of young boys are solved. Maria participates in the trial as a witness because she worked during the killing as a teacher for the sons of the glass factory owner.

The story begins with court suit and is constructed through analepsis and prolepsis. The discontinuity of the chronology of the story can be interpreted as a breaking of the coherence of the fiction (cf Hutcheon 1980, 28). The novel plays with the temporal linearity.

The novel is narrated by Maria. She makes marks in her diary and the readers' attention focuses on to the creation of the story of her life.

Tämä on raskasta kertoa. En saata ymmärtää, miksi ihminen tekee hirmuisia tekoja. Kirjoittaminen on tuskallista, koska muistaminen herättää myös minussa raivon, jota tunnen poikia kohtaan, Mikael Kempeä kohtaan, äitiä ja isää kohtaan ja omaa kohtaloani kohtaan, joka vielä sivalsi syytöntä lastakin ja teki hänestä sokean. Miten jaksan elää tämän vihan ja raivon kanssa? (295.)

This is hard to tell. I cannot understand why a man turns to terrible deeds. The writing is painful because the memories wake up also my fury against the boys, against Mikael Kempe, against mother and father and against my own destiny, which even punished my innocent baby and made him blind. How can I live with this anger and fury? (Huovi 1996, 295.)

The last chapters of novel reveal what writing means for Maria. Maria wants to make sense of her life and the history of her family.

Vaisin lopettaa oikeastaan tähän. Tämän kirjoittamiseen on mennyt miltei tarkalleen vuosi ja olo tuntuu nyt helpommalta. Olen koonnut pöydälle levitetty kirjeet ja sulkenut samaan rasiaan savesta isketyn lantin. - - Kun kirjoitan, tuntuu paremmalta. Tuntuu niin kuin ymmärtäisin jotain. Kääntelen asiaa ja yritän tehdä siitä kysymyksen: Ymmärrätkö näiden papereiden avulla enemmän maailmasta vai itsestäni? (303, 304)

Actually, I could finish my writing here. It has taken almost exactly a year to write this and now I start to feel better. I have spread the letters on the table and I have closed the clay coin in my box. As I write, it feels better. I feel like I would understand something. I keep turning the things and try to pose a question: do these papers help me to understand the world or myself better. (Huovi 1996, 303–304.)

The end of the story reveals that Maria's tellings are same as she writes down in her papers. The story what readers read is the same as Maria writes. The last quotation emphasizes what is the motif of the story structure and the breaking of chronology. Interrupting the narration with analepsis and letters strengthens the feeling of discontinuity. This points the attention forward to the reading conventions and rises questions of the illusion of art. At the same time, the border of fiction and reality, right and invented memories as well as the line between right and wrong are discussed.

Both *Lasiaurinko* and *Vladimirin kirja* mix fictive and historical modes of representation. *Lasiaurinko* includes several scenes of historical conditions of the workers and social hierarchy in the glass factory, such as descriptions of clay pots and glass bottles. *Vladimirin kirja* depicts the tzarist hierarchy and the war scenes. They draw attention to the relationship between the history and reality. So, they both could also be described as historiographic metafiction (McCallum 2004, 596).

REFLECTIONS IN YOUNG ADULT FICTION

The changes in the discussions of young adults identities and their appearance in the young adult fiction has brought along the playful and ironic use of narrative experiments. The discussion has posed questions if young readers are capable to understand the metafictional traits. For me the focus on textuality and metafictionality in young adult novels goes together with the discussions of the identity itself. What for example Hannele Huovis texts show is the similarity, even overlaying, of the questions of young people's identity problems as well as the textual identities. Both are narcissistic, they focus on themselves, they are 'stories'.

It mirrors itself,
it compares itself to the others
it tells its own story and exaggerates it
but it can also do it ironically or underestimating.
It steps outside and regards itself with the others eyes .

The text above is not referring to a metafictional, narcissistic or self-reflexive text. It is not about a text. It is as typical protagonist of contemporary young adult novel for whom the reflecting and mirroring is a daily routine. The contemporary young adult fiction lives the time of reflexivity.

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“TIME NO LONGER” or THE KEY TO THE FANTASY
WORLD OF *TOM’S MIDNIGHT GARDEN*
BY PHILIPPA PEARCE

Many people consider that children’s fairy tale fiction, like the folk fairy tale, is a symbolic representation of the initiation process rather than a mimetic reflection of a given “reality”. Accepting this point of view, we may say that every journey of the young character is a description of the different stages in the process of the personal quest for self-identity.

The transfer of a character from one dimension to another or from one world to another is a staple element of the plot in many children’s stories. Among these we may mention those of Lewis Carroll and Clive Staples Lewis as the most prominent. Apart from these there are works that describe single, idyllic worlds, where time “flows” according to its own laws, different from that of the chronological time of reality – the stories of Charles Kingsley, Kenneth Graham, etc.

What is common to works that are defined as fantasy fiction is the existence of a separate, specific world, distanced and different from the real. They call it a parallel, secondary or alternative world. For the purpose of the present work, we may call this world differentiated, since in the book we are about to discuss, it exists as an analogue to the depicted reality we understand, yet at the same time, is differentiated from it in space and time.

The American critic Jill May points out that “Throughout the years, we have maintained that children who enjoy reading stories want to find books about places they would like to visit, events that could happen, and characters they would like to be. [...] If this is so, then reading becomes a process of self-gratification that allows readers to vicariously explore their inner fantasies without feeling threatened” (88). In other words, by presenting the differentiated world, the child-reader is being given the opportunity to peek into a different space and time. By identifying with the character or through his own vision, the child-reader is able to “realize” inner impulses and fantasies through the process of growing up and self-identification accordingly.

A typical case of peeking into a different world is the popular book of the English writer Philippa Pearce, entitled, *Tom’s Midnight Garden*, published in 1958. John Townsend says that “If I were asked to name a single masterpiece of

English children's literature since the last war, [...] it will be this outstandingly beautiful and absorbing book. (247)

The story is about Tom's holiday adventure. Because his brother has the measles, he spends his summer vacation at the house of his childless, but loving Aunt Gwen and Uncle Alan. At first, Tom is not happy that he is spending his time at the seemingly boring lodging of his aunt, until one night when he hears the grandfather clock strike thirteen times. The clock never strikes the right hour. Tom goes downstairs to see whether there really is a thirteenth hour on its face, and discovers a passage to a wonderful garden.

Later on, he figures out that the garden exists only in the thirteenth hour. In the garden, Tom meets a girl from the late Victorian period named Hatty, whose parents have died, and she is taken care of by her old aunt. In the wondrous garden, Tom is invisible, and can only be seen by Hatty, all the animals and birds and by Abel, the gardener.

Tom visits the garden night after night, and discovers that time there is not linear but can go backwards and forwards. That's why we can claim that the distancing from reality here is based on time rather than on space. The plants, animals and people in the garden are just ordinary. What they differ in is their clothing and the time in which they live – the late Victorian period. In such a way, by visiting the garden, Tom traces out the growing up of Hatty from a little girl to the moment she meets her future husband.

On the last night of the prolonged stay at his relatives' Tom finds he can enter the wondrous garden no more. In his desperation he starts shouting Hatty's name and wakes up all the lodgers of the house, including the old Mrs. Bartholomew who is the owner of the house and of the strange clock. On the next day the old lady wants to speak to Tom. He expects that she will demand an apology, but instead, she tells Tom that she was actually Hatty and had seen Tom many times when she was a child. Now that she is old, night after night she dreams of her past.

It seems that Tom had "entered" into the dream of the old lady and that the entire midnight adventure had "taken place" in his own dream.

We can determine the fantasy character of the work even from the title itself. It hints that the story would not pretend to be realistic but will have an element of differentiation. It is a midnight garden, and midnight is usually the time when wonders begin to happen. The divide of the midnight hour, as well as the model of the wondrous /secret/ garden, are common in fiction.

The preparation for the transition from the real to the fantasy world begins with Tom's departure from his parents' home. The separation from the house with the garden and parents, the temporary move to another place, which for a child is a new and unexplored territory, are factors that destroy the status quo and open the way for discovering the differentiated world. And Tom needs (and looks for) his "garden", which is that protected territory of childhood, which he had temporarily lost.

The troubled and lonely night hours give the garden back to him back– as an imaginary Garden of Eden, born of the longing for his home, relatives and playmates. Material, as much as it is ghostly, it turns the boyish desires and impulses into "reality". "Reality" that replaces the nondescript home and boring hours spent at daytime. "...The daytime in the flat was like a period of sleep to him" (100; ch. 13) – the author says. "He lived his real and interesting life at night-time, when he went into the garden" (99; ch. 13). The shift of time layers in the character's consciousness turns an object that is present in both worlds into a mediator between his life in the daytime and at night. This is the grandfather clock on the first floor, which belongs to both the present and the past. The peculiar thing about this clock, apart from the inscription and the angel drawing that implements it, is that it appears to be the master of time, which it governs according to laws of its own. And although that the clock's hands point to the right time, it strikes according to eccentric rules that are not typical for normal timepieces. It even keeps a thirteenth hour – an hour beyond the normal, chronological time. This is an hour that appears to be a transition (and a passage) to the mythic time and space of the garden.

In order to move to the differentiated world, Tom has to pass through the door leading to the back of the house. But it is the clock and not the door, which is the mediator between the two dimensions /of the Chronos and the Kairos/. Since, if Tom passes through it, beyond the frame of the additional thirteenth hour (as happens to him at the end), he stays at his own time and space – that of the converted, gardenless house.

The actual door leading to the garden is this magical thirteenth hour of the grandfather clock. Its drawing and inscription bring to mind the biblical "Time no longer". The exit, however, remains unclear in time, as the clock, and more precisely the time it keeps and which serves as an entrance, does not always serve as an exit. Time in the garden does not obey the laws of the ordinary world. And while days and months can pass there, it time can stay still in Aunt Gwen's house. Thus, Tom himself discovers that time has different dimensions in the two worlds and starts asking questions why this is so. The clock and the midnight garden tell him the answer.

Tom goes into his own time by returning to the house – in these cases the door is an exit too, but only if it is used during the thirteenth hour.

Apart from this door, another possible exit is falling asleep. For example, the question for Tom's return to his own world arises in Ch. 18, where his anxiety for the injured Hatty helps him enter the midnight house for the first time. It is solved by falling asleep in the differentiated world and waking up in the real one.

Generally speaking, dreaming and going to sleep are key elements in *Tom's Midnight Garden*. Apart from being an exit, they can be viewed as linking elements in the differentiated world too. Tom's brother – Peter - manages "to visit" him too, although he is far away from the clock and the house itself. This,

however, happens only after he has had an enormous desire to visit Tom before he goes to sleep. The only case when dreaming does not fulfill a given desire is when it serves as a final exit from the differentiated world – the trip of Tom and Hatty in Barty's gig. From that moment on, the garden disappears. And this is one of the things that show that the whole world of the midnight garden is actually a projection of the dream of the former Hatty – the present Mrs. Bartholomew and Tom. Further evidence of this are the frequent metamorphoses in time and space, reminiscent of a dream vision.

The ambivalence of the dream, assiduously backed by the narrative, gives us the reason for naming the whole world by way of an oxymoron: the real unreality, and defining the whole story as a fantasy fiction. On the other hand, Tom is actually, although not materially, present in the garden. There are certain results from his presence there as, for example, Hatty's fall from the tree house. On the other hand, this happens only when Mrs. Bartholomew dreams of her childhood, which had once been a reality. However, as Peter Hollindale points out "Only by discarding our notions of linear time can we make sense of the book's events, and yet in moving close they do indeed make sense, irresistibly." (271).

A peculiar ambivalence of the actions and states of being is imparted by the word "dream" itself. At nighttime, Mrs. Bartholomew dreams of the days of her youth, of which she has thought of at daytime. Tom realizes his desire for adventures through dreaming his dream about the midnight garden, which at the time seems impossible because of Peter's quarantine. He goes into an even bigger and more interesting garden, where he puts to action his plan for building a tree house. The only difference is that he does this with Hatty and not with his brother. Peter's dream of being with his brother, in spite of the quarantine, also comes through after dreaming for hours about that before going to sleep. And so, the differentiated world is actually a product of both the impulses of fantasy and of children's consciousness. They dream of things as they want them to be and not as they really are. The differentiated world is a dream world, like Peter Pan's Neverland, it becomes their mutual playground.

"The first step of initiation offers the child a possibility to investigate the world in the form of play, a temporary departure from idyll and kairos, a short disruption of harmony" (Nikolajeva 7).

The midnight garden is just the place where Tom and Hatty can play as children do. But neither those games, nor the dreamlike shifts of time are arbitrary.

Tom appears in the garden at given intervals. He usually goes forward in time, which enables him to observe the changes in the growing Hatty. These changes can be traced by the games they play – beginning with the typically boyish game of bows and arrows in which Hatty is very active, going through the building of the tree house, and finally we have the skating on the frozen river, which serves as a courting ground – it is at this stage exactly when Hatty meets her future husband. And games, being a system for acquiring knowledge

and mastering the "grown up" world, where the chance and complexity of this world are subjected to a peculiar organisation, are themselves means for self-identification and maturity.

This is why the world of the midnight garden allows us to trace a section of the characters' path from innocence to maturity. This is clearer in Hatty's case. We follow her development, through the time shifts, in a sequence of key moments – from the small, orphaned girl to her wedding day. The further Hatty goes from her childhood, the more transparent Tom, who remains a child, is to her. This again proves that the differentiated world here is a product of children's fancy and is possible only in a state of innocence.

The fact that Hatty sees Tom for the last time in the night of Midsummer is not to be dismissed. It is then, according to folklore beliefs, when all kinds of sprites and spirits appear. But when she sees him he looks "as thin through as a piece of moonshine" (212; ch. 27). The following day, Hatty gets married, and her state of innocence is over. Naturally, she never sees Tom again, because the time of the differentiated world does not catch up with the time from the real one. When it does, however, Tom does not meet Hatty, but the old Mrs. Bartholomew.

We witness a change in Tom, too. His stay at the differentiated world gives him the chance to acquire a type of sensitivity different from that of a child. It also helps him gather experience that avails his own growing.

While Tom is in the midnight garden he forgets everything else. And while Hatty is still small they are just children: "In the daytime, in the Kitsons' flat, he thought only of the garden, and sometimes he wondered about it: where it came from, what it all meant. Then he planned cunning questions to put to Hatty, that she would have to answer fully and without fancy; but each night, when he walked into the garden, he forgot to be a detective and instead remembered only he was a boy and that Hatty was his playmate." (84–85; ch. 11). This differentiation gives him the possibility to feel the bliss of the Garden of Eden, which symbolises child's innocence and its loss after acquiring knowledge.

And the midnight garden does remind one of the Garden of Eden. There's a parallel between Tom and Hatty's innocence and Adam and Eve before eating the forbidden fruit of knowledge and being expelled from Paradise. Like them, the further Hatty goes from the childish innocence, the further from the garden the action of the novel moves – on the garden wall, then high above it on the tree, until at last the action moves beyond the garden in the neighbouring town.

Playing together in the garden, the two gradually get to know each other better and become closer. And the ticking of the clock starts beating in time with Tom's youthful heart and directs his thoughts to the missing-at-daytime Hatty. Together with the thrills of first love, Tom and Hatty experience the natural impulse for knowing things beyond their playground. That's why, the

answer to the most mysterious question – that about Time, they look for in the wisest of all books – The Holy Bible.

References to the Bible are common in the book. The name of the gardener – Abel, also comes from the Bible and Hatty mixes the biblical world with reality. Abel is the only person depicted as closely connected to the Christian religion – he keeps the Bible in a special place; he is the only one who observes and Godlike sees everything, including Tom, all the time; it is he, who is the actual creator of the garden.

The inscription on the face of the clock, which the two children strive to comprehend, is biblical too – “Time No Longer”. This text can be viewed in ways that, as Tom himself understands, lead to different meanings. It is, however, sure, that this is one of the most important keys for grasping the work and an instrument for comprehending its entire multileveled meaning.

The lack or stopping of time, since it stops in the real world while Tom is in the differentiated one, emphasises the timelessness of childhood. He exists in Hatty’s world only while she is a child and their meeting is possible only in a differentiated world. “Time No Longer” annihilates the Chronos of each and every character in order to meet them, through the medium of the dream, in the Kairos of the mythic children’s world. And although that the Angel from the Revelation of St. John reveals that “There will be time no longer” and to a certain extent hints the answer to their question, it is not until the end of Tom’s holiday adventure that he understands the meaning of the key phrase. It’s all about the restrictions of the chronological time of everyone and the endless Time and Eternity in the garden of Childhood.

To recapitulate, we can say that *Tom’s Midnight Garden* is a book which brilliantly interprets the central theme of children’s prose fiction – of the beauty and irrevocability of childhood. It states once again that growing up means an irrevocable loss of Paradise and innocence.

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The Child and the Modern World of “Digital Resources” (Manners of Perception)

Nowadays, a child living in the world of media convergence encounters a particular manner of social communication¹. Convergence as a cultural change is defined as 1) gathering new information, 2) interlinking content available on various technological media, and 3) flowing of content between these media², which depends on the active involvement of the recipients. They (including children) extract fragments of information from the media stream and turn them into portals (*digital resources*) creating personalized images (networks) with recipient-specific goals and functions such as cognitive or entertainment³. If one considers both the role of social communication and the manners of perception, new *digital resources* as media products will always be a work of interaction and dialogue between the sender and the recipient. Their negotiation and exchange of ideas may establish a new meaning and/or change the interpretation of content⁴. Communication is understood here as generating meaning, equalizing the status of a sender and a recipient. The category of a message is equaled to a text, hence open to interpretation⁵.

The process of transforming digital magazines for children and teenagers into multifunctional web portals, for various recipients (young people, but also parents and educators) is the starting point of this essay. These portals, consid-

¹ McLuhan, Marshall. *Zrozumieć media. Przedłużenia człowieka* [Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man]. Preface by L.H. Lapham. Warsaw 2004. See also: Kluszczyński, Ryszard. *Spółczesność informacyjna. Cyberkultura. Sztuka multimediów* [Informational Society. Cyberculture. Art of Multimedia], Kraków 2001.

² Jenkins, Henry. *Kultura konwergencji. Zderzenie starych i nowych mediów* [Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide]. Warsaw 2007, p. 9.

³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴ See: Kluszczyński, Ryszard, op. cit., p. 15. See: O’Sullivan, Tim. *Studying the Media*. London 1998.

⁵ Kluszczyński, Ryszard. op. cit., p. 12–33. Additional information on generating meaning as a semiotic concept may be found in: Fiske, John. *Introduction to Communication Studies*. London 1990; *Understanding Popular Culture*. London 1989; *Reading the Popular*, London 1989

ered as *Digital resources* became texts of cyber culture, objects of interest for young recipients - active Internet users.

It is worth remembering that magazines for children (both printed and digital) always filled in the gaps between school and home education. They promoted cognitive, educational and aesthetic goals while at the same time corrected the shortcomings of school education, highlighting the elements of fun and self-learning. The magazines were also up to date with social and cultural situations, trying to keep up with the ever-changing reality and current children's needs. What is more, they were interdisciplinary and universal (often becoming e.g. mini-encyclopedias or life and survival guides) adjusting the content and form to development stages of children, i.e. kindergarten stage (3–6 years old), early school stage (7–9, e.g. *Kumpel* [trans. *Buddy*]), school stage (10–12, e.g. *Victor Junior*), junior high school stage (13–16, *Victor*).

Nowadays, the „paper” model of social message has been in need for a change, yet it still maintains many of the aforementioned functions and goals. The multifunctionality of digital magazines and their rapid implementation in a contemporary child's life supplanted printed media of knowledge (including literature published in book form). Many publishers still offer simultaneous use of web portals and printed versions (digital versions of magazines are copies of paper versions; portals promote and encourage buying printed versions, e.g. Polish *Victor Junior*, *Kumpel*, Ukrainian *Poznajko*). Digital magazines have another advantage – the archive to browse by users, a feature unavailable in printed versions.

Most of contemporary Polish and Ukrainian *digital resources* for children are therefore a combination of both printed and digital form, prepared by one of the publishers, e.g: www.czasdzieci.pl, www.republikadzieci.pl, www.interia.pl, www.kumpel.pl, www.dolinka.pl, www.victorjunior.pl, www.zyraffa.pl, or www.sieciaki.pl. Such a formula encourages and educates children in responsible and active use of the Internet (with characteristic tags, such as: „sieciomisja” [trans. net-mission], „siecioTV” [trans. net-TV], „siecioradio” [trans. net-radio], „siecioplaneta” [trans. net-planet], „literatura w sieci” [trans. net-literature]).

Ukrainian publishers offer the following digital resources: „Жирафа Рафа” [trans. Giraffe Named Rafa], „Ангелятко” [Angyelatko], „Ангеляткова наука” [trans. Science of Angyelatko]; publisher's portal „Мамине сонечко” [trans. Mom's Darling] with seven magazines: „Мамине сонечко від 1 до 3 років” [trans. Mom's Darling from Ages 1 to 3], „Мамине сонечко від 2 до 5 років” [trans. Mom's Darling from Ages 2 to 5], „Маленька фея та сім гномів” [trans. Little Fairy and Seven Dwarves], „Маленький розумник” [trans. A Clever Child], „ВДГ” [WDG], „Пригоди” [trans. Adventures], „Кухарочка” [A Little Cook]; portal „Piznajko” [Phizhnayko]. Most of these digital resources are educational in their form and character.

The attractiveness of these projects strongly depends on their availability: they need constant administrative support and, what is most important, a proper online promotion. Computerization and connection to the Internet of modern libraries eliminates technical, financial and territorial (e.g. in rural libraries) obstacles preventing children from accessing the content.

Because such *digital resources* are convergent in form they create a new manner of perception, which results in:

1. New functions of children's media – aided by links referring to various fields of knowledge (highlighting the cognitive function), disciplines (promoting educational function and popular science) and spheres (distinguishing the fun and play function, or advice e.g. psychological, including both conversation and mailing, a portal example – Helpline for Children and Teenagers (Phone: 116 111[Poland]) (www.czasdzieci.pl)
2. Change of the relationship with the recipient (most of the projects are interactive, they guarantee mutual communication between parties, present on e.g. edugames.pl)
3. New narration and the structure of the presented material, through hyper-text (e.g., title page of www.czasdzieci.pl) or organization of material appearing in magazines into smaller chapters (in *Victor Junior – Idole Victora* [trans. Victor's Idols], *Wiersze bez tajemnic* [trans. Poetry Without Secrets], *Top temat* [trans. The Top Subject], *Wakacyjny koktajl* [trans. Summer Mishmash], *Galeria* [trans. Gallery], *Goście* [trans. Guests], *Punkt widzenia* [trans. The Point of View], *Obciach w górach, czyli wspomnienie wychowawczyni* [trans. The Mountain of Embarrassment, or Form Tutor's Memoir].
4. New graphic style (combination of words, images, music and videos), well-prepared design with rich color palette, and precise layout of various types of information on a page. These qualities are characteristic for *Victor Junior*, *Kumpel* or www.czasdzieci.pl.
5. The transformation of the child's role. The child stops being only a recipient and also becomes a creator of new content: he or she takes part in board discussions, solves puzzles, learns new vocabulary or does psychotests (passive user becomes an active participant, player or debater). All of these activities provoke interaction (e.g. on www.dolinka.pl). The overall goal is not only to encourage and motivate to read, but also to challenge the recipient to become active. Links, tags (key-words) and navigation as a whole serve this purpose by categorizing entries under one phrase and forming a community around one subject, connecting everyone interested in a similar issue.

Digital resources are concerned not only with the attractiveness and accessibility of their message, but also with subject diversity, its relevancy, interdisciplinarity and multifunctionality.

Portal "Czasdzieci" offers sections that refer to the non-online world: cooking recipes, artistic inspirations, developmental games, magazines, books

and multimedia. In the “Zabawy rozwojowe” [trans. Developmental Games] section a child may discover its manual abilities, test his or her IQ and concentration span, take part in social relations, relieve emotions, shape imagination, and so on. The website provides interesting games expanding imagination, such as: “Kleksowe obrazki” [trans. Pictures from Inkspots], “Bricolage – tworzenie opowieści przy użyciu dostępnych materiałów” [trans. Bricolage – Imagining a Story Using Available Materials], “Co by było gdyby...?” [trans. What if..?], “10 zabaw z książką” [trans. 10 Ways to Play with a Book] (the challenge is to create a story based on illustrations from the covers of various books) (see www.czasdzieci.pl).

Portals intended for a young reader often advertise new literature and encourage reading books award-winning (e.g. *Uśmiechnięta planeta* [trans. A Smiling Planet] or buying games (e.g. *Pojedynek robotów*). Another type of advertisement is aimed at parents or teachers, to whom companies try to sell: anti-allergic mats to children’s rooms, car seats, or guides, which are helpful in improving the quality of child’s writing or orthography etc.) (portal www.victorjunior.pl).

An important work done for children’s portals is by educators and psychologists, whose task is to secure appropriate materials for the intellectual and emotional development of children. They also supervise the educational function of children’s Internet sites and offer counselling directly to the interested recipients. In order to make the message more credible, experts are presented in detail, with pictures, qualifications, work history and experience. They give their advice on previously suggested topics, e.g.: lies and theft of a 5-year old, nightmares, autism, lack of speech, stimulation of speaking, listening program (portal “czas dzieci”). Current *digital resources*, despite the accumulation of information, are good at consistent delivery of content, thanks to the fact that links, which often refer to various cultural and social contexts (film, theatre, books, illustrations or boards, blogs, discussions, psychologist’s advice and talks on difficult subjects), are clear and easily visible. Additionally helpful is the unification of the graphic style, which facilitates the individual perception of material and its creation by the recipient. The logic behind it translates into a legible structure of every site, which has easily recognizable signs, symbols and icons.

A separate function is fulfilled by various educational tasks present on the websites (particularly on *Victor Junior*). They demand an active and creative participation from the recipient, who should be brave enough to “expose himself/herself” (e.g. by writing film or theatre reviews, sending in written tales about their region, creating modern fables and comics, uploading photographs and paintings to web galleries). In this educational field, one may find a spectrum of educational games whose task is to shape and develop children’s abilities and competences.

Virtual educational games are present on most Polish and Ukrainian *digital resources*. They combine fun and imagination with learning (e.g. www.ci-

ufcia.pl, www.porajuniora.pl, www.planetaedukacji.pl, www.edugames.pl, www.smyki.pl, www.sieciaki.pl, www.puchatek.pl). "Edugames" is a platform for WSiP [trans. Educational Books for School] with ready lesson scenarios for teachers, and separately with materials for students, adapted for viewing on interactive boards. They help teach the humanities subjects, orthography, grammar, geography, chemistry, history, foreign languages, and other subjects. Creators of such portals use both classic and contemporary theories of human development in order to provide content for young users (also parents and teachers) adapted to children's age, intellectual abilities and emotional competence. What is more, they ensure a proper development of social relations. On the one hand, children rate the games they play, on the other, their activities are monitored and diagnosed by adults. "The Magic of Virtual Games" is an attempt to systematize the role of video games by Sławomir Łukasz⁶. Pointing out games' thematic variety and instructing their rational use, he claims that simulation games, e.g. driving a car, simulating a police or commando squad exercises imagination and creativity; strategy games, e.g. tactical war games, demand from the player to plan, manage, create tactics, be dexterous and use manipulation help improve intelligence, cunning, orderliness and sensibility. Arcade games test reflexes, dexterity and agility; adventure games, e.g. those which have a plot, force the player to solve puzzles, look for items (treasures), and obtain correct information. They improve memory and teach the ability to reach conclusions. Role-playing games help develop a wide range of abilities and competences. Because the player has to create a character, choose a profession and describe its qualities, it makes him or her more imaginative, innovative and creative. Puzzle games require logical thinking and consistency in action; they train precision, accuracy and cleverness⁶.

Portal "Ciufcia" achieves many of the aforementioned goals. Its cognitive function helps in developing individual children's interests, e.g., such subjects as: *Jak pracuje mózg?* [trans. How Does the Brain Work?]; *Mały chemik* [trans. Young Chemist]; *Z wizytą na farmie* [trans. Visiting a Farm]; *Poznajemy dom duchów* [trans. A Trip to a Haunted House]; *Wyprawa w nieznane* [trans. A Trip to the Unknown]; *Poznajemy przyrodę krok po kroku* [trans. Discovering Nature]; *Wirujące kolory* [trans. Vibrating Colors]; *Spotkanie z mrówkami* [trans. Meet the Ants]; *Dziecko w sieci* [trans. An Online Child]; *Dziecko w kuchni* [trans. A Child in a Kitchen], *Gabinet lekarski* [trans. Doctor's Office]. Games on ciufcia.pl often refer to well-known cultural texts (e.g. classic fables). They become summaries, simplifications and visual adaptations. "Ciufcia" divides its material into "Games for Young Children", with subjects such as: science, castle, body, house, nature, creativity or city, and "Games for Older Children", concerning: letters of alphabet, nature and geography, numbers and measures,

⁶ Łukasz, Sławomir. *Magia gier wirtualnych* [trans. The Magic of Virtual Games]. Warsaw 1998, p. 27.

creative games, colorful world, observatory, a young banker and “Adventures”, e.g. green planet, safe land or far-away land ⁷.

A Ukrainian children’s magazine „Piznajko” with a protagonist – badger, a child who wants to know everything, is another example of a comprehensive children’s portal. From 1996 to 2001 it was just a magazine for children written in Ukrainian. Later it has developed into three versions – Ukrainian, Russian and English. Ukrainian and Russian versions are not identical in content and illustrations. Issues in different languages, similar in subject, supplement each other by making children familiar with authors both Ukrainian and Russian. As for the English version, which is colorful, full of games, comics and stories, it is an aide in studying English language from basics.

Nowadays “Poznajko”, apart from four magazines aimed at various age groups, which are published on paper and CD, is a portal for children and parents (www.posnayko.com.ua/pages/kids). The main page offers various ways of relaxing: puzzles, coloring pictures, didactic, educational and entertainment games. It attracts viewers and users. The goal of the site is to turn children into loyal followers of the brand “Piznajko”, consisting not only of the Internet portal, but also paper magazine. This portal is also connected to another site with informative, cognitive and didactic goals. Another site (posnayko.com.ua/journals/1) is a database of electronic versions of paper issues (archives, best publications, illustrations, etc.), collectible issues, discussion boards for users, advice column, photo galleries (similar to other social networking sites). There are also separate sections for parents and teachers with psychological and didactic guidelines respectively.

Polish digital resources “Czasdzieci” and Ukrainian “Piznajko” are typical example of convergence media which collectively create interdisciplinary, hypertextual and multimedia web portal.

Noticeably, online resources give children the opportunity to read, listen, discuss, comment and interpret the content. This is an active cooperation between the media and its recipients. The content existing on online portals cannot exist without an active participation of users. The intention of anybody creating for the Internet (whether it is information, game or a challenge) is interactivity, provoking the user to creative work, e.g. a child invents the road that Peter Pan took to fantasy land. The protagonist, controlled by the young player, overcomes obstacles of varying difficulty while using his own dexterity or magical items.

⁷ Kwiatkowski, Stefan M. *Gry komputerowe – wzory zachowań prowadzące do sukcesu* [trans. Video Games and Behavior Leading to Success]. *Dziecko i media elektroniczne – nowy wymiar dzieciństwa. Komputer i Internet w życiu dziecka i obraz jego dzieciństwa* [trans. A Child and Electronic Media – A New Dimension of Childhood. A Computer and Internet in a Child’s Life and the Image of Its Childhood]. Ed. Jadwiga Izdebska, Tomasz Sosnowski. Białystok 2005. Qtd. in Izdebska, Jadwiga. *Dziecko w świecie mediów elektronicznych: teoria, badania, edukacja medialna* [trans. A Child in the World of Electronic Media: Theory, Research and Media Education]. Białystok 2007

Active participation in interdisciplinary web portals of social character (e.g. www.czasdzieci.pl) facilitates the creation of communities and integration of discussion board members (e.g. sections „Pokażcie się!” [trans. Show yourselves!], „W Twojej klasie, w Twojej świetlicy...” [trans. In your Class, in your Day Room], „Album Kumplowych czytelników” [trans. The Album of *Kumpel's* Readers] allow the presentation for readers of *Kumpel* magazine and portal). Seemingly, young readers show the most interest in portals entitled “Readers’ Blogs” or “Teenager and his World” (*Victor Junior*). There, anonymous users exchange opinions on a variety of subjects, even difficult (e.g. parents’ divorce), private, intimate (e.g. first love, the acceptance problem) or controversial ones. Comments and judgments introduce young readers to a certain type of argumentation. Sharing experiences allows them to see various points of view, expands knowledge, and helps them find answers to their problems and issues. Contact with peers (it is worth pointing out that particular portals, such as “czas dzieci” are intended for children and teenagers of a certain age) often encourages open conversations and discussions.

An electronic version of a magazine allows readers to access the content in an unchronological order. Older issues of magazines are stored in the publisher’s archives (*Victor Junior* “O tym pisaliśmy” [trans. What We Wrote About]). Readers have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with issues discussed in the past.

What is also important in electronic magazines is the structure of narration and presented content. The world’s image is created by fragments and “scattered knowledge” in the form of links. This is a non-linear and non-sequential order of data – the text is stripped down to fragments that are connected with links. It seems that the structure of links may dominate the content, create a meaning and determine its communication with a reader. The manner of presenting content (knowledge) gives readers various solutions on how to perceive and assimilate it. This is a result of “jumping” from one type of information to another (www.victorjunior.pl). The role of the author in the texts in electronic magazines is minimized. It is the active, self-reliant, and independent young recipient (reader – viewer – player) that shapes the knowledge, putting it together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, and creating individual, coherent whole.⁸

CONCLUSION

Online behavior and perception of the Internet content by children is a complex network of experiences that only seemingly happens without control. Material that is present on educational – informative – fun portals seems to be carefully selected and “censored” by publishers, approved by educators and

⁸ Braun – Gałkowska, Maria. *Wpływ gier komputerowych na psychikę dzieci* [trans. The Influence of Video Games on Children’s Psyche]. *Problemy Opiekuńczo – Wychowawcze* [Educational Issues] no. 8 (1997).

teachers. It was noticed that such portals connect two groups of recipients: children and their parents, because the content is intended both for adults and children.

Commercialization plays a very important role in *digital resources*. One may find a lot of instances of direct advertisement or product placement with a goal of forming loyal brand customers from the young age. Among advertised products there are magazines and items aimed specifically “for children” (food, clothes, shoes), but also items for everybody (toothpaste, juice, vitamins) (see www.czasdzieci.pl). Advertisements are creatively implemented into educational texts, to reinforce children’s positive associations with the brand. In „Piznajko wid 6 rokiw” [Phizhnayko vid 6 rokhiv], the OTP Bank had a column „Abecadło finansowe” [trans. Financial Alphabet]. “Żywczyk” [Zhivchik], a character promoted by a juice company, became a protagonist of several sections – “Agencja detektywistyczna ‘Żywczyk & Co’” [A Detective Agency ‘Żywczyk & Co.’], “Wesela pererwa” (“Весела перепва”) [trans. A Happy Break], “Żywczyk-żarty” [trans. Żywczyk’s Jokes], “Profesor Krejd” [trans. Professor Craid].

A possibility to create an online identity on the web provides in itself a range of positive and negative outcomes. It is by all means a challenging and tempting experience, to be able to be somebody else, one’s own *alias*, to play an identity game of sorts, as described by Patricia Wallace,: “The Internet allows us to assume various roles and experiment with our identity. Because of unique qualities of this environment, we may astonishingly change our personality, for instance claiming to of different gender or age”⁹. This opportunity is also used by children.

Another issue of perceiving content and active participation in the world of *digital resources* will be a specific online group dynamics, such as: confrontation, polarization of the group, brainstorming, group conflict or cooperation (children and teenagers, start here new relationships, friendships, aspire to fulfill their dreams and interests or exchange of experiences and information about novelties: books, films, clothes). Noticeably, there is also integration not only in collective fun, but also in cooperative problem solving. Multifunctionality of contemporary Internet portals for children and their interactive goals, are the most important factor influencing behavior in the Internet environment. In the case of children and their parents this goal will assume the forms of information, education, fun, and play.

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⁹ Wallace, Patricia. op. cit. Poznań 2001, p. 9.

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“Everything Possible to Be Believed Is an Image of Truth”: Fantasy as a Way of Deeper Realism

We are naturally concerned about what is real and what is not. In everyday life a young man who cannot tell the difference between the two may choose Coca Cola to be himself or get run over by a truck he thought was just a flicker of light at the edge of his vision. With the exception of poets and, in Shakespearian vein, lunatics, we are very much reality-oriented and our solicitude with the real is understandable and practical.

On the other hand, even the most rational among us sometimes worry about things that never happened and never will. We also get excited about things which have not happened and may not happen in the future. Yet, the misery and happiness we vicariously experience are very real. Our concept of reality is thus constantly invaded and negotiated in a number of ways through its alliances with belief, hope, trust, skepticism, doubt, suspicion, scientific truths, hypotheses and other pilgrims of the inner realm. One impulse for our idea of reality to shrink, expand, shift or adjust to encompass our new knowledge or conviction comes through the reading experience. While literature in general is inherently endowed with reality-enhancing potential, certain genres are especially geared toward questioning the canons of the real, sometimes in order to expand the range of their readers' emotional and intellectual universes. That fantasy is one of such literary conventions is a cliché which needs no argument. What I want to point out in this paper is that fantasy – traditionally spoken of as an opposition to realism¹ – actually embraces the concept of the real very much akin to that offered by modern holistic sciences such as evolutionary psychology, ecology, and physics, and in that constitutes a type of literature more realist than realism as we know it.

¹ While, obviously, this phrase calls for extensive qualification and opens up one of the most problematic issues in fantasy criticism to date, I cannot afford to explore it in this paper. Some of the books that represent the tradition I have in mind include Kathryn Hume's 1984 *Fantasy and Mimesis*, Gary Wolfe's 1986 *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy*, and John Grant and John Clute's 1996 *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. “[W]hen conceived as being in contrast to Realism,” Grant and Clute say, “[fantasy] is the most extraordinarily porous term, and has been used to mop up vast deposits of story which this culture or that – and this era or that – deems unrealistic” (337).

THE BIAS AGAINST FANTASY

Post-Enlightenment rationalism, our secular religion, is open to suggestions as long as its monopoly on truth is unquestioned. This attitude has been criticized from a number of perspectives, but has taken so deep roots in our culture that it seems beyond weeding out. The implication for this paper, however, is that for almost three centuries materialist rationalism has held the monopoly on the real which it is still reluctant to relinquish. For fantasy criticism which emerged in the second part of the 20th century this meant that practically all critical discussions of fantasy had to be "primarily defenses of the genre" and that fantasy has mostly been defined negatively against what it is not (Wolfe *Glossary* xviii).

To complicate the situation of a literary convention which had to be endlessly defended the way Wolfe described it², the rise of fantasy in modern literature – through the explosion of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* to mass popularity first in 1965 when a pirated paperback edition hit American campuses and then in 1968 when it was already recognized as one of the most important influences on the generation – coincided with the Theoretical Era (1968–1988). Since the schools of literary criticism that emerged in this period were built upon the foundation of de Saussure's, Marx's and Freud's scientific rationalisms theorizing about fantasy was done by critics who spoke from an ultra-Enlightenment stance which was not only at odds with fantasy as a cognitive strategy but lacked essential methodological tools to interpret expressions of fantasy in literature on their own terms. Because of what Martin Heidegger in *Being and Time* has called the "pre-understanding" (153); because of what Richard Shusterman in "Beneath Interpretation" has called "the felt background we presuppose when we start to articulate or to interpret" (127); and because of what John Searle in "Literary Theory and its Discontents" has called "the thesis of a Background" (105) these schools were oblivious to what lies beyond the perimeters set by their guiding assumptions³. Anti-essentialist, rela-

² Defenses of fantasy – against the charges of escapism, childishness, non-literariness and others – can be found in J. R. R. Tolkien's 1938 "On Fairy Stories," C. S. Lewis's 1961 *An Experiment in Criticism*, Eric S. Rabkin's 1976 *The Fantastic in Literature*, Diana Waggoner's 1978 *The Hills of Faraway. A Guide to Fantasy*, Brian Attebery's 1980 *The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature*, Roger Schlobin's 1982 *The Aesthetics of Fantasy Literature and Art*, Ann Swinfen's 1984 *In Defence of Fantasy*, Kathryn Hume's 1984 *Fantasy and Mimesis*, Sheila Egoff's 1988 *Worlds Within. Children's Fantasy from the Middle Ages to Today*, Martha Sammons's 1988 "A Better Country": *The Worlds of Religious Fantasy and Science Fiction*, Attebery's 1992 *Strategies of Fantasy*, Kath Filmer's 1992 *Twentieth Century Fantasists*, and Diana Tixier Herald's 1999 *Fluent in Fantasy. A Guide to Reading Interests*. The list is, obviously, not exhaustive.

³ Structuralist blinders, and consequent blunders on fantasy, are best represented by Tzvetan Todorov's 1970 *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, Marxist-Althusserian cum Lacanian – by Rosemary Jackson's 1981 *Fantasy: The Lit-*

tivistic, and politicized, these schools contended that reality is a linguistic construct, that meanings are provisional, and that the concept of human nature, along with any talk about values or meanings in literature, must be distrusted as Euro- and andro-centric⁴. Serving as the secular orthodoxy in the academia for decades, these schools produced interpretations of fantasy severely limited by the blinders of the worldview these schools endorsed.

This is not to say that the alternative was not proposed. On the contrary, I believe that criticism of fantasy to date can be seen as falling roughly into reductionist and holistic approaches, each stemming from a distinct worldview⁵. Used here as terms designating clusters of assumptions, reductionism and holism I understand in their broadest as defined in Anthony Flew's 1984 *Dictionary of Philosophy*. Reductionism means "[t]he belief that human behaviour can be reduced to or interpreted in terms of that of lower animals; and that, ultimately, can be reduced to the physical laws controlling the behaviour of inanimate matter" (300). Holism, by contrast, means "the contention that wholes, or some wholes, are more than the sum of their parts," coupled with the conviction about interconnectedness of reality and the acknowledgment that the continuum of energy and matter forms stratified orders of all kinds of unities, most of which we are only becoming aware of (152). This worldview encompasses the essential components of a spiritual perspective, with spirituality understood as a belief in some power which is higher than the self, and a way of life based on "ideals that transcend our selves and our communities but that can guide both the individual and collective sides of our inner lives and our outward behavior" (Alexander, *Reclaiming Goodness* 24).

erature of Subversion, neo-Freudian – by T. E. Apter's 1982 *Fantasy Literature. An Approach to Reality*, Post-structuralist – by Christine Brooke-Rose's 1982 *A Rhetoric of the Unreal: Studies in Narrative and Structure, Especially of the Fantastic*, Post-modernist and deconstructionist – by Lucie Armitt's 1996 *Theorising the Fantastic*. For a discussion on how and why representatives of those schools attacked or misrepresented fantasy see, for example, Attebery's 1992 *Strategies of Fantasy*, and my (forthcoming) *American Mythopoeic Fantasy*. For literary-theoretical discussion of the excesses of Theory in general see, for example, Wendell V. Harris's 1996 *Beyond Poststructuralism. The Speculations of Theory and the Experience of Reading* and Reed Way Dasenbrock's 2001 *Truth and Consequences. Intentions, Conventions and the New Thematics*.

⁴ If this sounds like a dangerous generalization, see Peter Barry's presentation of Theory in his 2002 *Beginning Theory. An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (especially pp. 34–36).

⁵ By "worldview" I understand what James W. Sire in his 1978 *The Universe Next Door. A Basic Worldview Catalog* calls "a set of presuppositions (and assumptions) which we hold (consciously or unconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world" (17); and what – when applied to science – Thomas Kuhn in his 1962 *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* calls a paradigm and defines as a model "from which spring particular coherent traditions of scientific research," and a set of givens adopted "for further articulation and specification under new or more stringent conditions" (10, 23).

Reductionism and holism are contrasting paradigms and they have produced radically divergent approaches to fantasy, with the reductionist stance claiming the field for decades. The gist of the clash was that whereas reductionist criticism saw fantasy literature as represented best by stories of abnormal mental states, neurotic fears and suppressed, antisocial desires which the reader can vicariously fulfill through the narrative, holistic criticism, on the other hand, saw fantasy as represented best by stories of quest for personal growth, knowledge and understanding which assist the reader, in symbolic and metaphorical images, in becoming more aware of the human potential. Whereas the former was interested in fantasy as a cultural practice which reveals political, historical, economic, gender and other entanglements that characterize all human activities, the latter approached fantasy as a cultural practice whose meaning extends beyond those entanglements and, in its most ambitious, aims to create a platform for imaginative representation of transcultural concepts and values. Whereas the former adopted as its allies relativism, biological determinism, naturalism, behaviorism, Freudianism and secularism, and used them to examine fantasy; the latter aligned itself with the school of *sophia perennis*, antireductionism, essentialism, Jungian, religious and spiritual perspectives and perceived fantasy from this angle.

One object of contention, besides fantasy or the fantastic, was the nature of human being, of the universe, and of the human ability to know reality. Where for reductionist criticism the real was seen in terms of material phenomena, holistic criticism asserted that what is real also encompasses non-material factors and dimensions of existence. The divergence of those two approaches to what is real can be seen in definitions of fantasy proposed from each angle.

For holistic critics such as Sheila Egoff "there is another kind of real, one that is truer to the human spirit, demanding the pilgrim's progress to find it" and fantasy is an attempt to reveal "that we do not live entirely in the world of facts, that we also inhabit a universe of the mind and spirit where the creative imagination is permanently struggling to articulate meaning and values" (*Thursday's Child* 80, 81). In the same vein Ursula Le Guin speaks of fantasy as "a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence [... one that] is not anti-rational, but para-rational; [...] superrealistic, [and] a heightening of reality" ("From Elfland to Poughkeepsie" 79). Lloyd Alexander calls fantasy "reality pretending to be a dream" ("Wishful Thinking or Hopeful Dreaming" 386), and Madeleine L'Engle a type of story that speaks "about a world more real than that of every day" (*Herself* 337). Another critic, Ann Swinfen sees fantasy as a literary form which "looks beyond the material world [for] the ultimately real" world of the spirit and whose fundamental purpose "is to comment upon the real world and to explore moral, philosophical, and other dilemmas posed by it" (11, 231). The list of such examples could go on but the above are sufficient, I hope, to suggest that holis-

tic critics have invariably endeavored to capture fantasy in positive terms, as a type of literary discourse which expands our understanding of what is real.

Reductionist definitions of fantasy were, by contrast, usually built on some negative component such as the “impossible,” “irrational,” “unreal,” “antireal,” “violation” of the natural law, of what the reader or author believes is possible and so on. What all reductionist definitions have in common is the element that Brian Attebery in his 1992 *The Strategies of Fantasy* has called “the realist bias.” Embedded “in our critical tradition” it betrays a core assumption of post-Enlightenment reductionism: namely that imaginative works are essentially false, and as such cannot legitimately comment upon or describe the real (4). William Irwin’s definition of fantasy as “a story based on and controlled by an overt violation of what is generally accepted as possibility” (*The Game of the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy* 4); Robert A. Heinlein’s – as a story that is “imaginary-and-not-possible” (qtd. in Wolfe 39); Colin Manlove’s – as “a fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of supernatural or impossible worlds, beings or objects [...]” (“The Elusiveness of Fantasy” 54); Marshall B. Tymn’s, Kenneth J. Zahorski’s and Robert H. Boyer’s – as a work in which “nonrational phenomena [those that “do not fall within human experience or accord with natural laws as we know them”] play a significant part” (*Fantasy Literature: A Core Collection and Reference Guide* 3); or Christine Brooke-Rose’s – as a work representing “the rhetoric of the unreal” in which “[t]he marvelous and the realistic are not so much blended as bathetically juxtaposed” (*The Rhetoric of the Unreal: Studies in Narrative and Structure, Especially of the Fantastic* 255) – all those are definitions which, besides being too general to be practical, reveal the realist bias of the reductionist angle. The insufficiency of this perspective is epitomized in what, according to Gary Wolfe in his 1986 *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy: A Glossary and Guide to Scholarship*, is the most often quoted reductionist definition of fantasy, that being “a fictional narrative describing events that the reader believes to be Impossible” (*Glossary* 38).

What this insufficiency consists of has been noted by numerous scholars. Wolfe, for example, demonstrated in his 1982 essay “The Encounter with Fantasy” that “the notion of the impossible itself raises a number of intriguing questions, not all of which can be adequately addressed by the resources of literary scholarship” (2). The impossible, as used by reductionists, is a manipulative term sufficiently porous to encompass vast deposits of materialist/skeptical bias but sufficiently vague to hide it and wear the guise of objectivity. According to *Random House Dictionary* impossible means “unable to exist,” “unable to be done,” “incapable of being true,” “not to be done or endured with any degree of reason or propriety,” “utterly impracticable,” and “hopelessly unsuitable, difficult, undesirable, or objectionable” (716). In all of those meanings, the impossible is extremely context-, knowledge-, and opinion-based, primarily because each person’s conception of what is im-

possible differs in a significant way. Worldview, knowledge, culture, age, and times in which a person lives all play their role, and I do not think any examples are necessary. Especially arrogant, but widespread in modern Western culture, has been the application of the conception of the "impossible" to human belief in the "supernatural," an issue I shall revert to in the second part of this essay. But even when removed from its contemptuous bearing on the "supernatural," the impossible is too vague to be practical. If it suggests "not yet encountered personally" – a definition reductionists may want to apply to a unicorn – it may just as well pertain to tornado, breast cancer, grizzly bear, supernova or a Hungarian nurse. If it means "logically impossible" – a definition they, again, may see as appropriate to describe a unicorn – it may just as well pertain to numerous factual phenomena inconceivable within our conventional, linear, either-or logic, such as wave-particle nature of light, multidimensionality of the universe, or such creatures as *Ophrydium* which, for modern biology, are animal and plant so closely integrated that "[...] it is difficult [...] to say where the animal ends and the algae begin" (Margulis *Symbiotic Planet* 10). Other adjectives used in definitions of fantasy such as "irrational," and "unreal" are no better. If fantasy is to be distinguished by the presence of "irrational" phenomena, then all works of art which deal with their characters' emotional states, dreams, visions, or memories must be judged as fantasy, just as much as our own emotions, dreams, visions, and memories are fantasies in our "real" life. This is not true, however, because the suggestion this materialist thinking implies – namely that only those things which are "rational" should be accepted as valid and real – is plainly absurd. Nor is "unreal" of any help. If it implies things which are "not everyday occurrences," as Hume would have it, one may notice that to be real a thing or a state does not need to happen every day, or even every century (*Fantasy and Mimesis* 21); if it implies "nonfacts" which are made to "appear as fact," as Irwin would have it, one may point out that the real contains many more things than mere "facts" (*The Game of the Impossible* 9). As Ursula Le Guin has said "fantasy is true, of course. It isn't factual, but it's true" – true because it is "by such beautiful non-facts [as 'in a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit'] that the fantastic human beings may arrive, in our peculiar fashion, at the truth" ("Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons" 40). Also the definition of the impossible as "a departure from consensus reality" is weak precisely because consensus reality on which it depends is a constantly shifting concept and not a solid foundation as Irwin may want to suggest (Hume 21).

What all of it means is not that fantasy is real in the same sense as the table is real. It does not deny or attack reality. What it does, however, and what has been so subversive about fantasy for mainstream academia, is that it suggests a broader, deeper reality than a limiting and limited reductionist version of the real that can be measured, described and thus controlled. In this fantasy

genres, and the genre of mythopoeic fantasy in particular⁶, triangulate with modern holistic sciences which present reality as a continuum of consciousness, energy and matter, and human beings – as more than the sum of their parts.

FANTASY AS DEEPER REALISM

Before I move to the argument about fantasy as truer to the real than it is commonly admitted I want to illustrate my point with the story taken from Orson Scott Card's *Seventh Son*, the first volume from his *Tales of Alvin Maker*.

A seven-year old boy has a terrible vision. He sees "[t]he world filling up with invisible trembling *nothing* that seeped into everything and shook it apart." He can see it "rolling toward him like a huge ball, growing all the time" seeping through his fingers, pressing on his face, and oozing into his skin (*Seventh Son* 124). He is brought back to reality from the seizure by an older man who happens to be by his side and sees the wave of terror sweeping over the boy. In a conversation that follows the boy admits that he's been having these visions as long as he can remember and the only way he can describe them is that he sees nothingness. As he explains:

It gets into everything. It gets into the smallest cracks and shakes everything apart. Just shivers and shivers until there is nothing left but dust, and then it shivers the dust, and I try to keep it out, but it gets bigger and bigger, it rolls over everything, till it like to fills the whole sky and the whole earth. (125)

The old man is convinced that "a dream that comes again and again is trying to tell you the truth" (125). He notices that while they were talking about the nothing, the boy, unconscious of his fiddling, makes a tiny basket of grass. When the man asks about it and presses with other questions, the boy realizes that every time he becomes aware of the nothing he can not stop fidgeting until he has done something that was not there before. "[L]et me tell you the name for the nothing," says the man after a moment (127).

"It's the Unmaker"

"Never heard of it," said Alvin.

"Neither did I, till now. That's because it likes to keep itself secret. It's the enemy of everything that exists. All it wants is to break everything into pieces, and break those pieces into pieces, until there's nothing left at all [...]"

"I'm not talking about good and evil [...]. Even the devil himself can't afford to break everything down, can he, or he'd cease to be, just like everything else.

⁶ Fantasy is a worldview and a cognitive strategy which presupposes the existence of the supernatural; as an artistic mode in narrative fiction it crystallizes into various literary genres. In literature, the core of fantasy is the genre of mythopoeic fantasy: a narrative constructed from artistically re-imagined mythic materials and archetypes aimed to create an imaginative experience of a universe in which metaphysical concepts are objective realities.

[...] So in the great war between the Unmaker and everything else, God and the devil should be on the same side. But the devil, he doesn't know it, and so he serves the Unmaker as often as not [...]."

"In the great war against the Unmaker of your vision, all the men and women of the world should be allies. But the great enemy remains invisible, so that no one guesses that they unwittingly serve him. They don't realize that war is the Unmaker's ally, because it tears down everything it touches. They don't understand that fire, murder, crime, cupidity, and concupiscence break apart the fragile bonds that make human beings into nations, cities, families, friends, and souls." (127–128)

The boy reflects. The story he has just heard makes sense in as many ways as it does not. On the positive side it may explain why Al always makes things to compensate for the nothing he sees. It may explain that by being creative humans can beat the Unmaker back. It may confirm that what Al sees is not a figment of his imagination – for, indeed, he insists that "I don't just see it in my head, it's *there*" – and that he is not having lunatic spells (130). Finally, it may suggest a viable cosmic perspective on the universe.

On the other hand the story does not make sense. If the Unmaker has been at work since the beginning of the world, how come the world is still here? How is it possible that things do not disintegrate? How is it possible that nobody else has noticed it before the boy? With the questions quite vexing and Taleswapper admitting that the story has problems, the boy gets irritated and asks:

"I thought you only told stories you believe."

"I believed it while I was telling it."

Taleswapper looked so mournful that Alvin reached out and laid his hand on the man's shoulder, though his coat was so thick, and Alvin's hand so small that he wasn't altogether sure Taleswapper felt his touch. "I believed it, too. Parts of it. For a while."

"Then there *is* truth in it. Maybe not much, but some." Taleswapper looked relieved.

But Alvin couldn't leave well enough alone. "Just because you believe it doesn't make it so."

Taleswapper's eyes went wide. Now I've done it, thought Alvin. Now I've made him mad [...]. So he wasn't surprised when Taleswapper reached out both arms toward him, took Alvin's head between his hands, and spoke with such force as to drive the words deep into Alvin's forehead. "Everything possible to be believed is an image of truth." (131–132)

"Everything possible to be believed is an image of truth" is a major challenge to our concepts of what is and what is not real (132). Since the dominant understanding of truth is that of "conformity with facts" and "agreement with reality," in the correspondence theory the true and the real are synonyms. I have given so much space to this example because it touches upon three points that

have been central to discussions of fantasy in literature. The first is the use of the criterion of belief for defining what is true and real. The second is the role of storytelling in conceptualizing human experience. The third, perhaps most problematic, is the human tendency to resort to supernatural explanations. As will be clear by now, reductionist and holistic critics would take conflicting positions on these issues. For reductionists belief would have small or insignificant influence on shaping the real; storytelling would predominantly express personal experiences and would be negligible as a mode of conveying transpersonal meanings; finally human belief in the supernatural – “powers whose origins and nature lie outside of human knowledge” (Timmerman 73) – would be a case of lingering superstition.

In fantasy, however, belief, storytelling, and the supernatural are serious issues which are elements of the holistic vision of reality that fantasy advocates. This vision is based on the conviction – not far from the principles of sympathetic magic – that material and non-material reality forms a continuum and elements of this continuum can affect each other as vibrations on a single thread affect the whole spider-web.

The role of belief in fantasy is crucial. One aspect of the issue is that, at least since Tolkien's 1947 “On Fairy Stories,” holistic critics hold that in order to be successful fantasy must be fully believable in realistic criteria – where “realistic,” obviously refers to the broader concept of reality than the empirical-reductionist. Another aspect is that fantasy is contingent on belief. In fact, like Hume in *Fantasy and Mimesis* and Attebery in *Strategies of Fantasy*, I think that fantasy is primarily *a cognitive strategy, a worldview and a way of conceptualizing human experience in the world which assumes the existence of the supernatural*. This “belief structure” or cognitive strategy informs countless human activities, social and cultural productions, and in literature manifests as a cluster of genres, historic and contemporary, all of them bound with belief to the extent that producing fantasy without belief is impossible. “I do not think it is possible to write ghost stories effectively,” contends one critic who speaks from this stance,

unless one comes from a culture that has traditionally believed in the possibility of ghosts, and I suspect belief in ghosts would not be amiss in the author. Similarly, I do not think it is possible to write effective supernatural horror stories unless one comes from a culture that has traditionally accepted the possibility of supernatural horror. (Lobdell 173)

Because in the case of fantasy the belief concerns fundamental ontological assumptions about the nature of reality and is thus akin to a spiritual stance, writing fantasy or critically examining it are never disinterested. As David J. Hufford in “The Scholarly Voice and the Personal Voice: Reflexivity in Belief Studies” has shown, because “spiritual beliefs are strongly felt and can have socially important consequences” the so called “impartiality in spiritual matters is an impossibility.” Moreover, “the tendency to count disbelief as an ‘objective’

stance is a serious, systematic bias that runs through most academic studies of spiritual belief" ("The Scholarly Voice..." 61).

The importance of storytelling for fantasy is crucial too, not only as a medium for conveying the story but also as a bonding mode for human communities and identity-sustaining mode for individuals. That fantasy relies on a compelling, well-structured and well-paced story is obvious. Less noticed is the fact that the storytelling in fantasy is a tacit acknowledgement of the existence of a mode of knowing things intuitively, which is complementary to but not less important than scientific cognition. This mode, fantasy literature suggests, has been neglected by our empirical and reductionist civilization in most areas of life but can be recovered through special type of stories told in a specific manner. On this view, fantasy is an imaginative engagement which awakens the mechanisms of and requires from the readers the use of this intuitive, poetic mode of knowledge to understand reality. Long suppressed, and only recently brought to scholarly attention, among others, by books such as James Taylor's 1998 *Poetic Knowledge*, this mode of knowing is necessary for us to approach aspects of the real which cannot be hemmed in by linear, rationalist-empirical and definitive formulations. In this mode storytelling, with its metaphorical and symbolic layers, is an effective means to real and valuable knowledge. If this assertion is deeply embedded in fantasy literature, it deserves to be approached more seriously than reductionism suggests when considered in the light of numerous scholarly claims that human individuals and cultures live in stories they create for themselves⁷. For example Lakoff and Johnson in their 1980 *Metaphors We Live By* have argued that we live largely by metaphors which, besides giving us "a way of conceptualizing a preexisting reality," co-create it for us and play "a very significant role in determining what is real for us" (144, 146). On their theory, it is not too far fetched to say that fantasy – and especially mythopoeic fantasy – represents a cluster of "experiential gestalts" or metaphorical concepts with the potential to change our conceptual system and thus "affect how we perceive the world and act upon these perceptions" (145–146). If, as they contend, "[m]uch of cultural change arises from the introduction of new metaphorical concepts and the loss of old ones," then the importance of storytelling for affecting reality should not be underestimated.

The same applies to the supernatural whose existence fantasy strongly asserts. Whether understood as personalized, anthropomorphized divine; as

⁷ This argument can also be found, among others, in Richard Kearney's 1988 *The Wake of Imagination. Ideas of Creativity in Western Culture*; in Jack Zipes's 1994 *Fairy Tale as Myth, Myth as Fairy Tale*; in William Lowell Randal's 1995 *The Stories We Are: An Essay on Self-Creation*; in Terrence W. Deacon's 1997 *The Symbolic Species. The Co-evolution of Language and the Brain*; in Bruce Lincoln's 1992 *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification* and his 2000 *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology and Scholarship*; in Jan Zwicky's 2003 *Wisdom and Metaphor* and in many other books authored by literary theorists, linguists and philosophers.

purposeful and conscious yet disembodied energy; as intelligences of the universe; as non-material causes beyond miracles or unexplainable occurrences – the belief in the supernatural is, at its core, tantamount to asserting that reality may well consist of more than we understand, perceive or can measure. As such, the belief in supernatural is not the domain of fantasy literature only. A brilliant volume on “the ways that children define and construct ideas about the supernatural, magical, or metaphysical” edited by Karl Rosengren, Carl Johnson and Paul Harris under the title *Imagining the Impossible: Magical, Scientific and Religious Thinking in Children* suggests that “thinking beyond the ordinary boundaries of understanding” is not only intuitively natural to human beings, but must also be “considered to be a developmental achievement rather than a primitive form of confusion” (xiii). Since, as I have said, *disbelief* is also a form of belief, materialist skepticism toward the supernatural – which, in reductionist discussions of fantasy, surfaces in frequent equations of the supernatural with the impossible – is parochial. By contrast, the belief in the supernatural that fantasy texts foster carries a far greater promise of opening the readers’ horizons to their own search for what is real. Fantasy achieves it by not limiting the horizons of the real to scientific rationalism. This has been pointed out in many holistic accounts of what fantasy is, but especially well in Diana Waggoner’s 1978 bibliographical guide *The Hills of Faraway. A Guide to Fantasy*.

Whereas most former and latter critics have asserted the congenital relation of fantasy to the supernatural, Waggoner was the first to stress that this relation should be taken as a primary classifying category in any discussions of the genre. Having proposed a classification of Western literature into “four broad classes of fiction” depending on their treatment of the supernatural – pre-realistic literature, realism, post-realistic fabulation, and speculative fiction (9) – Waggoner contends that neither realism nor post-realistic fabulation considered the possibility that the supernatural may, in fact, be real. “This seminal question,” says Waggoner, “created modern speculative fiction” – a literary category which encompasses fantasy genres and is informed by the philosophical assumption of the factual existence of the supernatural. As she explains:

To argue that the symbols of the numinous were mere representations of human psychology was to overlook the possibility that they might refer to objectively real things. Ghosts, magic, alternate universes, unreasonable horrors, the unimaginable future, even God, might not be superstitions or convenient philosophical assumptions or evidence of madness, but living, if unprovable, reality. The idea that everything real was perceptible was itself only an assumption. (8–9)

In the light of the above belief, storytelling and the supernatural – as used in fantasy – must be seen as interlocking components of a holistic, poetic way of engaging with reality which is truer to the real than it is commonly admitted. It is truer than a reductionist version of empirically verifiable reality also when

tested against what modern science tells us. In fantasy as in many modern disciplines reality is interconnected rather than isolationist, consciousness filled rather than inert, organic rather than mechanical, multidimensional rather than three-dimensional, symbiosis- rather than competition-driven, purposeful rather than accidental, and structurally organized rather than chaotic.

Of course, the first hard blow against mechanistic, reductionist concept of the real upheld by hyper-rationalist Western science was struck by quantum physics already in the thirties. Albert Einstein's 1934 *Essays in Science*; 1934 *Atomic Physics and the Description of Nature*, then his 1958 *Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge*; 1963 *Physics and Philosophy* and then his 1971 *Physics and Beyond*; Robert Oppenheimer's 1954 *Science and the Common Understanding* and countless other works since then demonstrated deeply holistic interrelatedness of time, space, matter and energy and thus extended our concept of what is real. Philosophizing physicists such as Fritjof Capra in his 1982 *The Turning Point* have spoken about severe limitations of Western materialist science, "concerned only with quantity and based exclusively on measurement" (375). Theoretical physicists and mathematicians have demonstrated unquestioningly that reality is multidimensional, that the empirical tests apply in most cases to appearances rather than the essence⁸. Micho Kaku in his 1994 *Hyperspace. A Scientific Odyssey through Parallel Universes, Time Warps, and the 10th Dimension* asserts that "the main current dominating theoretical physics in the past decade [1990s] has been the realization that the fundamental laws of physics appear simpler in higher dimensions, and that all physical laws appear to be unified in ten dimensions" (314). On this view, "a three-dimensional description of the world, such as the Standard Model, is 'too small' to unite all the fundamental forces of nature into one comprehensive theory" (313).

In psychology pioneering integrative theorists such as Ken Wilber in his 1977 *The Spectrum of Consciousness* and later books posited the continuum of consciousness and matter, claiming that "being and consciousness exist as a spectrum, reaching from matter to body to mind to soul to Spirit" (xvi). Although this theory has not yet been experimentally confirmed and might be exceedingly difficult to prove in the laboratory, it follows logically from theories of multidimensionality proposed by quantum physicists and has already swept across many disciplines, irrevocably altering the field of noetics and consciousness studies⁹.

⁸ Micho Kaku in his 1994 *Hyperspace. A Scientific Odyssey through Parallel Universes, Time Warps, and the 10th Dimension* says: "If all our common-sense notions about the universe were correct, then science would have solved the secrets of the universe thousands of years ago. The purpose of science is to peel back the layer of the appearance of objects to reveal their underlying nature. In fact, if appearance and essence were the same thing there would be no need for science" (vii).

⁹ One recent development is the proposal to expand our concept of human intelligence systems from two – IQ (rational intelligence) and EQ (emotional intelligence) – to three,

In biochemistry and biology James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis¹⁰, Rupert Sheldrake's theory of morphic resonance¹¹, and Lynn Margulis's Serial Endo-

together with SQ, or spiritual intelligence. In an engaging SQ. Connecting with Our Spiritual Intelligence (2000) Oxford University based quantum physicist Dana Zohar and psychiatrist Ian Marshall argue for at least three types of "brain's [...] thinking systems and their neural organizations" (39). The linear, logical thinking, "useful for solving rational problems and achieving definite tasks," is possible by brain's wiring known as neural tracts (47). These tracts work on fixed on-off programs and produce the kind of mental ability called serial thinking similar to computer serial processing and testable in standard IQ tests. "The advantages of serial thinking and of IQ intelligence," Zohar and Marshall say, "is that it is accurate, precise and reliable" (49). However, it cannot handle nuance and ambiguity and breaks down when faced with the unexpected or with altered rules. The second type of brain's wiring is called "neural networks" and it is responsible for associative thinking (50). This type of thinking helps us form associations between things, states, characteristics; it helps us recognize patterns and is "heavily-experience based" in that "[n]eural networks in the brain are connected to further neural networks throughout the brain and body" (53, 52). Thus, "unlike serial neural tracts, which are rule-bound [...] and unable to learn, neural networks have the ability to rewire themselves in dialogue with experience," forming what Daniel Goleman in his 1995 groundbreaking book of the same title called emotional intelligence (52). So conceived, EQ intelligence is responsible for our emotions, feelings, memory and behavior, helping us to handle nuance and ambiguity. "The disadvantages of this kind of thinking," Zohar and Marshall explain, "is that it is slowly learned, inaccurate and tends to be habit-bound or tradition-bound" besides being tacit and difficult to share with others (55). The third type of thinking that Zohar and Marshall posit is unitive thinking, "our meaning-giving, contextualizing and transformative intelligence" they call spiritual intelligence (59). SQ is responsible not only for all kinds of processes in our brains which coordinate serial with associative thinking, but also for the sense of unity in our perception and our quest for meaning. Zohar and Marshall argue that "[t]his unitive ability is an essential feature of consciousness," is creative, insightful and intuitive, and has been neurologically identified with "synchronous neural oscillations in the 40 Hz range" (60, 62–9). Their study establishes that the brain "was designed to be conscious, and designed to have a transcendent dimension" with SQ as the meaning- and value-giving faculty which accounts for human imperative to search for truth, knowledge, and beauty (76).

¹⁰ Proposed by Lovelock in his 1979 *Gaia. A New Look on Life on Earth*, the Gaia hypothesis postulated that Earth must be seen as a living organism rather than inanimate rock. Initially ignored and castigated by the scientific community – paradoxically, mostly because of Lovelock's metaphoric language rather than lack of evidence for his thesis – the theory has become, since 1990s, a subject of serious investigation which confirmed most of Lovelock's ideas. This turn elevated Lovelock from a maverick to a prophet of environmental movements, and won him a dozen honorary doctorates, environmental awards and scientific honors, besides a visiting professorship at Oxford.

¹¹ In his 1981 *A New Science of Life. The Hypothesis of Formative Causation* Sheldrake proposed an alternative to the conventional mechanistic theory of life in the form of morphogenetic fields which are "responsible for the characteristic form and organization of systems at all levels of complexity, not only in the realm of biology, but also in the realms of chemistry and physics" (13). The book drew the fire of conventionally minded academics because it suggested that some phenomena of life depend on non-physical factors and postulated a kind of memory fields in nature which act "across

sympiotic Theory¹² have changed our conception of universe from the me-

both space and time" (13). Sheldrake developed his thesis of a living universe with its own inherent memory in subsequent books. In 1988 *The Presence of the Past* he extended the idea of morphic fields to encompass social and cultural structures, pointing out the affinity of his theory with Jung's idea of the collective unconscious and its archetypal content. In later books – especially 1991 *The Rebirth of Nature*, 1999 *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home* and 2003 *The Sense of Being Stared At* – Sheldrake has continued to work on extended mind, morphic fields and similar concepts, all of which suggest that a holistic and integrative theory of living organization is closer to grasping the mystery of life than its mechanistic counterpart of biological determinism.

One recent interesting development which, if confirmed, could validate Jung's and Sheldrake's conviction about the existence of invisible energy fields that embed our thoughts and act on our consciousness through time and space is the "field of consciousness" posited by Russian physicist Gennady Shipov in his *Physical Vacuum Theory*. Although still considered an outsider by mainstream physicists, Shipov developed a unified field theory which is a continuation of Einstein's work. According to Shipov the planes of the universe are interpenetrating, with the field of consciousness – or, as he calls it, the torsion field – influencing directly all planes below it. The torsion field is the carrier of information, is composed of "thought matter," and permeates all other types of matter with at least billion times faster than light without any loss of intensity. As the cosmic, instantaneous communication system, the torsion field is equaled by Shipov with consciousness with all its qualities of self-regulation, learning, memory, and transmission of information. It is thus a powerful influence on human beings and on what we call animate and inanimate life. If this theory is verified, its implications will be momentous, also for humanities. For details see Shipov's 1998 *A Theory of Physical Vacuum*. (Moscow: Russian Academy for Natural Sciences, 1998).

¹² Margulis's Serial Endosymbiotic Theory was proposed in her 1981 *Symbiosis in Cell Evolution*. Presently one of the most honored biologists in the world, Margulis realized that evolution progressed by networking and cooperation – a process called symbiogenesis – rather than competition, with the eukaryotic cells originating from communities of interacting entities that joined together in a specific order. In her 1986 *Microcosmos. Four Billion Years of Microbial Evolution*, co-authored with Dorion Sagan, Margulis demonstrated that the same pattern applies to higher organisms, and that the "established ideas about the origins of life and the dynamics of evolution on earth" as propounded by traditional mechanical biology are invalid. In her symbiogenetic perspective "all life forms are meticulously organized, sophisticated aggregates of evolving microbial life" which not only shows the absurdity of "attempting to measure evolution by a linear progression from the simple [...] to the more complex" but also invalidates "the view of evolution as chronic bloody competition among individuals and species" (14). What Margulis thus pictures for us is "a new view of [life as] continual cooperation, strong interaction, and mutual dependence among life forms" (15). In this, although her data comes from another field, Margulis's ideas confirm Sheldrake's hypothesis of memory of nature, as when she says that "our ability to make new kinds of life [by tinkering with DNA] can be seen as the newest way in which organic memory – life's recall and activation of the past in the present – becomes more acute" (20). Convinced that "[w]e are part of an intricate network [...]" in which "[o]ur powers of intelligence and technology do not belong specifically to us but to all life," Margulis has continued to develop the symbiotic theory in all her 12 books published to date – most significant being, per-

chanical to organic, and of life from linearly-evolutionist and competition-driven to integrative-evolutionist and symbiosis-based. All these theories suggest reality very much like it is presented in fantasy.

It is for these reasons and in the light of such theories that fantasy can be spoken of as a type of literature more realist than realism as we know it. Although for decades it has been defined negatively in relation to the real, the true, and the possible, for many authors and readers fantasy has proven to be more real, truer, and more possible than most other types of literature. Finally, if the story about the Unmaker sounds impossible and yet may be close to capturing what is real and how we conceptualize the real than perhaps, indeed, "everything possible to be believed is an image of truth."

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“You will meet the naked truth in there (...) and you will be naked before the truth”: The Consequential Other World in Dave Duncan’s *Rose-Red City*

One of our daily activities is waging war with reality: on the one hand, we try to determine the real by picturing and examining the present state of the universe; on the other, we envision possible tomorrows that would be a marked improvement on the present. Paradoxically, what may help us in this struggle is fiction as it liberates truth from its “attachment to a *particular* reality” (Martin 23). Fantasy fiction in particular, however unrealistic it is, that does so especially intensely, for by depicting a world which it itself acknowledges as fictional, it can easily free that truth from its context “and use it to point at anything that it is fitted to focus upon and thus fitted to reveal” (Martin 23). In this way, it shows human actions both as they are and in terms of the numerous possibilities they carry. As Martin puts it, “it’s there to be swiveled, adjusted and interpreted just as you like. It’s a viewing device through which to see whatever truths might reasonably emerge. Reading it, you are free, among all the facts that may be suggested to your mind. And therefore it is indeed a statement of fact” (23). The sharpness of readers’ perception of the extra-literary world depends on the degree of fictionality of the invented world: the less they are anchored in the familiar world, the more acute and flexible their insights into it may be. This is so as fantastic otherworlds are often embodiments of psychological states, inner human development, political structures and so forth. These conceptualizations, as David Brin explains, let us “perform mental experiments, (...) ‘try out’ a course of action before we are committed to it, or test an idea before we decide we like it” (“Metaphorical Drive” 72). However, “[T]hey are like photos of a mountain – useful to a map maker, but certainly never to be confused with the mountain itself” (Brin “Metaphorical Drive” 72). As soon as we start believing these alternatives and subject our lives to them, “rather than using them for what they were meant to be, models of the world and nothing more” (Brin “Metaphorical Drive” 77), we are no longer able to distinguish between our own fantasies and reality. Through foregrounding its fictionality by such qualities as “[n]ovelty, intensity, relationship, condensation, and transcendence of the material and the materialistic” (Hume 196), fantasy literature alerts readers to the choice they have to face every day:

as Brin puts it, it is either about “accepting the saccharin-sweetness of tying (...) [one’s] ego to favorite metaphors” or about admitting that “the map is *not* the territory, and approaching (...) [one’s] model of the world with a sense of humor” (“Metaphorical Drive” 73).

Our reliance on often inadequate models of our lives is the reason why we are not much aware of reality despite the fact that each morning we start comparing the new day with our internal picture of what the world was like before we fell asleep, and then go on to wonder what this universe might be like if we performed certain deeds. As Hume clarifies, “[w]e can get up and dress in a semiconscious state, and many repetitive professional tasks require little more engagement or concentration (...). The same sort of low-grade consciousness characterizes many of our responses to the world (...). Our consciousness automatically narrows our awareness, and we get out of an experience far less than is available” (84). Simultaneously, we live in times of “reality crisis” (Brooke-Rose 3), which makes the world seem unreal: as Salman Rushdie puts it, owing to scientific discoveries or media manipulation, “impossible things happen constantly, and quite plausibly, out in the open under the mid-day sun” (*Imaginary Homelands* 302). Hence, however deep our cognitive lethargy is, we face a chaotic and uncontrollable reality in which the hitherto systematized perception of the world is no longer valid or practical. This is why to regain a fuller sense of our lives, we need “[l]iterature which calls attention to the nature of its own reality, helps free us from our automatic filtering and makes us freshly aware of our vision of reality” (100).

Dave Duncan’s *A Rose-Red City* (1987), a fantasy about the city of Mera, a fortress concealed from humanity and existing beyond our consensus time and space, exemplifies the potential of fantasy literature to provide a “*gedankenexperiment*, demanding that the reader abandon clichéd assumptions and test yet another new way of looking at things” (Brin 27), including the reality of “what-is” and the dream of “what-we-want-it to-be” (25). As Kathryn Hume accounts for the mechanism of this “conceptual breakthrough” effected in fantasy texts: by a two-way interaction between the ordinary and the fantastic “an unknown element intrudes into the known world and is eventually incorporated in our conception of the known world; or – and this is the eventual and ultimate point of the known/unknown relationship – “a philosophical apocalypse (...) takes place and the known world is reconceived as a result of its incorporation into a previously unsuspected reality” (5). Thus fantasy may become for the reader an epistemological tool to probe and negotiate reality and complexities of human life. I argue that Duncan attempts at provoking in his readers a receptive mode of consciousness by presenting an encounter between average contemporary American citizens and the inhabitants of Mera, who come from every land and every time period. The Merans are protected from the ravages of time and death by the Oracle that rules the city: “healing is fastest up here, close to the Oracle and the center of faerie. No doctors, but

a wonderful old couple look after the patients” (148). In return, the Oracle expects them to help the rest of humanity by undertaking missions to rescue mortals in need of aid, which usually means saving them from the world models that are delusive and only dull their perception of reality and of themselves. Significantly, the Meran Oracle is not like other traditional oracles that were asked questions and returned ambiguous answers. On the contrary, this one “asks the questions, and you tell it the answers—and you cannot lie to it” (150): “Expect the truth (...). And the truth is not often palatable” (150).

Mera could be called a consequential world, that is, an invisible world co-existing with what we regard as the real world. As David Ketterer explains, “the assumed credibility of their [consequential worlds] relationship to the author’s world has consequences for the understanding of that supposedly known world – it provides a new enlarged context that necessitates a fictional reconception of reality” (5). More specifically, the interaction between the two worlds leads to a conceptual discovery: “the known world is reconceived as a result of its incorporation into a previously unsuspected reality” (5). By engaging both his protagonists and readers in an adventure with a consequential world, Duncan plunges them into the uneasy state of epistemological confusion, coupled with the disturbing sense of the contingency of their seemingly systematized life. This vertigo encourages, to use Hume’s phrase, a “conscious comparison” of one’s own vision of reality with realities that are “more rich, more intense, more coherent (or incoherent), or somehow more significant” (82). As Hume notes, at such moments we “feel the limitations of our notions of reality” (82) and are forced to alter these conceptions.

The notion of the fantastic consequential world significantly qualifies the aforementioned claim that fantasylands function as doubles for everyday experience. Such an understanding of fantasy limits it to “medicine rather than a creative art” (Mendlesohn 169), whereas in fact, fantasy is just as metonymic as realism, which works “through representing aspects of story and discourse as part of larger signifying patterns” (Bradford, qtd. in Mendlesohn 168). Fantastic settings are not just props that heighten our perception of the real but communicate to readers that “normal” life is fragmented and illusory: fantastic alternatives to the mundane let us realize that the notion of reality as unified and solid is inadequate. This awareness, however, remains on a very abstract level and it is only in everyday confrontations with the real and the fantastic, both in life and in art, that we can try to attain a truer glimpse of the world and of ourselves.

Duncan is clearly aware of the metonymic function of fantasy when, at the end of his book, he mentions that, although the word “chimera,” which inspired Mera, may also mean “[a] mirage, and unattainable fancy”, the fantasyland is around the corner, existing alongside us, “always just of sight. I, for one, intend to go on looking. See you here” (n.p.). No wonder that to move from Mera to Outside and back, the characters do not have to travel in time or cross any por-

tal: the segue from one space to another is reflected in subtle, almost imperceptible, changes in the landscape. Another element of Duncan's construction of his fantastic space that highlights Mera's metonymical aspect is that he begins his story in the otherworld and from the perspective of the fantastic characters, thereby maximizing the effect of defamiliarization or cognitive estrangement. As José Eduardo Dos Reis contends, "[t]his world of wakefulness, partly conjured up by the brain-function, is the same historical phenomenal world which (...) can be daydreamed with other presuppositions and other possibilities; it is the material world upon which the idealising function of the brain may supersede other alternative mental world" (48). In offering readers an optional conceptualization of the world, fantasy is not pressed to present a given situation as the only conceivable predicament. It is in the disparity between the consensus world and fantasy that we can detect the mechanisms of the transformation of readers' worldviews. As Patrick Parrinder explains, the cognitive estrangement from the consensus reality is realized on at least two levels: it is "the moment of ontological apperception of something posited (...) as external, independent and strange" (6); and it is "the epistemological labour of bringing-to-knowledge, involving a dialectic of analogy and difference. Concomitant with this intellectual condition are: "a state of partial and imperfect knowledge" and the subsequent "idea of discovery" (7). Readers are forced to stop thinking of the mundane as the norm and to look at their world from a new angle, noticing its startling aspects and thus questioning whatever values, attitudes and actions have hitherto been accepted as the norm. Duncan's strategy may also have an ironical effect: as readers, we see what we see and may laugh at how the real protagonists choose to interpret it. However, we are also forced to reflect on what we, and other people, will and will not acknowledge in both the real and fantastic dimensions of the world.

In Duncan's tale, this interrogation centers on people's often misguided assessment of their predicaments and the resulting attitudes to the future. As mentioned above, we always resort to creating world models which, as we hope, will help us to see "in advance what mistakes to avoid, what strategies to use, so we'll get that promotion, that award, that date, that mate" (Brin, "Waging Wars" 25–26). Naturally, despite our intelligence, imaginative abilities, and other skills, our efforts to shape the future are often all in vain, which is also complicated by the fact that, as Brin explains, "people around us are trying to shift reality, too. The future is forever a moving target" (26).

Duncan presents a very convincing example of such a struggle: as the two Meran rescuers, Jerry and Killer, meet her, Ariadne Gillis is desperately hoping to cross the Canadian border as she has just kidnapped her two little children, Alan and Lacey, from her ex-husband Graham and his new wife, Maisie, who are pursuing her. Ariadne promises her children that they will have a nice place to live and that she will earn her living teaching the piano lessons. What she willfully ignores is that it is she herself, and her incurable alcohol-

ism, and not her husband, that is responsible for the crisis in their marriage. As Graham explains to Jerry, "I have shelled out thousands for cures for her, and they never last. I tried removing the liquor—she bought more and hid it. I took away her money—she sold her jewelry, including heirlooms from my mother. My ranch is a long way from town, I disabled her car—but nothing works" (Duncan 59). Kidnapping the children, Ariadne is trying to forget all the times when she scared or neglected them, disappeared for long, lost her consciousness, "was recovered like trash from the gutter on several occasions, not knowing where she had been or what she might have done," or had affairs with other men (59). She has also convinced herself, despite flimsy evidence, that she is no longer an alcoholic, that she will return to her concert career, and that her daughter Lacey has a musical gift that should be fostered. Ariadne's false reasoning is an example of the aforementioned combats against the real: in an attempt at creating a more hospitable reality we either invent alternative conceptualizations of the world that hide the intolerability of the real or split it into bits that may be easier to deal with, but which at best are rough approximations of reality.

It is no wonder that at first sight Ariadne's husband may seem justified in his accusations and his pursuit of her. As a lawyer, he believes in state and institutions as the only relevant frame of reference in ethical dilemmas. Still, beneath the veneer of respectability there hides his second life: the rape of his wife, "[t]he long absences, the strange friends, the sudden incredible prosperity—feast after famine—and then the steadily growing realization [on the part of Ariadne] that a young lawyer couldn't possibly be making this much money by honest means" (73). As Ariadne puts it, "he never breaks the law, but he bends it like a pretzel" (91). Indeed, in the course of the narrative it also turns out that he has hired a terrorist, Carlo, to kill Ariadne. The other two characters from the consensus world, Maisie and Carlo, also try to, as the Meran Oracle phrases it, "determine [their] reality stream[s]" (159) by substituting the real with fantastic models and configurations of people, relationships and events. The former is a devout Catholic who prefers not to question Graham's dishonesty for fear of shattering the illusion of peace and harmony in their household. Moreover, she is unable to put Christian ideals into practice as her only objection to a person being murdered is that it should not be done in front of children. The latter is a terrorist whose two imprisoned friends will be defended by Graham on the condition that Ariadne is killed. Simultaneously, he is a bitter young man suspecting everybody of hostile feelings for him and motivated by hatred of people around him in return.

As the four of them encounter the Merans and gradually learn more and more about the city, the worldviews they hitherto regarded as the only reliable and workable ones disintegrate. So does their vision of what is real and what is just their interpretation of external events or their self-perception. The extension and modification of their attitudes is difficult as, Jerry

notices, they live in an age in which belief unsupported by empirical scientific evidence is “almost impossible (...), perhaps that was why there were so few Merans from technological cultures” (52). As Duncan makes Jerry account for this imaginative passivity in modern consciousness, the supernatural and the magical have never disappeared but, metonymically, “had been around for centuries, disregarded as myth and legend by those whom it did not concern” (55). Jerry’s comment brings to mind the Weberian concept of disenchantment (*Entzauberung*), i.e. the process of rationalization, intellectualization, and mechanization of the world caused by secularization and the development of science. According to Weber, we live in times when “there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play” as they have been replaced by calculation (139), which in turn prevents, or relieves us from obtaining answers to the vital question “ ‘What shall we do and how shall we live’ ” (143).¹ Skeptical attitudes representative of the Weberian disenchantment of the world can be found in the other characters’ responses to Jerry’s comments on Mera. When he explains to them that the howls they heard outside the cabin in which they are all sheltering are not wolves but demons, Graham, for whom the world is governable and calculable, can only snort “ ‘What kind of a shakedown is this?’ ” (47) On another occasion, when Jerry mentions that Merans have always ventured into Outside (hence the motley character of Mera’s population), which for the others is their everyday reality, so as to prevent “cases of demonic possession loosed on an unsuspecting world, time bombs of evil to be detonated later” (51), he again encounters their utter disbelief, which actually stems from their misconception that even if evil is out there, none of them could be an efficient demon bearer. Graham’s stubborn refusal to accept the supernatural and his reliance on the habitual and the automatic is a learned response of relegating what is improbable to the realm of the fantastic and may be interpreted as his defense strategy against what Roger Caillois refers to as “a break in the acknowledged order, an irruption of the inadmissible within the changeless everyday legality” (qtd. in Jackson 21).²

Even when Jerry tries to clarify his own position by describing the missions in very simple terms that would be relevant to the others’ experience – “ ‘I was sent by an organization of which you have never heard (...). Killer and I are field men. From time to time we are instructed to contact certain persons and offer them sanctuary (...)’ ” – Graham’s rationality does not allow him to

¹ Contemporary fantasy literature, with its redefinition of the real/the miraculous divide, may be regarded as a manifestation of the search for a new spirituality in the rationalist and materialist globalizing world. For a detailed discussion of this function of fantasy see e.g. *Towards or Back to Human Values? Spiritual and Moral Dimension of Contemporary Fantasy*. Ed. by Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak and Marek Oziewicz. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006.

² See Caillois, Roger. *Images: Images: Essais sur le rôle et les pouvoirs de l’imagination*. Paris: José Corti, 1966, 15.

transcend the limits of a purely material and empirical outlook. He just asks: “‘Sanctuary?’ (...) ‘Asylum? Where?’ ” (55). Naturally, Graham has in mind an asylum for the mentally ill and not a haven in which one can be saved from the hell of one’s own models of the world that block perception and in fact disorganize reality. Jerry’s attempts at linguistic simplification and Graham’s uncomprehending response to them point to habits of language that often restrict our understanding of events even if, as is the case for Duncan’s characters, the fantastic is portrayed as the most logical and sensible aspect of their predicament, while their everyday reality is becoming less and less plausible. It is Adriane’s little daughter, Lacey, who, contrary to the adults, is not at all surprised with what is happening. Her immediate and unconditional belief reflects a child’s reality which, contrary to an adult’s sense of it, consists of both the realistic and the fantastic layer. This is turn, as Roni Natov explains, “reflects the child’s ability to pass in and out of the imaginative and ‘realistic’ realms, to live often fully and without much discomfort in both, in a kind of spontaneity” (5); an ability that adults usually lose. No wonder that in Mera there are no children – they do not have to be taught yet about the interconnectedness between the real and the fantastic but accept it unconditionally.

Still, the tangible manifestations of the faerie and the supernatural step by step undermine the characters’ certainty that, as Jerry puts it, they are just captives of “a raving lunatic” (55). The cabin becomes a space which triggers their doubts about the status of the mundane; for example, (1) for each of them the demon’s voice calling them from the outside of the cabin sounds like the voice of a person they know very well; (2) Meran clothes do not get dirty or damaged; (3) the Meran wand enables the Americans to communicate with the Merans although they do not speak one language; (4) Jerry performs a trick with his wand that leaves them all “disarmed and also shaken” (49): The big man [Graham] scowled and lifted his wife’s handbag from the floor. Jerry edged cautiously around the table and reached out with the wand, hooking the handles and pulling it from Gillis’ hand. The three newcomers gasped simultaneously, for it must be seeming to float of its own accord. Jerry swung it around, walked over, and laid it in Ariadne’s lap” (Duncan 47–48). Ariadne is the first one to believe in the existence of Mera. She soon notices that, quite understandably and logically, “those who did not believe in faerie and Mera would see magic, while those who did believe would not” (48). With time, the others also start to lose their confidence. Consequently, as Jerry tries to depict Mera in detail, he can see their “skepticism become incredulity, the incredulity grown into trepidation” (55). Their confusion slowly evolves into the belief in Mera as reality, however uncommon and exotic it appears to them. It is then that they witness how the children leave on unicorns so as to await the reformation of the adults.

Soon afterwards the adults are forced not only to listen about what seems to them to belong to legends and fables, but also to participate in one of such

stories. Trying to escape from the demons to Mera, the characters have to find their way through the Minotaur's labyrinth, with the beast pursuing them. Duncan's incorporation of the mythical dimension is to create "an augmented world," in which both the characters and the readers "are made uncomfortably aware of the thinness and insignificance of (...) [their] own material reality" (Hume 87), or rather, in Duncan's characters' case, of their worldviews. The Cretan surroundings seem so absurd, but at the same time so tangible, to the characters that they become dissociated from themselves and from their backgrounds. As a result of attaining such a distance to their value judgments, they soon stop trying to determine the reality or unreality of the whole situation and focus on the only thing that matters, that is, their survival. They do manage to escape to Mera only when they forget about their "real" hostilities and begin to cooperate. This augmentation of the ordinary by imbuing it with mythical dimensions works particularly efficiently for Ariadne, who, just as her mythical counterpart, manages to deceive the Minotaur and leads the others out of the labyrinth. Duncan's employment of the Greek myth as a catalyst of inner change in his characters makes it dialogic: for all of them, and for the reader, the passage through the labyrinth is a route to a deeper understanding of themselves, even if the relation of this "landscape of allusion" (Yolen 15) to their lives cannot yet be fully comprehended.

For the characters, it is their encounter with the Meran Oracle that lets them assess their predicament adequately. Their confrontation with the Oracle turns out a spiritual purification, which in turn enables them to look anew at themselves and the relationships among them. This inner metamorphosis is particularly visible in the case of Graham, who, thanks to the estranged perspective on his life, is also capable of questioning the hierarchy of categories that have so far shaped his judgments. As he confesses, "(...) I think I'm now what they call 'born-again.' (...) we need that Oracle (...) in the States; we could dispense with a lot of psychiatrists and policemen and..., yes, and lawyers and priests, too" (168). This inner change also makes him appreciate and apologize to Ariadne, whom he no longer thinks unworthy of family life and happiness. Ariadne is so shocked by Graham's "enthusiastic breast-beating" (168) that she immediately forgets about her hatred towards him. Graham has learnt how much pain and havoc he caused by treating his model of the world as final and valid.

The investigation to which the Oracle subjects the visitors is also an enriching and fortifying experience for Ariadne, as she begins to notice all her past mistakes and recognize her personal demons, i.e. her disrupted concert career, alcoholism, adultery, and the fear of Graham. Simultaneously, she is able to admit that although she wants it so much to be true, most probably she would not be a good mother and could not force Lacey to become a pianist. Even more importantly, she realizes that despite her past, she should not despise herself and feel guilty of everything that happened to her family.

On the contrary, the Oracle reveals before Ariadne that it was her courage, resourcefulness and determination that saved others from the Minotaur.

In more general terms, the fantastic experienced by the characters has led to what Edward Rekwitz refers to as freeing reality of “the veil of our human constructions of that reality ripped off, thus exposing it in all its contingency” (156–157). As a result, Duncan’s characters develop the ability to navigate by the poles of truth and untruth about themselves. Ariadne’s session with the Oracle is the most telling example of this instruction: the Oracle inundates her with very subtle and deep-cutting questions about her life and thoughts, asked by the woman’s naked reflection in the mirror, until all her answers are true and testify to her attaining a clear understanding of her predicament. Hence the confrontation with the Oracle as if denudes the characters by forcing them to determine their values and convictions independently, without the presence of any authority or frame of reference that would free them from responsibility for their decisions. Part of this process is learning that to preserve soundness of mind one needs to develop the awareness of both the differences and interdependencies between fantasy and the real (Cardinal xiii), including the degree of the fantastic of their subjective interpretations of the world. This discovery means grasping how to actively alter one’s life: Ariadne and Carlo decide to stay in Mera and benefit from their consciousness of the segue between the miraculous and the real, whereas Graham and Maisie, whose memory of Mera will finally be erased from their minds, come back to America, filled with the hope for the child Maisie is already carrying. On a more general level, the Oracle itself and its workings could be said to embody properties of fantasy: its concern with knowledge — “not only the criteria for valid knowledge, but also the nature of knowing itself, and (...) that of the knower” (Malekin 41) — and the experience of reading a fantasy text enabling interrogation of one’s selfhood and one’s past, present, and future. As Charles Butler puts it, the reader of fantasy literature feels “the *frisson* of gaining a sudden insight into a world perceived as alien” (Butler 71), but this alien world is what we take for apparent reality. This process in turn results in critical interpretation of the knowledge gained, which is usually the translation of the new experience into one’s private or public life. It may also let the reader draw parallels to the personal and social predicaments of others. Describing such occurrences taking place in a consequential world overlapping with the real one, Duncan provides a holistic experience of the fantastic and the real and signals to readers possible failures in grappling with an objective reality. Dislocated to another space-time configuration, readers witness the processes of gaining knowledge about oneself and the world, perhaps seeing in themselves people who, to use Tom Moylan’s phrase, ask soberly “where in the world they are, what in the world is going on, and what in the world they can do about it” (4). In other words, readers become freshly alerted to reality, and in particular, to “the mysterious relationship between man

and his circumstances in the disenchanted world" (Leal 122), which they can nevertheless re-enchant by noticing the "coinherence" (Raboteau) of the routine and the ordinary and the wondrous. It is also the source of honesty, which, as Brin cogently puts it, "saves some of us from the consequences of our lying minds" ("Metaphorical Drive" 73). Finally, this ability to evaluate the real and the fantastic in our own lives that encourages empathy, respect and tolerance for fellow human beings.

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The Moral Imagination in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*

In this article I will conjoin some recent ideas about moral imagination. I will argue that the moral capability takes advantage of the imaginative faculty of mind. After determining the moral imagination as a faculty of mind I consider the moral imagination concerning literature and fiction in general. Because the genre of fantasy literature is deeply based on advanced use of imagination, I will pursue to find the special way of fantasy to represent moral problems. My consideration is focused on a prize-winning fantasy trilogy, Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*.

I emphasize with Mary Devereaux that the nature of narrative fiction is essential to considering the moral content of it. Moving on to consideration of how imaginative power of fantasy goes hand in hand with imaginative faculty used in moral judgment, I rely on the views of Noël Carroll, Michael J. Pardo and Vigen Guroian. In the analysis of *His Dark Materials*, I will apply Amy Mullin's survey about multiple ways in which a work of art can be morally imaginative.

THE IMAGINATIVE POWER OF FANTASY LITERATURE AND *HIS DARK MATERIALS*

Fantasy literature is a genre in which imaginative and impossible worlds are presented as true and possible ones. In those worlds natural laws do not operate in the same way as in reality, at least in that certain improbable things are registered as happening by the help of magic or supernatural powers. The imaginative worlds of fantasy fiction also present alternative social norms, ethical models and even radically divergent courses of history. Some fantastic worlds get close to science-fiction inasmuch as they draw heavily on scientific theories and hypotheses.

The strangeness of a new fantastic world is achieved through altering some conditions valid in the real world; despite the strangeness, there is something familiar nonetheless. This is the very dominant feeling a reader gets on reading Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* (1995–2000), where the protagonist Lyra lives “in a universe a lot like ours, but different in many ways” (*Northern Lights* opening page).

It is the combination of strange and familiar components that makes fantasy so challenging. Rosemary Jackson clarifies in her *Fantasy: the Literature of Subversion* that in many cases an “imaginary world is neither entirely ‘real’..., nor entirely ‘unreal’..., but is located somewhere indeterminately between the two” (19). The protagonist Lyra lives in a world where lights are “ambaric,” but presently we learn that “ambaric” corresponds to “electricity” in our world. Far more striking is Lyra’s constant escort Pantalaimon, who seems to be an animal, but often shifts his shape, and is presented by Pullman as a being called a “dæmon,” a kind of outward projection of her consciousness. Lyra and Pantalaimon are connected so steadfastly that they are the two sides of one person; Lyra is feminine and human whereas Pantalaimon is masculine and animal-like. They go through the plot together and feel and react emphatically with each other. Lyra consults her dæmon when she wants to understand her world and find the right way to act in it, and Pantalaimon plays an essential role in Lyra’s development to find ethics of her own.

His Dark Materials is a story about Lyra, 11-year-old girl brought up in Oxford by scholars in one of the colleges. Her real parents are involved in frightening enterprises: Lord Asriel, Lyra’s father, is ready to kill a child to build a bridge between his world and another one. Mrs Coulter, Lyra’s mother, kidnaps children to be sent north where shady experiments are made. In the operation called “intercision”, the child and his/her dæmon are separated, their mental connection destroyed, and both are downhearted. The child will neither reach puberty or adulthood nor is s/he able to negotiate about ethical issues with his/her dæmon. When this kind of negotiation is inhibited, the child no longer exists as an ethical being.

In this paper I propose to focus on the question of how moral issues are introduced by Pullman through his creation of alternative worlds in *His Dark Materials*—issues such as the characters’ ethical development through the quest, their innocence changing to experience with the losses and gains that it entails, and the power of the Church—or any institutionalized ideology—over people’s minds. Pullman’s trilogy deserves further exploration, since the moral problems that the narrative gives rise to are hard and challenging. The fact that some readers may thus find Pullman’s moral questions troubling, and his cruel scenes morally disgusting, accounts for the doubts voiced about its suitability for young adult readers. The controversy, however, fruitfully challenged the borderline between adult and children’s literature. Michael Chabon (whose *Summerland* has been categorized as children’s fantasy) captures the problem well in his review by claiming that “in fact the question of whether or not *His Dark Materials* is meant or even suitable for young readers not only remains open but grows ever more difficult to answer as the series progresses. This indeterminacy of readership—the way Pullman’s story pulses fitfully between the poles of adult and children’s...[is] itself a figuring- or working-out of the fundamental plot of *His Dark Materials*... (25). Childhood and adulthood are not

distinct areas for any human; a child has to anticipate the future, and an adult carries the bygone childhood as an individual history. Such books, like Pullman's trilogy, are needed to remind us that child and adult perspectives exist in every mind.

The philosophical and ethical nature of Pullman's trilogy has been avowed by many scholars. Gregory Maguire sums his reading experience: "In the end, with the mysteries of dark matter resolved, we have only the mysteries of our own dark human selves to contemplate." (738) Millicent Lenz has pointed in "Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction" that stories are much more potent than moral precepts in teaching morality (122). Clare Walsh has considered in her article "From 'capping' to intercision" the importance of self-conscious subjectivity of young protagonists (234). By making the protagonist come over the hindrances also the reader is given an empowering subject position. At the same time Walsh points out that albeit Pullman is complex and sophisticated writer, he is not very dialogic. He does not give voice to alternative points of view in his trilogy, but controls the ethical stance (248).

These kinds of judgments are common nowadays, because criticism has taken an ethical turn since the 1980s. The questions central to ethical criticism have concerned the impact of reading, the role of the moral imagination in human behaviour and the adherence to values, and artistic responsibility, as Mary Devereaux lists in her article "Moral Judgments and Work of Art: The Case of Narrative Literature" (3). Devereaux herself wants to keep to issue of moral judgment assigned to a work of art as such.

Moral judgments concerning ordinary life and concerning literature are two different issues. According to Devereaux "moral judgments about narrative literature can best be understood in the context of a particular conception of the nature of narrative fiction" (4). When we read, we are not only finding out what is going on in the narrative. We are also aware of the way the text is organized, how it is made to mean. We assume, Devereaux continues, that behind textual organization there is "an author who has produced the text in such a way as to prompt certain questions and provide the resources to begin to answer them" (6). Only when we are aware of literary features do we understand how the moral content of a work is structured. It is no use to "merely count up the number of times Twain uses the n-word or Lawrence the f-word" (9). The whole text constructs a relational field, and we have to ponder what kind of ethics is valid in such conditions.

If it is important to understand the nature of narrative fiction before making any moral judgments of it, it is definitely quite as important to be aware of the nature of fantastic fiction to validate its ethics. I define fantasy as fiction where supernatural things are made possible either in a realistically depicted world obeying laws of nature, or in another world that is based on some supernatural laws. Like fiction generally, fantasy is a narrative which the reader considers to be a construct of imagination and not something that could be found

in reality. But while realistic fiction still seeks to imitate the real world suggesting that “this could really happen”, fantastic fiction suggests an alternative state of affairs appealing to the reader’s imagination. At the same time, however, usually fantastic stories contrive to claim something about reality, just as the realistic ones do, only the way of saying is diverging.

Fantastic narrative exploits the metaphorical capacity of language somewhat similarly as poetry. In the next section I will compare the metaphoric nature of fantasy to the role of metaphor in making moral judgments. The same structure in both activities explains why fantastic expression is an effective way to ponder moral questions.

THE METAPHORS IN FANTASY CORRESPONDING TO THE METAPHORS IN MIND

The advantage of hypothesis construction by reading narrative, if compared to purely theoretical making of hypotheses, is that in fictional narratives such imaginings are richly detailed. They achieve more plausibility, validity, and concreteness. As Noël Carroll points out in his “The Wheel of Virtue: Art, Literature, and Moral Knowledge,” imagined cases become the stuff of experience, not only abstract thought, and the impact of moral pondering may be deeper (19). Carroll has pointed out the justification of using literature to gain moral knowledge, reminding us that philosophers use thought experiments that are “often narrative and generally fictional in nature” (7). Assembling what both Devereaux and Carroll argue about the benefits of reading literature, there are two dimensions in how moral knowledge is connected to it. Firstly, when literature is the subject of moral criticism, we have to be concerned with it keeping the nature of narrative fiction in mind. Secondly, after having experienced the narrative as such, we have gone through something that is equivalent to thought experiments.

It is easy to agree with Michael J. Pardales when he maintains that “literature actually adds to our experience in a way that daily living, alone, often cannot. Through literature we can have experiences that we may not be able to have otherwise” (432). Fantasy, science fiction, and all speculative literature go further in broadening the experience for the reader, and hence give a wider scope of thought experiments for moral knowledge. I think that fantasy and genres akin to it are able to approach from beyond problems that are totally amorphous in real life.

Metaphors and anomalies in poetry open a way of seeing the world with fresh eyes. In fantastic literature, metaphoric expressions often have concrete fulfilments. In *His Dark Materials* dæmons are often concretisations of common metaphors, for example the dæmon of deceitful Lord Boreal is a serpent. Metaphor makes a transfer between two divergent concepts. If Burns’s “love” is “a red rose,” some qualities of the rose are transferred to the essence of love.

There is another reason to keep metaphor in mind when talking about the moral dimension in fantasy. In his *Tending the Heart of Virtue*, Vigen Guroian defines moral imagination as relying on the concept of metaphor: "The moral imagination is...the very process by which the self makes metaphors out of images given by experience and then employs these metaphors to find and suppose moral correspondences in experience" (24). For Guroian moral imagination is like a tool for making metaphors by which experience is employed reflectively in a morally significant way. This, of course, is contingent on certain learned skills: if children lack knowledge of metaphor they cannot follow an author's figurative imagination in fiction. And it is in this respect that Guroian blames the modern society for not providing children with ways to gain moral imagination (25).

My view of fairy tale and fantasy as an experimental field for moral reflection is very similar to Guroian's. Fantasy stories are able to transport the reader into other worlds to identify him/herself in the same magical adventures as the hero. Guroian avers that the reader's imagination translates these experiences and images into the constitutive elements of self-identity and into metaphors used to interpret the real world (26).

I have now considered metaphor as a device of poetic imagination and use. Proceeding to the metaphorical nature of human conceptual system, I refer to George Lakoff's and Mark Johnson's well-known work *Metaphors We Live By*: "Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system." (6). Metaphor is also one of the components of the moral imagination Michael J. Pardales introduces in his article "So, How Did You Arrive at that Decision?" Connecting Moral Imagination and Moral Judgement". For Pardales moral imagination is "a psychological faculty that allows individuals to explore various possibilities for their lives" (426). This simple definition requires the specification "possibilities of moral significance". Making moral judgments is not simply the application of a moral rule, but vivid working of imaginative faculty which explores various possibilities and evaluates their consequences.

Pardales divides moral imagination into four components: prototypes, metaphor, narrative, and moral perception (427). The second stage, metaphor, is not taken here as a linguistic entity. "A conceptual metaphor is a mapping of conceptual structure from source domain, which is typically some aspect of our concrete bodily experience, onto a more abstract or less highly articulated target domain" (428), Pardales states. Conceptual metaphors help us when we are uncertain about how to act in morally ambiguous situations. I elucidate this with an example from *His Dark Materials*. In this case the metaphor Lyra "maps" from her earlier experience onto the later one could be labelled as "coin is reverence".

There is a crypt in Lyra's Oxford where the skulls of dead scholars are conserved. Within each skull there is a coin, in which the picture of the dead person's

dæmon is engraved. Lyra makes a trick by changing the coins into wrong skulls. But next night her room is haunted, and, scared, she restores the coins to their rightful places. Lyra will enforce the code of not separating even the dead people from their token of dæmons when she has to face a dead child later in *Northern Lights*. The Knowledge grounded on her experience with skulls makes her to scratch the name of the child's dæmon in a gold coin and put it in his mouth.

Because *His Dark Materials* uses the possibilities of fantastic expression, it is a supernatural thing, haunting, that puts her moral perception to work. The fantastic intertwines to the whole story in the example I summed up above, and I would like to stress that the fantastic element in the narrative enhances the metaphoric structure of conception by using very salient metaphors. I will advance to point out special features of moral imagination by following Amy Mullin's findings.

DIMENSIONS OF MORALLY IMAGINATIVE NARRATIVE

Amy Mullin, in her article "Moral Defects, Aesthetic Defects, and the Imagination" defines the moral imagination as "the imaginative exploration of emotions, propositions, and situations of moral significance" (249).

Amy Mullin has listed the different ways in which works of art can be morally imaginative in 'Moral Defects, Aesthetic Defects, and the Imagination' (255–256). I would like to apply her ideas to children's literature—or specifically—to our adopted ways of thinking about how children's literature functions from the moral point of view. Mullin's first notion is that an artwork puts moral ideas into free play.

Pullman has taken a fantastic liberty to change the nature of the human being by creating a dæmon. In my interpretation, we can see in dæmon the human aptitude to be directed towards another consciousness. Besides the interaction between a human and one's dæmon we can figure out what codes there are for the interaction between a human and another human's dæmon, as well as those between dæmon and dæmon. It is an appallingly violent deed to touch another person's dæmon. An exception to this rule happens when Lyra's dæmon Pantalaimon, now in the form of a wolfhound, lays his head on her friend Will's knee. Pantalaimon does this on his own initiative with an aim to comfort and encourage Will, who has not a dæmon of his own. Lyra is astonished at first, but afterwards she thinks that Pantalaimon did the right thing (*The Subtle Knife*, 191–192).

The ethical development of the protagonist in *His Dark Materials* is constantly present in the narration. Moral ideas are put in a free play by altering the basics of human interaction. The reader constructs the ethical framework for different kinds of circumstances through learning the same things that the protagonist Lyra has to learn about her world. The quest, the series of exceptional adventurous situations, is the way to test Lyra morally and to uncover

the deeper nature of ethics. For Lyra the unusual behaviour of her dæmon is the most moving and upsetting thing to happen. Every time that the conventional moral laws are broken by her dæmon, Lyra finds something more enduring than the common ethics of her world.

The second way of being morally imaginative, according to Mullin, is to endorse a familiar moral vision. This is how children's literature was understood until the last decades of the nineteenth century. We know that books for children were used for teaching morals to youngsters. Since *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *The Treasure Island* (1883) children's literature has tried to shake off the label of moralizing. Though moralizing is not treated as a special value in children's literature nowadays, it is still possible to deal with moral ideas without straightforward moralization. I think that it is fantasy that has the capacity of freeing concepts from the engagements they usually have. The evolution in children's literature from moralising to enriching moral imagination is similar to Pardales' point that making moral judgments is not to apply a moral rule, but use one's imaginative faculty (426).

Nevertheless, I believe no work of literature, however radical, can totally avoid committing itself to established moral systems. Even the most innovative moral systems created in fiction endorse, in some respects, visions that are already familiar in existing moral codes. Pullman endorses many familiar elements of moral vision in *His Dark Materials*, even though the strikingly divergent ones are noticed by the reader in the first place. On the one hand, the reader encounters scenes of torture, violence, and children's deaths, which cannot be endorsed or understood to be endorsed by Pullman. On the other, he or she recognizes moral visions that may be congruent with the teachings of the Christianity or parents and all the rest.

For example, Pullman is teaching the reader good manners in a classical fairy-tale fashion by reporting what results from Lyra's tendency to lying. The pragmatic side of lying is introduced many times in dangerous situations during Lyra's quest. Because many adults are untrustworthy, it is safer to tell lies. But when Lyra has to go to the land of the dead, she has to learn her lesson. The ghosts in the land of the dead are tormented by harpies. One harpy commands Lyra to tell the story of her life. When Lyra tells tales about herself the harpy attacks on her and screams: "Liar," which echoes back from the wall as "Lyra." Deeply moved, Lyra tells only true stories from then on (*The Amber Spyglass* 307–308). This sounds like a very simple and fairy-tale like lesson for the protagonist. Interestingly, the chapter devoted to these events begins with a citation from Byron: "I hate things all fiction...there should always be some foundation of fact" (*The Amber Spyglass* 291). There again, Pullman himself widens the meaning of the episode to deal with truth in writing. He compares Lyra's falsehood story to fantasy genre in general, and claims that most fantasy does not tell "anything interesting about being a human being" with the "substratum of genuine truth" ("Darkness Visible").

The third way in which a work of fiction can be morally imaginative is that an artwork can encourage us to take “a perspective on a situation that is morally novel, and not clearly good or evil” (256). By this Mullin suggests that an artwork can lead us to situations we have never confronted before, somewhere “beyond good and evil,” perhaps. A striking situation in *His Dark Materials* is connected to Iorek Byrnison, the armoured bear, who is Lyra’s friend and protector. Like many other animals in fairy- and fantasy stories, he can talk and his mind is represented as human-like. But implicitly and explicitly his human-likeness is stopped half-way. When Iorek finds the dead body of a brave aeronaut he had known, he acts like an animal rationalizing the action human-wise at the same time: “And because the Texan aeronaut was one of the very few humans Iorek had ever esteemed, he accepted the man’s last gift to him... and began to feast on the flesh and blood of his old friend. It was his first meal for days, and he was hungry” (*The Amber Spyglass* 44).

Amy Mullin’s fourth and last case of morally imaginative power of a work of art is that a work sets “morally significant material into play with other aspects of the work considered as a whole” (256) Lyra’s inner quest in the story concerns her maturing from innocence to experience. If we take this evolution as a main development in the trilogy, it is partly possible to comment upon the question of the relation between the whole work and the moral material in it.

As a theme in a fictional narrative, innocence changing to experience is not a moral question as such. It just happens when one gets older. But the meanings and values tied to this process make it a moral question. *His Dark Materials* is very epoch-making in the way it depicts the loss of innocence as a positive and fundamental event in life. This is so because the common thread of children’s literature is to understand the idea of child’s innocence as a an irretrievable loss, something an adult can never gain again. To put it bluntly, writing and reading children’s literature has been, for adults, dreaming of an innocent state, and an expression of a longing to see the world through the child’s eyes. The question of innocence concerns both the protagonist and the reader. In this regard, the narrative should prepare the reader to grow out of innocence by giving some intellectual, emotional and moral means for the future.

To refer to Mullin once more, “even a single instance of such an imaginative experience can destroy a kind of moral innocence, in which, for example, some kinds of cruelty had simply never occurred to one” (252). If we think about *His Dark Materials* as children’s book, it is more than probable that there are readers who are innocent in the way Mullin describes. The most horrible kind of cruelty occurring in *His Dark Materials* concerns severing a child from dæmon, since the consequence of that is that the child becomes an empty-minded zombie. After having understood the all-important connection of human and dæmon, the reader draws an analogy to violent provocations in the real world. The reader knows that it is even worse than to lose one’s limb or parents. Clare Walsh, among others, in her article “From ‘capping’ to interci-

sion: metaphors/metonyms of mind control in the young adult fiction of John Christopher and Philip Pullman" has associated the severing with singer castration and female circumcision, and they are referred to in Pullman's fiction, too. Similar to this point is what Walsh judges: "The process of intercision therefore takes part of its metaphorical force from analogous practices in the real world" (244).

This is how the moral imagination works. We are led to see moral connections that were unknown before, and we remain involved as long as we devote our thoughts to the moral system Pullman has created. Losing one's innocence by being forced to think of horrible things is not the point. The point is what it does for one's moral imagination. If the violence is there for its own sake, it harms. But if facing cruelty makes the reader to prepare and beware, it is a resource. Mullin warns that innocence may "make us easier to manipulate, and can lead to failure to recognize when immoral things are happening" (252). Because we know that the world in which children will live in the future is morally complicated, we cannot give all the instructions they will need. The best thing to give them is moral imagination.

Moral imagination is a concept which bridges the experience with future moral judgments. In this process the pivotal tool of mind is metaphor. Making moral judgments means that one has to choose from many possibilities, and moral imagination is the psychological faculty that allows the exploration of possibilities. That exploration is to imagine morally significant situations by going through and evaluating their various consequences.

Literature endows readers with a spectrum of experience to enrich their moral imagination. Narrative fiction has particular strategies to set moral questions, and make readers aware of it. In fantasy genre the supernatural complement in using metaphor makes its narrative even more effective to invoke moral imagination.

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Fear and the 'Fantastic' in Hanna Krall's 'The Dybbuk' and Don DeLillo's *The Body Artist*

It is the fear of forgetting that brings two seemingly unconnected works of contemporary literature together: "The Dybbuk" (1995) by the Polish writer Hanna Krall and *The Body Artist* (2001) by the American writer Don DeLillo. Basic summaries of these works suggest meager commonalities, as the former is a journalistic short story about a man quite literally haunted by the Holocaust; while the latter is a lyrical and unnerving novella about a woman coping with the death of her husband. Upon closer inspection, however, the texts emerge with surprising parallelism, from their genre to their themes. Ultimately, the protagonists in both "The Dybbuk" and *The Body Artist* find themselves creating and confronting seemingly fantastic events in the face of their respective fears.

By beginning with Tzvetan Todorov's structural approach to the fantastic, I will compare the poetics of these two texts by systematically classifying them in the genre of the fantastic and by discussing their thematic properties. I will depart from Todorov's theory often, however, as his structural approach does not engage in interpretation.

Before proceeding to this study of the common fantastic ground shared between these two texts, some contextualization is in order. Although these two authors are certainly distant from one another in terms of the globe, they are very close in terms of time: Krall was born in 1937 in Warsaw, DeLillo the year before, in 1936, in New York. Krall was educated as a journalist and worked in her field for many years before she published her first book in her mid-thirties. The story "The Dybbuk" appears in her tenth book, *Proofs of Existence* (*Dowody na istnienie*). DeLillo began writing his first novel at the age of 30. *The Body Artist* is his twelfth novel.

"The Dybbuk" begins with the narrator, a journalist, introducing us to the protagonist, the Polish-American professor Adam S. She relates how she learns about the dybbuk that has been inside of him his entire life. It is a dybbuk of his 6-year old half-brother whom he never met, who died in the Warsaw ghetto and who shares his name. Later in the story it is revealed that the little boy's death resulted from his fellow Jews throwing him out of their hiding spot for fear his crying would expose them all. Even more shocking is that the little boy's mother did not leave the hiding spot with him. Another character central to this story is

one Samuel Kerner, an American Jew who became a Buddhist monk and who attempted to exorcise the dybbuk from Adam S.'s body. Just at the moment when Samuel is on the verge of a successful exorcism, however, Adam S. changes his mind and calls his little brother back to him. The story concludes with Adam S. and his wife dealing with the strain that the dybbuk's presence puts upon their lives and with Adam S. feeling preoccupied with his own mortality.

In *The Body Artist*, soon after a woman's husband commits suicide she encounters a strange man in her home. She is drawn to this curiously childlike person, to his odd mannerisms and speech. She names him Mr. Tuttle, after a teacher she had once had and he becomes for her a kind of project, a way to fill her sense of loneliness, a way to put off her grief. And her connection to him deepens when she discovers his ability to mimic her dead husband, to replicate his voice, actual past conversations and gestures.

In his theory of the fantastic, Todorov emphasizes the central role of the reader in determining whether a work of literature belongs to the genre of the fantastic. The "world [of the characters]," Todorov explains, "is defined by the reader's own ambiguous perception of the events narrated" (31). In other words, the reader, identifying with the protagonist, hesitates between perceiving the events, or "ambiguous visions" (33), as stemming from either natural causes or from supernatural causes (26). If the reader is steadfast in his or her interpretation, then the work belongs to a subgenre of the fantastic: it is either "uncanny" (if the unusual events can be rationalized as being limited to the imagination) or marvelous (if the unusual events are determined to be "real"). These subgenres are thus helpful, indeed even necessary, in determining a text to be fantastic (27).

Defining Krall's writing as fantastic may seem suspect to those familiar with her work, for she is known as a journalist and a chronicler of the atrocities of the Holocaust. The English-language translation of "The Dybbuk," moreover, is included in a collection of stories entitled *The Woman from Hamburg and Other True Stories*. The device of labeling something as "true," however, suggests there to be a certain extent of incredibility. When reading "The Dybbuk," most readers will at first question the dybbuk's existence within the story, but when they reach the exorcism scene they might hesitate in their perception of the events. That which makes the exorcism scene so pivotal is the fact that it verifies the story of the dybbuk through a witness – Samuel, the monk who attempts to perform the exorcism. The narrator, retelling Samuel's version of the event, says, "There was no doubt about it: a third person had appeared in the room" (151). [Nie było wątpliwosci: w pokoju pojawil sie ktos trzeci] (14).] She then says,

The one who was with them, who was only wind and fear, began to follow the words.

And then Adam S. said something in that sibilant language.

The other one stopped. He turned back and moved hurriedly toward Adam (151).

[Ten kto był z nimi, kto był tylko powietrzem I strachem, zaczął podążać za słowami.

I wtedy Adam S. coś powiedział w owym szeleszczącym języku.

Tamten zatrzymał się. Zawrócił I pospiesznie ruszył w stronę Adama (14).]

Hearing about the dybbuk only from Adam S. is not quite convincing enough to make this text fantastic for it is too easy to attribute the idea of the dybbuk to Adam S.'s imagination. When, however, the story is verified by a monk—a traditionally trustworthy character-type—then we, as readers, reconsider the possibility of the dybbuk's reality within the story. That hesitation, as Todorov calls it, is what designates this story as fantastic.

In *The Body Artist* the reader is never sure whether to interpret the events following the husband's suicide as real or as Lauren's psychological response to a traumatic incident. The reader experiences a hesitation early on in this work. Before her husband's death, Lauren and he speak of curious noises they have heard in the house. The way in which the couple speaks of these noises (or, more precisely, does not speak of them) enshrouds the story in mystery. Over breakfast Rey says to Lauren that he wants to tell her something but that he cannot remember what it is. When Lauren prods him to tell her, he says: "It's too early. It's an effort. It's boring." And then: "It's like pushing a boulder." (19). Eventually Lauren reveals that she, in fact, knows what it is he wants to tell her and she says simply "The noise" (20). After Rey's death, when Mr. Tuttle appears, we connect him to these noises but it is never clear that they were actually made by him for it is never clear that he actually exists. In a remote room of the house soon after Rey's death, Lauren stumbles upon Mr. Tuttle, sitting on the bed in his underwear. Mr. Tuttle will live with her in the house for some undetermined amount of time. Then, toward the end of the book, he begins to stop eating and then finally disappears. Unlike in "The Dybbuk," there are no witnesses to the "ambiguous vision" in this text.

In addition to the reader's hesitation—the necessary condition of the genre—Todorov's discussion of the fantastic also includes what he terms an optional condition to the genre: this optional condition rests upon whether the reader's hesitation is shared by the works' characters.¹ The tendency is for the optional condition to be fulfilled. In Krall's book, however, this condition is not present; for neither Adam S. nor the monk ever doubt the existence of the dybbuk, nor do they seem to think it particularly eerie. With DeLillo's text, however, the reader's persistent hesitation follows Lauren's throughout the book.

¹ A third and final condition of the fantastic, according to Todorov's approach, is that the reader should have a necessary attitude toward the text, i.e. should engage in a certain kind of reading. If the reader does not engage in this suggested mode of reading, the genre of the fantastic is threatened. In arguing his point, Todorov refers to poetry and allegory as genres oppositional to the fantastic (although not directly oppositional to one another). This section of Todorov's book is either self-evident or not sufficiently presented and so I will not be including a discussion of it in my study.

On numerous occasions, Lauren attempts, unsuccessfully, to “rationalize” Mr. Tuttle’s appearance: Has he wandered here from the nearby insane asylum? Is he an alien? Is he a forgotten relative of the people who lived here previously? The discrepancy between the two protagonists’ reaction to the unusual occurrence is one of the fundamental differences between these two works.

Beyond belonging to the fantastic, “The Dybbuk” and *The Body Artist* share numerous other parallels, one being their structure. Firstly, and rather inconsequentially, each is divided into seven parts. It is possible that the traditionally magical connotations held by the number seven were considered by the authors as fitting for a text with fantastic leanings. Secondly, and more relevant, the main characters in each form a triangle whose sides merge and conflate, lifting the boundaries between characters and playing with notions of individuality. In the world of the fantastic text, in general, boundaries of all kinds are lifted or moved. Indeed, the major themes of the genre, as Todorov sees them, all entail the removal of boundaries: “a special causality, pan-determinism; multiplication of the personality; collapse of the limit between subject and object; and, lastly, the transformation of time and space” (120). To review, the trio of main characters in Krall’s story are: Adam S., the Polish-American professor; the dybbuk of his half brother who died in the Holocaust; and Samuel Kerner, the Buddhist monk who attempts to exorcise the dybbuk. Of these three individuals, there are only two actual physical characters that the reader encounters because the dybbuk, while having once been a boy, in the timeframe of this story lives only as a spirit inside the body of Adam S. Thus, the conflation here occurs between Adam S. and his brother. They are doubles in that they share the same body, the same name, and the same history of persecution.

In *The Body Artist*, the three main characters are: Lauren, who is the body artist and wife/widow; Rey Robles, the husband who commits suicide; and Mr. Tuttle, the enigmatic and childlike stranger who appears in the house. In this work the complexity of character conflation goes beyond that of “The Dybbuk.” Mr. Tuttle appears only after Rey’s death and the chronology of his existence suggests, in part, that he is an extension of Rey—he speaks using at times Rey’s voice, specific phrases and gestures. This is one level of conflation. The next level comes at the end of the book when Lauren, through her work as a body artist, turns herself into an extension of Mr. Tuttle by altering her appearance to resemble him. Through this series of doubles, we eventually come full circle, with Lauren emulating Mr. Tuttle who was emulating Rey.

The themes of art and architecture emerge as yet another parallel between these two works. DeLillo’s protagonist is, of course, a body artist—a kind of performance artist of identity—and Krall’s is a professor of architecture. Each protagonist is portrayed as housing its “ambiguous vision.” Mr. Tuttle is quite literally a tenant, residing in Lauren’s house, and the dybbuk is figuratively living in Adam S.’s body and is, in fact, referred to as a subtenant (138) or *sublokator* (6) in the story. Remarkably similar is the symbiotic relationship these art-

ists have with their otherworldly tenants. The artist-protagonists provide them with space and comfort and, in turn, find solace and inspiration in their residents. Adam S. became an architect because of his dybbuk. He studied Polish in order to understand him and then traveled to Poland, where he discovered 300-year old wooden synagogues. Lauren, on the other hand, came to her profession before Mr. Tuttle's appearance. However, after his disappearance Lauren creates a performance piece that is nothing if not inspired by her experience with Mr. Tuttle—she becomes him:

She has transformed herself shockingly [...].

She is not pale-skinned so much as colorless, bloodless and ageless. She is rawboned and slightly bug-eyed. Her hair looks terroristic. It is not trimmed but chopped and the natural chestnut luster is ash white now, with faint pink traces (105).

In an interview, Lauren insists that the performance piece is not a direct result of Rey's death. While it may not be a "direct result," it has been inspired by a series of events captured in time since her husband's suicide (111).

We are now approaching the heart of the matter in these bodily texts: the themes of fear and time. The boundaries continue to be lifted in these stories, as our intellectual notions of time are turned on their heads. Adam S. and Lauren create "ambiguous visions" that will enable them to manipulate time so that they can, ultimately, cope with their fears. These visions, as I have shown, have inspired the protagonists in their creative professions but their actual role in this task is of greater importance. It is necessary that these visions be child-like so that they have "the pre-intellectual conceptions of causality, space, and time" (Todorov 145). For the dybbuk and Mr. Tuttle, then, time will not be "a line joining these three points (past, present, and future), but rather an eternal present [...] something elastic or infinite" (Todorov 145). With this new-found pre-intellectual concept of time, Adam S. builds a bridge across time with one end secured to the moment when his brother died in the Holocaust and the other secured to his own life. To have exorcised the dybbuk of his half brother would have been to burn this bridge. It is a bridge that serves two purposes, both of which alleviate Adam S.'s greatest fears: forgetting the Holocaust and the knowledge of his own mortality. The events of the Holocaust recede further into the past with each new day. By cutting out the expanding temporal gap between himself and history, Adam S. can secure the memory. Moreover, by keeping inside him the spirit of a six-year old boy, he can secure a sense of youth. But Adam S. was not fully aware of the necessity of what he had constructed; he felt only the pain that accompanied it and so he tried to destroy it by going to the monk to have it exorcised. Samuel's touch, however, awoke a realization in Adam S. Krall's narrator explains the monk's technique:

Healing through touch is based on drawing out memory. Memory is concealed in the human body, in muscle tissue. It is uncovered by touching the

head, the back of the neck, the feet. Things that have been shoved deep into non-memory are recalled anew and lose the power to torment (149–15).

Leczenie przez dotyk polega na wydobywaniu pamięci. Pamięć ukryta jest w ciele ludzkim, w błonach mięśniowych. Odnajduje się ją dotykając głowy, karku i stóp. Rzeczy zepchnięte w niepamięć i na nowo przywołane przestają dręczyć (13).

Lauren's manipulation of time moves in an opposite direction, for out of her fear of forgetting her husband she expands time rather than condensing it as Adam S. does. The notion of elastic or infinite time, however, is shared between the two texts. With *The Body Artist*, DeLillo has created a text in which time itself becomes tangible, is anthropomorphized as Mr. Tuttle. His name betrays him as a kind of hiccup in time. The seemingly mundane details of the first hours after Rey's death will all return at the end of the book, in a different order, yet certainly there: Lauren's climbing the stairs, hearing the wax paper separate from the roll. So much seems familiar to the reader that he questions whether time has passed at all. We are told: "The plan was to organize time until she could live again" (39). A further explanation comes later in the book: "Time is the only narrative that matters. It stretches events and makes it possible for us to suffer and come out of it and see death happen and come out of it" (94). After Lauren makes her plan, there occurs a minor miracle that hearkens Mr. Tuttle's first appearance. She hears a noise upstairs, begins moving toward it and looks out the window. There she "saw a twirling leaf [...]. It was a small amber leaf twirling in the air beneath a tree branch that extended over the roof. There was no sign of a larva web from which the leaf might be suspended, or a strand of some bird's nest-building material. Just the leaf in midair, turning" (43). Immediately after this she finds Mr. Tuttle sitting on the edge of a bed. The twirling leaf signals the moment when time is suspended. The amber color of the leaf also hints to the notion of captured time, as the petrified resin hints at the notion of petrified time.

So it is that we have brought together two characters from two such seemingly different works. The essence of their commonalities, then, lies in how they go about preserving memory and allaying their fears. For one, the story of her "ambiguous vision" ends once she has coped with her loss; for the other, it continues beyond the confines of the text, into an uncertain future.

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“Complete Veracity of Expression”: Reassessing Realism in Liudmila Ulitskaia’s *Daniel Stein, Translator* (2006)

The focus of this essay is a recent novel by the Russian author, Liudmila Ulitskaia, *Daniel Stein, perevodchik* (first published in 2006, *Daniel Stein, Translator*)¹. My purpose is to analyze the narrative composition of the novel, which develops numerous links with contemporary discussions on representation in fiction. Firstly, the novel tells the story of a Catholic Jew, Daniel Stein – a character based on a real life paragon, Oswald Rufeisen (Brother Daniel). The novel is a pseudo-documentary consisting of nearly 170 documents, partly, if not entirely, composed by the author. They include: letters, diary entries, memoir texts, conversations, interviews, and news articles. These are narrated, or otherwise produced, by dozens of characters over a period of 50 years, from the 1940s to the 1990s, in non-chronological order, and comprising some several hundred pages in length, the 2008 edition of which has 700 pages. The textual composition is reminiscent of a postmodernist *pastiche*—mimicry of different types of texts derived from different sources and compiled into a non-chronological whole (Saariluoma 1992, 15; Jameson 1989). However, the text is not, strictly speaking, a pastiche, because the imitation of documents does not share the superficiality and stylistic mannerism of the postmodernist pastiche; additionally, it does not share the mockery of the original of the modernist pastiche. One can ask, therefore, what is the meaning of this fragmentary, “jig-saw” textual structure?

Secondly, the novel offers itself to be read *as if* the events and characters described in it were authentic and factual—hence the references to actual paragons in the novel—but at the same time the novel explicitly breaks the illusion of authenticity by declaring that the documents and partly the characters are invented. The novel shares elements of historical fiction, a hybrid literary genre combining factual events and characters woven into the world of fiction. But why does the author insist on the *veracity* of that fiction, as she does? To what reality does that veracity relate?

Thirdly, the novel’s structure is based on the principle of *heteroglossia*. While being a constitutive feature in the novel as a genre, as put by Bakhtin,

¹ In this essay the novel will be referred to as *Daniel Stein*. All references to the novel are made from the 2008 edition. All translations from the novel are mine—M.R.

it is made into a principle of primary importance in this novel particularly, in the sense that all the characters—of which there are over 40—speak with their own voice. Moreover, the author also speaks in her own voice in the form of *paratexts*. This essay analyses how to make sense of this type of heteroglossia and how to interpret it within the whole of the novel.

In its thematic appearance, the novel is many-faceted as well. To begin with, it is an exceptional novel to be published in Russia and to enjoy extensive popularity among the readers.² This is something not expected of a novel about a Polish, Jewish, and Catholic priest in one, living in Israel. The novel discusses questions of belief and religion, where the characters represent a variety of beliefs and ideological systems in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, atheism, communism and materialism. It is not typical of Ulitskaia's *oeuvre*, which comprises short stories, novels and novellas representing the Soviet Russian post-war society through individual life-stories, narrated mostly by one transmitting agent, narrator, and not involving authorial *paratexts*, that is, comments or other additional types of information. Although it is a textual composition with its jig-saw structure, interweaving time frames, representing dozens of different subjective perspectives and voices, the novel employs an array of non-experimental, realistic, and rather conventional literary techniques, and points to the importance of addressing *ethical, social, and ideological* questions of and in the world. Despite its "non-experimental" quality, I would like to contend that the novel in its form and content develops into a text that probes the conditions of fictionality and writing, investigating the role of the writer, the premises of the genre, and gender roles.³

The writer of the novel, Ludmila Evgen'evna Ulitskaia (b. 1943), is a biologist and geneticist by education. In the 1980s, she started to work as a repertoire director and script writer in the Hebrew theatre in Moscow. She began to publish short stories in the 1980s and in the 1990s she gained world-wide renown with the short story *Sonechka* (Little Sonya, 1994). Since then her texts have been translated into many languages and she has won many literary prizes at home and abroad. Ulitskaia became the first female author to receive the Russian Booker-award in 2001. In her early short stories and novels Ulitskaia centres on the post-war experiences of women and other individuals who were not at the centre of attention in the Soviet society of that time. Her texts represent the discourse of sexual difference which emerged vividly on the So-

² It has sold over 800 000 copies in Russia (February 2008). The information is extracted from the page of Ulitskaia's literary agent: http://www.elkost.com/ludmila_ulitskaya/books/daniel_stein_translator_2006.html (20.2.2009)

³ A similar evaluation is made by Carol Adlam when discussing Ulitskaia's short stories and novels published prior to *Daniel Stein*: "Ulitskaia's own characteristic writing mode follows the conventions of realist narration, with reliable omniscient narrative voices and the comfort of explicable plot trajectories, but (...) her writing also interrogates prevailing gender-based norms and boundaries." (Adlam 2005, 111)

viet Russian literary scene in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the so-called new women's prose. Ulitskaia's texts also represented other kinds of differences: ethnicity, disabilities, and physical deviations (Parnell 2004). Her most famous novels and short stories are *Medeia i ee deti* (Medea and her children, 1996), *Sonechka* (1994) and *Kazus Kukotskogo* (*Kukotsky case*, 2000). A review on Ulitskaia states that "[her] stories represent a reserve of Soviet taboos: the most marginalized, those who were not even supposed to exist, become heroes" (Rosenholm ja Savkina 2002, 62). The novel *Daniel Stein* was first published in 2006 and it received the Big Book award in 2007.

The popularity of *Daniel Stein* has somewhat surprised literary critics in Russia. One reason for the novel's popularity is, in spite of the fact that the themes the novel deals with—Polish Jew, Catholic priest, doctrines of Judaism and Christianity, Holocaust, history of Israel—are not very typical of Russian fiction, at least popular fiction. Ulitskaia, however, seems to have the skill to build a bridge between "serious" literature and popular literature. On the other hand, some reviewers contend that with this novel, Ulitskaia has answered the readers' growing demand for literature on religious and spiritual themes in Russia. The book gained considerable attention, mostly positive, when it was published. The portrayal of the main character, particularly, was praised—the empathetic, tolerant and determined Daniel was compared to Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin, Bulgakov's Ieshua and even to Don Quixote. There have, nevertheless, been dissonant voices as well. Ulitskaia has been criticised for being too ideological and imposing her own ideas on readers under the guise of fiction. Not everyone was convinced that the novel is significant and worthy of the Big Book-Award, but suspected that the underlying reason was the author's high popularity among readers.

That the novel discusses the "Jewish question" and the fate of many East European Jews is noted by Russian reviewers. However, this point is not further developed into discussions on how, for example, anti-Semitism is still a problematic issue in Russia. The negative reviews bring out—explicitly or implicitly—that the themes of the novel are "too difficult" for a writer like Ulitskaia, and that she does not accomplish a very good job in describing conflicts between different religions and beliefs. It is held that "women don't write about ecclesiastic themes and they are not able to understand them" as one critic puts it—half-jokingly of course—and refers to Ulitskaia's own statement that this book should have been written by someone who is much wiser than she is (Beliakov 2007). Another critic states in a highly ironic tone that Ulitskaia-Stein's religion is very "nice and femininely warm" and it suits well Ulitskaia's simple readers and admirers (Ermolin 2007). These reviews point to Ulitskaia's status as both a serious and a popular writer. The latter is associated in Russia with so-called women's prose, which is labelled with the gender bias of being "old-fashioned" and "sentimental".⁴

⁴ Ulitskaia herself is aware of the risk of being considered an "old-fashioned" and "sen-

Let us now look at the characteristics of this novel as a *novel*, a genre that serves as the quintessential literary artistic form of the modern world, as Bakhtin put it, by way of its formlessness (or: openness) and continuous changing (Bakhtin 1979, 472). These features are connected to the open state of the present with which the modern novel as a genre is concerned. This means, again according to Bakhtin, that the author figure is in interaction with the represented world: they are both part of the same time and value dimension, and the representing discourse of the author is on the same level as the represented discourse of the characters. Thus they form a dialogic interaction and a hybrid relationship with each other. (Bahtin 1979, 489–490.) Ulitskaia's novel makes the representing of the world and reality one of the core questions of the novel on the meta-narrative level, without undermining or parodying the possibility of the representation of reality. Ulitskaia makes use of the novelistic repertoire for representing heteroglossia, that is, for representing a multiplicity of voices, and perspectives, as for representing different ideologies, and beliefs (Bakhtin 1979, 83). This is foregrounded in the narrative composition by every character enunciating his or her own words in the first person singular (Uspenski 1991, 138). It is reminiscent of the composition of an epistolary novel, with the difference that the textual genres and corresponding subjects are more numerous.

Different levels can be extracted in the narrative time: the level of *fabula*, or the story, and the level of *sjuzhet*, or the discourse, as these levels have been discerned by Russian Formalists.⁵ The novel tells the story of Daniel Stein, who was born in Poland, and at the break of the Second World War his family fled the Germans to Lithuania and Byelorussia. The family members were separated and Stein and his brother concealed their Jewish identity. Fluent in many languages, Stein ends up working as a translator for a policeman functioning under the Gestapo in Byelorussia. He uses this extraordinary position to help Jews escape from the ghettos. After a few months, his true identity is revealed, but Stein manages to escape the Nazi police and plead for refuge in a Catholic monastery, where he converts to Christianity. After the war Stein returns to Poland to become a Catholic monk, and in the late 1950s moves to Israel, where he founds a Jewish Christian community and helps refugees and immigrants, mostly from Eastern Europe. The story is based on the biography of Oswald (Brother Daniel) Rufeisen (1922–1998) whom the author met in 1992. Since then Ulitskaia has planned to write a documentary book about his life. It took 15 years of reading Jewish history, documents on Rufeisen's life and travels to Israel before Ulitskaia decided to write a fictionalized documentary of Daniel's life. The over-arching narrative constituent is Daniel, his character

timental" representative of women's prose. According to Adlam, Ulitskaia demands reassessment of this belittling category in favour of a more positive evaluation. (Adlam 2005, 111.)

⁵ See Tomashevski 1996, 180–182.

and life story. After the first part of the novel, the reader finds out that what has just been read in the first part of the novel in the form of different kinds of documents is fiction. The following is a quotation from Ulitskaia's letter to her literary agent and translator:

From the first day of my acquaintance with Daniel I've been beating about the bush with this, and you know how many attempts I've made to deal with this. And here's one more. This time I try to liberate myself from the pressure of the document, from the names of real people, whom I might wound or harm and I try to keep that which hasn't got a private meaning. I change the names, put in my own, invented heroes, I change the place of action here and time of action there. But I hold myself and try not to be wilful. In other words I'm interested only in complete veracity of expression. (Ulitskaia 2008, 164)

Until this letter, the reader may have had the impression that it is a question of more or less factual documents written by factual people and referring to more or less factual events. The letter reveals that it is not real people who are presented here, not even real events. More surprising is the statement in the last sentence of the quotation: "I'm interested only in complete veracity of expression". The reader has no alternative but to wonder what that might mean. I read this statement as a kind of "contract" that the author is making with the reader, stating that although this may be fictional and this does not have a referent in reality, I'm not playing around with language and representation, but I believe that there is still something to tell about the reality and the real world. This might remind a reader familiar with Russian literature of the 19th and 20th centuries of the "role" of the poet as the voice of the people, reciting the truth about Russian society and the important role of literary texts in the writing of history, a role that became especially prominent among the dissident writers during the Soviet period and Stalinism.⁶

Except for the main character, Daniel Stein, there are dozens of other characters and voices, the most important of which I will introduce here: Hilda Engel, Daniel's assistant and co-worker, Eva Manukian, a Polish Jew, born during the Second World War, an émigré to the United States, Rita Kovach, a Jew, Polish communist, the former's mother, who had her daughter during the war in difficult conditions after escaping from a Jewish ghetto in Emsk, Byelorussia, and Avigdor Stein, Daniel's brother. Other characters include, for example, the Pope John Paul II, whom Daniel knew personally, and many emigrants from the U.S.S.R, who come to seek religious refuge in Israel. All of the oth-

⁶ Cf. Matt F. Oja's account of literature on Stalin's purges and the Soviet gulag system: "In short, much of the literature on this subject, whether *belles lettres*, personal memoirs, or more or less scholarly secondary accounts, possesses a curious hybrid quality, seeming to be something more than fiction, yet something less than strict historiography." (Oja 1988, 111). See also Leona Tokor's monography on the genre of Gulag narratives as employing both ethics and aesthetics: *Return from the Archipelago. Narratives of Gulag Survivors*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000.

er characters are linked to each other by Daniel Stein. He is first and foremost a mediating figure, a translator between different languages, cultures, religions, between different generations, between friends and enemies, but he is also a very controversial figure. He is empathetic, a good person who performs good deeds, even though his methods might seem unorthodox. He works for the Nazis out of necessity, but helps rescue 300 Jews from the ghetto in Emsk; he wants to unite Judaism and Christianity, since he believes in Jesus, not as the son of God but as the son of a man; in Israel he co-operates with the Muslims. He is represented in rather feminine terms in that women are his closest friends, but he never marries; with maternal feelings, he protects a female cat which had kittens in his monk's chambers; he knits a sweater for his friend Hilda for her birthday; he is a mediator between conflicting parties. All these characteristics are considered to be particularly feminine.⁷

The novel begins with Eva Manukian's recollections of her childhood and her meeting with Esther Handtman, a woman from Emsk, who was witness of her birth in the woods. The text is dated and located ("1 December 1985, Boston") and is written under Eva's name, who also performs, as the transmitting agent, I-narrator, the text. In a similar vein, all of the other over 170 documents are dated and located, and written under someone's name, or otherwise indicated as to what type of text is in question. Every character, thus, speaks in her/his own voice and from his/her own perspective and situation. This technique of representation and narration is an important constituent of the novel—its theme and significance—as a whole. *Daniel Stein* discusses questions such as what is good and what is evil, what is a good life, what is happiness and unhappiness, how belief differs from religion—questions that are part of the societal and ideological systems, but when they are experienced in individual lives, they may turn out to have rather different answers. The novel shows how these ethical, social and ideological questions are lived through by individual people who are situated in very different, unique circumstances and are part of larger inter-subjective networks. There are many examples of this. Hilda Engel is a German Christian girl, who wants to come to Israel and work in order to help Jewish people, because she feels, as a member of her nation and state, guilty of the crimes committed by the Nazis during the Second World War. She sends a letter to Daniel and asks for work in his small religious community, which is based on mutual work of Christians and Jews. Eva Manukian's mother, Rita Kovach, is a Polish communist, who has committed her whole life to the service for the cause of communism. The novel represents the tension between the generations, the mother and the daughter, who stand for opposing views and values in life. This is a rather familiar theme from the history of Russian

⁷ In *Kukotsky's Case* Ulitskaia employs a male figure, Pavel, who understands women and the female particularly well: he is a gynaecologist, and advocate of women's right for abortion.

women's literature⁸, but Ulitskaia manages to offer the reader a different kind of moral judgement, that is, neither Rita, nor Eva, is represented as morally superior to one another. Rita left her two small children—one was Eva—in a Soviet children's home for years, while she herself was imprisoned in the Soviet Gulag. The following quote is from Eva's diary, from the year 1986, describing the reunion with her mother after she was released from the Gulag in 1954:

The meeting with my mother took place in a hospital: I had scarlet fever and I was placed in a Moscow hospital. She came directly to the ward. She was ugly, badly-dressed, dried up. It didn't even cross my mind that in that moment she was most afraid of crying. I burst into tears from disappointment. Mother drew up the documents and we left for Poland. It was terrible. It was the worst thing that happened in my life. She didn't grow fond of me, and I just came to hate her. I didn't know anything about the circumstances in which she had left us. Alien woman, she wasn't that different from the Russian worn-out teachers and rough nurses. And I had imagined mummy in a broad-shouldered silk blouse, with blond locks, and beautiful hairpins... (...) She only talked about communism. She worshipped Stalin, thinking—after having spent so many years in Stalin's camps—that his death was a big blow to the whole of progressive humanity. That's what she said: "progressive humanity". (Ulitskaia 2008, 87)

A few pages later, we read Rita Kovach's letter to her friend and comrade, written in 1986 in Haifa, narrating the events from her point of view:

Eva, while we were living in Warsaw, said to me, that I am a terrible mother, that no other woman in the world would do like that, like me—when I sent them to the orphanage... My heart broke into pieces then, but I did it for their future, so that they would live in a fair society. I sent my children for safety, because I knew that I would only ruin them.

For a long time I didn't know anything about them and I found out that they were alive only after the war, but I didn't have time to go to them, because first I worked in a special department of the NKVD, on a secret mission, and then I was sent to prison again. (...) It makes me laugh when I look at Eva—it's a life of a frivolous butterfly fluttering from one man to another, each time she is happy, then unhappy, and she gets bored. When she's bored, she goes to a spa, or moves to another flat, or buys another suitcase of clothes. (...) When I try to say something to her, she starts shouting, and I stopped talking to her long time ago. I'm guilty of everything... ! (Ulitskaia 2008, 95–96)

When reading these passages side by side, though they are not placed side by side in the text, it becomes clearer that the question is not only of different generations in the family and the generational gap in this sense, but of lives broken due to historical and political turmoil in European 20th century history.

Thus, the reader learns what both sides think about each other, accepting the position of the "third" party, to whom both characters make confessions

⁸ See for example, Engel (1983), Goscilo (2003) and Rytönen (2004, 153–159; 200–207)

about themselves. This narrative technique allowing the characters to speak and write with their own voices, makes the task of perceiving the whole of the novel different from what it would be if the case was that one narrative instance would master the different narrative voices. In this way, it is as if the reader "listens to" different people speaking with their own voices and own perspectives, and has to draw the possible conclusions her/himself. This is where the *dialogic* nature of language and discourse are most vividly at play in the novel as well (cf. Vološinov 1990, 104–121; Bakhtin 1979, 96–102). Because, by making the reader read or "listen to" the characters speaking, the reader is also put into the position of the addressee, being the other, "you" for the "I" of the speaker. By creating these subjective perspectives and experiences for every character, the novel escapes the claim to any "objectivity", but it does not, strictly speaking, abandon the individual subject position either, but positions it in the web of numerous *chronotopes* (time-spaces) and intersubjective networks of communication. The speech of the character is always located and dated and addressed to someone. Thus, the novel emphatically uses and builds on heteroglossia or *intersubjectivity* of events, experiences and truth.

Another level of dialogism, or heteroglossia comes into play in the form of authorial *paratexts*. A paratext (compared here to the metatextual level) is a sequence in the narrative where the author appears as him- or herself⁹. In the case of *Daniel Stein*, paratexts take place in the form of letters to Ulitskaia's literary agent, Elena Kostioukovich, about the progress of writing the novel and in the epilogue. These paratexts belong to the author function of the discourse, that is, they belong to the textual composition of the whole novel (Foucault 1977; Hekanaho 2006, 125–126). Thus, they are not to be understood here as the writer's direct communication with the reader and the world outside the text, but they are strictly a part of the novel's composition. The apparent purpose of paratextual comments is to shed light on how the text was constructed and what difficulties the writer of the text experienced during the writing process. There is the feeling of voyeurism, because the letters are intimate in tone and they are addressed to a third person. The writer comments on what has been written so far and presents her own views about the religious and existential questions the novel discusses, for example:

Like any other big book, this finishes me. I cannot explain to myself, or to you, why I undertook this writing, already knowing that it is an impossible task. Our consciousness is built so that it denies unsolvable tasks. If there is a task, there has to be a solution. Only mathematicians know the redeeming formula—under the given conditions, the task has no solution. [...] There are many things like that—original sin, salvation, redemption, why God, if He exists, created evil, and if He does not exist, what's the meaning of life... [...] I very much want

⁹ See e.g. Genette, Gérard: *Seuils*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987. (translated as *Paratexts. Thresholds of interpretation*, Cambridge: CUP, 1997); see also Ronald Collins & David Skover, "Paratexts," *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 44, 1992.

to understand, but no logic can give me the answer. Christianity doesn't give. Judaism doesn't give it. Buddhism doesn't give it. Grow humble, people, there are many unsolved questions. There are things with which one has to learn to live with and bear them, and not solve. (Ulitskaia 2008, 320–321)

One could start to wonder whether this is the writer's credo, the truth that she wants to mediate to the "people", to readers. However, after this section the author moves on to personal events and news, for example, that a grandchild was born to her the day before yesterday, and that she is happy to become a grandmother. In another letter she describes how the writing of this book had made her ill and that she was feeling sick for several days, just vomiting. At some point she realizes that she had vomited the "Jewish question" out of her body, the whole horrifying history of pogroms. She did not want to think about it any more and wanted it "out" of her system.¹⁰ One could also think that this is probably what irritates Ulitskaia's critics, and makes them mock her as "nice and feminine" and her readers as "simple". One could ask, whether the woman writer, who should leave ecclesiastic themes to someone much wiser, is making a fool of herself when she mixes the "unsolved questions" of humanity with such personal events as becoming a grandmother or with such vulgar bodily functions as vomit. Or, one could start to think that this is the point of it all. Ulitskaia manages to stretch the borders of the image of a Russian writer embracing eternal themes that are larger than life by combining large questions with small human experiences, and employing a narrative technique that allows these small human experiences and voices to grow up to an entity that addresses the questions and our knowledge of good and evil, belief, religion, science and ideology and shows, rather than directly tells, these questions are not important in themselves, but it is important to think how we gain and produce knowledge of them: "Knowledge and morality seem to be located in different systems, but as it turns out, that is not correct—these clots of knowledge about things, ideas, phenomena were charged with moral potential." (Ulitskaia 2008, 679)

After the Second World War individual biography and perception—which was seen as a core constituent of the bourgeois realistic novel—were no longer the centre of the world. On the one hand, individual people were as if expelled from their biographies during the 20th century by force of many catastrophes and traumatic events (Mandel'shtam 1990, 204). On the other hand, the autonomous, Cartesian subject became questionable as evinced in criticism by Marxist philosophy, psychoanalysis and structural linguistics (Saariluoma 1992, 29). Individual biography, and individualistic perception of life were broken and new, more experimental models of representation came to the cen-

¹⁰ Ulitskaia discusses her own experiences as a Jew and a girl in the 1950s' Soviet Union in her autobiographical short story "Votorogo marta togo goda..." (On the second of March that year...) (Gosteva 2001).

tre stage with their fragments, episodes, and patchworks (Kosonen 2000). Why the 21st century, then, sees the realistic novel remain as a form of representing reality, is a question that might be posed when reading, for instance, Ulitskaia's novels. Certainly, *Daniel Stein* reintroduces to us a realistic novel, but not in its individualistic, coherent form, rather in the form of emphatic, inter-subjective, fragmentary, many-voiced network of positions, which interact with each other in time and space. I agree with Carol Adlam's view, that "[t]o concentrate only on formal proto-modernist devices effaces such writers as Ulitskaia, whose techniques are not innovative, yet whose work is boldly transgressive; it is to ignore those whose work does not fall into that category." (Adlam 2005, 113) This is to remind us that formal experiment does not always guarantee a transgression of conventional values, nor is writing according to formal conventions a sign of adherence to prevailing norms and values.

Ulitskaia's novel touches upon the important moments of the second half of 20th century European history by weaving historical time and events into the patchwork of the life-experiences of individuals who happened to live in that time. In many ways the novel continues some traditions of the more conventional modes of the realistic novel and the moral pathos of the classical Russian poet by its claim to express "absolute veracity" and its defence of individual people in the whirlwind of history. But in other ways it questions this tradition, by giving voice to "all" characters and their life experiences and not withholding everyday life experience from the horizon of the large questions.

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Contesting the Real in American Fiction (Donald Barthelme: *The Angry Young Man*, 1992).

Realistic literature based on the mimetic principle pretends to imitate the model of the world which actually exists as physical reality. However “realistic” literary realists are, the principles operating in the construction of the world as perceived by the human mind on the one hand, and in a realistic (and any) literary work, on the other, can never be the same. It follows then that “realistic” construction of the world in realistic literary works can only be close to the perception of the world as it appears to a particular human mind, but can never work on the same principles as the real world does. Realistic (and any) literature thus itself belongs to a different world than the reality represented by it. Benjamin Harshaw (Hrushovski) theorizes on the nature of fictitiousness in literary works and argues that

“1. Works of literature convey meanings and meaning complexes as well as rhetorical and aesthetic import; they require of the reader some kind of ‘experience’ or ‘concretization’ and call for interpretations and elucidations. However, the experience and interpretation of literary texts are not a matter of language alone: language in literature can be understood only as imbedded in fictional constructs, no matter how partial or unstable these may be. On the other hand, the fictional constructs in literary texts are mediated through language alone[...] It is not necessarily a vicious circle, but can be understood as an interdependence between these two domains: language and fictional constructs[...] An interpretation involves making certain hypotheses on aspects of this interdependence” (Hrushovski 1984:227).

What Harshaw Hrushovski seems to suggest is not only a close connection between language and the fictional constructs it creates in reference to the real, physical reality, but also a difference between the principles characterizing fictional and real worlds¹ He further comments on the connection between the real world and its fictional representation. In his view,

¹ Hrushovski argues that

“An Internal Field of Reference is constructed as a plane parallel to the real world [...] situations and behavior [in a literary work, J. Kušnir’s note] resemble (or are different from or otherwise related to) those in the real world. Thus, the Internal FR is projected as parallel to an External FR. But parallel planes never meet. A character cannot walk out of a fictional house and show up in a real café” (Hrushovski 1984: 248).

"fiction can be described as language offering propositions which make no claim for truth values in the real world" (229).

Hrushovski introduces the term frame of reference to distinguish between different ontological levels, worlds, and "realities" in connection with the use of language (in a literary work) representing them. He characterizes the term frame of reference as

"...any semantic continuum of two or more referents that we may speak about: it may be a scene in time and space, a character, an ideology, a mood, a state of affairs, a plot, a policy, a theory, psychoanalysis, the wind in autumn trees, the mountains of Corsica, etc.[...]It may be real, hypothetical or fictional; its ontological status is unimportant for semantics—it is anything that we can speak about" (230–31).

His term "semantic continuum" is quite unclear and ambiguous since it is not explained what the continuum continues with. But it seems his understanding of the frame of reference could be loosely labeled as the topic, setting or subject matter to be referred to by any discourse. Hrushovski further introduces a similar term – the "field of reference" – that is, in his view

"a large universe containing multitude of crisscrossing and interrelated frames of various kinds. We may isolate such Fields as the USA, the Napoleonic Wars, Philosophy, the 'world' of Tolstoy's War and Peace, the world today, etc." (231).

Hrushovski also characterizes a field of reference typical of and specific for literature which he calls Internal Field of Reference which he understands as

"a whole network of interrelated referents of various kinds: characters, events, situations, ideas, dialogues, etc." (230).

In his view,

"The language of the text contributes to the establishment of this Internal Field and refers to it at the same time[...]Within this Internal Field of Reference, we judge the truth values of propositions using whatever other information for the same Field that we may have" (Hrushovski 1984: 230)

and, as he argues, literary texts thus create their own Internal Field of Reference (232). Finally, he concludes that

"a work of literature constructs its own 'reality' while simultaneously describing it[...]an author rarely tells us anything directly, he does it through various speak-

Hrushovski's unique metaphor of a character in a fictional work cafe points out the specificity of the world of literature, its separateness from the real world however convincing it represents this world and thus it indicates that literature requires different methodological and linguistic tools and operations serving for the reconstruction of both "linguistic meaning" and the parallel, actual world the language of a literary work represents.

ers and narrators, who are committed to the same truth within the Internal Field of Reference or are exposed as being ironical, ignorant or unreliable” (232).

Hrushovski further identifies three domains essential to a work of literature² and points out, despite the separateness of literature as a specific field with its own rules, a necessary connection between the real and the literary world arguing that

“we need knowledge of the world to make sense of a work of fiction, construct the frames of reference through scattered material, fill in the gaps, create the necessary hierarchies, etc.” (250).

Although Harshaw Hrushovski’s terminology, especially the use of frame and fields of reference, may be confusing, he quite clearly explains how the literary work functions and how it relates to the real, actual world from both the literary theoretical and philosophical positions.

Also Lubomír Doležel and Ruth Ronen attack reductionism associated with the understanding of literature as a direct representation of reality and mimetism in literary theories³, pointing out a difference between philosophers’ and other scholar’s understanding of the real and the fictional, and offer their theory of fictionality, that is a possible world theory (semantics) of fictionality and fictional semantics (Doležel 1988: 482). In Doležel’s view,

“The most important feature of the possible-worlds model is its legitimization of non-actualized possibles (individuals, attributes, events, states of affairs, etc.[...] Possible-worlds semantics correctly insists that fictional individuals cannot be identified with actual individuals of the same name” (Doležel 1988: 482).

Doležel further defines other specific features of fictional worlds of literature⁴ and emphasizes not only the autonomy of the fictional worlds of literature, but also their semantic complexity, self-sufficiency and the ontological equality of status of various worlds (all are fictional worlds) represented in fiction (488). Although we can agree with his idea of the fictional equality of vari-

² In Hrushovski’s view, these domains are

“The establishment of an Internal Field of Reference[...], autonomy of the text from any direct speech situation and from direct reference, its relative fixity and transferability[...], and the use of a variety of historically determined conventions and tendencies in the fields of language, genre structures, themes and aesthetic norms” (241–242).

Although these views seem to be too formalistic and the concept of relative unity of a literary work Hrushovski suggests can be attacked by deconstructionist and other post-structuralist theories, most of his ideas are valid for understanding a work of literature, in my view, although this would require further analysis for which there is a limited space here.

³ see Doležel, qtd. below

⁴ In Doležel’s view, these are: the fact that fictional worlds are sets of possible states of affairs, that fictional worlds are unlimited and varied, and that they are accessible from the actual world (the model of the actual world is transferable through language to the fictional world), see Doležel qtd. below (482–486)

ous ontological levels within fiction from the perspective of its understanding as fictional, we cannot agree with ontological equality among various forms and styles of fictional worlds—realistic, fantastic, science-fiction, cyberpunk, modernist, etc. All these levels and modes of expression as represented in fiction are equal only on the most general ontological level of fiction, but various modes of representation and ontological levels contribute to the semantic complexity of the narrative and help a writer create a desired aesthetic effect. In Ronen's view, fictional worlds create a subset of possible worlds that is different from the philosopher's understanding of it⁵. She argues that

“possible worlds are indeed non-actualized but actualizable[...]whereas fictional worlds are non-actualized in the world but also not-actualizable, belonging to a different sphere of possibility and impossibility altogether[...]fictional states of affairs are actualized and actualizable in the fictional world, which reflects the different logico-ontological domain to which fiction belongs” (Ronen 1994: 51).

Postmodern literature seems to be the most suitable domain through which the idea of both the separateness and necessary connection between fiction and reality as well as the idea of the independent status of fiction as separate entity are conveyed. Postmodern literature contests the idea of a belief in a direct (mimetic) relationship between the outside (physical, actual) world and the literary language representing it and focuses reader's attention on this relationship. It points out fictional equality, unity and difference of a literary world from the real and factual, especially by the use of metafiction, that is by a direct invasion into the meta-reality and by the creation of further meta-worlds; by breaking boundaries between various ontological levels and modes of representation each of which are understood as real, inseparable from each other; by emphasizing fictitiousness, that is the ontological independence and self-sufficiency of fictional works and the world; by creating a semantic complexity through the use of intertextual elements all emphasizing the self-sufficiency of language and its role in creating a separate fictional world and meaning.

Postmodern narrative strategies can be also seen in various novels of Donald Barthelme and his short stories. The title of his short story, *“The Angry Young Man”*, implies both metafictionality and ambiguity since it refers to both

⁵ In Ruth Ronen's view,

“Most philosophers, simply and bluntly, reject the idea of possible state of affairs as existing in some concrete space and time, and the idea that there are various modes of existence of worlds. The philosophical position also does not regard possible worlds primarily as a framework imposing ontological gradations on the world; possible worlds are incorporated, alongside an actual state of affairs, into one ontology. Literary theorists, who adopt the concept of possible worlds in order to describe the status and structure of fictional worlds, detach the notion of possibility from any abstract idea of relative probability of occurrence as originally formulated in a possible world's semantics[...]Literary theorists hence seem to be modal realists in their approach to fictional worlds; they attach a high degree of realism to the notion of the world of fiction” (Ronen 1994:50).

the actual (the real group of artists) and the fictional world (literature, writing by these authors). This ambiguity evokes a tension not only between the past forms of rebellion in the fictional world (British Angry Young Men and their works) and Barthelme's postmodern treatment of them, but also between the seriousness of the rebellion and its commercialization through institutionalization (rebellion as academic, literary and other institutionalized field). This tension is further supported by dictionary definitions of an angry young man and the narrator's ironic description of one of the angry young men's clothes, behavior and opinions. The angry young man's clothing suggests his working class origin (as real Angry Young Men were) and a rebellion against establishment and high society, but it further turns out to be a parody of the misappropriation of the working class and popular culture into an entirely different domain, that is intellectual and academic life. The Albert Hall lecture given by an unknown narrator, probably the Angry Young Man, points at an absurd commercialization and institutionalization of working class culture in the academic criticism which is rendered through Barthelme's use irony and parody. The speaker in the Albert Hall says that

"My subject tonight is cooking before marriage. It has been my observation, and I'm not alone in this, other people have made the same observation, a blind man could see it, that the young people today are doing a bloody great lot of cooking together before marriage. Cooking together, shamelessly, night after night, and God knows I'm no prude but the sight of these young...lovebirds...without so much as a by-your-leave, without so much as the shred of a marriage contract between them, well it's a bit much now isn't it...wallowing in...spices...rosemary...saffron..." (Barthelme 1992:109).

Here Barthelme performs a narrative trick with the reader by pointing out and contesting both reality (actual), that is the actually existing people (the Angry Young Men group of writers) and their protest in the actual world, its appropriation for consumer purposes, its commercialization, and, at the same time, a misappropriation of working class culture, formerly considered to be low, into a "high" academic discourse by the operation of which it becomes a meta-reality, a meta-realistic discourse challenging the notion of reality and realism in literary works themselves. This meta-realistic discourse is developed by Barthelme's further use of self-reflexive and metafictional elements, irony, parody and the imagery of what could loosely be called mimeticism. Ironic comments and exclamations can be seen at the very beginning of the story and they all undermine the seriousness of the Angry Young Men rebellion in both reality and the arts. The narrator, at the beginning of the story, exclaims "*What a wonderful thing it is to be angry! To be young*" (Barthelme 1992: 107), and is asking "*Is there any point in being an angry 'old man'?*" (108). At the same time, the story includes incorporated and re-written dialogues between an angry young man and woman reminiscent of Angry Young Men's poetics which turns out

to be a parody of the British Angry Young Men's style of writing, but also the British culture generating it:

"Tom!"
 'Helen!'
 'How've you been? Angry?'
 'Rabid.'
 'Good girl. Tea?'
 'Yes, thanks, I'd love some'" (108).

The motifs known from Angry Young Men's works appear in this short story to further emphasize not only a disappearing rebellious potential of the British working class characters as depicted in the works of these writers, but also the inadequacy of this poetics in contemporary, postmodern times that is characterized by a different sensibility. This can be seen in the following extract in which the narrator states that

"The wives of the angry young man are now married to other people— doctors, mostly" (110).

Marrying other husbands can be considered to be an act of rebellion the sharpness of which has been, however, weakened by their marriage with representatives of a higher class that evokes the idea of conformity rather than rebellion. At the same time, the metafictional and parodic framework is emphasized by a passage depicting a meeting of the Angry Young Men and the following ideas reminiscent of a manifesto and related to the idea of the protest (social, literary, and perhaps even historical). The narrator introduces the meeting in the following way:

"At the Annual Meeting, voices are raised in anger. The hall is crawling with coon-skin caps, which are waved, or dropped, or flung. Large whey-faced angry young men grapple with small wiry angry young men—the faces of the latter made of string. The chairman calls for order but in vain; order is not wanted here [...] The floor is black with spilled porter and bile[...] Other angry young men are refusing to speak to other angry young men. The flag is trampled, spat upon, urinated upon, used as a bar rag" (Barthelme 1992: 109–110).

The protest invoking the idea of coherence and unity (as a movement, or a group as a presupposition for achieving its goals) is put in a parodic context here and it implies the idea of chaos, disorganization, diversity and pseudo rather than real protest, a gesture and superficiality rather than unity, coherence and convincingly substantiated idea and message of the protest. This is further supported by the self-reflexive "theoretical questions" (110) raised at the meeting that are reminiscent of a manifesto of the artistic group:

- "2. How long, expressed in decades, can true anger be maintained without modulating into, say, pique? [...]"
4. *What can be learned by studies of the shelf life of the average volcano?*

5. *Can anger be institutionalized, can it avoid being institutionalized, and what is the place in all this of the cup of tea?*
 6. *Does the boiling point of the cup of tea vary from corrupt society to corrupt society?"* (110).

By the ironic juxtapositions of the academic discourse (theoretical questions related to anger and protest), everyday quotidian life (eating, tea) and the pseudo-academic and pseudo-theoretical questions (i.e. question 6) and his typical method of using the questions, Barthelme not only emphasizes the parodic and metafictional framework of his short story to give a playful critique of pseudo-intellectualism, radicalism and academism, but also of the inappropriateness of the idea of institutionalization (through a reference to the adaptation of the theme of protest and anger by the academic discourse) of incompatible phenomena (the protest as a critique of the current state of arts and society and its institutionalization as conformity and acceptance).

Barthelme also uses style and imagery reminiscent of other conflicting representations of reality, that is a dictionary definition evoking mimeticism and rationality that imply a direct connection between the language and reality representing it; and fairy tale elements emphasizing irrationality, fantasy and the imaginary world. Both relate to the idea, function, existence and meaning of the Angry Young Men and all connotations they evoke. Thus a quotation from *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* defines an Angry Young Man as

- "one of a group of British writers since the late 1950's whose works reflect strong dissatisfaction with, frustration by, and rebellion against tradition and society.
 2. *any author writing in this manner.* 3. *any frustrated, rebellious person...*" (107).

Barthelme seems to suggest a "realistic" situation by describing an angry young man that is further self-reflexively defined through a dictionary definition seemingly emphasizing its actuality that is eventually undermined by fairy tale motifs and meta-discourse on "lower", or working class, or perhaps popular art. Barthelme's narrator presents an angry young man and character in his short story in front of the mirror asking, like in a fairy tale, "*Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the most baddest angry young man of all?*" (108).

Thus a realistic character's status, in the context of the fairy tale imagery, changes from realistic to postmodern since the character known from once innovative novels (an angry young man) is cast into a triply contextual intramural position (within the literary and linguist discourse) of a realistic, fairy tale and, finally, a postmodern character (his consciousness of his role and self-reflexive position meditating on it). This implies several connotations:

1. fairy tale imagery foregrounds a narcissism not only of actually existing representatives of the well-known literary movement, but also their style and poetics

2. it creates another degree of reality by generating a meta-discourse on the mimetic (realistic) art
3. it creates a metafictional space for the author's reconsideration of the role and function of different styles of writing and generic conventions used in different periods within this meta-discourse (realistic, modernist, postmodernist, fairy tale)

Concerning the first point, narcissism, the artificiality and weariness associated with the Angry Young Men's style of writing manifests itself in the misappropriation of the Angry Young Man character (fictional, not mimetic) in the fairy tale world which turns out to be a parody of this misappropriation.

The second point opens up a narrative space for a meta-discourse on the purpose, function, adequacy and meaning of the popular culture and the whole idea of the purpose of "the art for the masses", as I have tried to point out above. Parodic extracts related to this topic are further extended by other passages commenting on this kind of art:

"CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANGRY YOUNG BOOK

The angry young book should be a good true book of a familiar and reliable pattern. It should concern itself with human emotions of standard issue plus at least one

(1)non standard emotion for seasoning and piquancy. It should extend to a good number of pages and said pages should hold a full body of printing both recto and verso...[...]It should have a good true spine to which the pages are attached by sewing and strong glue[...]The same should reflect strong dissatisfaction with, frustration by, and rebellion against tradition and society. The book should, ideally, burn the hands—a third degree burn" (109).

These ironic and parodic comments are further extended by a more explicit parody on the whole nature of working class/low and perhaps also realistic art depicting the dullness of everyday reality. The pseudo-characteristics of this reminiscence of newspaper headlines reads:

"CURRENT MANIFESTATIONS OF THE 'KITCHEN SINK' SCHOOL OF BRITISH PAINTING, THOUGHT AT ONE TIME TO BE ANALOGOUS TO THE WORK OF THE ANGRY YOUNG MEN

There are none" (109).

These comments on both mimetic (realistic) and popular art create a meta-discourse on the role and function of this kind of art in the past and present. By addressing the issue of art and commenting on it they also create another ontological level incorporated in the structure of Barthelme's short story, that is a metafictional and self-reflexive level that generates and interrogates the inadequacy of this kind of art in the postmodern period marked by a different sensibility influenced by media and a different kind of popular culture. This parody is not a traditional parody with a mocking intent, but rather a blank

parody in Fredrick Jameson's understanding⁶ (although, in contrast to Jameson's view, I consider it to be rather positive), a parody that shows a difference between both the past and present and past and present forms of representation as Linda Hutcheon understands it. In her view, this kind of parody

"...implies a distance between the backgrounded text being parodied and the new work, a distance usually signaled by irony. But the irony is more playful than ridiculing, more critical than destructive" (Hutcheon 1978: 202)[...] Postmodern parody is both deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representation-in any medium" (Hutcheon 1989: 98)

Tamás Bényei also comments on other functions of this kind of parody. In his view, such a parody

"...is placed in a metapoetical context where, without losing its original meaning (the mocking imitation of another text or group of texts), it acquires a number of other connotations (metafictional critique, self-referentiality, etc.) that have by now become part of the critical discourse on parody" (Bényei 1995:92).

The postmodern parody that Barthelme uses is more neutral (in a positive sense), it points out a distance between the past and present forms of representation and the cultural contexts and sensibility that these forms generate; it is much more playful and implies various other connotations one of them is a metafictional critique of mimetic literature and criticism as represented, for example, by the poetics of the Angry Young Men school of authors. This can be seen in the following and the last passage in the short story:

"ULTIMATE MEANING OF THE ANGRY YOUNG MAN

The ultimate meaning of the angry young man is not known. What is known is the shape of his greatest fear—that all of his efforts, from learning to speak to learning to write, to write well, to write badly, to write angrily, from learning to despise to learning to abominate, to abominate well, to abominate badly, to abominate abominately, to rant, to fulminate, to shout down the sea, to age, to age gracefully, to age awkwardly, to age at all, to think, to regret, to list himself in the newspaper under 'Lost and Found,' might culminate precisely in this: a roaring, raging, crazy mad passionate bibliography" (Barthelme 1992: 111).

This final passage thus shows a linguistic play and indicates a creative use of language in a modern context, gives a critique of its commercialization through the media and advertising industry and the weakening of the semantic poten-

⁶ In Frederick Jameson's view,

"Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language. But it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter" (Jameson 1991: 17).

tial of the language in a new postmodern context characteristic for a new media sensibility generating a massive dissemination of popular culture.

CONCLUSION

In his short story *The Angry Young Man*, Barthelme's use of postmodern narrative techniques, especially the mixture and overlapping of various genres and styles, the use of postmodern parody and metafiction, generic conventions (realistic literature, fairy tales) transformed in a different context create several ontological levels that refer to both actual, physical reality and to itself, that is to the language and a literary discourse as conveyed through language. By constructing an internal field of reference (Hrushovski, 1984) all these narrative techniques point out a separateness, self-sufficiency and autonomy of the literary, fictional world and its difference from the actual, real, physical world without abandoning the idea of transferability of this world into human consciousness through language. This fictional world forms one of the possible but actualizable worlds within which various modes of representation of reality and generic conventions imply various connotations:

1. on the basic semantic level, within the story, a mimetic mode implies a story on the role of the Angry Young Men group of authors in history
2. the use of non-literary genres such as dictionary definitions establishes a make to believe, factual and positivist approach to and vision of the world, but Barthelme's further use of irony and parody undermines the idea of the capacity of reason to explain the world, the idea of stereotypical generalizations about the world phenomena as well as any mimetic writing generating it
3. the use of fairy tale genre conventions, motifs and their parody imply the idea of the inappropriateness of an authoritarian, simplistic, naïve, black and white "grand narrative" as represented by this genre in the contemporary postmodern context and it rejects any idealization of reality and art; the use of parody along with the image and motif of the mirror invoke a critique of narcissism and eccentricity of the way of writing and culture as represented by the British group of Angry Young Men
4. the metafictional frame/mode of representation creates, in my opinion, an allegorical framework within which the nature of art and differences among different artistic modes are treated. It is not a traditional allegory, or allegory as a genre, but a postmodern allegory in Craig Owens' understanding. In his view,

"In allegorical structure, then, one text is read through another, however fragmentary, intermittent, or chaotic their relationship may be[...] Allegorical imagery is appropriated imagery; the allegorist does not invent images but confiscates them.[...] He does not restore an original meaning that may have been lost or obscured[...] Rather, he adds another meaning

*to the image[...]*the allegorical meaning supplants and antecedent one; it is a supplement (Owens 1992: 54).

Using this narrative frame, Barthelme shows the inadequacy of art for the masses and the idea of a working class and vernacular poetics in the post-modern period. At the same time, he gives a critique of the inappropriate commercialization of arts and popular culture by its institutionalization that also implies a weakened potential rebellion and protest of any kind.

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The Topology of The Virtual

At the beginning of “The Library of Babel,”¹ Borges wrote: “In the hallway there is a mirror which faithfully duplicates all appearances. Men usually infer from this mirror that the Library is not infinite (if it really were, why this illusory duplication?); I prefer to dream that its polished surfaces represent and promise the infinite...”² The figure of a „mirror“ occasions a reflection on the infinity of the Library but its reasoning eludes us at first sight. In this paper, I will propose an interpretation of this figure of the „mirror“ as the space of the „infinite“ in its delimitation. I will argue that this space presents itself as a location of the „virtual“ — a „topos“ in its „virtualization“ — at this improbable conjunction of the necessarily non-infinite delimitation and the „infinity.“

If the Library really were infinite, why this illusory duplication?, asked the narrator in parentheses, as if to justify the common inference by „men.“ The appearance in the mirror, though faithfully duplicated, is considered here „illusory“ and not *grounded* in “reality” and, as such, this does not belong to the “Library” *per se*. This distinction between the extensions by “illusion,” on the one hand, and within the “reality” of the Library, on the other, is itself a logical distinction and its two terms (“illusion” and “non-illusion”) are presented as mutually exclusive; but, since what these mutually exclusive terms introduce here *inside the Library* is the very distinction that cannot exist *therein*, this distinction immediately takes on the appearance of an ontological disjunction, a disjunction interior to the existence of the Library: the reality of the Library cannot be illusory, just as the illusion *inside* the Library cannot be part of its reality. With the acknowledgement of the possibility of “illusion,” the unity of the *existence* of the Library becomes synonymous with its internal disjunction wherein its *reality* and *existence* no longer coincide.

With this in mind, let us rephrase the question : if the Library were really infinite, why this disjunction within? How could this disjunction be possible? If it really were infinite, it would not have this delimitation — the delimitation by the exclusion of its illusory duplication and duplicity — as does the Library in its reality. In this disjunction, the Library can be affirmed both in its reality

¹ Jorge Luis Borges, „The Library of Babel,” in *Labyrinths* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), pp.78–86.

² *Ibid.*, p.78.

and in its existence — in their coincidence — only in the exclusion of duplicity from their „happy“ conjunction. The existence of the Library may be infinite in itself, but its reality must be confined within the limit, apart from the duplicity. The only condition in which it could be affirmed as the infinite is not to have any „illusion,“ and not to introduce the limit with which alone, however, the „reality“ of the Library could be determined as such. If we are to affirm the specular duplication as illusory, in other words, the Library can no longer be affirmed in its infinity but becomes logically delimitable and, hence, determinable in its totality. The possibility of the logical delimitation constituent to this ontological disjunction would not exclude the possibility that the Library could still be „infinite“ within the confines of its reality, but, if it is to be infinite therein, the concept of the infinite must displace itself radically within the given logical topology so as not to be caught in this apparent contradiction. The question of the infinite would have to be posed not in the view of the infinite in the absence of determination — the infinite as the non-differentiation of the existence — but in the view of the determination of the infinity that the Library could possibly possess. This appears to be the very problematic that the narrative of „the Library of Babel“ engages from its very first word, and perhaps, even before this word, in its condition of possibility as a text with the unity of its signification.

When „Men [...] infer from this mirror that the Library is not infinite,“ the sense of this non-infinite is already double: on the one hand, the Library is logically delimitable and thus identifiable in its totality as the happy coincidence of its existence and reality; on the other hand, the existence of Library *qua* universe — “The universe (which others call the Library)”³ — itself cannot remain unlimited, as it is already delimitable and delimited in the form of “the Library.” The coincidence of the reality and the existence here, instead of reducing them to an indistinctive unity, offers us the dual and alternate perspectives to their common delimitation. The unity of the Library is already a product of their happy union without duplicity, but inside this union, the double senses of „non-infinite“ still continue to resonate and, in their duplicity, mirror one another indefinitely in the view of excluding the „bad faith“ and, in the end, also their own duplicity. It is only with the minimum assumption of „good faith“ in the mirror, despite its duplicity, that we can begin to imagine „the Library“ *qua* universe — in the transposition of “existence” to “reality,” and *vice versa* — and identify it in its unity. This unity is also already double, however: on the one hand, it is the totality of the Library as described in the text, but also, on the other hand, it is already *the unity of the text itself* — i.e., “*The Library of Babel*” — *in its signification*.

What is the “Library” in the unity of its reality and existence? It is the “universe” itself:

³ Ibid., p.78.

The universe (which others call the Library) is composed of an indefinite and perhaps infinite number of hexagonal galleries, with vast air shafts between, surrounded by very low railings. From any of the hexagons one can see, interminably, the upper and lower floors. The distribution of the galleries is invariable. Twenty shelves, five long shelves per side, cover all the sides except two; their height, which is the distance from floor to ceiling, scarcely exceeds that of a normal bookcase. One of the free sides leads to a narrow hallway which opens on to another gallery, identical to the first and to all the rest. To the left and right of the hallway there are two very small closets. In the first, one may sleep standing up; in the other, satisfy one's fecal necessities. Also through here passes a spiral stairway, which sinks abysmally and soars upwards to remote distances.⁴

The Library is the invariable distribution of hexagonal galleries, each of which contains an invariable number of books, each of which, in its turn, contains an invariable number of letters:

There are five shelves for each of the hexagon's wall; each shelf contains thirty-five books of uniform format; each book is of four hundred and ten pages; each page, of forty lines, each line, of some eighty letters which are black in colour. There are also letters on the spine of each book; these letters do not indicate or prefigure what the pages will say.⁵

There are nothing but delimitations in the Library; the Library is, in appearance, the „indefinite or infinite“ repetition of the delimited unit, i.e., the hexagonal gallery. Furthermore, the possible number of books is said to be also delimited and thus calculable, but if it is so, the extent of the Library would become delimitable despite the initial claim of the „indefinite or infinite number of the hexagonal galleries“:

The orthographical symbols are twenty-five in number. This finding made it possible, three hundred years ago, to formulate a general theory of the Library and solve satisfactorily the problem which no conjecture had deciphered: the formless and chaotic nature of almost all the books.⁶

Coupled with this claim is another rule: *“In the vast Library there are no two identical books.”* “From these two incontrovertible premises,” continues the narrator, “[a librarian of genius] deduced that the Library is total and that its shelves register all the possible combinations of the twenty-odd orthographical symbols (a number of which, though extremely vast, is not infinite); in other words, all that it is given to express, in all languages.”⁷ The number of possible books has an end, and only in the light of this delimitation, the Library could become total.

In its totality, the extent of the Library would not know any duplication; it is total when the repetition of books, shelves and galleries is in number submit-

⁴ Ibid., p.78.

⁵ Ibid., p.79.

⁶ Ibid., p.80.

⁷ Ibid., p.81.

ted to the limitation of the number of possible books. Along with the possible variation of the combinations of the said twenty-five symbols, none of the gallery is in principle ever repeated. However, it is said that “There are also letters on the spine of each book; these letters do not indicate or prefigure what the pages will say.” If these letters follow the same rule of a limited number of orthographical symbols and their non-repetitious combination, then, as Kentaro Ejima points out,⁸ only the combination of the number of letters of either

⁸ Kentaro Ejima, „平野啓一郎『バベルのコンピューター』に見る新たなアポリア（後編）,” in 江島健太郎 / Kenn's Clairvoyance, CNET Japan Blog, 2 July, 2004: <<http://blog.japan.cnet.com/kenn/archives/001354.html>>:

“「途方もない数ではあるが無限ではない」数の本たちは、それぞれを「いかに呼び分けるか」という新たなアポリア（難題）に直面する。

我々は一般に、本にタイトルや著者名、出版社、刊行日などのメタデータを付加することで、その本をそれ以外の本と区別している。（以下では簡単のため「本」と「タイトル」の関係だけに絞って議論する。即ち、タイトルは決して重複せず、それだけで本を一意に呼び分けられることを前提とする）

しかし、完全にランダムなアルファベットと記号で1,312,000文字が埋め尽くされた一連の本には「その1,312,000文字よりも短いタイトルを付与することができない」という驚くべき逆理が出現する。[…]

より科学的に言えば、例えば「1,312,000文字の『A』が並んだ本」や「1,311,999文字の『A』に続いて1文字の『B』が登場する本」のように、ある明白な特徴を持つ本に限ればこのように短い別名を与えられる可能性が（上述の別名には29種類のアルファベット以外の漢字・平仮名・数字・記号を使っていることは差し引いたとしても）残されているが、29種類の文字が1,312,000個並んだ本すべてに対して同じ29種類の文字の組み合わせだけでより短い別名を与えるような命名規則（アルゴリズム）は絶対に存在しない。言い換えれば、本文の1,312,000文字よりも短い名前ですれを呼ぶことができないという圧縮不能性、情報エントロピーの既約性の問題に行き着く。（別名群の一部を本文より短く、同時に一部を本文より長くすることは可能であるが、こうした別名群全体の大きさを本文群全体の大きさより小さくすることは決してできない）”

[Books “a number of which, though extremely vast, is not infinite” here face a new aporia of “how to index” each one of them separately. Generally we isolate one book among all the others by adding such meta-data as title, author, publisher and publishing date (from now on, we will discuss only the relation between “book” and “title” for the sake of convenience, assuming that the titles would never repeat and could “index” books by themselves alone). But the books filled by 1,312,000 perfectly random orthographic symbols [= 80 letters/line x 40 lines/page x 410 pages/book] paradoxically cannot have the title shorter than 1,312,000 letters. [...] If we speak more scientifically, for example when a book is filled with 1,312,000 A's or 1,311,999 A's followed by one B, with such distinctive characteristics, we still have a possibility of giving them the shorter titles as we just have done (even if we discount the fact that we have employed the Japanese orthographical symbols other than the 29 alphabetic symbols), but there is absolutely no algorithm capable of naming adequately all the books of 1,312,000 letters filled with 29 symbols [=29^{1,312,000} books in total] by the titles of less than 1,312,000 letters with the same 29 symbols [i.e., by less than 29^{1,312,000} titles]. In other words, we

the same or greater length than that of the book itself could ever hope to index and differentiate adequately each book. The possible number of the external appearance of books in the galleries would be smaller than the number of possible books, unless the number of the letters used for those inscriptions on the spine of each book is equal to or greater than the number of letters used in the book. Unless each book is inside out, in other words, the books in these galleries are in appearance destined to repeat before the number of the possible books can be exhausted. If we assume, on the contrary, that the number of the letters on the spine is the same as or greater than the number inside the book, then we can already observe the duplicity of *inside* and *outside* without any necessary correspondence between them. The specular duplication of *inside* and *outside*, albeit faithful in appearance, would be illusory, and what is illusory is none other than their mutual correspondence. It is with this disillusionment that we can now pronounce these words: “these letters [on the spine] do not indicate or prefigure what the pages will say.” The totality of the Library must contain a limited number of possible books, on the one hand, but at the same time the repetition of books, shelves and galleries in their appearances which is absolutely indifferent to the limitation by the number of possible books, on the other. If the mirror that duplicates faithfully all appearances is here assumed to present nothing but an “illusion,” then, the same reasoning is also applied here to the repetition: before the totality which is delimited and calculable in advance, the apparent repetition within this totality is not regarded as primary, and the duplication that it introduces here could only lead us to chaos and disorder, away from the non-infinite totality of the Library, unless it is in advance submitted to the immediate exclusion.⁹ The totality of this

have here the impossibility of abbreviation and the limit of information entropy: it is impossible to identify each one of $29^{1,312,000}$ books by any index shorter than its content itself. (It is possible to shorten or stretch the part of the contents by an alias but it is impossible to reduce the total number of titles to the number less than the total number of the books.)] My translation.

⁹ If not submitted to the delimitation by the totality given in advance and completely excluded, this duplicity — here that of the Library in its totality and repetition, but logically not limited to it — can only amplify the chaos until this chaos and disorder become total. If we consider the appearance of each gallery as a unit, for example, then we must take account of the number of all the possible non-repetitive combination of these letters on the spine *between* all 700 neighbouring books in one gallery as a whole. If we then take the totality of this non-repetitive galleries as a unit, we could also consider the number of possible non-repetitive combinations *between* these neighbouring galleries, and so forth, until, in the end, the Library becomes total wherein the locations of each gallery, each shelf, each book, each letter of the inscription on the spine of the books are overdetermined. Such total overdetermination would indicate, contrary to its appearance, the absence of overdetermination within the totality, however. For every repetition of this totality will produce simply another larger, non-repetitive totality in which every element will find a new but always unique location, and if each element is thus *guaranteed* to retain its unique location in no matter what totality, then, there would be no

Library could be envisioned only in the exclusion of the apparent duplicity which is nonetheless already inscribed in the Library, and by its subordination to the delimitation given in advance.

The duplicity and its exclusion are the dual foundation of the totality of the Library. It forms, on the one hand, the condition of possibility for the delimitation of the Library in its totality, but it also presents the process of the actualization of this delimited totality, on the other hand. This *double* exclusion of duplicity is also another possible duplicity, and it must be excluded in order to retain the Library in its totality and unity. At the end of the chain of the exclusions of possible duplicities in all appearances, we retain only a series of books with the combinations of twenty-five orthographical symbols which are never to repeat. These books are still reducible, however, to one single book with the limited number of non-repetitive combinations of the letters whose limit is set by the space within the book delimited in advance, and thus, in the end, we would not even retain books but the letters in the series of their indifferent, programmed permutation. The happy conjunction is here presented in the form of a book and not in the expanse of galleries which after all could give rise only to the illusion and the chaos in its *apparent* repetition. The Library in its totality needs only one single volume whose delimited space serves for the actualization of all the possible non-repetitive combinatory sequences of the letters. In this sense, any book will be equal to all the others in its possibility, and if it does not by rule repeat in its actualization, it becomes the pure repetition of the delimited space in the process of actualization, devoid of any signification which alone would be capable of isolating one book out of all the others. The unity of a book as “1” will be here simply multiplied by itself $25^{1,312,000}$ times¹⁰ and the apparent result remains always the same: “1.” It is in this void of signification, in the repeatability of the possible combination in the delimited space of actualization, that the duplicity reinscribes itself, and each actualization becomes another duplicity, the repetition of the erasure of duplicity: each actualization of “1” sacrifices all the rest, i.e., $(25^{1,312,000} - 1)$. With the totality of the Library, its reality goes back to the duplicity whose exclusion conditioned its actualization in the first place.

Facing the mirror from which “Men usually infer [...] that the Library is not infinite,” the narrator has already advanced another interpretation which does not necessarily contradict the idea of its non-infinity: “I prefer to dream that its polished surfaces represent and promise the infinite...” This supplements

more distinction between “repetition” and “totality,” between the repetition of identical totalities and the totality of this repetition, and between delimitation and the absence thereof: it falls back into the tautology of the totality with the affirmation that “all things are simply as they are” without discernable “patterns” or combination of “units,” and it thus comes back to the self-referential affirmation of dis-order as such.

¹⁰ This is the number of the non-repetitive combinations of 25 non-identical symbols — the comma, the period, the space and the 22 letters of the alphabet — in the space of 1,312,000 letters.

the “usual” interpretation with the possibility of the infinite therein of which he would simply “prefer to dream,” and this dream brings together the surfaces of duplicity with the infinite in its promise and not in its reality. The surface in question is the space in and with which the delimitation of the reality is produced by the exclusion of its constituent duplicity. In this sense, the same surface can be found in all appearances, not limited to those of the mirror in the corridor; it could be also a book in the Library, the entire Library in the space of one single book, the place of each letter in the delimited volume of the book always open to any of the twenty-five symbols, etc. It is the place of both the happy conjunction and duplicity and it already duplicates itself faithfully in all appearances. In and through this surface, the reality enters the scene of its presentation, and hereupon its duplicity could only be dreamt. But it is also the same surface that recalls the duplicity to the scene in the form of its exclusion and absence.

The motif of the specular surface is repeated by the narrator at the end of the story:

I say that it is not illogical to think that the world is infinite. Those who judge it to be limited postulate that in remote places the corridors and stairways and hexagons can conceivably come to an end — which is absurd. Those who imagine it to be without limit forget that the possible number of books does have such a limit. I venture to suggest this solution to the ancient problem: *The Library is unlimited and cyclical*. If an eternal traveller were to cross it in any direction, after centuries he would see that the same volumes were repeated in the same disorder (which thus repeated, would be an order: the Order).¹¹

The delimitation of the unit in its unity — such as *a gallery or a book* — already articulates it with its internal organization, and the repetition of this organization is called here “the Order.” Contrary to the undelimited space and its letters in disorder, the un-limitation and un-delimitation of the Library in its totality can be envisioned here in the form of its repetition, in this cyclical process of the introduction and the exclusion of duplicity. This repetition *de-limits* the space of the totality from inside.

Bernard Stiegler calls the conjunction of the presence and the absence — which is, in truth, none other than their disjunction — “*téléprésence*.”¹² The specular surface that promises the infinite, despite the logical necessity of the delimitation of this space, presents itself as the location of this virtual presence. What produces the virtuality of the surface, what virtualizes thus the reality and brings the happy delimitation back to the haunting memory of its “crime” of the exclusion, is another duplicity: the incomprehensibility of the non-infinite “human” order before the infinite “divine” order:

¹¹ Borges, *Ibid.*, pp.85–6.

¹² Bernard Stiegler, *La technique et le temps: 1. La faute d’Épiméthée* (Paris: Galilée, 1994), pp.98 and 101.

The Library exists *ab aeterno*. This truth, whose immediate corollary is the future eternity of the world, cannot be placed in doubt by any reasonable mind. Man, the imperfect librarian, may be the product of chance or of malevolent demiurgi; the universe, with its elegant endowment of shelves, of enigmatical volumes, of inexhaustible stairways for the traveller and latrines for the seated librarians, can only be the work of a god. To perceive the distance between the divine and the human, it is enough to compare these crude wavering symbols which my fallible hand scrawls on the cover of a book, with the organic letters inside: punctual, delicate, perfectly black, inimitably symmetrical.¹³

It is “human” to err inside the invariable “divine” Order of the Library, and the human errs in search of the book or the books when every book is indifferently equal to all the others in the absence of signification. If the book exists in its possibility of infinite duplicity, it is the work of the human to realize this possibility in good faith.¹⁴ But already “To speak is to fall into tautology,”¹⁵ caught between the possible and its actualization, and as such, the good faith

¹³ Borges, *Ibid.*, pp.79–80.

¹⁴ Ejima, *Ibid.*:

“ここでソシュール言語学の視点で言い換えれば、シニフィアン（記号）とシニフィエ（対象）の結びつきの恣意性の由来は、人類が地域やコミュニティによって各国語へと分化していくヒューリスティックな過程であると解釈することができ、さらにもう一步踏み込んだ審級において、シニフィアンがシニフィアンのインデックスとなるself-referenceな状況下では、各国語を操る人類がシニフィアンのもつ情報量をシニフィアンによってヒューリスティックに圧縮する過程であると解釈することもできる。つまり、一冊分の本文という文字集合に対してタイトルという文字集合が一对一の双方向の関数として存在すること自体が、シニフィアンそれ自体の可約性を内包していたわけである。[…]

即ち、索引が作れないということは「『単語（辞書）』や『文法』が存在し得ない」という言明と同値であり、チョムスキーを代表とする言語の形式性を重視する生成文法論者にも意味性を重視する認知言語学者にも、等しく叩きつけられた哲学的命題である。”

[If we translate this with the words of Saussurean linguistics, we can interpret the origin of the non-essential correspondence between the “signifiant” and the “signifié” as the heuristic process of segmentation [and diversification] of the humanity into a variety of languages by its diverse localities and communities, and, furthermore, when the “signifiant” becomes the index to the “signifiant” in its self-reference, also as the process in which the humanity with its ability to control and manipulate languages in its diversity heuristically compresses [and reduces] the amount of the information that the “signifiant” carries, by means of the “signifiant.” The very fact that the content of a book as a set of letters could mirror the title as another set of letters in their mutual correspondence, in a way, already presupposes the possibility of such “signifiant.” [...] In other words, not being able to produce an index is already the same as saying that there could be neither “vocabulary (dictionary)” nor “grammar,” and this philosophical proposition imposes itself as a problem equally to the theoreticians of the transformational grammar — such as Chomsky — with their emphasis on the structure of language as well as to the cognitive linguists with their emphasis on the semantics.] My translation.

¹⁵ Borges, *Ibid.*, p.85.

that the human introduces here does nothing but to reaffirm and reproduce the order of duplicity and fails to exclude it once and for all. In the end, the human effort even appears to be insignificant and without consequence: "The certitude that everything has been written negates us or turns us into phantoms."¹⁶ This awareness would also put the unity of the text of Borges ("The Library of Babel") and its signification in question and negate the existence of the "narrator" despite his *de-facto* presence:

An *n* number of possible languages use the same vocabulary; in some of them, the symbol *library* allows the correct definition *a ubiquitous and lasting system of hexagonal galleries*, but *library* is *bread* or *pyramid* or anything else, and these seven words which define it have another value. You who read me, are You sure of understanding my language?¹⁷

Constitutive to its existence, the duplicity of the Library is irreducible. Paradoxically it is only in the dream of the infinite and in this duplicity which the human tries to reduce that we can affirm, although only in a brief instant before its disappearance, the existence of the human order.

"Man, the imperfect librarian," thus errs *already inside the Library* and he continues to err in his inability to overcome its duplicity and to go beyond its virtual presence. In his „imperfection," "Man" finds himself always already trapped in the duplicity of the Library and continues to work *from inside the virtuality and against it*, toward the „perfection" — the „perfection" of the reality in good faith — that, once realized, would bring the Library to an end and negate his existence. In the presence of the human order, in other words, the reality is also without "perfection": the human "imperfection" in the view of the desired "perfection" of the reality is immediately mirrored by the "imperfection" of the reality in the presence of "Man." As we have seen, the existence of the human order can be affirmed only in the brief moment of duplicity, but it is by affirming the existence of the human order that we can affirm the internal duplicity of the reality in its "im-perfection." It is the recognition of the human existence that virtualizes the reality of the Library, and it is the affirmation of the human existence that keeps the reality in its virtuality. At the heart of virtualization, the *humanization* of the reality is always already in progress.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.85.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.85.

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Outside Athens, Outside Poznan: Intertextuality in Małgorzata Musierowicz's *Nutria i Nerwus*

Małgorzata Musierowicz is one of the most popular and most acclaimed authors of young adult fiction in Poland. Starting with her first novel *Szósta klepka* [*The Sixth Sense*] published in 1977, Musierowicz has built up a fictional universe centered around a fictitious Borejko family whose members' various adventures she describes in the following fifteen volumes with unrelenting sympathy and good humor. The strength of Musierowicz's fiction is her ability to smoothly intertwine the fictional element focusing on ordinary teenage problems with obvious reference to the contemporary social and political problems of contemporary Poland. However, with *Nutria i Nerwus* (1995) a new element is added to Musierowicz's work: that of literary allusion. This novels' intertext is Shakespeare's *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the way Musierowicz deploys this text is worth critical attention.

Nutria i nerwus [*Nutria and Nerwus*] is the tenth book in Musierowicz's series titled *Jeżycjada* (Jeżyce is a district in the city of Poznan, where the author comes from). The book was published in 1994 and was illustrated by the author herself. The two protagonists from the title are Nutria – “a beautiful redhead with a temper”, actually named Natalia, one of the Borejko sisters – and Nerwus, real name Filip Bratek, a musician and brother of Nutria's ex-boyfriend. Nutria is calm and quiet, loves music and books. The novel takes place during summer holidays, on a trip of Nutria and Gabrysia's younger daughters, whom she takes care of (Gabrysia is the eldest sister in the Borejko family). One of the daughters – Laura (nicknamed Tygrysek, that is Tigger) – is wicked, demanding, and a cause of tension. Suddenly, during the trip an eccentric boy appears, named Filip Brater, and a new love is born.

Shakespeare's play is brought into the reader's attention primarily in form of quotations: Nutria, an erudite student of Polish literature, quotes Shakespeare's text frequently, and even sings a song whose lyrics come from *Midsummer Night's Dream* but whose melody she has composed herself. Interestingly, she uses the most recent, and therefore language-wise most accessible translation. Thanks to the quotations, the magical, de-realized quality of time and place is emphasized, moving the plot onto the plane of the fairy tale and legend. This

is evident when, encountering the sleeping Nerwus in the woods, Nutria compares him to a sleeping Athenian boy and sees him miraculously transformed from his usual irritated self into a beautiful loving creature. A similar change takes place in Nutria's case: her stalker takes her for a materialistic, cruel *femme fatale*, and only when he hears her sing by the bonfire does he realize that she is a shy, sensitive girl.

The atmosphere of the magical and the legendary is underlined by the choice of time and place. The former is St John's Eve, the solstice, again an allusion to Shakespeare, and in Polish folklore the night of miracles and magic, the time of spells and foretelling of the future. The place is the rural region around Poznań, whose ancient traditions are suggested by constant references to the past of the Piast tradition, itself deeply rooted in Polish legend and myth. In order to avoid Nerwus, Nutria leaves the vestiges of civilization and moves into the relative wilderness of the forest, the lake, and a primitive campsite where she sets up her tent. This temporary shelter in the bosom of nature calls to mind again the wood outside Athens in which Shakespeare's protagonists seek refuge. In *Midsummer* the "realistic" plot is punctuated with the "magical" one; in Musierowicz's novel the development of the plot is punctuated by moments of magic like the jewel-eyed frog sitting on Nerwus's heart as he sleeps, the hands of the protagonists meeting when they fall asleep among the ferns unaware of each other's presence, or Nerwus's prophetic dream in which he sees himself as Nutria's lover, a union blessed by his brother. These moments in turn are interrupted by a shrill cry of a magpie suggesting a borderline between the real and the surreal.

A careful reading of Musierowicz's novel shows that not only the time, place and atmosphere are modeled on Shakespeare. The characterization and motives of the protagonists are also evocative of Shakespeare. Nutria's two nieces are placed in a juxtaposition suggestive of Shakespeare: the older, unimaginative, stolid and reliable, endowed with a plump body and kind heart, may be likened to Shakespeare's Bottom, Quince, while the younger, slender, pretty, self-conscious and mischievous, is obviously modeled on Puck. Laura is frequently compared to an elf in her appearance and movements, more than that, her role in the plot is that of a manipulator and organizer: it is she who contacts Nutria's rejected boyfriend to tell him of her holiday plans, thus eliciting Nerwus's company; she is the one to leave traces behind so that he can follow them more easily; she is the one who withholds information thus postponing the meeting between Nutria and Nerwus. Laura seems to be the only one to know exactly what is going on, and her superior position is emphasized by Nutria's voiced fear of her. Further similarities between Laura and Puck may be noticed in her initial situation: her mother contemplates a punishment for her school misbehavior and Laura is evidently in disgrace. Her sister, Rose, requires guidance and explanations, but she is endowed with an ability to forgive and defend her sister.

Nutria's three sisters gathered in the kitchen at night, preparing soup for their absent sibling and her potential companion and turning this everyday action into a ritual of potion-making, recall Shakespeare's witches; these familiar figures of Shakespeare's universe are absent in *Midsummer* but the sisters' ability to foretell and influence Nutria's future is not: both Oberon and Titania, in their own ways do the same to the humans in the play.

Last but not least, the protagonists, one escaping, the other following, are obviously taken from Shakespeare. More than that, the plot structure is essentially that of *Midsummer*: Nutria leaves Poznan to avoid being manipulated into marriage by a boyfriend whom she has grown to consider dominating and thus bullying. Her escape is an attempt to preserve a right of an individual, independent, unbiased choice; it is also Nutria's gesture in favor of love she realizes she does not find in her relationship. Like Hermia, her Shakespearean counterpart, her action challenges the patriarchal order which oppresses her and denies her love in the name of obedience to the wishes of the father figure in Shakespeare represented by Hermia's father and the prince of Athens, in Musierowicz by Nutria's boyfriend. On the other hand, Nerwus follows Nutria just like Demetrius follows Hermia in an attempt to restore the order. This attempt seems to be frustrated by the intrusion of the magical: Demetrius discovers his love for Helen and thus rejects Hermia, Nerwus discovers his love for Nutria and the superficiality of his brother's attachment, and thus feels free to return to her. In both cases, however, the change of lovers' attention does not generate a disorder or even a revolution in the order of things. With different partners the patriarchal order is preserved; the magic works not to disrupt but to bring together and consolidate: the faults of the patriarchal order are amended and Shakespeare's two couples and Musierowicz's Nutria and Nerwus return happily to civilization.

POSSIBILITY OF A DECONSTRUCTIVE READING

Destabilized status of reality in *Midsummer Night's Dream*: in itself based on a contrast of worlds to some extent relying on a set of pre-existing conventionally contrasted binaries originating in the literary form of debate (e.g. town vs. nature in the pastoral); a composite produced of various, frequently discrepant, but skillfully blended cultural traditions: rural belief/superstition, folk tale, Greek/Roman mythology, classical fable, topical allusion as a recurring theme: the ontological status of imagination and art/poetry; a text fluctuating between an exposure of its own theatrical mechanisms of illusionist fictions and an endorsement of theatricality as the ultimate form of reality: play within the play with its inept role-playing as pretending pitted against the notion of *theatrum mundi* with its notion of playing a role as realization of one's essential self.

This deferral of meaning of reality heightened in *Nutria i Nerwus* by a re-inscription of such a complex network into another text and its clash with the

text's underlying historical tradition of different rural festivals and a structure of intertextual reference to texts chronologically posterior to *Midsummer Night's Dream* (e.g. Rilke's poetry and Hesse's prose) as well as interpretive metatexts (e.g. M. Janion's *Gorączka romantyczna*). This reinscription additionally is not a straightforward re-writing creating neatly corresponding equivalencies but a process of clipping, expanding, blending and repositioning (a game that *Midsummer Night's Dream* itself undertook with its classical pre-texts). The fusion is particularly striking in the already mentioned episode in which Nutria's sisters cook soup (alternately: brew a love potion for her), the episode which is modeled upon a scene from *Macbeth* (a play quoted once straightforwardly in the text) when the hags fill their double cauldron with several ingredients and make it bubble. In Musierowicz's rendering the weird sisters are exorcised and emerge as benevolent and supporting figures of benign authority corresponding to *Midsummer Night's Dream* fairy and human royals.

Still further destabilization of the status of reality could be detected in *Nutria i Nerwus* in its extensive application of dreams (echoing *Midsummer Night's Dream* again) which can be prophetic, warning, incomprehensible, disquieting, soothing, etc. Waking up on a bus, Nutria experiences the reality as worse, more oppressive and more surreal than her suffocating dream. The furious roaring of a motorboat on a lake that wakes Nerwus up is more discrepant with the vernal-sylvan landscape of tranquility than his appeasing dream. And when Nutria, a literary character already placed in a location magically alternative to her regular reality has a dream in which she dreams of airy, transparent, ethereal Oberon, a figure from another literary text inhabiting the reality this text identifies as a dream, one could say after H. Plett that the author's primary purpose is not to bring her audience to an immediate confrontation with reality, but only with mirrors of reality; that by experiencing layers of removal of fictional reality from factual reality, the reader is made to realize that "the reality of literature made up of literature is literature".

But this is not what the implied reader or target audience is supposed to do.

What we see as intentionality of *Nutria i Nerwus* would propose a reading rather along Barthesian lines and his proposal that we make sense of our lived experience and hence construct our lives in relation to texts "whether these be Proust or television soap operas". Making sense and constructing lives would have at least two facets: a rudimentary epistemological gesture of establishing individual and group identity (as one of the predicaments Nutria is afflicted with is the perennial I don't know who I am, How can I know who I am) on the one hand and, on the other, launching an axiological process (as the other predicament Nutria faces is deciding What is wrong, what is right, What is good, what is bad, etc). And Musierowicz's novel exposes its intertextual involvement to persuasively crystallize to its characters and its young readers a desirable model of selfhood and quite normatively project an evaluative paradigm of behaviors and attitudes. Combining these with an aesthetic stimulus for the re-

cipient's delight, the book's self-conscious intertextual investment fulfils three basic functions of literary quotation or allusion: authoritative, erudite and ornamental. In a word: for both its protagonists and readers, the book reinforces a realization that it is better, more satisfying, truly rewarding and deeply pleasurable to make sense of one's lived experience in relation to Proust. For our purposes here: Shakespeare and what he stands for as a canonized Bard in the liberal-humanist tradition, and, in relation to soap operas: here consumerist pop culture of the early 90's.

Imitation here is a performative act of criticism and interpretation. *Midsummer Night's Dream* is incorporated as an already interpreted text on maturation and identity formation: acculturation through the experience of an attractive, but also uncanny and threatening confusion resulting in a transformative internalisation of a desirable role model.

MODEL OF IDENTITY: NUTRIA AND HER TRANSFORMATIONS

Evaluative paradigm: hierarchical ranking of opposed sets of worlds: city vs. nature, and correspondingly reality of consumerist pop-culture vs. reality of cultured literariness and education.

Following Riffaterre, reading as interpretation is a two-level process, starting from mimetic reading: linear, word-by-word decoding of the message with an assumption that language is referential and that words relate directly to things (Clayon, Rothstein 25).

But it's clearly not enough: retroactive reading is enforced—one prompted to look elsewhere for the significance of the work by encountered “ungrammaticalities”—difficulties, obscurities, undecidable moments, figurative language. Opulence of such markers is to be detected in *Nutria i Nerwus* quotations, paraphrases, suggestive and evocative passages and persistent references to music as well as equally pervasive lunar imagery

This literariness is by no means to be conflated with withdrawal, escapism or isolationism. The lessons that characters learn, voice directly and indirectly propound, are the lessons of imperative activity, watchfulness and individual/emotional as well as public/social involvement. Proper literariness is the golden mean between the trap of unproductive figments of one's uncurbed fantasy (Nutria's adolescent, “poetic” infatuation with a man she did not even speak a word to might serve as an example here) and the sterile oppression of the excessively mundane (again Nutira's disappointing relationship with Tunio, whom she describes as “too literal”, “without distance, Margin or inverted commas” might serve as an example here). The novel claims that immersion in literariness channels the sense of the self as it is forwarded as a system of communication: shared signs, points of reference, paradigms, and patterns which rely on and point to a similarity of traditions, values, norms and interests. Additionally, the novel insists that literariness does not exclude one from the grid

of obligations: on the contrary, it produces an ethically conscious and responsible citizen.

Literariness and textual universe are an irreducible reality, non-dismissible in their tangibility and inseparably bound with the palpable experience of mimetically presented everyday routines and practicalities of daily existence. Knowledge of Shakespeare is emblematic of cultural competence, which, in turn, indicates a social competence with its endorsement of the duty of thoughtfully utilitarian life differentiating one from the thoughtless *profanum vulgus* of self-complacent and self-centred consumers.

The novel *Nutria i Nerwus* insists on the reality of “pleasures of the text” for its protagonists and makes a promise of them for its readers. The pleasures include empowerment and authority experienced and exercised owing to cultural expertise as well as rewards of acculturation found in a personally fulfilling relationship catalyzed by a demonstration of cultural expertise. Not to mention the pleasures of recognition offered to an initiated reader. The novel at the same time presupposes, postulates and co-produces a literary competence as well as it develops a proper climate for a validity of certain literary interpretations coupled with legitimized assessment of extra-textual reality. Shakespearean intertext enshrined in and synecdochically embodying the cultural canon becomes an authority sanctioning the novel with the system of values it endorses and the model of world-perception it puts forward. At the same time, however, the near cult-status of Musierwicz’s cycle authorizes Shakespeare and “high culture” giving to “their airy nothing” ‘a local habitation and a name’ in a series of familiarizing readjustments. In short: Shakespeare is shown as a commendable matchmaker in the marriage of true minds, his effectiveness surpassing that of female seeks male columns in popular magazines.

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Varia

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Children's theatricalization of the world, or between 'for real' and 'make-believe'¹

Different types of theatrical performances, paratheatre and theatre-forms create opportunities for expression in the area of literature. It is worth considering what lies at the bottom of children's theatricalization of the world. The period of childhood includes phenomena, which make up a theatrical sphere in a child's life, mapping out a specific plane of child's reception of literature and creating theatre (as well as other arts).

From the point of view of psychology and pedagogy all theatre and paratheatre forms of work with children are very valuable. Participation in a theatrical performance gives a child a special and one of its kind possibility of experiencing the work of art, and it also develops and teaches a number of skills necessary to analyze and interpret the work, such as description of the main character, selection of events, depiction of mood and place of action. It is also essential that usually many children take part in the performance, thus learning to cooperate in a group and becoming sensitive to their peers' reactions.

Theatre can take the form of a puppet show, shadow theatre, finger theatre and other. This type of work requires on the teacher a special preparation of the text of work so that its content is included in the dialogues and monologues, and involves dramatic tension. As an autonomous art, theatre should always be in harmony with other arts like music, singing, dance, or scenography. All these can be put together in a single children's show with the hallmarks of a real theatre.

However, it should be mentioned that all stage forms need to be preceded by drama classes based on literary text. These help the child to experience and recreate emotional states of joy, sadness, fear, anger and surprise. Short 'acting' episodes in the form of play can already be carried out with a four year old, who in this way develops its powers of observation, imagination, body movement and the ability to make use of a certain space and move within it. Such classes usually include verbalization so that a child can learn pronunciation,

¹ This text appeared in a slightly changed form in the work titled *Między teatrem a światem. W kręgu problemów dramatu, sztuki scenicznej i teatralizacji kultury* ed. by R. Strzelecki, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, Bydgoszcz, 2010 and my book titled *Literackie inspiracje w rozwoju przedszkolaka*, Wydawnictwo SBP, Warszawa 2012.

and how to show various emotional states in speech. However, in order not to become 'artificial', it is worth studying the child in its free activity, which is usually realized best at play. One should ask oneself which of children's activities, psychological features or emotions help to create forms of paratheatrical character.

Deliberations on art always involve the problem of two possibilities of presentation – one resulting from the point of view of a recipient and the other from the point of view of an author, that is a real participant in the creation of mimetic world. This duality presents itself particularly clearly in theory of theatre. The person of an actor and the one of a spectator imposes it – elements indispensable for the existence of this form of art. They are essential both in the theory of theatre for adults and for children. The child's existence in theatre can take the following two basic roles – of an active participant, that is the actor and a recipient – the spectator. It seems that, in principle, these forms are identical just like in adults' world. However, on observation of activities of paratheatrical children's groups one can easily notice that children's reaction to theatrical illusion is different than that of adults, both when it comes to the figure of an actor and a spectator. It is very difficult to separate both roles when one looks for theatre-generating features. Thus, as a rule, one should consider a child both as a recipient and a creator of a specific children's theatre. It should be noted that a similar relation arises in the context of other arts, such as plastic arts, music or literature. A child, creative in nature, becomes a creator and a recipient in one person.

A joint presentation of children's perception and participation carries a difficulty typical for the description of all issues connected with the participation of children's recipient and creator. This problem is further complicated when one assumes that a child in its spontaneous activity incorporates also its own creativity and work. The child is both a spectator and an actor, a director and a playwright, as well as a stage designer. This is why it is difficult to do thorough research in this area of children's activity. The child-respondent is peculiarly limited in its reflection of experience connected with art; it has a limited ability of fluent verbalization of own feelings and reflections. Thus the researcher is in a specific situation, which makes it necessary to refer to psychological, pedagogical, sociological and anthropological spheres. In the latter, observations of children's plays and the form of quasi-theatre activity might be particularly useful, which is also the case of childhood memories of adult people describing experience connected with theatre. It is certain, however, that children's paratheatrical activities constitute a part of experience connected with theatre in general, and are a characteristic prologue to all theatre-generating behavior, which may shape the attitude to theatre in later periods of man's life.

The description of the real nature of children's theatre raises many doubts. They emerge especially at the moment when we realize that the repertoire of children's spectacles, its direction, or selection of stage setting are the work of

adults, who often fail to address the real needs of a child spectator. It might thus be the best to consider mainly the problems of reception. However, the choice of only one plane shall not allow for a thorough, detailed study. The more because the real sense of theatre can be found only when reception and participation are combined. The will to get to the core of the problem brings out another question: which area of children's life can tell the most about children's need of theatre. I suppose the closest to the real essence of theatre is a children's spontaneous dramatic play in which little 'actors' performing known behaviors subconsciously search for their own identity and fulfill the desire of living in another world created as the play goes along. It is thus worthwhile to use this child's activity in order to get to know art, particularly literature.

According to Lew S. Wygotski, play is 'the most important line of child's development'², and takes various forms depending on the level of child's development, from manipulating with objects through functional, structural, thematic plays to those receptive and symbolic. In the context of theatricalization thematic plays seem to be the most important. They are usually connected with some subject matter chosen by children, and described by Maria Przetacznik-Gierowska as creative, fictitious, illusory or pretended, dramatic, role plays, symbolic. These terms emphasize specific features of thematic plays like children's ingenuity, the ability to transform the real world, symbolic make-believe activities, construction of action and plot, using props like in the theatre, playing parts, isolation from a real situation due to the use of object and verbal symbols³. The set of actions enumerated here seems to be really close to everything, which is connected with theatre. According to psychologists, playing is what helps a child to understand the surroundings. In the world of paratheatre fiction, and also literary one child's dreams can come true. Maria Kielar-Turska notes that during play 'by using symbolic substitutes and performing <make-believe> activities, children recreate various activities, events, situations from everyday life'⁴. Man creates theatre because he wants to influence reality by it. Does a child have a similar consciousness? Probably not yet in the pre-school period, however research by Kielar-Turska has shown that play, similarly to theatre, is a symbolic performance, in which a child can see more than one can see⁵.

² Cf. L. S. Wygotski, *Zabawa i jej rola w rozwoju psychicznym dziecka* [In] *Dziecko w zabawie i świecie języka*, ed. by A. Brzezińska et al., Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1995, p. 67.

³ Cv. M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, *Świat dziecka. Aktywność – Poznanie – Środowisko. Skrypt z psychologii rozwojowej*, Skrypty Uczelniane Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego no. 684, Kraków 1993, pp. 37–38.

⁴ M. Kielar-Turska, „...zobaczyć więcej niż widać”: dziecko wobec zabawy dramatycznej i widowiska teatralnego [In] *Dziecko i teatr w przestrzeni kultury. Teatr w świecie*, vol. 1, ed. by M. Karasińska and G. Leszczyński, Centrum Sztuki Dziecka w Poznaniu, Poznań 2007, p. 103.

⁵ Expression by Kielar-Turska taken from a statement by a seven year old. Ibidem, p. 110.

Theatre theoreticians look for its genesis in the rituals of primitive men, in the first rites, and religion⁶. What accompanied the first cults and rituals connected with them were joint dance and singing, in which a harmony of body and soul came into being. In the dance rhythm, gestures, expression, words and shouts the first performers united in common experience. This behaviour, swollen with feeling and tension, most frequently resulting from the possibility of contact with the deity, led to inner cleansing. This element of common play – paidia – joy, rhythm, dance and uncontrollable emotions appears also in children's play. The state of spirit and mind which accompanies children at their usual play is similar and perhaps the same as the one of first rituals. This is why the path to exploring the roots of children's need for theatricalization leads to play. It is also justified by the necessity to describe the real state of consciousness, which accompanies little performers. According to Henryk Jurkowski, a researcher and historian of theatre, 'the difference between child participation in a theatrical performance and play is that in the first case the child experiences events from a parallel world, whereas in the second one it experiences its role resulting from the scenario of play. In the first case it takes part in events by the use of empathy, in the second it creates these events as a contestant or player'⁷. Despite this difference play seems to be an essential pro-theatre form of children's activity. The phenomenon noticed by Jurkowski becomes more complicated if we include in the centre of our attention dramatic plays with elements of theatricalization, in which child's attitudes unite, joining both emphatic feelings and keeping to rules⁸. The following is a typical view from a children's playground:

'Playing theatre. Children are making a stage. It is a potato crate turned upside down. The main actress gets onto the crate, singing, reciting poems, and pretending funny figures. A group of peers watching participates unwittingly in the spectacle – adding text, joining in singing, dancing'⁹.

In this way the audience and the actors jointly create a paratheatre-play reality. The whole undertaking reminds of some ceremony: with bows (must be low or 'like a ballet dancer'), with applause, with focus on the goal being a

⁶ M. Steiner, *Geneza teatru w świetle antropologii kulturowej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2003.

⁷ H. Jurkowski, *Dzieciństwo zredukowane. Popkultura i postmodernizm w sztuce dla dzieci* [In] *Dziecko i teatr...*, p. 90.

⁸ L. S. Wygotski claims that a child at play (not only in games) is governed by rules. These rules determine the subject of plays. The researcher writes: 'Let's take any play, which is about making a 'make-believe' situation. This 'make-believe' situation itself contains rules of behaviour (...) The child, who imagined itself to be a mother, and the doll to be a baby, has to act according to motherly ways'. Following this line of thought, one can assume that theatricalization which appears in children's plays also becomes a rule, and activities undertaken by children must fit in with the rules of theatre. L. S. Wygotski, *Zabawa i jej rola...*, p. 73.

⁹ On the basis of own observations.

peculiar *mimesis* and with text created as it goes, including fragments of literary texts – poems and songs known to children. In this activity two attitudes overlap: keeping to the rules of play and experiencing events of a parallel reality. This type of play, although it is not yet theatre, reflects child's first spontaneous notion about it. Additional complication is connected with the specific character of children's theatre, which results among others from the fact that a child often treats participation in it as a play. Thus they are able to feel empathy and be willing to keep to the rules at the same time. One of the most important roles is played by the 'word' coming from the 'stage'. Usually texts distributed by children in plays are creations of children's folklore, but it also happens that they include fragments or all of previously remembered works. If a spectacle is prepared on purpose, its authors usually use the texts of spectacles for children or create their own script.

Children's emphatic attitude to theatre is also noticeable in the process of perception. A child has a feel for the role and participates in the events mainly as a result of sharing the characters' feelings, for example by identifying with their emotions. This state is extremely valuable when it comes to human development. This is so because in the case of a spectacle of considerable value a child has a chance to experience extraordinary emotions, which build their self-esteem, influence their personality, and develop sensitivity. Jurkowski notes that empathy results in *catharsis*¹⁰ – the state that makes it possible to free oneself of fears. On the plane of children's reception of theatre it leads to emotions of emphatic character: when Hänsel is about to be eaten by the Witch, or when Cinderella is humiliated by the Stepmother. At such moments a child feels deep sympathy for the fate of characters, which results from identification with them. The most moving for a child are critical situations, moments of transition, such as a character's illness, disability, death, exposition to trials, extraordinary changes. Most often these situations are reflected in children's dramatic plays 'playing doctor', 'wedding', 'funeral', 'being someone else', 'soldiers', 'policemen and thieves'. Topics which inspire such plays show that childhood is not only a happy Arcady, but that a child has their own problems and feels strong emotions like fear, anger, hatred, or joy. They try to tame the 'anxieties' that haunt it during play. Thus all – the play, the theatre and the text of literary work carry therapeutic functions. Adults' theatre has been associated with evoking 'sudden uprising of emotions' since ancient times¹¹. The same must be said about the role of children's theatre. This is certified by opinions of adults brought about by childhood reminiscences in connection with theatre and observations of spontaneous reactions of children's audience in theatre. Krystyna Chołoniewska, the author of screenplay for children's spectacles, writes: 'a real madness began when my father gave us a wonderful gift – a small theatre with a velvet curtain and some marionettes (...) It was specially

¹⁰ H. Jurkowski, *Dzieciństwo zredukowane...*, p. 91.

¹¹ Ch. Balme, *Wprowadzenie do nauki o teatrze*, PWN, Warszawa 2002, p. 68.

for these figures that I wrote my first ever theatrical play, and I invited all my young neighbours for the first night show'¹². Even more meaningful are reminiscences by an American actor, Julian Beck, cited by Joanna Ostrowska: 'At the age of six I ate a whole handkerchief piece by piece while watching *Hänsel and Gretel* in the Metropolitan Opera. (...) I ate that horrid tasteless handkerchief with Hänsel in order to identify with him – and then I did not have to eat it any more, all the children were free, saved from the stove, not eaten, alive and could still grow up'¹³. The artist's words signify a deep experience of the spectacle and its cathartic function. Thus *Catharsis* is in the same or perhaps even greater way available to a child and an adult, due to involuntary identification with the character. Referring further to children's plays – particularly worth noting are plays, which use various types of dolls like marionettes or puppets, and their role in drawing children's attention. Due to the fact that a child thinks in an animistic way a doll has an unusual power of exciting children's imagination. It is obvious to everybody who even once tried to play in this way with children. A glove with one finger often gains more respect than a real baby minder¹⁴. Literary characters familiar to children play a role of enormous importance in such little theatres. Dolls made for the play become these characters. In a moment the dolls become a king, a princess, a witch, an angel, an animal, or a dwarf. They also become the 'faces' of specific characters like Pinocchio, Teddy Floppy-ear, dwarf Hałabała, Little Red Riding Hood, Tom Thumb, etc.

Dramatic plays are the closest to theatre and can be regarded as a specific paratheatre children's activity. This also includes some forms of activity accompanying play like spontaneous movement, free and rhythmic dance, verbal expression, plastic activity and a widely understood creative activity. During a play a child fulfills their desires and although they come true in a fictitious world, this activity has a real dimension for a child. When an amused boy is running ahead at uncontrollable speed, pretending to be a speeding railway train – he is one – he takes over all its features: roars, bursts and runs. He pretends to be it not only from the outside but also from the inside¹⁵.

¹² K. Chołoniewska, *Między za- a roz-czarowaniem – wyznania autorki piszącej dla niedorosłego widza* [In] *Dziecko i teatr w przestrzeni kultury. Świat w teatrze*, vol. 2 ed. by M. Karasińska and G. Leszczyński, Centrum Sztuki Dziecka, Poznań 2007, p. 19.

¹³ After: J. Ostrowska, *Specjalnie dla młodzieży. Z mitologii teatru ulicznego* [In] *Dziecko i teatr w przestrzeni kultury. Świat w teatrze*, vol. 2, p. 51.

¹⁴ In the 90's in one of kindergartens in Rzeszów teachers used a glove puppet of dwarf Hałabała when reading or discussing a text. It turned out that children listened to the stories told by 'the puppet's mouth' more willingly than when the text was told by the teacher. When the subject was over children wanted to play with the puppet, missed it and asked for further meetings. Jan Dorman in his theatre did interesting experiments with the use of toys as 'meaningful objects'.

¹⁵ J. Cieślowski gives example of 'child-railway engine' after J. Huizinga and K. Czukowski. Cv. J. Cieślowski, *Wielka zabawa...*, p. 218.

This is because dramatic play is not only about pretending. The role of a child is fully dramatic; if some other participant in the game says: 'watch out – a station' or 'we have run out of coal', the child behaves according to the dramatic situation which is being created, provided it is in accordance with the rules. A question arises: In what state is the child at this very moment? Have they lost their identity completely? Perhaps they are pretending and know that all this is 'make-believe'? On the basis of observation I can assume that a child knows that the reality created by them is fictitious. At the same time, however, one should note that a child is both themselves and the railway engine in that play. It enters the role completely and this activity is important only for themselves; the audience, might it be anybody, is not important here. As Jerzy Cieřlikowski has noted: 'a complete unification with the played part is not theatricalization, as it is not intended for somebody from the outside, and the issue how well this looks from the point of view of imitation does not count at all'¹⁶. It is worth noting, however, that among thematic plays there are 'theatre' games, and they come in various types: from imitating the parts of roles of actors who played the parts of characters interesting for a child (e.g., Robin Hood, Spiderman, Batman, etc.), representatives of interesting professions (a doctor, a policeman, a teacher, a driver), and various forms of home theatres (finger theatre, shadow theatre, doll theatre, marionettes, puppets, pantomime). As it has already been mentioned, participation in such performances imposes on a child two states – one resulting from the game, the other from the part played.

According to Marta Steiner's theory, in which the researcher refers to the thoughts of Richard Schechner and anthropological sources of theatre, the essence of being an actor is in remaining between the state of 'being <not one-self>' and 'not being oneself'. The point is to notice the difference between performers of different shows, also rituals, concerning the processes of identity, which the performer is going through. The problem of the state of consciousness is important also in the case of the child participant of dramatic plays and theatre. A child spectator, just like an actor, does not assume reality of what is happening on stage, since they believe in it. So theatre is for the child-recipient a story occurring 'for real' although it is 'make-believe'. This dualism is a consequence of child's animistic thinking, who despite being beyond mimetic worlds treats them as real ones¹⁷. In 'make-believe' the child finds their own truth about themselves and the world. As written by Steiner, according to Schechner, identity, and sometimes also performer's consciousness undergoes transformation, 'the performer as if loses certain features of their own identity, at the same time not taking any of the new one. He is <not himself>, being at the same time to a certain degree <not not-himself>'¹⁸. It is also important that the actor consciously emphasizes his playing, so in Steiner's words, he uses

¹⁶ Ibidem.

¹⁷ H. Jurkowski, *Dzieciństwo zredukowane...*, p. 90.

¹⁸ M. Steiner, *Geneza teatru...*, p. 299.

'falseness', although he gives the audience to understand that he is 'real'¹⁹. Despite the fact that the phenomenon pertains to the essence of theatre, it cannot be transferred in a literal way into the subject matter of children's theatrical and acting activity. A child in a pre-school period does not falsify the world²⁰. Their verbal or plastic activity, although it does not reflect the precise characteristics of objects, or characters of events presented, shows the specificity of children's experiencing and perceiving reality. This feature of play should be kept in children's theatre. A child is thus closer to the ritual performer or a cultural show performer, who 'is always <real>, irrespective of whether they play their own social role, or transforms into another character'²¹. Thus the state between 'being <not oneself> and 'not being oneself', typical for the mimetic recreation in the form of a theatre show, is not fully adequate on the ground of children's theatre. In the child's world things happen 'for real' and 'make-believe'. It seems that in the case of children's mimetic behaviours one can speak of performer's status as existing between 'for real' versus 'make-believe'. This is illustrated by the following example of a five year old boy's play:

'A child is running around the room, holding a book with musical notation widely open, and shouting:

– I am a plane! I am a plane!

He is simultaneously producing unarticulated sounds imitating the noise of a plane taking off and flying. Suddenly the mother interrupts the play:

– Son, give me this book back.

The boy does not pay any attention, preoccupied with playing.

– Please, give me back the book. Give it!

The child still does not react. Finally the mother finds another way, she enters the part of a participant in play:

– Listen, give me back this plane.

The boy suddenly stops playing; standing dismayed and for a moment looks shocked at his mother. Finally he bursts out laughing and shouts:

– Mum, these are notes!²²

This example shows that the child, although he loses his own identity for the moment of play, is still aware of the existence of the real world. The state in which he is functions somewhere between 'for real' and 'make-believe', which can also transform into the state of both 'for real' and 'make-believe'. Moreover, the child treats the whole act seriously. Can we, however, claim that children's dramatic plays are close to tribal rituals? A ritual was provoked by the development of the processes of production and the need to keep one's life, which

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 304.

²⁰ Opinion shared by K. Krasoń. Cv. K. Krasoń, *Znak jako komunikat w teatrze ruchu* [In] *W kręgu sztuki i ekspresji dziecka. Rozważania inspirujące* ed. by K. Krasoń and B. Mazepa-Domagala, Wydawnictwo GWSP, Mysłowice 2006, p. 246.

²¹ M. Steiner, *Geneza teatru...*, p. 303.

²² On the basis of own observations.

does not have much in common with theatre as an esthetic phenomenon, and children's play behaviours (meaning dramatic plays) have different goals. Most certainly, they represent a will to be in some other world and the need to find one's own identity through imitation. It turns out that they concur with one of the spheres of theatre impact, which is its therapeutic function²³. On the other hand, isn't play what keeps a child alive?²⁴ After all, a child devoid of the possibility of playing becomes sad and quickly acquires characteristics of adult persons, becoming 'anthropologically invisible'.

Besides these dilemmas there still exists the problem of audience, which is not present at play included in its course. As it is known, the spectator is an indispensable element of theatre, thus it seems that children's play can be included in considerations on the subject of children's theatre as pro-theatre forms or pro-theatre forms of theatre-generating character. So play is not theatre, it is 'almost' theatre. However, taking into consideration the state of child's awareness during dramatic play (playing a part, etc.), one can assume that children's play is often closer to theatre than the theatre in which children's actors take part. It is thus very difficult to attain, especially with small children during the so called school plays, this peculiar state of free paidia, in which 'for real' would naturally mean 'make-believe'.

²³ M. Steiner, *Geneza teatru...*, p. 310.

²⁴ I mean leaving 'the child in childhood', understood as a state necessary for a proper development of a human being.

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„Potłuczone kawałeczki nieśmiertelności” w *Przygodach Piotrusia Pana* J. M. Barriego

„Pan Barrie zrobił coś, czego nikt nie zrobił do czasu twórcy „Alicji”. Wy-
nalazł nową legendę, nowoczesną folklorystyczną historię, która zawiera
wszystkie najszybsze sekrety nowoczesnego dziecka”¹ – pisał w „The World”
recenzent po ukazaniu się *Piotrusia Pana* (1906) Jamesa Matthew Barriego.
Pisał o sekretach nowoczesnego dziecka, bo moment powstania sztuki stał
się okresem narodzin psychoanalizy, która zajęła się badaniem tych osobi-
wości. Za sprawą Freuda obnażono „mroczną” stronę dziecka z jego popędo-
wością i seksualnością. Odsyłając do tego, co w nim przykre i wstydlive, jed-
noznacznie zerwano z mitem dziecięcej niewinności. „Najszybsze sekrety”
– odsłonięte przez psychoanalizę – stały się niezwykle atrakcyjnym tematem
również od strony literackiej, chociażby we wspomnianej przez recenzenta
Alicji w krainie czarów (1865) Lewisa Carrolla. W chwili powstania, sztu-
ka Barriego doskonale wpisywała się w mentalność edwardiańskiej Anglii,
w której fermentowały już wątpliwości zasiane przez nowe prądy intelektu-
alne.

Barrie stworzył bohatera, konotującego niepokojące treści, których sam au-
tor prawdopodobnie sobie nie uświadamiał. Początkowo jego pisarstwo było
porządkowaniem własnych emocji, traumatycznej biografii. W tym celu twór-
ca *Piotrusia* próbował odzyskać fragmenty nieśmiertelności i scalić je z wła-
snymi przeżyciami. W efekcie stworzył „zastanawiającego” bohatera, który
okazał się jednym z najtrwalszych mitów nowoczesnej kultury, inspirującym
nas do dzisiejszego dnia za pomocą ukrytych w nim symboli i znaków. Piotruś
Pan stał się ikoną ponowoczesności, symbolem postawy, definiującym współ-
czesną umysłowość i mentalność przeziąkniętą infantylizmem. Zmiana kryte-
riów stosowanych przez badaczy pozwala dostrzec ukryte w tekście sygnały,
które umożliwią spojrzenie na utwór Barriego pod innym kątem. Psychoanali-
tyczne analizy – szczególnie teoria psychoanalityczna Lacana – otwierają wie-
le tekstualnych możliwości, które mogą być zastosowane do dziecięcej fikcji,
w tym do fantastycznych utworów Barriego.

¹ Cyt. za: S. L. Brett, *Pan and the little green gate*, Hodder & Stoughton, London 1908,
s. 238.[tłum. autorki artykułu]

Barrie po raz pierwszy zaprezentował postać Piotrusia Pana w powieści dla dorosłych *The Little White Bird* w 1902 roku, fabularyzowanej historii przyjaźni Barriego i dzieci Llewelyn Davies. Następnie przeniósł ją na deski teatru w sztuce pt. *Piotruś Pan czyli chłopiec, który nie chciał dorosnąć* (*Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*). Premiera spektaklu odbyła się 27 grudnia 1904 roku w Duke of York's Theatre w Londynie.²

W klimat sztuki wprowadzał już plakat z 1904 r., zaprojektowany przez Charlesa Buchela. Obraz pokazuje Piotrusia odlatującego z Wendy nad oświetlonymi dachami domów do Nibylandii. Ten niby realistyczny obrazek może być zinterpretowany zgoła inaczej. Równoległe czytanie obrazka i tekstu Barriego nadaje mu sens symboliczny. Ilustrator wydobywa motyw, w którym mroczne niebo i jeszcze ciemniejsze morze skonstrastowane z domami tworzą mentalny margines, który zapowiada symboliczną drogę, jaką Wendy odbędzie z Piotrusiem Panem. Estetyczny zamysł – osnuty na kanwie sztuki – lotu Piotrusia i Wendy, utrzymany jest w konwencji ilustracji baśniowej, bohaterów złapanych na ucieczce do Nibylandii. Domy pojawiają się tu jako wspomnienie świata, który dziewczynka zostawiała. Morze w oddali symbolizuje z kolei mające dopiero nadejść życie po śmierci. Ilustracja wyostreza więc sens morza, jako pramaterii wiążącej się ze śmiercią, wzmocnioną przez nocne widmo, ptaka śmierci – sowę. Połączenie obu tych planów: widzialnego i niewidzialnego, oraz wyraźny związek obu postaci z siłami chthonicznymi, wiąże je z zaświatami. Autorowi udało się więc pośrednio oddać w obrazie dwie największe obsesje ludzkości – czasu i śmierci – wyrażone w swoich figuratywnych odpowiednikach, które wyznaczały kierunek rozważań Barriego w *Przygodach Piotrusia Pana*.

W 1906 roku, po sukcesie sztuki, opublikowano fragment *The Little White Bird* z Piotrusiem jako głównym bohaterem pod tytułem *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (*Piotruś Pan w Ogrodach Kensingtońskich*) z ilustracjami Artura Rackhama. Póź-



Rysunek 1. Charles Buchel, Plakat sztuki *Piotruś Pan* J.M. Barriego, Londyn, 28 grudnia 1904. Muzeum V&A nr. S.258–1998

² Dzieło edwardiańskiego autora było dla niego projektem niedokończonym. Podczas ostatniego spektaklu 22 lutego 1908 roku, czwartej i ostatniej edycji Londyńskiego *Piotrusia Pana* Barrie zaskoczył publiczność wprowadzeniem dodatkowej sceny zatytułowanej „The Afterthought”, która stanowiła swoiste posłowie autorskie. Była ona zbliżona do powieściowego dialogu w ostatnim rozdziale *Piotrusia Pana*.

niej Barrie zaadaptował sztukę na powieść wydaną w 1911 roku pt. *Peter Pan and Wendy*.³ Osią tych książek są przygody tytułowego Piotrusia, dlatego też należy je czytać jako całość, gdyż wiele wątków wchodzi w nich ze sobą w metatekstowy dialog. Dotychczas w badaniach nad postacią „Piotrusia Pana” podkreślano szczególnie aspekt niedojrzałości głównego bohatera. Ujęcie to rozpowszechniła praca Francesco Cataluccio, który w książce pt. *Niedojrzałość* wskazywał na trwałość mitu Piotrusia Pana. To zastęgnięcie dziecięcości w postaci bohatera Barriego kojarzymy współcześnie z „archetypem infantylnizmu”⁴. Poza zasłoną dziecięcości, niechęci czy wręcz odmowy dorastania, podskórnie pulsują w tekście sztuki „ukryte pod barwną tkaniną akcji”⁵ lęki egzystencjalne, dziecięca seksualność oraz metafizyczne wątpliwości. Utwór Barriego zdaje się reprezentować wszystko, czego literatura dziecięca jako gatunek, powinna się wystrzegać. Tak jednak nie jest. To właśnie baśń podejmuje trudne i niewygodne tematy: „Zło,



Rysunek 2. Arthur Rackham, *Piotruś Pan i Wróżki*

lęk, śmierć, zniszczenie, cierpienie – cała ta sfera dojrzałego bytu trwa »podskórnie«, skryta za zasłoną baśni, poza bezpiecznym, pięknym dziecięcym snem.”⁶ – konstatuje Grzegorz Leszczyński.

Literatura wiktoriańska jest tego szczególnym przykładem, ponieważ wytworzyła oryginalny sposób mówienia i pokazywania dzieciństwa. Nie nazywa ona jednak przemijania po imieniu, ale używa eufemizmów, metafor i metonimii. Różne są oblicza śmierci, tak przerażającej dla dorosłych, a tak magicznej i pociągającej dla małych istot. Śmierć, jej różne hipostazy: kobiety, cieni, zwierząt, wróżek, snów, na stałe zapisała się w literaturze – szczególnie dziecięcej, która nadawała jej różne kształty. W wieku XIX podobne figury

Tanatosa mnożyły się na potęgę, dając wyraz nowoczesnemu doświadczeniu śmierci. Noszą one różne suknie, różne maski. Sięgają one jeszcze do folklorystycznych wyobrażeń śmierci, zachowane w przekazach baśniowych, gdzie

³ Na język polski powieść po raz pierwszy przełożyła już w roku 1913 Zofia Rogoszówna (pod tytułem *Przygody Piotrusia Pana*) tłumaczyli ją również Maciej Słomczyński (*Przygody Piotrusia Pana*, 1974) oraz Michał Rusinek (*Piotruś Pan i Wendy*, 2007). W Wielkiej Brytanii tekst przedstawienia ukazał się drukiem w 1928 r. przekład polski w 2010. Zob. przypis 8.

⁴ Por. F. Cataluccio, *Zagubieni chłopcy*, w: tegoż, *Niedojrzałość. Choroba naszych czasów*, Kraków 2006.

⁵ H. Radzikunas, J. M. Barrie, „Prosto z Mostu” 1937, nr 33, s.7.

⁶ G. Leszczyński, *Baśń jako matryca doświadczeń egzystencjalnych*, w: *Kulturowe konteksty baśni*. T.1 *Rozigrana córa mitu*, red. G. Leszczyński, Poznań 2005, s. 73.

wyobrażano ją jako postać pół-ludzką, pół-magiczną. Ukazywała ona symboliczną ranę – dysharmonię między fizjonomią, a kryjącym się za nim życiem psychicznym. Śmierć to nie tylko biologiczny proces, ale również wnikanie do mikrokosmosu jednostki. U Barriego nie ujawniają się więc typowe w literaturze obrazy okrutnej kostuchy z kosą czy bezwzględnej niszczycielki, dlatego autor tajemnicy szuka za pięknym parawanem.

„ZABAWA W CHOWANEGO Z ANIOŁAMI”

Barrie pisał: „Mój skromny dział literatury może być określony jako zabawa w chowanego z aniołami”.⁷ Anioł urzeczywistnia się w jego twórczości zarówno pod postacią „anielskich” bohaterów, jak i towarzyszy codziennych zabaw – dzieci Daviesów. Szczególny wyraz temu daje w dedykacji dołączonej do sztuki: „Całej Piątce”, w której przywołuje wspólne przygody odbyte w krainę wyobraźni. Pamiątką tych zabaw była powieść pt. *The Boy Castaways of Black Lake Island*: „Będąca historią okropnych przygód trójki braci latem roku 1901 wiernie spisana przez Numer 3” w 1901 roku.⁸ Barrie wspomina w dedykacji, że zachował dla siebie z tego okresu Piotrusia Pana: „tak jak kilka innych potłuczonych kawałeczków nieśmiertelności”.⁹ Autor pragnął zachować „te nie całkiem śmiertelne przygody”, „aby przywołać wspomnienia” i choć na chwilę przedłużyć wiarę chłopców w „anioły”.¹⁰

Intencją autora nie było więc opisanie swego życia, ale przywrócenie właściwego *status quo* światu wyobraźni dziecięcej. Jego sztuki nie można jednak wyabstrahować od kontekstów biograficznych, są bowiem niezbędne do zrozumienia jego twórczości. Szczególnie jedno doświadczenie z okresu dzieciństwa wywarło wpływ na wyobraźnię pisarza. Przywołanie go wydaje się w tym przypadku wręcz kluczowe, bo – jak sugeruje – Aleksander Brzózka wpłynęło na ostateczny kształt kreacji Piotrusia Pana:



Rysunek 3. Michael ubrany jak Piotruś Pan oraz z J. M. Barrie w roli Haka, sierpień 1906¹¹

⁷ Cyt. za H. Radzikunas, *J. M. Barrie*, op. cit., s.7.

⁸ Por. A. Brzózka, *Przedmowa*, w: J. M. Barrie, *Piotruś Pan, czyli chłopiec, który nie chciał dorosnąć*, przeł. A. Brzózka, BAŚNIOKRĄG, Wrocław 2010.

⁹ J. M. Barrie, *Dedykacja*, w: *idem, Piotruś Pan, czyli chłopiec, który nie chciał dorosnąć*, przeł. A. Brzózka, BAŚNIOKRĄG, Wrocław 2010, s. 28.

¹⁰ Ibidem, s. 22.

¹¹ Dostępny w Internecie: <http://www.jmbarrie.co.uk/> [data dostępu 28.12.2010.]

Gdy J. M. Barrie miał sześć lat, był świadkiem tragicznego zdarzenia. George, starszy brat Jamesa, w przeddzień swoich czternastych urodzin utonął, gdy w czasie zabawy na zamrożonym jeziorze załamał się pod nim lód. Matka bardzo boleśnie przeżyła stratę ukochanego syna. Stopniowo popadała w coraz większą depresję i coraz mniej uwagi poświęcała pozostałym dziewięciorgu dzieciom. Ten brak zainteresowania najdotkliwiej odczuwał właśnie mały James. Jak podają biografie, od czasu wypadku chłopiec starał się upodobnić w oczach matki do swego nieżyjącego brata. Aby jak najbardziej go przypominać, przebierał się nawet w ubrania George'a. [...] To właśnie pochodzące z dzieciństwa Barriego bolesne wspomnienia związane z matką oraz strach przed dorastaniem jako czymś złym i szkodliwym uznać można za pierwsze doświadczenia, które wpłynęły na kształt postaci Piotrusia Pana.¹²

W biografii Barriego, jak zauważa badacz, Piotruś w pewien sposób reprezentuje zmarłego brata, który pozostał wiecznie młody i domaga się, by o nim pamiętano. „Ja zestarzałem się, on wciąż ma 14 lat” – mówił Barrie.¹³ Nie jest to sytuacja odosobniona. Biografowie ponadto zwracają uwagę, że różne stworzone przez Barriego wcielenia Piotrusia Pana zapowiadają śmierć dzieci, które znał, jak chociażby prototyp Wendy – Margaret Henly, która zmarła w wieku sześciu lat.¹⁴ Te wątki zwracają uwagę na coś, co być może ma związek z postawą autora tekstu wobec problemu śmierci dziecka. Barrie pisze w lekki, humorystyczny sposób o sprawach bardzo trudnych, wręcz traumatycznych. Potrafi przybliżać je z dystansem właściwym tylko pisarzom angielskim. Odślania tajemnicę istnienia pośrednio, jedynie mgliście ewokując wrażliwość na śmierć dziecka, wplecioną w narrację pozornie, jakby od niechcenia. Uderza czytelnika fakt, że Barrie sprowadził swoje losy do konwencji gry z czytelnikiem, tak że fikcja miesza się w nich z materiałem właściwej biografii. Biografia ta – rekonstruowana przez Barriego w dedykacji do sztuki – przeszyta jest fikcją, gdyż od początku autor wciela się w fantastyczne role: czy to pirata, czy Piotrusia Pana, czy wreszcie w zmarłego brata, upominając się o swe anioły i wymykające się mu „kawałeczki” nieśmiertelności, które zabiera mu dorastanie. Uruchamia wówczas schematy baśni, aby poprzez narrację przedłużyć ich trwanie w pamięci swojej i dzieci. Jego twórczość można więc przewrotnie nazwać (życio)pisaniem, a raczej (baśnio)pisaniem, ale zawsze pisaniem siebie.

Intuicje badaczy potwierdzają te przekonania, które widzą w figurze Piotrusia Pana alegorię przewoźnika śmierci, Charona dusz, albo kolejne wcielenie archaicznej postaci Tanatosa, jednakże nie rozwijają głębiej tego proble-

¹² A. Brzózka, *Przedmowa*, w: op. cit., s. 5.

¹³ A. Belabbes, *Peter Pan*, w: *Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan. A Comparison of English and Scottish Fantasy Literature*, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, 2009 s.33. Zob. też: Cataluccio, *Zagubieni chłopcy*, w: idem, *Niedojrzałość*, op. cit., s.54.

¹⁴ Por. S. Gilead, *Magic Abjured: Closure in Children's Fantasy Fiction*, w: idem, *Literature for children: contemporary criticism*, red. P. Hunt, London 1992, s.108. Zob. też A. Brzózka, op. cit., s.10.

mu jedynie go sygnalizując. Francesco Cataluccio zauważył, że Piotruś jest postacią: „blisko związaną ze śmiercią”, wręcz „demoniczną”, ale na tym porzestaje, bo inne są cele jego diagnoz społecznych i kulturowych. Aleksander Brzózka z kolei wpisał postać „wiecznie młodego chłopca w stały cykl narodzin i śmierci”.¹⁵ Sam Barrie odnotował na marginesie jednego ze swych tekstów: „Widzicie – teraz wydaje mi się, że Piotruś jest tylko martwym dzieckiem – dzieckiem wszystkich tych ludzi, którzy nigdy nie mieli własnego”.¹⁶ Barrie wydobywa z postaci Piotrusia Pana esencję tanatologicznego bytu. Ujmuje go w kategoriach przemijania, które stają się komponentem jego egzystencji. Optykę tę kontynuuje w swojej twórczości. Znajdujemy liczne poszlaki w tekście powieści odnoszące się do słów autora. Pani Darling konstatuje: „Były o nim różne dziwne opowiadania, jak na przykład to, że kiedy dzieci umierają, odprowadza on je przez pewną część drogi, żeby się nie bały.”[11] Jeszcze wyraźniej rolę chłopca podkreśla Barrie w powieści *The Little White Bird*, w której dowiadujemy się, że mający zaledwie siedem dni chłopiec „po zamknięciu ogrodów” na noc wraz z wrózkami „zajmuje się odnajdywaniem i grzebaniem zwłok małych dzieci zgubionych przez ich nianie podczas codziennych spacerów.”¹⁷

To fakt: Barrie buduje wokół postaci chłopca szczególne pole znaczeniowe. Powiązanie symboliki tanatycznej z dzieckiem urzeczywistni się w sztuce i powieści w różnych wariantach znaczeniowych. Jego ontologiczny byt nie jest jednakże jednoznacznie określony. *Puer aeternus* to postać hybrydalna, która jest niby – dzieckiem, niby – śmiercią. Wyróżniają go atrybuty śmierci: potrafi latać, jest nieśmiertelny, a jego królestwem jest Nibylandia, kraina, pozbawiona dystrybucji dorosłych, do której zabiera dzieci. Chłopiec nie musi liczyć się ponadto z realnością, czasem i przestrzenią, a wspaniały świat przygód jest z jednej strony cudowną krainą wyobraźni, z drugiej – światem istniejącym poza czasem i miejscem śmierci.

Piotruś magnetyzuje swym jestestwem dzieci, które spotyka na swej drodze. Ma uwodzicielski urok, który sprawia, że trójka dzieci Darlingów bez większych obaw wyrusza z nim na wyprawę do Nibylandii. Jest to perwersyjny urok, któremu nie można się oprzeć. Niezwykle wyrazisty bohater, tyleż przyściąga – uwodzi obietnicą spełnienia wstydliwych pragnień, co odpycha – bo prócz rozkoszy obecnej w samym spojrzeniu, wzbudza lęk: „Jej [Wendy] ciało gięło się w niepewności. Wyglądało to tak, jak gdyby walczyła, żeby nie oderwać się od podłogi.”¹⁸ [34] Decyzja Piotrusia jest

¹⁵ A. Brzózka, op. cit., s. 8.

¹⁶ Cyt. za. A. Brzózka, op. cit., s. 8, Zob. też J. Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan, or the Impossibility of Children's Fiction* (New Cultural Studies), University of Philadelphia Press, Philadelphia 1993, s. 38.

¹⁷ Por. A. Brzózka, op. cit., s.6.

¹⁸ Wszystkie cytaty pochodzą z: J. M. Barrie, *Piotruś Pan. Piotruś i Wendy*, przeł. M. Słomczyński, GMP, Poznań 1990. Strony podaje w nawiasie.

przesądzona: „[...] nie miał dla niej litości.” [34] Jeszcze bardziej bezwzględny potrafi być w stosunku do dorosłych. Sympatia i okrucieństwo grają w nim na przemian z właściwą śmierci tendencją uwodzenia i dominacji:

Ale oczywiście było mu [Piotrusiowi] przykro. Był tak pełen gniewu na dorosłych, którzy jak zwykle wszystko psuli, że gdy tylko wszedł w swoje wydrążone drzewo, zaczął oddychać specjalnie prędko, chyba z szybkością pięciu oddechów na sekundę. Robił tak, bo w Nibylandii jest powiedziane, że za każdym twoim oddechem umiera jeden dorosły. Pełen mściwości Piotruś zabijał ich teraz tak szybko, jak umiał. [112]

Powiew śmiertelności oddechu Piotrusia odsłania w tym momencie jeszcze jeden z jego tajemnych wizerunków. Odbierając życie swoim ofiarom, pogrąża je w wiecznej niepamięci. Czytamy w powieści: „Po zabiciu ich zapomina o nich – odpowiedział niedbale”. [167] Mieszkańców Nibylandii, którzy dorosną, wygoni ze swej wyspy lub odda na zabicie piratom. Piotruś więc w swej istocie uosabia fascynację i grozę. Karen Coats w *Looking Glasses and Neverlands* pisze: „Piotruś Pan reprezentuje utratę pamięci i pewien typ arbitralnego okrucieństwa, które są związane ze śmiercią.” [tłum. aut.]¹⁹ (W powieści czytamy: „Mógł przecież całkiem o niej (przygodzie – K.Sz) zapomnieć i nic nie powiedzieć, a potem wychodzi się na dwór i znajduje zwłoki.”[90]) Nibylandia w tym kontekście staje się krainą wiecznego zapomnienia.

Dzieci – mimo dwuznaczności Piotrusia Pana – poszły za jego nęcącą pieśnią. Bohater Barriego Piotruś Pan kuśił je zupełnie jak Szczurołap. Nęcił i czarował swoich małych podopiecznych prowadząc ich na „tamtą stronę”. Pierre Péju w książce pt. *Dziewczynka w baśniowym lesie* przypomina ów stary baśniowy wątek. Próbuje wyjaśnić, na czym polega czar kusiciela. Historia o *Fleście z Hameln* to rodzaj dostępnej każdemu dziecku, a więc i dorosłemu:

fantazji o uprowadzeniu, mrocznych pragnień, by zostać porwanym (zarazem jednak dotyczących „gdzie indziej” i podróży), które drzemią w każdym dziecku. Odejść z nieznanym. Tak jakby się pragnęło, by człowiek o niezwykłym wyglądzie, któremu zaraz przypisuje się magiczne moce, pojawił się w codziennym, czasami smutnym uniwersum rodziny. Człowiek ten wypowiadałby słowa lub czynił gesty świadczące o jego przynależności do innej sfery niż rodzice; wszystko w nim przywołałoby na myśl owo nieskończone „gdzie indziej”, a zatem i ucieczkę, podróż, drogi i spotkania ... Jego niepokojąca obecność stanowiłaby wyłom w rodzinnym krajobrazie. Nie jest to bowiem żaden antyojciec, ktoś, kto otwarcie przeciwstawia się prawu ojca, ale rodzaj *przechodnia*, który przyciąga, zachęca i rzuca urok, łącząc w sobie atmosferę okrucieństwa i zapowiedź możliwej przyjemności.²⁰

¹⁹ K. Coats, *Looking Glasses and Neverlands*, w: *Looking Glasses and Neverlands*. Lacan, Desire, and Subjectivity in Children's Literature, Iowa City 2004, s. 95.

²⁰ P. Péju, *Flecista z Hameln*, w: *Dziewczynka w baśniowym lesie. O poetykę baśni: w odpow-*

Zastanawiając się nad wątkiem uprowadzenia Péju wyjaśnia, iż oznacza on możliwość preedypalnej egzystencji dziecka:

Wbrew interpretacjom klasycznej psychoanalizy nie wszystko daje się sprowadzić do „ojca”! Tamten „typ” zupełnie wymyka się siatce edypalnej i sygnalizuje dzieciom pozytywną szansę uniknięcia systemu Edypa. Problemem nie jest już wcale zabicie ojca, zrzucenie winy, obawa przed kastracją czy pożądanie matki, ale *wyruszenie w drogę*.²¹

Kiedy więc narrator Barriego pyta: „Jak mogła się oprzeć?” [35], mówi o niemożliwości odrzucenia przez dziecko baśniowego modelu „wyruszenia w drogę”. Dziewczynka nie mogła się oprzeć również z innego powodu. W tajemnicy, która otacza Piotrusia zawarta była obietnica rozkoszy – *jouissance*.²² Rozbudził w niej pragnienie za krainą pełną magicznych stworzeń – syren i wrózek oraz szacunku do pozycji matki. Ucieleśniał bowiem figurę obcego, o którym wspomina Péju. Dziewczynka podąży ślepo z braćmi za tą obietnicą, nie zważając na świat, który zostawia.

DLACZEGO W NIBYLANDII NIE MA DOROSŁYCH?

Każde dziecko według Barriego ma swoją Nibylandię – własną, wymarzoną krainę dziecięcej szczęśliwości. Czy dorośli mają mogą mieć do niej wstęp? Autor pokazuje, że Nibylandia istnieje tak długo, jak trwa wiara dziecka w magię. Czytamy w *Piotrusiu i Wendy*: „Dzieci miewają zdumiewające przygody, które wcale ich nie niepokoją. Na przykład potrafią wspomnieć w tydzień po wydarzeniu, że spotkały w lesie swego umarłego tatusia i bawiły się z nim.” [11] „Dziecięcość”, o której mówi, odnosi się raczej do pewnej dyspozycji emocjonalnej i umysłowej podmiotu, niż do biologicznej właściwości. U dorosłych zanika ona i zostaje zastąpiona racjonalizacją niepojętego. „Nie można dostrzec Piotrusia, kiedy jest się dorosłym. Myślę, że jest podmuchem wiatru na rogu ulicy” [125] – czytamy w sztuce. Dorośli zapominają o wyspie i o Piotrusiu, a wówczas magiczny świat staje się dla nich jedynie fikcją. Pani Darling nie widzi wróżki w pokoju dzieci, a jedynie „kulę światła” [38].

Tymczasem do Nibylandii trafiają wszystkie niechciane dzieci – dzieci śmieci, np. „zagubieni chłopcy”: „Są to dzieci, które wypadły z wózków, kiedy nianka patrzyła w inną stronę. Jeżeli nikt się po nie nie zgłasza w ciągu siedmiu dni, odsyła się je daleko do Nibylandii dla zaoszczędzenia wydatków.” [32] Schronienie to staje się więc alegorią dziecięcego raju.

iedzi na interpretacje psychoanalityczne i formalistyczne, przeł. M. Pluta, Warszawa 2008, s. 38–39.

²¹ *ibidem*, s.39.

²² Por. Pojęcie *jouissance* rozumiem tu w znaczeniu jakie podaje Paweł Dybel. Por. P. Dybel, *Fantazmaty ideologii*, w: idem, *Urwane ścieżki. Przybyszewski – Freud – Lacan*, Kraków 2000, s. 303.

W epoce wiktoriańskiej i edwardiańskiej często wyobrażano sobie miejsce, do którego miały udawać się zmarłe dzieci. Przestrzeń ta jawiła się jako wydzielona z raju. Znajdowały w niej przystań niewinne istnienia. Dawne hierofanie zastąpiono jednak intymnymi krainami metafizycznymi, które były alternatywą dla dotychczasowego modelu. Był to przejaw wyczerpania się paradygmatu Raju chrześcijańskiego, który zaczął tracić swój wymiar sakralny. Transformacja ta była związana z romantyczną koncepcją konsolacyjną po stracie dziecka, która uległa laicyzacji. Kryła się za nią próba ocalenia fantazmatu niewinności dziecka. Judith Plotz zauważa, że tendencja ta znalazła szczególnie wyraz w jednym z tekstów epoki. Badaczka stwierdza, że:

Takie wysuwanie na pierwszy plan dynamicznych momentów służy transformacji martwych dzieci w nieśmiertelne. Przez intensywność występowania specyficznych wspomnień, zatrzymywano dziecko w momencie jego najpełniejszej energii, a w ten sposób uczyniono je wiecznie obecnym. Nawet niebo nie oferuje w tym kontekście nic lepszego niż taką właśnie obecność, tak więc według większości wiktoriańskich spekulacji, dzieci w niebie nigdy nie dorosną. [...] Takie uporczywe podtrzymywanie [wiodące] do niezmiennego dzieciństwa spowodowało, że esej Leigha Hunta *The Deaths of Little children* z 1820 roku stał się najważniejszym artykułem zbioru. Hunt dowodził w nim, że istnieje związek pomiędzy wczesną śmiercią i wiecznym dzieciństwem. Gdyby nie było śmierci dzieci „to powinniśmy każde małe dziecko traktować jako przyszłych mężczyzn i kobiety. [...] Dziewczynki i chłopcy byłiby przyszłymi mężczyznami i kobietami, a nie obecnymi dziećmi.” [...] Ale wraz ze śmiercią „inne dzieci dojrzeją [do] męskości i kobiecości i będą cierpieć wszystkie zmiany moralności. To jedno tylko uznane będzie za nieśmiertelne dziecko”. [tłum. aut.]²³

Oba paradygmaty, chrześcijański i romantyczny, łączyła próba „ocalenia” niewinności dziecięcej w zaświatach. Ich realizacje otrzymały różnorodne w literaturze nazwy: „kraina z tamtej strony północnego wiatru”, wodne królestwo, dziecięce Betlejem – oddane przez ilustratora *Piotrusia Pana* Arthura Rackhama w rysunku pt. „To Bethlehem: A Christmas Masque”. Podobne krainy pojawiały się zarówno w baśniach jak i w innych tekstach kultury tego okresu. Te same schematy fabularne i konwencje prezentacji dziecięcego raju pojawiają się szczególnie w literaturze angielskiej (np. baśń Georga MacDonalda *Na skrzydłach Północnej Wichury* (1871), czy utwór Charlesa Kingsley’a pt. *Wodne dzieci* (1863).

Na tle literatury wiktoriańskiej ujęcie Barriego jest oryginalne i zaskakujące. Ujawnia znaczące pęknięcie w kreacji małego mieszkańca Nibylandii. Piotruś pragnie pozostać wiecznym dzieckiem: „Nigdy nie chcę być dorosłym mężczyzną! [...] Chcę na zawsze pozostać małym chłopcem i bawić się. Więc uciekłem do Ogrodów Kensingtonskich i długi czas mieszkalem z wróżkami.” [28–29] Nie jest jednak, jak należałoby oczekiwać, zbiorem cnót. Widzimy

²³ J. Plotz, *Literary ways of Killing a Child: The 19th Century Practice*, w: *Aspects and Issues in the History of Children's Literature*, red. M. Nikolajeva, Wesport, London 1995, s. 17.

wiele pejoratywnych cech chłopca, jak chociażby jego zarozumialstwo, narcyzm, brak serca czy egoizm. Autor zdaje się więc polemizować z teorią wrodzonej niewinności dziecięcej, w rzeczywistości jednak koncepcję tę rozwija prezentując relatywizm moralności dziecięcej. Jak się wydaje ma to związek z jego pojmowaniem kategorii niewinności. W Nibylandii mogą się znaleźć jedynie dzieci: „wesołe, niewinne i bez serca.” [174] Dziecko staje się takie, gdy odrzuci w nim seksualność. Dlatego Barrie metaforycznie wycina z małych bohaterów serce, pozbawiając ich zdolności do miłości, usprawiedliwiając tym samym niekrystaliczną naturę „wiecznego dziecka”.

Widać tu więc erozję w myśleniu o *sacrum* i niewinności dziecięcej. Raj Barriego stanowi pole walki w umyśle dziecka między tym, co w nim cielesne, a śmiertelne, doczesne i ostateczne – między Erosem i Tanatosem. Niewinność rozumie nie w wymiarze cech (nawet dopuszcza popełnienie morderstwa), ale dojrzałości seksualnej. Współistnieją tu pierwiastki dobra i zła, czystości i seksualności, mieszają elementy *sacrum* i *profanum*. Wendy odlatuje z Piotrusiem do krainy, którą zamieszkuje chłopiec – krainy *jouissance* (rozkoszy). Dla dziewczynki Piotruś Pan staje się *signified* dla samej *jouissance* – zarówno na płaszczyźnie relacji matka – dziecko, jak też *jouissance* w znaczeniu przyjemności seksualnej.²⁴ Ponieważ jednak Piotruś nie chce zrezygnować z pozostania w Wyobrażeniowym porządku, nie jest w stanie wypełnić braku powstałego w dziewczynce, która przyjmując rolę matki, pragnie widzieć w nim potencjalnego Ojca. Nie mogąc ostatecznie wypełnić tej pustki, krąży wokół obiektu *jouissance*, stwarzając w ten sposób iluzję wypełnienia.

Eros, którego próbuje odnaleźć Wendy nie uaktywnia się w Piotrusiu, bowiem musi on pozostać niewinnym dzieckiem. W efekcie to sama Wendy zostaje pochwycona przez obiekt swego pożądania, w uścisk Tanatosa. Nie są to jednak „skrzydła Tanatosa”, o których pisał Zbigniew Mikołajko w artykule *La Belle Dame Sans merci*, które miały chronić przed bólem i cierpieniem.²⁵

W takim rozumieniu Piotruś Pan pozostaje na zawsze bezcielesny, niematerialny, ponieważ otacza siebie aurą nieprzystępności, tak by pozostać wiecznym dzieckiem. Wendy nie może go nawet dotknąć: „Nie wolno ci mnie dotykać” oraz „Nikomui nie wolno mnie dotykać”. [46] Bohater jest więc tylko uwodziciel-



Rysunek 4. Arthur Rackham, „To Bethlehem: A Christmas Masque” 1900.

²⁴ Rodzaje te analizuje K. Coats w: K. Coats, *Looking Glasses and Neverlands...*, op. cit., s. 91–92.

²⁵ Por. Z. Mikołajko, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, „Twórczość” 1997, nr 9, s. 89.

skim duchem zawieszonym między życiem a całkowitym niebytem. Reprezentacja pozbawia go twarzy na rzecz ikony, z której wygnano wszelką materialność ciała. Świadczą o tym określenia pojawiające się w sztuce, oddające jego eteryczność: „nic nie waży” [85]. Hak widzi w nim „nie tyle chłopca, ile obłoczek mgły tańczącym w promieniach słońca” [116], wreszcie określa go „demonem”.

A zatem Piotruś jest niewidzialną, niezniszczalną i nieśmiertelną istotą. Cechuje go życie poza *śmiercią*, które Lacan określił mianem „lamella”. To żyjący umarły, który po uśmierceniu w porządku Symbolicznym nadal „żyje” w porządku Wyobrażeniowym. Piotruś Pan istnieje niezależnie od cienia, który odrywa się od ciała właściciela.²⁶ Jego status jest fantazmatyczny. Ta niezniszczalna uporczywość libido jest odpowiednikiem Freudowskiego „popędu śmierci”, który jest sposobem ukazywania się nieśmiertelności w psychoanalizie, jako nadmiar życia, istniejący poza biologicznym cyklem życia i śmierci. Ten nadmiar zapisuje się jednakże jako rana, która czyni podmiot wiecznie „żywym” i pozbawia go możliwości śmierci w rzeczywistości Wyobrażeniowej. „Piotruś Pan” to zatem libido ukazane jako czyste życie, niezniszczalne i nieśmiertelne – zupełnie jak samo doświadczenie śmierci.

Piotruś zamiast więc istnieć w porządku Symbolicznym, żyje w Nibylandii, ponieważ odmówił wyrzeczenia się swojej rozkoszy (*jouissance*). *Jouissance* jest tym miejscem, gdzie życie i śmierć mieszają się. Wejście do lacanowskiego Wyobrażeniowego, które reprezentuje Nibylandia, to wkroczenie do fazy wyobrażeniowej śmierci. Dzieci w powieści Barriego przechodzą przez ten etap rozpoznania i przeglądają się w postaci Piotrusia Pana. Wraz z nim zaczynają odtwarzać różne role, które umożliwiają im sprawdzenie się w odmiennych sferach życia. W takiej udawanej przestrzeni Wendy może widzieć siebie jako kobietę, matkę, chłopcy zaś w roli synów, piratów. Odgrywają jednak życie na – niby. Na – prawdę jest gdzie indziej, o czym przypomina reakcja dziewczynki, która obawia się, że żałoba matki po dzieciach może się skończyć, czego przejawem będzie zamknięcie okna („Natychmiast! – odpowiedziała Wendy stanowczo, bo przerażała ją okropna myśl, że może matka zdjąć już żałobę”. [112] Wendy, wybierając więc na koniec porządek Symboliczny, zaakceptowała problem czasu i przemijania ludzkiego, pomimo towarzyszącego jej resentymetu za utraconą młodością.

Szczególne znaczenie ma również fakt, że Barrie nie umieszcza Nibylandii w rzeczywistości zewnętrznej, jak to miało miejsce w dotychczasowych realizacjach przestrzennych raju, ale w mikrokosmosie dziecięcego umysłu. To w jego pracy poszukuje odpowiedzi na fundamentalne pytania eschatologiczne i egzystencjalne. Czytamy w powieści *Przygody Piotrusia Pana*:

Nie wiem, czy widziałeś kiedyś mapę ludzkiego umysłu. Lekarze czasem rysują mapy innych części twojego ciała. Rzeczywiście mapa twojego ciała może cię

²⁶ Por. R. Feldstein, B. Fink, M. Jaanus, *Reading Seminar XI: Lacan's Four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis: including the first English translation of "Position of the unconscious" by Jacques Lacan*, New York 1995.

zaciekawić. Ale niech spróbują narysować mapę dziecinnego umysłu, który jest nie tylko pogmatwany, ale w dodatku kręci się przez cały czas w kółko. Widać na nim linie zygzakowate, podobne do wykresu temperatury na karcie szpitalnej. Linie te są prawdopodobnie, drogami biegnącymi przez wyspę. Bo Nibylandia jest zawsze – w mniejszym albo większym stopniu – wyspą, gdzie błyskają, od czasu do czasu, zdumiewające barwy i gdzie są koralowe rafy, podejrzanie wyglądające okręty w pobliżu brzegów, dzicy ludzie, odludne legowiska zwierząt, gnomy zajmujące się krawiectwem, jaskinie, przez które płynie rzeka, książęta mający sześciu starszych braci, chyląca się do upadku chatka i pewna, bardzo mała, stara pani o haczykowatym nosie. Ale jest jeszcze: pierwszy dzień w szkole, religia, ojcowie, okrągły staw, robótki igłą, morderstwa, wieszanie, nieregularne czasowniki, tort czekoladowy, wkładanie szelek, powiedz: „Chrzęszcz brzmi w trzcinie!”, trzy pensy za to, że sam sobie wyrwiesz ząb – i tak dalej. Te sprawy i rzeczy są albo częścią wyspy, albo należą do innej mapy, która przez nią prześwituje. A wszystko to razem jest bardzo pogmatwane, zważywszy w dodatku, że nic nie chce stać spokojnie. [9–10]

Metafora mapy oddaje skomplikowaną esencję Nibylandii. Staje się ona literackim obrazem nieświadomości, który został uprzestrzenniony w umyśle dziecka. Nie chodzi tu jednak ani o samą mapę, ani o terytorium, do którego się ona odnosi. Karl Schlögel nazywa takie obrazy dziecięcego umysłu *mental maps*. Badacz zauważa, że: „kładą *«one»* w zasadzie kres wyobrażeniu o jednej przestrzeni, są radykalną subiektywizacją wyobrażenia o przestrzeni.”²⁷ Zbudowane są z obrazów, wspomnień, zapachów, dźwięków. W takim rozumieniu kraina, którą rysuje i ożywia w umyśle dziecka Barrie, jest w rzeczywistości baudrillardowskim symulakrem, który projektuje rzeczywistość pozbawioną źródła i realności.²⁸ Baudrillard takim symulakrem określił również recepcję figury Boga. Podobna asocjacja łączy Nibylandię z chrześcijańskim Rajem – są one swoimi symulakrami. Symulakry te nie są jednak wcale mapami czy rzeczywistymi śladami. Dlatego do Nibylandii nie można trafić, bo jak czytamy: „nawet ptaki, mając ze sobą mapy i w bardzo wietrznych zakątkach badając je, nie mogłyby skorzystać z tych objaśnień.” [40] To sama wyspa poszukuje dzieci:

Po wielu księżycach osiągnęli ją, a co więcej okazało się, że lecieli przez cały czas tak jak trzeba, nie tyle dzięki przewodnictwu Piotrusia i Blaszanego Dzwoneczka, ile dlatego, że wyspa sama zaczęła ich szukać. Tylko w ten sposób może ktoś odnaleźć jej zaczarowane brzegi.” [44]

Konsekwencją takiego ujęcia jest swoiste zwielokrotnienie i zapętlenie wewnętrznej rzeczywistości dziecięcej, z której „prześwituja” mapy realna i ma-

²⁷ K. Schlögel, *Mental maps*, W: *W przestrzeni czas czytamy. O historii cywilizacji i geopolityce*, przeł. I. Drozdowska i Ł. Musiał. Poznań 2009, s. 242.

²⁸ Pojęcie „symulakry” rozumiem w znaczeniu, jakie nadał mu Baudrillard. Zob. J. Baudrillard, *Procesja symulaków*, w: idem, *Symulakry i symulacja*, Warszawa 2005.

giczna, Symboliczna i Wyobrażeniowa, rzeczywistość na – niby i na – prawdę, co powoduje niemożliwość oddzielenia zjawisk porządku ontologicznego i znakowego. Występuje tu więc perspektywa podwójnego trwania, w której procesy egzystencjalne ukazane są przez pryzmat podświadomości postaci. Kraina ta, za pomocą tej dwoistości, symuluje Raj i staje się jego lustrzanym odbiciem. To jednakże złudny obraz, bowiem jednocześnie jest jego przeciwieństwem. Pozostawia po sobie jedynie ślad i pustkę (brak matki, brak pocałunku).

Wyjściowy model Raju w tym kontekście ulega rozpadowi i staje się uniwersalnym rajem, ale w swej istocie jest on tylko symulakrem – tzn. wyraża wszystko symultanicznie i ciągle symuluje coś innego, niż mówi („Ale przecież nie znajdujemy się naprawdę na wyspie.”[52] – konstatują bohaterowie). Symbolicznie umarli dla świata rzeczywistego tutaj ożywają, by za chwilę ponownie umrzeć. Odwrócenie to powoduje, że jest to raz kraina fascynująca, a za chwilę niepokojąca i przerażająca:

Spośród wszystkich rozproszonych wysp Nibylandia jest najbardziej przytulna i zwarta. Nie taka szeroka i rozległa, z wielkimi, nudnymi odległościami pomiędzy jedną przygodą a drugą, ale przyjemnie zatłoczona. Kiedy bawisz się na niej za dnia, używając krzeseł obrusa, wtedy wcale nie jest niepokojąca. Ale na dwie minuty przed zaśnięciem staje się niemal prawdziwa. Dlatego właśnie palą się nocne lampki w dzieciennych pokojach. [10]

Dzieci szybko odkrywają, że Nibylandia posiada mroczną stronę swej istoty, która pojawia się za podwójną zasłoną: nieświadomości oraz nocy. Wówczas wyraźnie zarysowuje się „różnica pomiędzy wyspą Na – Niby a tą samą wyspą rzeczywistą.”[49] Nieuchronnie przybliżają się wówczas do bólu, zagrożenia i śmierci:

Za dawnych dni w domu Nibylandia zawsze zaczynała ściemniać się i wyglądać trochę przerażająco, gdy nadchodziła pora snu. Niezbadane ścieżki ukazywały się i rozbiegały, posuwały się po nich czarne cienie, ryk czyhających bestii stawał się groźniejszy, a najgorsze było to, że traciłeś pewność zwycięstwa. Byłeś bardzo zadowolony, że palą się nocne lampki. Lubieś nawet, kiedy Nana mówiła ci, że tam jest kominek, a Nibylandia jest na – niby. Oczywiście, Nibylandia była tylko na – niby za tamtych dni, ale teraz była prawdziwa, nie paliły się żadne nocne lampki, stawało się coraz ciemniej i gdzie była Nana? [45]

W owym skrytym i mrocznym obliczu doświadczenia Nibylandii czytelnik odkrywa nagle jaśniejącą teofanię dziecięcego raju. Rzeczywistość ta jest wytwarzana i budowana z cząstek dziecięcej wyobraźni, z różnych matryc i jednostek pamięci. Jak pokazuje Barrie, a mówiąc za Baudrillardem: „może z ich pomocą być reprodukowana nieskończoną ilość razy.”²⁹ Możemy ją rozumieć

²⁹ J. Baudrillard, *Procesja symulaków*, op. cit., s.7.

w kategoriach lacanowskiego Wyobraźniowego, ponieważ Nibylandia jest inna dla każdego z bohaterów:³⁰

Oczywiście Nibylandie różnią się bardzo od siebie. Ta Janka, na przykład miała lagunę, nad którą przelatywały flamingi, Janek strzelał do nich. Michał, który był bardzo malutki, miał flaminga, nad którym przelatywały laguny. Janek mieszkał na plaży w łodzi przewróconej dnem do góry, Michał – w wigwamie, a Wendy – w domu zrobionym ze zręcznie pozszywanych liści. [...] Ale wszystkie Nibylandie mają rodzinne podobieństwo i gdyby stanęły rzędem, mógłbyś powiedzieć, że jedna ma nos drugiej – i tak dalej. Do tych czarodziejskich brzegów nieustannie przybijają łódki bawiących się dzieci. I my tam byliśmy. Chociaż już nigdy tam nie wylądujemy, słyszymy nadal głos fal uderzających o brzeg.[10]

Scena wytwarza przestrzeń piętrzących się metafor, coraz bardziej oddalonych od siebie i od swego źródła. Różnicę tę umożliwia właśnie „powtarzalność modeli i symulacyjne generowanie różnic.”³¹ System wymienia się sam na siebie, a przestrzeń życia i śmierci zaciera się.

Barrie swoimi tekstami sygnalizuje więc rzecz kluczową dla ujęcia problematyki tanatycznej w literaturze dziecięcej – przejście od śmierci, jako kategorii kulturowej, do śmierci rozumianej jako indywidualne, podświadome, ale jednocześnie intymne przeżycie. Tendencja ta widoczna jest u pisarza właśnie wtedy, gdy intuicyjnie odsłania ową ciemną, osobliwą siłę znajdującą się w postaci Piotrusia i wyobrażeniu Nibylandii, po czym umieszcza ją w umyśle każdego dziecka – w jego snach i marzeniach sennych. Barrie konstruuje dyskurs oniryczny prawdopodobnie bezwiednie wchodzi w obszar niewyrażalności. Odsłania istniejące w dziecku pewne pradoświadczenie śmierci, które ludzkość próbowała opisać posługując się platońską ideą anamnezy. Lang relacjonując Lacana zauważa: „Nie istnieje bowiem inna rzeczywistość niż ów dotyk śmierci, którym zostaje on naznaczony w chwili narodzin, poza nowym prestiżem, jaki zyskuje u człowieka funkcja wyobraźni.”³² Pierwszym doświadczeniem wyobraźniowym dziecka zdaje się więc być spotkanie śmierci. Rozliczne fantazje, które mają dzieci Darlingów, przybliżają je do niej. Matka, w ujęciu Barriego, nie chce jednak, aby dzieci myślały o ciemnych, mrocznych rzeczach. Kiedy więc porządkuje umysły dzieci podczas ich snu, spycha głęboko niechciane myśli do podświadomości. Dlatego też Piotruś Pan, choć znany i bliski, staje się niebezpieczną myślą, która ostatecznie materializuje się w groźny konkret – umbra mortis (cień śmierci), bo uprowadza jej dzieci, pozostawiając jedynie widok cieni w oknie: „A najbardziej mrozącym serce

³⁰ Por. *Finding Neverlands...*, op. cit.

³¹ J. Baudrillard, op. cit., s. 7.

³² H. Lang, *Język i nieświadomość. Podstawy teorii psychoanalitycznej Jacques'a Lacana*, przeł. P. Piszczatowski, Gdańsk 2005, s. 340.

widokiem były trzy cienie na firance, krążące w koło i w koło, ale nie po podłodze, tylko w powietrzu. Nie trzy cienie! Cztery!” [39]³³

Barrie próbował więc znaleźć miejsce dla śmierci dziecka w przestrzeni kulturowych obrazów. Postać Piotrusia Pana jest produktem poczucia winy, świadomie sentymentalnego zboczenia od dorosłych lęków przemijalności czasu i śmierci. Sposób tej kreacji ma ominąć te lęki. Regresywne pragnienie eksponowane w baśni, pozwala zastanowić się nad wiecznym dzieciństwem, poszerzonym jednakże o jego aspekt eschatologiczny.

Barrie stara się uchronić dzieci przed symboliczną śmiercią, jaka spotkała Piotrusia Pana. Jego bohater nie rozumie znaczenia i wartości życia. W sztuce czytamy: „Gdyby tylko mógł się w tym połapać, zapewne usłyszeliśmy jego zawołanie: »Żyć, a to dopiero wielka przygoda!«, zaraz jednak dodaje: „ale nigdy jakoś nie może się w tym połapać...”³⁴ Zamiast tego słyszymy słynne słowa wypowiedziane w scenie na lagunie syren, w której chłopiec staje w obliczu własnego końca: „Śmierć jest także wielką przygodą!” [95]. Tak oto Barrie odnajduje „potłuczone kawałki nieśmiertelności” w Piotrusiu, którego przeznaczeniem było nie tyle odbieranie życia, ile dawanie nowej przygody, przygody śmierci kolejnym pokoleniom oczarowanych jego osobą dzieci.

**„BROKEN FRAGMENTS OF IMMORTALITY”
IN J. M. BARRIE’S ADVENTURES OF PETER PAN**

J. M. Barrie created a new type of “intriguing” character, who connotes disturbing content, which proved to be one of the most enduring myths of modern culture, inspiring us to this day with its hidden symbols and signs. Author examines his play *The Adventures of Peter Pan*, as an example of thinking beyond Victorian convention of conceptualizing the childhood innocence. With the help of psychoanalytic analysis - in particular Lacanian theory – she shows how behind the childhood veil, dislike or even refuse to grow up, Barrie’s text subcutaneously hides unseen under the colorful fabric of the story existential anxiety, child sexuality, and metaphysical questions that organize also all of his stories. The author tries to show the image of Peter Pan, excavated from the fuzzy, “broken pieces of immortality” captivating it in the terms of passing, which becomes a regular component of his existence.

³³ Cień symbolicznie prognozuje śmierć.

³⁴ J. M. Barrie, *Piotruś Pan, czyli chłopiec, który nie chciał dorosnąć...*, op. cit., s. 130.

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Felicja Szymanowska z Krysińskich – tłumaczka i adaptatorka powieści dla dzieci i młodzieży

Felicja Szymanowska z Krysińskich, tłumaczka, pisarka dla dzieci i młodzieży, żyjąca w latach 1821-1891, wywodziła się z żydowskiej rodziny konwertytów.

Zadebiutowała w 1847 r. wydaniem podręcznika do początkowej nauki gramatyki polskiej, napisanego według wzoru francuskiej gramatyki pani Amable Sabine Casimire Tastu¹ pt. *Wychowanie macierzyńskie, czyli Podręczna Biblioteczka naukowa dla dzieci płci obojej od lat 2 do 6*. Podręcznik do nauki języka polskiego, czyli *Początkowa gramatyka polska*, został wydany w tomie V jako dopełnienie wydania francuskiego i w założeniu miał służyć zarówno dzieciom, jak i matkom do bardzo w ówczesnych czasach powszechnego nauczania domowego. We wstępie do tej niewielkiej książeczki F. Szymanowska pisała, iż „powodem do ułożenia tego dziełka była chęć stania się użyteczną dzieciom a zarazem Matkom, które pragną same kierować umysłem wykształceniem swych dzieci”². Szymanowska wzorowała się nie tylko na Amable Tastu, której, jak sama zaznaczyła, zawdzięcza najwięcej, ale również na *Gramatyce księdza Kopczyńskiego* oraz na podręcznikach innych autorów: Józefa Muczkowskiego, Teodora Heinsiusa, Tomasza Kurhanowicza, Franciszka Noëla, Charlesa Chapsala³.

Podręcznik został podzielony na lekcje, z których każda dotyczy innego zagadnienia i kończy się odpowiednio dobranymi pytaniami, służącymi utrwaleniu materiału. Ćwiczenia konstruowane są w taki sposób, aby były gotowymi wzorami dla matek, mających uczyć swoje dzieci. Materiał gramatyczno-językowy często podawany jest w formie tabel, co zwiększa jego przejrzystość. W książce nie zabrakło również krótkich opowiadań oraz wierszowanych bajek, np. Jana Lafontaine’a, Juliana Niemcewicza, Oliwiera Goldsmitha, Stani-

¹ Tastu Amable, urodzona w r. 1798 w Metz, w Lotaryngii, z domu Voyart. Jej główne prace to: *Poésies* (1836), *Poésies nouvelles* (1834), *Chroniques de France* (1829), *Soirées littéraires de Paris* (1832), *Education maternelle; simple leçon d'une mère à ses enfans* (1836). Napisała także *Histoire de la littérature allemande* (1842). Zmarła w Paryżu w r. 1849, *Encyklopedia powszechna*, t. XXV, Warszawa 1867, s. 18.

² F. Szymanowska, *Wstęp*, [w:] *Początkowa gramatyka polska, według A. Tastu, Wychowanie macierzyńskie, czyli podręczna biblioteczka naukowa dla dzieci płci obojej od lat 6 do 12*, Warszawa 1847.

³ Ibidem, *Wstęp*.

sława Jachowicza, służących wychowaniu moralnemu. Kończąc pierwszą część podręcznika, dotyczącą fonetyki i fleksji, Szymanowska pisała, iż „gramatykę należy bardzo dokładnie wykładać i przyzwyczajać dziecko, aby się nad każdym wyrazem zastanawiało”⁴. Zdaniem autorki szczególną uwagę należało zwrócić na naukę o przypadkach. Druga część tej małej, a jakże ważnej książeczki dotyczy składni. Nauka rozbioru zdań połączona jest tu z nauczaniem moralnym. „Dobra matka jednakowo kocha wszystkie swoje dzieci. Dobry ojciec stara się usilnie o dobro swoich dzieci”⁵. To przykłady użytych zdań, służących za materiał do ćwiczeń, a jednocześnie podnoszenia morale i wskazywania matkom tego, jak należy wychowywać swoje pociechy. W podręczniku omówiono także zasady ortograficzne oraz zamieszczono krótki słowniczek trudniejszych wyrazów.

Innymi książkami dla najmłodszych, które napisała Szymanowska są *Powiatki dla Stasia i Jadwini* wydane w Warszawie w 1879 pod pseudonimem Zofii z Rymanowa⁶ oraz *Książeczka babuni. Małe powiatki dla dzieci od lat 4 do 7* (Warszawa 1880). O pierwszej z nich pisał w „Ateneum” z 1878 r. Feliks Witkowski, że jest to książeczka, którą „...z radością wziął do ręki, albowiem dotąd w naszej literaturze powiastek króciutkich, odpowiadających rozwinięciu małych dziełek, odznaczających się prostotą języka, daleką od wszelkich ozdób krasomówczych, nie znaleźmy”⁷. Dalej F. Witkowski oceniając powiatki, pisał, że zawarte w książeczce ilustracje są świetnym dopełnieniem tekstu, choć piękne wydanie nie rekompensuje z kolei niedociągnięć języka, wyrażających się w jego niedokładności, nieścisłości i nielogiczności⁸.

Podobnie oceniana była *Książeczka babuni*. J. Pracki w „Tygodniku Powszechnym” z 1879 r. pisał o niej w rubryce omawiającej książki gwiazdkowe, że F. Szymanowska przeznaczyła ją dla dzieci małych, ale umiejących już czytać. Chwalił świetną obrazowość, jasny, potoczny styl, ale ubolewał z kolei, podobnie jak F. Witkowski, omawiając poprzedni tytuł, nad nieszczególną estetyką języka i złą interpunkcją. Spośród króciutkich opowiadań, które według niego nawiązywały do stylu Klementyny Hoffmanowej lub naśladowały opowieści francuskie⁹, naj-

⁴ Ibidem, cz. 1, s. 309.

⁵ Ibidem, cz. 2, s. 5.

⁶ Według Mateusza Miesesa Szymanowska Felicja posługiwała się pseudonimem Zofii z Rymanowa, M. Mieses, *Polscy chrześcijanie pochodzenia żydowskiego*, Warszawa 1938, t.2, s. 227.

⁷ F. Witkowski, *Powiatki i nauczki dla Stasia i Jadwini przez Zofię z Rymanowa. Z wielu rycinami* „Ateneum”, Warszawa 1878, t. IV, s. 568.

⁸ Ibidem, s. 568-569.

⁹ Innego zdania na temat naśladowania z francuskiego był nieznany autor rubryki gwiazdkowej „Tygodnika Powszechnego”, z następnego, 1880 roku. Twierdził on, iż F. Szymanowska jedynie przez swą skromność zaznaczyła, że powiatki swe naśladowała z francuskiego. Z pewnością są one oryginalne, pisał, gdyż widać w nich niezwykle dużo włożonego serca, ciepła i naturalności, *Wydawnictwa gwiazdkowe*, „Tygodnik Powszechny”, Warszawa 1880, s. 791.

ładniejsze są te opisujące bożonarodzeniowy targ przy Żelaznej Bramie lub sklep Lessera z zabawkami¹⁰. Na walory dydaktyczne tychże powiastek zwrócił uwagę Adolf Dygasiński w swoim *Krytycznym katalogu książek dla dzieci i młodzieży* z 1884 roku, choć i tu nie obeszło się bez wytknięcia niedociągnięć. Z jednej strony znany pedagog pisał, iż te „ładnie, bezpretensjonalnie skonstruowane powiastki uczą dzieci wielu drobnych cnót, torujących drogę wychowaniu moralnemu, ale z drugiej strony chwalą przede wszystkim dzieci bogate”¹¹. Owe krytyczne uwagi wynikały z tego, iż uważał on, że wszyscy ludzie mają jednakowe prawa, więc nie wypada chwalić dzieci pochodzących z zamożnych domów tylko dlatego, że grzecznie bawią się z dziećmi stróża, gdyż powinno to być czymś naturalnym. W ten sposób, zdaniem autora katalogu, Szymanowska bezwiednie, a niepotrzebnie zaznaczyła różnicę klasową. „Złe charaktery dzieci nie wynikają z braku czy też z posiadania pieniędzy, lecz ze złego wychowania domowego”, pisał dalej A. Dygasiński¹². Przy tej okazji miłośnik Ponidzia nie omieszczał skrytykować działań Towarzystwa Dobroczynności, które na podstawie sytuacji materialnej rodziców, szufladkowało dzieci na te, które żebrzą i na te, które tego robić nie muszą, i sztucznie wytwarzało dobroczyńców ludzkości¹³.

Natomiast w „Kurierze Codziennym” z 1879 roku, w rubryce pt. *Wydawnictwa gwiazdkowe* nieznany autor wyraża swoje uznanie dla zamieszczonych w *Książeczce babuni* krótkich, naśladowanych z kolei z niemieckiego, opowiastkami. Według niego pogadanki z pierwszej części świetnie omawiają przedmioty codziennego użytku, natomiast opowiastki z drugiej części mogą wspaniale służyć celom wychowawczym i umoralniającym¹⁴. Króciutkie omówienie kończy wzmianka o zamieszczonych w książeczce rysunkach ks. Pilattiego¹⁵.

Mimo różnych ocen tych trzech książeczek dla najmłodszych F. Szymanowskiej, z pewnością można powiedzieć, że wpisywały się one w powszechny trend wychowania domowego, do którego nawoływali ówcześni pedagodzy, ale też i lekarze. O jak najwcześniejszym wychowaniu moralnym pisał znany warszawski lekarz pierwszej połowy XIX wieku, Wilhelm Malcz. Twierdził on, iż kształtowanie serca powinno zacząć się niemalże już w pierwszym roku życia małej istoty. Przy czym zaznaczał on, że musi to być wpisane w naturalny rytm dziecka, bez narzucania ram czasowych i regularności nauczania; bardziej poprzez ruch i zabawy¹⁶. Również słynny szwajcarski pedagog, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, twierdził w swej ostatniej książce pt. *Matka i dziecko*, że

¹⁰ J. Pracki, *Notatki literackie. Książki gwiazdkowe*, „Tygodnik Powszechny”, Warszawa 1879, nr 51, s. 806.

¹¹ A. Dygasiński, *Krytyczny katalog książek dla dzieci i młodzieży*, Warszawa 1884, s. 14.

¹² Ibidem, s. 15.

¹³ Ibidem, s. 15.

¹⁴ *Wydawnictwa gwiazdkowe*, „Kurier Codzienny”, Warszawa 1879, nr 277, s. 1.

¹⁵ Henryk Pillati (1832-1894), artysta malarz, ilustrator w „Tygodniku Ilustrowanym” oraz „Kłosach”, *Encyklopedia powszechna z ilustracjami i mapami*, t. XI, Warszawa 1901, s. 473.

¹⁶ W. Malcz, *Rady dla matek obejmujące przepisy pielęgnowania i hodowania dzieci w pierwszych latach życia*, Warszawa 1834, s. 193.

naczelną rzeczą jest rozwój duszy dziecka, a najlepszym środkiem do osiągnięcia tegoż celu jest działanie matki¹⁷. Albowiem: „Matka jest uzdolniona do tego, aby stać się najważniejszą siłą motoryczną rozwoju swego dziecięcia”¹⁸. Klementyna z Tańskich Hoffmanowa także podkreślała w swych *Listach o wychowaniu dziewcząt*, iż nie jest żadną tajemnicą, że matka, która chce doczekać się pewnej pociechy z dzieci, sama najpierw powinna czuwać nad ich wychowaniem moralnym¹⁹. I dlatego książeczki F. Szymanowskiej dla najmłodszych jak najbardziej wpisywały się w propagowanie działań wychowawczych.

Początkowe wychowanie domowe pod okiem matki, jakkolwiek niezwykle ważne, w pewnym okresie życia dziecka już nie wystarczało. Wiedzieli o tym pedagodzy i reformatorzy oświaty przełomu XVIII i XIX wieku, dlatego też wysyłali dzieci do rozmaitych szkół. Również F. Szymanowska prowadziła w latach 1858 – 1860 prywatną, świecką szkołę rzymsko-katolicką dla dziewcząt, zwana Pensją Wyższą Żeńską²⁰. Zdaniem Małgorzaty Czapskiej edukacja w tejże szkole miała charakter domowy²¹. Siedziba szkoły znajdowała się kolejno od r. 1858 do VII 1859 r. przy ul. Marszałkowskiej pod nr 1065 w domu Blumenfelda²², od 8 VII 1859 do 4 VII 1860 r. przy ul. Granicznej pod nr 1078 w domu W. Kropiwnickiego, w okolicach Ogrodu Saskiego i od 4 VII 1860 r. przy ul. Nowy Świat pod nr 18 w domu Kicińskiego²³. F. Szymanowska, jako właścicielka placówki²⁴, pełniła w tejże rolę ochmistrzyni²⁵.

Powstawanie prywatnych szkół męskich i żeńskich spowodowane było niedostateczną ilością placówek rządowych oraz nieodpowiednim dla potrzeb polskiego społeczeństwa programem nauczania²⁶. Natomiast fakt, iż prowadziły je często kobiety, był wynikiem ruchu emancypacyjnego i sytuacji społeczno-

¹⁷ J.H. Pestalozzi, *Matka i dziecko*, Warszawa 1938, s. 10.

¹⁸ Ibidem, s. 11.

¹⁹ K. Hoffmanowa, *Listy o wychowaniu dziewcząt*, Wrocław 1833, s. 28-30, za: *Źródła do dziejów nauczania domowego dzieci polskich w XIX i początku XX wieku*, pod red. K. Jakubiaka, G. Karłowskiej, M. Nawrot, A. Winiarza, Bydgoszcz 2005, s. 57.

²⁰ „Kurier Warszawski” 1859, nr 171, s. 911.

²¹ M. Czapska, *Prywatne szkoły średnie w Królestwie Polskim*, Kielce 2002, s. 376.

²² „Kurier Warszawski”, Warszawa 1859, nr 171, s. 911.

²³ „Kurier Warszawski”, Warszawa 1860, nr ..., s. 968.

²⁴ M. Czapska, op. cit., s. 362.

²⁵ „Kurier Warszawski”, Warszawa 1859, nr 171, s. 911. <http://ebuw.uw.edu.pl/publication/24121>

²⁶ Z uwagi na to, iż car Mikołaj I upatrywał w systemie wychowania głównej przyczyny wybuchu powstania listopadowego, postanowił zająć się szczególnie polskim szkolnictwem. W 1831 roku na podstawie ustawy rosyjskiej z 1828 roku specjalny komitet pod przewodnictwem Nowosilcowa zaczął reformować szkolnictwo w Królestwie Polskim. Zamknięto wszystkie szkoły wyższe oraz wojewódzkie. Językiem wykładowym stał się rosyjski. Nauczyciele, którzy brali udział w powstaniu zostali wykluczeni z zawodu. W 1840 roku szkolnictwo Królestwa zostało podporządkowane całkowicie Ministerstwu Oświaty w Petersburgu. S. I. Możdżeń, *Historia wychowania 1795-1918*, Kielce 2000, s. 196-204.

ekonomicznej²⁷. Jednak jeśli chodzi o F. Szymanowską, to jako żona prawnika, profesora Szkoły Głównej w Warszawie²⁸, czynnik ekonomiczny raczej nie był w jej przypadku decydujący. Prywatne nauczanie domowe w drugiej połowie XIX wieku rozwinęło się zarówno pod wpływem masowej akcji nauczania początkowego dzieci mieszczańskich, zapoczątkowanej przez pozytywistów, jak i pod wpływem mocno zakorzenionych tradycji szlacheckich²⁹. W poglądach na to, jak ma wyglądać edukowanie polskich dzieci i młodzieży, ścierały się dwa stanowiska. Jedno wynikało z tradycji szlacheckiej, która preferowała znajomość języka francuskiego jako podstawowego języka służącego porozumiewaniu się, drugie z tradycji narodowo-patriotycznych, usilnych zabiegów o to, by zachować polską tożsamość, język, kulturę, literaturę. Szczególnie wydaje się to istotne w świetle urzędowych protokołów oraz wypowiedzi członków Rady Administracyjnej Królestwa Polskiego, którzy uważali (w tym wypadku nie chodzi o francuski, lecz o rosyjski), że język rosyjski stanowi pierwszą potrzebę wychowania polskiej młodzieży, aby mogło nastąpić jak największe zbliżenie Polaków do Rosjan. W razie nieznajomości języka rosyjskiego absolwent gimnazjum nie mógł pełnić funkcji publicznych³⁰. Chwalebny przykład postawy patriotycznej, niezgadzającej się z wytycznymi ani zaborców, ani mody na język francuski, jest wypowiedź Klementyny z Tańskich Hoffmanowej, która we wspomnianych wyżej *Listach o wychowaniu dziewcząt* pisała: „Córki moje dopiero wtedy zaczną uczyć francuskiego języka, kiedy swój dokładnie poznają”³¹. Niestety język polski w sferach arystokratycznych często uważany był za plebejski. Było to niezrozumiałe dla cudzoziemców; dziwili się oni, że istniała grupa Polaków, którzy nie chcieli mówić w swym ojczystym języku w czasach, kiedy inni rodacy tracili wolność w walce o to, by móc czytać polskie książki i mówić właśnie w tym języku³².

Takim niechlubnym przykładem bohaterki posługującej się na co dzień językiem francuskim czy też angielskim była jedna z protagonistek, przełożonej z francuskiego, książki dla dorastających panien F. Szymanowskiej pt. *Blichtr i złoto* (Warszawa 1881). Zosia Warner, po powrocie ze Szwajcarii, dokąd wysłali ją przykładający dużą wagę do salonowych konwenansów i statusu materialnego rodzice, posługiwała się tylko językiem francuskim lub angielskim. Ta młoda, jak mówiono o niej: „Paryżanka”³³, a w rzeczywistości salonowa kukieł-

²⁷ Ł. Kabzińska, *Teoretyczne przesłanki nauczania domowego w Królestwie Polskim w drugiej połowie XIX wieku i początkach XX wieku*, [w:] *Nauczanie domowe dzieci polskich od XVIII do XX wiek, Zbiór studiów*, pod red. K. Jakubiaka i A. Winiarza, Bydgoszcz 2004, s. 73-74.

²⁸ *Encyklopedia powszechna*, t. XXIV, Warszawa 1867, s. 860.

²⁹ Ł. Kabzińska, op. cit., s. 74.

³⁰ *K. Protokół z posiedzenia Rady Administracyjnej Królestwa Polskiego z 16/28 grudnia 1832 r.*, [w:] *Walka Caratu ze szkołą polską w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1831-1870*, wybór, wstęp i opracowanie K. Poznański, Warszawa 1993, s. 16-17.

³¹ K. Hoffmanowa, *Listy o wychowaniu dziewcząt*, op. cit., s. 57.

³² A. Lisak, *Miłość, kobieta i małżeństwo w XIX wieku*, Warszawa 2009, s. 23.

³³ F. Szymanowska, *Blichtr i złoto*, Warszawa 1881, s. 284.

ka, gardząca wszystkim co polskie, bo „parafiańskie”³⁴ i zaściankowe, śmiała się z przyjaźni swej siostry – Jadwigi – ze starszą panią, doktorową Modrzewiczową i spotykała się z hrabią Nałęczem, który to hrabia-arystokrata ożenił się z niezwykle bogatą Niemką, spadkobierczynią gotyckiego zamku nad Renem. Ten trzydziestodwuletni mężczyzna w ogóle nie kochał Idy Oldenburg, ale za to lubił robić na złość Jadwidze, która niegdyś, jako szesnastoletnia panienka, nie dała mu się pocałować. W związku z tym ślub z Niemką, a wcześniej nieszczerze zaloty, miały być przysłowiowym utarciem nosa polskiej nastolatce. Wszystkie postaci przedstawione w tej spolszczonej przez F. Szymanowską książce miały służyć celom wychowawczym. Stąd też postać hrabiego, ale też Zosi, miała uświadamiać dorastającym pannom, że małżeństwo dla bogactwa, na złość innym, nie może być udane. Udane może być tylko małżeństwo z miłości. Ale żeby do tego dojrzeć, trzeba przejść swoistą przemianę. Właśnie taką drogę do dojrzałości przeszła Jadwiga Warner. Początkowo, po skończeniu pensji, poddawała się woli rodziców; zajmowała się przede wszystkim strojami, balami i przyjęciami, by mogła olśniewać przyszłych kandydatów na mężów. Z czasem, pod wpływem mądrej pani doktorowej, ale też swojej przyjaciółki Marysi, córki leśniczego oraz szlachetnego Karola, zmieniła się w pannę, która zaczęła czytać polską literaturę, uczyć się szyc, piec, parzyć kawę dla gości itp. Toteż początkowo życie młodej panny, córki finansisty, biegło zgodnie z powszechnie przyjętymi normami drugiej połowy XIX wieku. Szesnaścieletnie dziewczęta po skończeniu gimnazjum już się więcej nie uczyły; im wyższy był ich status społeczny, tym więcej miejsca poświęcano życiu salonowemu, a tym mniej intensywnej nauce³⁵.

Zupełnie inaczej rzecz miała się z najlepszą przyjaciółką Jadwigi, Marysią Morzycką, sierotą wychowywaną przez generałową Rowińską, przedstawicielkę zubożałej arystokracji. Czasy zaborów były trudne również dla przedstawicieli możnych rodów. W wyniku zmian zachodzących w XIX wieku topniały elity prowadzące beztrudni styl życia. Bogata szlachta, żyjąca dotąd z pracy chłopów pańszczyźnianych, traciła pod zaborami swoją uprzywilejowaną pozycję ekonomiczną na rzecz właścicieli fabryk, bankierów³⁶. Działo się tak przede wszystkim pod wpływem zrywów powstaniowych i walk narodowo-wyzwoleńczych³⁷. Dlatego Marysia wiedziała, że jeśli chce osiągnąć coś w życiu, musi na to ciężko zapracować, czyli uczyć się dalej. Dzięki kapitałowi, jaki zostawiła jej w spadku generałowa, mogła skończyć seminarium nauczycielskie i samodzielnie się utrzymywać. Determinacja Marysi, jej upór w dążeniu do celu, niezachwiany optymizm i szlachetne podejście do ludzi były przykładem iście wychowawczym i pedagogicznym, choć nie wszyscy krytycy dziewiętnastowieczni byli podobnego zdania. Adolf Dygasiński pisał, że w związku z tym, iż w książce autorka

³⁴ Ibidem, s. 284.

³⁵ A. Lisak, op. cit., s. 22.

³⁶ Ibidem, s. 278.

³⁷ S. I. Możdżeń, op. cit., s. 196.

poświęciła mnóstwo miejsca na opisy różnych, jak je nazywał, ceremonialnych obrzędów, zabrakło miejsca na przedstawienie wyższych moralnych zasad oraz prawdziwego życia³⁸. Również Władysław Nowicki krytycznie odnosił się do przekładu F. Szymanowskiej. Uważał on, że *Blichtr i złoto* nie należy do literatury wartościowej i książkę tę, podobnie jak *Pamiętnik Laury* (Warszawa 1877), także naśladowany przez F. Szymanowską, nazywał „lichą płonką”³⁹. A ponadto, podczas gdy w programie edukacji kobiet nastąpił przełom, to w literaturze dla dziewcząt panuje zamęt. „Kiedyż kobieta pozna wzorowych polskich pisarzy z ojczystej literatury”? – pytał⁴⁰. Mimo dosyć ostrej krytyki *Blichtru i złota*, ale też i *Pamiętnika Laury*, W. Nowicki dostrzegł niewątpliwe walory książki, albowiem blichtrzem ma tu być bogactwo, które nie daje prawdziwego szczęścia, natomiast złotem ma być cnota, praca, kształtowanie charakteru. Innym walorem, który krytyk dostrzegł w powieści, było pokazanie miłości do własnego kraju oraz takie podejście do przeróbki francuskiej książki, by znalazło się w niej jak najwięcej wątków polskich⁴¹. Choć i tu nie obeszło się bez przytyku odnoszącego się do nazwy miasta Kolberg zamiast polskiego Kołobrzegu.

W świetle represji wobec Polski i Polaków, jakie miały miejsce w czasie zaborów, uwagi W. Nowickiego, choćby o czytelnictwie polskiej literatury, są uzasadnione⁴². Niemniej jednak *Blichtr i złoto* ma wiele walorów dydaktyczno-wychowawczych i odnaleźć można na kartach tej powieści kilka akcentów patriotycznych, jak na przykład epizod, gdy Jadwiga przechodzi przyspieszony kurs literatury polskiej, czytając Mickiewicza lub słuchając utworów Moniuszki, Szopena. Innymi akcentami patriotycznymi są opisy Krakowa oraz polskich Tatr, wprowadzenie postaci profesora Brodzica, wykładowcy Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, uczelni będącej symbolem polskiej nauki oraz ciągłości historyczno-kulturowej. Wychowawczy wymiar książki został zrealizowany również poprzez ukazanie bohaterów w kontekście wiary, moralności chrześcijańskiej, rozwijania cnoty pracowitości. Nie tylko główna bohaterka, Marysia Morzycka, jest pracowita. Również córki leśniczego, przedstawicielki niższej warstwy społecznej, są wzorowym uosobieniem tejsze cnoty. Potrafią one piec, haftować, parzyć kawę, podawać gościom do stołu, układać piękne bukiety z kwiatów. Owe bukiety sprzedawane były potem podczas bożonarodzeniowej aukcji charytatywnej na rzecz biednych dzieci, co wpisywało się w dziwiętnastowieczną modę na dobroczynność. Pracowitości od tych panien

³⁸ A. Dygasiński, op., cit., s. 64-65.

³⁹ W. Nowicki, *Książki dla dzieci i młodzieży*, „Rocznik Pedagogiczny”, Warszawa 1881, s. 178.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, s. 178.

⁴¹ Ibidem, s. 178.

⁴² Po klęsce powstania listopadowego, nasiliły się represje wobec Polaków. Zaczęły się wysiedlenia, deportacje i konfiskaty majątków wszystkich tych, którzy związani byli z powstaniem. Szlachta została pozbawiona znacznej części dawnych przywilejów. W urzędach zaczął obowiązywać rosyjski jako język państwowy, województwa przekształcono w gubernie. Rozwój kultury polskiej został zahamowany przez emigrację i zsyłki. S. I. Możdżeń, op. cit., s. 195-197.

uczyła się bankierówna, odkrywając przy tym znikomość bogactw, płytkość bałowych konwenansów i patrzenia na świat przez pryzmat statusu materialnego. Kolejnymi cnotami ukazanymi w powieści jest prawdziwa wieloletnia przyjaźń najpierw między dwiema dorastającymi pannami, a potem dorosłymi kobietami oraz dojrzewanie do głębokiej miłości. Obie główne bohaterki odnalazły szczęście w małżeństwie, choć i przy okazji tych wątków W. Nowicki nie omieszczał skrytykować autorki za niekonsekwencję w ukazywaniu godnej naśladowania postawy Marysi Morzyckiej. Mianowicie krytyk zarzucał F. Szymanowskiej, iż doprowadziwszy bohaterkę do szczytu szczęścia, wynikającego z uzyskania dyplomu nauczycielki, potem założenia własnej pensji, okupionej rezygnacją z miłości do profesora Brodzica, zdecydowała się jednak wydać dziewczynę za męża, za tego szlachetnego nauczyciela. Maria Morzycka, w zamierzeniu autora recenzji miała być przeciwstawieniem bogatej córki finansisty. Jej spełnienie życiowe nie miało wynikać z faktu założenia rodziny, lecz z faktu samodzielnej pracy. „Szczęście Maryi i ta błogość, jaką jej dało wyrobienie samodzielne i samoistna praca przejściowe były tylko i tak nieznaczące, że na całe życie wystarczyć nie mogły; więc nie ma innego sposobu egzystencji kobiety jak tylko przy mężu? Jakaż stąd nauka dla panienek niezamożnych, nieładnych lub ułomnych”? Takie pytania stawał krytyk i porównywał *Blichtr* i *złoto z Pamiętnikiem Laury*⁴³.

Opowieść o Laurze, podobnie jak historia Jadwigi i Marysi, to spolszczona, najprawdopodobniej z francuskiego⁴⁴, powieść dla dorastających panien i w zamierzeniu autorki miała również wskazywać młodym panienkom drogę moralnego postępowania. Dlatego też *Pamiętnik Laury* pod wieloma względami wykazuje dużo podobieństwa do *Blichtru i złota*. Mamy tu dorastającą dziewczynę, wychowanie domowe, wychowanie poprzez pracę, pobieranie nauk w pensji żeńskiej, wreszcie przysposabianie do życia salonowego, które również i tutaj zostało skrytykowane przez ówczesnych recenzentów. Adolf Dygasiński w ostrych słowach wyraził swoją opinię o ukazywaniu w powieści zabaw, pięknych toalet. „W tej książce smutno wygląda ideał kobiety” – pisał pedagog i dodawał, że ostateczną edukacją niewiast są tu szyk i maniery⁴⁵. Również i tym przypadku, podobnie jak ocenianym przez niego innym książeczkom F. Szymanowskiej dla najmłodszych, zarzucił kastowość i przedstawianie bohaterów tylko z wyższych sfer.

Mimo pewnych słabych stron utworów przekładanych przez F. Szymanowską, które wytykali współcześni jej krytycy, miały one niewątpliwie sporo walo-rów dydaktycznych, wychowawczych, umoralniających. Ponieważ były to książki z kręgu literatury popularnej, czytało się je łatwo i szybko, mogły stać się zazwyczaj do poznawania bardziej ambitnych lektur, a niejednokrotnie wskazywać drogę postępowania pannom, wkraczającym w dorosłe życie. „Umiłowanie

⁴³ W. Nowicki, op. cit., s. 179.

⁴⁴ F. Witkowski, „*Pamiętnik Laury*”. *Upominek babuni dla dorastających dziewczynek, naśladowany przez Felicyę Szymanowską*, „Ateneum”, Warszawa 1878, t. IV, s. 569.

⁴⁵ A. Dygasiński, op. cit., s. 70

książki za młodu rozbudzone, idzie za nami w życie i nie tylko wiedzę naszą rozszerza, ale staje się źródłem najszlachetniejszej rozkoszy” – pisał Karol Nitman⁴⁶. Podążając za jego myślą, można postawić tezę, że książki Szymanowskiej były dobrym materiałem mającym rozbudzić za młodu umiłowanie czytania. F. Szymanowska, sama będąc matką, zapewne podzielała pogląd, iż: „Trzeba jednak znać duszę dziecięcą i rozumieć ją, a nadto zważać bacznie, by nie podać kłakolu fałszywych zasad lub rozumowań zamiast zdrowego ziarna wiedzy i szlachetnych aspiracji”⁴⁷. Autorka, która po długich i ciężkich cierpieniach zmarła 27.03.1891 r.⁴⁸ pragnęła, aby owe szlachetne inspiracje zawsze tliły się i w tych, którzy piszą, i w tych, którzy czytają.

Summary: The aim of this paper is to examine the life and work of Felicja Szymanowska (1821–1891), a 19th century translator, adaptor and writer of YA novels. A glance at the literature that deals with 19th century Polish YA fiction reveals that Szymanowska's oeuvre has still not received the critical attention it merits. The present paper thus constitutes an attempt to fill in this gap. It first focuses on Szymanowska's literary debut from 1847: a student's book inspired by Amable Tastu's influential *Éducation maternelle : simples leçons d'une mère à ses enfants* (1848) and designed to teach children the rudiments of Polish grammar. Used for homeschooling, this grammar book was divided into units that contained specially selected exercises, short stories and fabliaux. The present paper also offers an analysis of two novels by Szymanowska: *Powiatki dla Stasia i Jadwini* (1879; published under the pseudoname of Zofia z Rymanowa) and *Książeczka babuni. Małe powiatki dla dzieci od lat 4 do 7* (1880). These two books contained moral stories which followed French patterns and served to teach children virtues and values. Finally, the present paper analyzes Szymanowska's two novels aimed specifically at adolescent girls: *Blichtr i złoto* (1881) i *Pamiętnik Laury* (1877). Both works are placed within the context of popular literature and portray 19th century mentality. More importantly, they are abundant in careful educational instructions offered to adolescent girls. Generally, the life and work of Szymanowska, as well as her 2-year pedagogical activity, are discussed in this paper in the context of 19th century Poland, when some regions of the country were under Russian control.

Tłumaczenie Mateusz Marecki

⁴⁶ K. J. Nitman, *Literatura dla młodzieży jako czynnik wychowawczy w domu i w szkole*, Warszawa 1893, s. 3.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, s. 4.

⁴⁸ Nekrolog, „Kurier Warszawski”, Warszawa 1891, nr 87, s. 6.

Z historii polskich badań nad literaturą dziecięcą

From The History of Studies in Children's Literature in Poland

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The autoanalysis of the fairy tale about Snow-White and Rose-Red*

One of the oldest books in my children's library is The Brothers Grimm's *The Illustrated Fairy Tales*, published in Kraków by Księgarnia Powszechna in 1944, and printed by Pospieszna Drukarnia, located at 34 Reichstrasse. The book, purchased by my dad in 1950, has the following dedication: "To Dearest Alusia on her sixth birthday – from Mommy and Daddy." A few years later this much read book coloured by me was bound in hardcover by a bookbinder, which testifies to its value and even to a due esteem it has been held in. In this condition, the book has survived to this day and has remained intact for those many years. The fairy tales were first read to me by my parents; then I myself leafed through them, back and forth, from cover to cover; and finally it has passed to the hands of my children and grandchildren. Among several dozen titles in the collection, my favourite fairy tale has always been the one about *Snow-White and Rose-Red*.

Today, in the perspective of all those years, I wish to attempt an autoanalysis of the then intuitively chosen text. The idea has been inspired by Bruno Bettelheim, who in his excellent study *The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* emphasizes the fact that a child responds to fairy tales subliminally.¹ This means that messages inherent in a fairy tale, furnishing a child with the knowledge about life's happy courses, are encapsulated in symbolical forms of images. Yet to be successful in life, one needs to be able to read fairy tales for particular rules of conduct. Since fairy tales in the order of fiction tell about obstacles to be overcome by a protagonist. In order to mature, a child also needs to overcome fears, traumas, and complexes of the early childhood. A child knows, or rather feels, which fairy tale satisfies his or her needs, which particular fairy tale is intended for him or her. It is this fairy tale that shall become a paradigm, a scenario for childish fantasies. Since a child who wants to walk the right path, that is the path revealed by the fairy tale,

¹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. New York, Vintage Books 2010.

needs to learn how to fantasize, that is to experience imagined trials out of which he or she will emerge the victor. One should remember though that trials intended for fearless little boys who aspire to face a battle with a dragon, to defeat giants and monsters, to win a victory over hexes and witches, are different to dreams of little girls, expecting their prince.

All the stories considered so far – writes Bettelheim – convey that if one wishes to gain selfhood, achieve integrity, and secure one's identity, difficult developments must be undergone: hardships suffered, dangers met, victories won. Only in this way can one become master of one's fate and win one's kingdom.²

As a psychoanalyst and therapist of twisted children's emotions, Bruno Bettelheim also points to specific difficulties resulting from a child's parting with its mother, from jealousy and competition among siblings, from Oedipal complexes. It is the difficulties of which a child is unaware in early childhood, that are released and dispersed in the act of reading magical fairy tales.

Laying the groundwork for achieving full consciousness and relatedness would not be complete if fairy tales did not prepare the child's mind for the transformation demanded by, and brought about by, being in love. [...] One becomes a complete human being who has achieved all his potentialities only if, in addition to being oneself, one is at the same time able and happy to be oneself with another.³

In the magical fairy tales (also in The Brothers Grimm's collection) there exist stories of an exclusively initiatory nature. These include mainly those tales that use the motif of turning a fiancé into an animal. According to Bettelheim they are The Frog-Prince, The Donkey, Hans the Hedgehog, as well as Snow-White and Rose-Red. Since "[t]he message of these fairy stories is that we must give up childish attitudes and achieve mature ones if we wish to establish that intimate bond with the other which promises permanent happiness for both"⁴ Of course, listening to stories told or read, a child glides on a surface of a text (which besides allegorical and mythical approaches, constitutes so called an object approach to a text.⁵ A child recognizes presented (realistic and imaginary) characters, situations, animals, and objects, without seeking their deeper sense. Since the thinking of a child remains concrete, image-based and animistic until puberty, it finds psychoanalytic interpretations difficult and unnecessary. As Bettelheim maintains, these hidden senses reach only a child's subconsciousness, and - as if they were folded scenarios - they lie there and wait for an appropriate moment.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. pp. 278-279.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ In thematic criticism there are three types of approaches centred around the reader's interests: an object approach, an allegorical approach, and mythical approach. Northrop Frye writes about them in his *Mit, fikcja, przemieszczenie* (*Myth, Fiction, Displacement*), "Pamiętnik Literacki" [The Literary Diary] 1969, z.2 [vol. 2]

For now, going back to my memories of *Snow-White and Rose-Red*, I wish to add that I heard and read the story many times. I repeatedly asked my dad: "please, read to me one more time the story about *Snow-White and Rose-Red*." And Bettelheim, as this has been already remarked, strongly emphasizes the fact that a child subconsciously chooses this fairy tale which she or he needs the most, which will be comforting, uplifting, and therapeutic. So why then did I, a six-year-old girl, choose just this fairy tale?

Before answering the question, I shall attempt to reconstruct my first impressions after my reading of the story. Perhaps I can start from the scenes that made a huge impression on me, that is from "the captivating images."⁶ Here they are:

There was once a poor widow who lived in a lonely cottage. In front of the cottage was a garden wherein stood two rose-trees, one of which bore white and the other red roses. She had two children who were like the two rose-trees, and one was called Snow-white, and the other Rose-red.⁷

I remember that what captivated me in the above description was the little garden with rose bushes, a nice and safe locus in which one can freely hop and jump, smell flower-roses to which the little girls bear some resemblance (I actually felt one of them).

Another image I remember from childhood extends beyond the garden and includes by the *hortus conclusus* formula the area of the wood inhabited by domesticated animals.

They often ran about the forest alone and gathered red berries, and no beasts did them any harm, but came close to them trustfully. The little hare would eat a cabbage-leaf out of their hands, the roe grazed by their side, the stag leapt merrily by them, and the birds sat still upon the boughs, and sang whatever they knew. [...] if they had stayed too late in the forest, and night came on, they laid themselves down near one another upon the moss, and slept until morning came, and their mother knew this and did not worry on their account.⁸

The forest described above is not yet a symbol of dark recesses of the subconscious, which is confirmed by the company of mild animals and by the reaction of the mother who does not fear for her daughters, running freely around the wood day and night (I dreamed about taming a little rabbit, a doe and deer, and birds as well).

⁶ "The captivating images" is an expression borrowed from the thematic criticism of Bachelard. See G. Bachelard, *Wstęp do poetyki przestrzeni (Introduction to The Poetics of Space)*, [in] *Współczesna teoria badań literackich za granicą. Antologia*, [The contemporary literary theory abroad. The Anthology] t. II, [vol. II] H. Markiewicz (ed.), Kraków 1972.

⁷ The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales "Snow-White and Rose-Red" 22 December 2012 <<<http://sparks.eserver.org/books/grimm-fairytales.pdf>>>

⁸ Ibid.

A further description of the situation in which the girls find themselves deepens the interpretation of this space:

Once when they had spent the night in the wood and the dawn had roused them, they saw a beautiful child in a shining white dress sitting near their bed. He got up and looked quite kindly at them, but said nothing and went into the forest. And when they looked round they found that they had been sleeping quite close to a precipice, and would certainly have fallen into it in the darkness if they had gone only a few paces further. And their mother told them that it must have been the angel who watches over good children.⁹

A cottage garden along with the wood recall the Garden of Paradise where resides a “little angel” – a guide modeled on oil paintings hung in the past above children’s beds. In the paintings, there was presented a guardian angel watching children on their way along a footbridge or over a precipice (I did believe that I would meet a true angel).

Also the happenings which took place in the house of *Snow-White and Rose-Red* were ordered and harmonious, and answered my expectations as to the fulfilled happiness:

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother’s little cottage so neat that it was a pleasure to look inside it. In the summer Rose-red took care of the house, and every morning laid a wreath of flowers by her mother’s bed before she awoke, in which was a rose from each tree. In the winter Snow-white lit the fire and hung the kettle on the hob. The kettle was of brass and shone like gold, so brightly was it polished. In the evening, when the snowflakes fell, the mother said: ‘Go, Snow-white, and bolt the door,’ and then they sat round the hearth, and the mother took her spectacles and read aloud out of a large book, and the two girls listened as they sat and spun. And close by them lay a lamb upon the floor, and behind them upon a perch sat a white dove with its head hidden beneath its wings.¹⁰

The day-long cares of the girls for cleanliness and order in their home and their garden and the evening reading-outs of tales in the presence of a lamb and a dove make an impression of creating an arcadia, that is a space of “those in love” (they reminded me of the Bethlehem manger).

There is another character that joins this jolly company – it is a funny fuzzy teddy bear – an object of dreams in little children, who from a cuddly toy would eagerly pass on to embrace a living bear:

[...] he stretched himself by the fire and growled contentedly and comfortably. It was not long before they grew quite at home, and played tricks with their clumsy guest. They tugged his hair with their hands, put their feet upon his back and rolled him about, or they took a hazel-switch and beat him, and when he growled they laughed. But the bear took it all in good part [...]¹¹

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

This “grand playing” connects to a mythological situation – to a frivolity in front of God”, and hence to a situation “innocent,” unstained by sin¹² (I could feel on my skin this sensation of a primitive, natural language of the body).

The *loci amoenus*, that is topical places beloved, construct then a world of carefree childhood in which there are foregrounded word-images, word-keys: flowers, a white dove, a lamb, a shining dress, a fire, a glistening pot, eyeglasses, an armchair, a thick book, a little bear.

A malicious dwarf stirred in me conspicuous emotions of fear; a dwarf who once got his beard entangled in a fishing line, as he was angling by a river:

the feeble creature had not strength to pull it out; the fish kept the upper hand and pulled the dwarf towards him. [...] The girls came just in time; they held him fast and tried to free his beard from the line, but all in vain, beard and line were entangled fast together. There was nothing to do but to bring out the scissors and cut the beard, whereby a small part of it was lost. When the dwarf saw that he screamed out: ‘Is that civil, you toadstool, to disfigure a man’s face? Was it not enough to clip off the end of my beard? Now you have cut off the best part of it. I cannot let myself be seen by my people. I wish you had been made to run the soles off your shoes!’¹³

The scene does not only scare a child with the looks of the horrible dwarf, but also – as Bettelheim maintains – points to a second-after-the-image-of-the-bear image of a man: a hopeless, ungrateful individual (I detested his doings, yet I remember well that I pitied him when the bear stroke him).

Nowadays, as one has a metalanguage of the archetypal-mythographic and thematic criticisms, I would be inclined to accept that the chosen images of the garden, of the princess, of the guide, and of the book correspond to certain archetypes, that is to pre-models of children’s literature, and the discussed passages of the fairy-tale become an echo of a child’s emotions bound with the act of reading – this means that they correspond to a child’s desires for a beautiful, ordered world that offers security and playfulness.¹⁴

The emotional reactions of the reader, identified above as an “echo”, should be confirmed by an analysis of the characters and events bound with them appearing in *Snow-White and Rose-Red* done by a professional researcher. In the process of description and the following interpretation, attention should be then paid to the sisters who do not compete against each other and do not possess opposite psychological traits as that of a “brother and a sister” (illustrating

¹² P. Florenski in his idea of iconostasis explains that in paradise, before the fall of man, there was a motion around, or rather in front of God. After the fall man began to distance himself from God, and then to seek and come closer to Him. See: P. Florenski, *Ikonoostas i inne szkice*, Warszawa 1984. [P. Florenski, *Iconostasis*, Warszawa 1984]

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See: A. Baluch, *Archetypy literatury dziecięcej*, Wrocław 1993 [A. Baluch, *The archetypes of children’s literature*, Wrocław 1993]

through the id and the superego Freud's idea of a splitted character), since the two figures act and feel in similar ways. They differ only slightly as for their appearance and character.

They were as good and happy, as busy and cheerful as ever two children in the world were, only Snow-white was more quiet and gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red liked better to run about in the meadows and fields seeking flowers and catching butterflies; but Snow-white sat at home with her mother, and helped her with her housework, or read to her when there was nothing to do. The two children were so fond of one another that they always held each other by the hand when they went out together, and when Snow-white said: 'We will not leave each other,' Rose-red answered: 'Never so long as we live,' [...]¹⁵

- ▶ the mother, a symbol of peace and harmony, sitting, bespectacled, in an armchair, with a bouquet of roses given by her daughter. It is she who makes important decisions – she lets the children wander about the forest or even spend the night in it; she encourages them to play with the bear.
- ▶ the fat and fuzzy bear that eagerly warms himself by the fire, that lets the children pull his fuzzy fur and lets the children play with himself to their heart's content. He perfectly defeats an enemy; he gets him and kills him.
- ▶ the dwarf, the malicious and quarrelsome, greedy and ungrateful character that talks the bear into tearing the girls apart although they frequently help him out in his oppressions.

These characters interact with one another. In the order of events, this presents itself more or less in the following way: a happy family – the mother and her daughter (daughters) invite a man (not a father, because the mother is a widow, so it can be a stepfather or an uncle) who eagerly, although infrequently, stays by the family hearth. On the way towards a complete integration there stands the dwarf (also symbolizing important, manly matters) who stops the "bear" in the woods. The sisters are not afraid of the dwarf; they help him despite his grimaces and utter ungratefulness until, in the end, the bear "overcomes" the intruder. In the evenings, he eagerly plays with the girls, and when he sheds his skin, he "marries" Snow-White. It looks like their marriage is also a lot of fun.

Bruno Bettelheim has made a mistake by placing Snow-White and Rose-Red with tales about sweethearts turned into animals, forgetting somehow about the criteria of choice he has himself established. The plots of these fairy-tales contain, according to Bettelheim, typical elements and events: first – the changing of a sweetheart into an animal is a witch's doing; second – the person responsible for a girl's integration with the animal is her father. She does that out of her love for the father or out of obedience towards him; the mother does not play any important function in the eternal layer of these stories.¹⁶ In the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ See: B. Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, pp. 285-286.

fairy-tale about the sisters it is not the witch that turns the prince into the bear and it is not the father who encourages the girls to play with the animal. In this case the fairy-tale does not belong to typical stories of initiation as it does tell a story about difficulties of the young involved in sexual initiation. Therefore the story about Snow-White and Rose-Red should have been put in a different section.

Searching for an adequate section, one could assume the interpretive context to be the Oedipal problematics and one could state that the bear embodies the figure of the absent father or at least of a mature man; the figure of the mother deserves then especial attention since in the classical Oedipal conflict, as a stepmother, she would bar her daughter from any liaison with the father. Maybe the daughter (present in the doubled figure of the sisters) finds herself in the pre-Oedipal period since she does not feel any jealousy towards her and her relationship with the mother is “sweetly” happy. In this context, the bear can easily join the family and win the sympathy of the mother and daughters. It seems that it is either a familiar man or else an imaginary character, probably inspired by the fairy-tales read in the evenings. Encouraged by their mother, the girls gamely play with the bear or they imagine they play with the animal. He is strong and soft, and he thus embodies a universal ideal of man, also corresponding to the needs of an adult woman because such a strong and sweet “bear” gives a woman a sense of security and tenderness.¹⁷ In *The Brothers Grimm’s* tale it becomes evident that, playing with the bear, the sisters do not need to overcome unwillingness – as this is the case in the fairy-tale of *The Prince Frog* where the frog is cold and slimy so the princess does not want to sleep with the frog in the same bed.

Writing about the Oedipal entanglements of the girls, Bettelheim advises parents, and especially mothers, accompanying their daughters in their fantasies about marrying a prince who frequently turns out to be the father or a fictional character thought up while playing or taken from a book. Hence the mother-widow, raising her daughters on her own, keeps them company in their fantasies and play. It is through them that she acquaints her daughters with the image of a man in the figure of a bear or a dwarf (the plot suggests that the daughters make the right choice). It is only in this way that one can explain the ludic ending of the fairy-tale – the prince-bear has married Snow-White, and his brother has married Rose-Red; surely this has been achieved through play that prepares the girls for adult initiation.

However, one can accept a different version of the events of the world presented; in it, the action of the story in a way “ends” when the family gathers round its hearth, when, having put on her glasses, the mother takes a book into her hand (at this point, a dove hides its head under its wing, and a lamb

¹⁷ On Cracow’s Planty, between Wawel and the university the following inscription is written on the pathway: I love Little Fish – Little Bear. What a condensation of emotions, attitudes and appropriate relations between man and woman!

makes itself comfortable by an armchair). Since then, the action takes place one layer above as it were, the presented events come straight from the book, so they are lived only in one's imagination. Yet the sisters' emotions are real – the described bear replaces the prince-father. The malicious dwarf in turn, the little troublemaker, because of whom the bear cannot return home during the summer as he has to watch the treasures that fall prey to other dwarfs who steal them away – it is, as I have already pointed out, the second image of a man presented to the girls. It is the image of someone unresourceful and vengeful, who can yet be easily overcome or else ... he does not have to be paid any attention to. In any event, he is not a candidate for marriage.

Anyway, the fairy tale about *Snow-White and Rose-Red* certainly does not possess an initiatory character, although it gestures towards this kind. It is rather a ludic children's tale, telling a story about the play of the girls who pretend that they marry the prince-bear. The bear's skin does not cover the young man-fiancé (as is the case in an allegorical tale), but constitutes a costume, a dressing up, which is exploited in play.

This play in the fairy tale is accompanied by colours, lights, and reflexes: red and white flowers, a white, shining dress, a pot as bright as gold, a youth wearing golden robes. Children are attracted to them, and – it should be mentioned – these objects and colours have a special significance, for example in pictures of religious figurations, especially in icons; because gold signifies godness, that is a highest satisfaction.¹⁸

Looking nowadays at my copy of *The Brothers Grimm's Fairy-Tales*, I am moved when I see the illustrations, partly coloured by an inexperienced hand of a child, that is, mine when I was six.

In the picture showing Snow-White and Rose-Red who, afraid, look at the dwarf pulled into water by a fish, there lies beside a bundle of jewels drawn by me. This detail testifies to my careful reading of the tale and also to a child's need to sort out the world, even in the arts' domain, since it is written in the book that the dwarf snapped the bundle full of jewels hidden in littoral, the bundle has to be there.

When nowadays, after many, many years, I discover deep meanings of this tale, encouraging the daughter to play with her father that needs to be recognized even when he is cloaked in a bear's fur, I understand its hidden lessons that make an adolescent girl's life easier yet find their way into the child's mind subconsciously. Here they are:

- Listen to your mother's advice since you are a woman as she is.
- Do not be afraid of the bear, embrace him – the body language is more important than words.
- Do not take an ungrateful individual seriously; he will remain only a dwarf forever.

¹⁸ Compare: P. Florenski, *Ikonostas...* [*Ikonostasis*]

- When you grow up, you will certainly encounter your “prince”, and he will marry you and you will be happy; remember – choose the bear, not the dwarf.

I think that the tale under discussion strengthened in me, flowing out of my subconscious mind, the archetype of garden, and thus an eternal longing for a paradise, a dream of being a princess.¹⁹ The tale also unveiled the difficulties involved in a parting, in leaving one’s home, in “cutting off of the umbilical cord” (until today I rather prefer to stay at home, I am like a snail in its shell...). Looking back through the prism of the tale, I recollect that I, a late child of my parents, the only child and the apple of my father’s eye took a place beside him, disregarding my mother’s position. She once said (maybe too openly) this to me: well, since you were born, you have been the most important person for your dad. I somewhat pitied my mother but I then thought: and rightly so.

With the help of the fairy tale, thus resolved the Oedipal conflict helped me greatly in my adult life: the tale has allowed me to marry a bear since in my mind I linked the image of a man more with a friendly “bear” than with a cold “frog”. *²⁰

¹⁹ M. Eliade in his book *Sacrum, mit, historia. Wybór eseów*, (Warszawa 1970) [*Sacrum, myth, history. Selected essays*, (Warszawa 1970)] writes about so called primeval images; a longing for a paradise, the mystery of woman and love, and the ideal of perfect man belong to them.

* Alicja Baluch, *Autoanaliza baśni o „Białośnieźce i Różyczce”*. W: *Od form prostych do arcydzieła. Wykłady, prezentacje, przemyślenia o literaturze dla dzieci i młodzieży* [From simple form towards a masterpiece. Lectures, presentations, notes, and reflections on the literature for children and young readers], Kraków 2008, s. 61–70

Z historii polskich badań nad literaturą dziecięcą
From The History of Studies in Children's Literature in Poland

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The Judgment over the Brothers Grimm's Fairy Tales in Polish Literary Criticism between 1945 and 1949*

One of the more curious phenomena of our post-war literary criticism dealing with publications for children and the youth was the prosecution against the fairy tales of The Brothers Grimm which coincided with the notorious court case of Nazi murderers in Nuremberg (1945 - 1949). It was not an accidental coincidence since in the consciousness of many European nations which came to be occupied by the Germans, the act of prosecution could not be limited only to prominent politicians and generals of the Third Reich or to their supporters responsible for particular crimes but to some degree was aimed at all Germans that contributed directly or indirectly to Hitler's politics. The unquestionable puzzle torturing the minds of commentators was the question about the sources of the Nazi ideology which they were eager to locate in the mentality of the Germans. The mentality must have been shaped, as it was assumed, by the centuries of tradition and by education in which a significant place was occupied by songs, legends, fairy tales derived from the Old German roots. It was not an uncorroborated claim since in the second half of the 1930s (I resume this point further on) an attempt was made to include these sources in the system of the Nazi upbringing – beside historical, war, and adventure books as well as beside periodicals and illustrated publications.¹

Maria Szczepańska must have realized that when she had published a short article under the title *The German Fairy Tales* in the newly created illustrated weekly *Przekrój* in which she downright critically dealt with the The Brothers Grimm's output, probably having in front of her eyes the sight of concentration camps which was shocking even for people used to seeing war atrocities. As a starting point, she chose the plot of *Hansel and Grethel*, the fairy tale known to all since their childhood. In her interpretation, she put especial premium on soullessness and cruelty of both the parents and children appearing in the

¹ See P. Aley, *Jugendliteratur im Dritten Reich. Dokumente und Kommentare*. [Children's Literature in the Third Reich. Documents and Commentaries] Mit einem Vorwort von Prof. Dr. Klaus Doderer, C. Bertelsmann Verlag – Gütersloh 1967.

tale: "Does not the dark forest resemble some 'vernichtunslager' or a prisoner camp where the captives, swollen with hunger, eat tree bark until their inescapable death from hunger? Does not the fire making by Grethel remind one of digging one's own grave? Having enticed the witch to approach the crematorium oven, Grethel listens to her cries with the same amount of pleasure with which her distant descendants in concentration camps and death cells listened to the cries of people burned alive, and through a tiny window of a gas chamber looked on tortures of the suffocating ones enticed into the chamber of a 'shower room' with the same cunning trick as that of Grethel. The loot of Hansel and Grethel is the proverbial "Beute" (loot – R.W.) which over the centuries has claimed in its orbit almost everything: houses, land, wealth, shoes of the murdered ones, their furs, golden teeth, even the dust of the burned bodies.²

As it can be easily seen, in this demagogic argumentation the roles of a victim and oppressor are mixed up. Bearing in mind other plots of The Brothers Grimm's, Szczepańska sympathizes with both orphans thrown away into the cold by their stepmothers and with the evil queen who has to dance herself to death in red hot iron shoes. Only the moment of cruelty counts, regardless one's motivation that causes it. Moreover, the author of these remarks has assumed The Brothers Grimm's fairy tales to be an emanation of the murderous German spirit that masks its true nature in idyllic "naturfreude" pictures in which "birds chirp, Easter rabbits jump, kind bees help a prince find a right princess, little ducks fish out magic rings, little frogs transform themselves into handsome princes – the "critter" speaks the human language – one would wish to cry out: how beautiful the world is."³ But in this ironic statement does not there resound a bitter accusation of the blue sky and cheerful birds that create a soulless cover of the places of torture? Does not this irony sound the same as that of Bob Fosse in his presentation of the German idyll of Hitler's times in his unforgettable movie *Cabaret* (1972)?

Irena Tomska spoke in the same vein in "Kurier Popularny", giving her article a characteristic title: *Hitler and The Grimm*. She pointed out the role that the German mythology played in the shaping of the subconscious of the Germans by glorifying physical violence which according to her surfaced in the "popular habit in Germany of slapping children in the face." She thus discouraged not only young Polish readers but also adult ones from reading the tales. Their pernicious and not fully realized influence consists in the fact that "the evil alone loses its contours and sharpness, transforming itself rather into immorality."⁴

There were attempts to give the discussion, so unexpectedly started, a more serious dimension. In the following year the editors of "Życie Szkoły" published the essay *Hansel and Grethel (An attempt at analysis)* by Wiesław Os-

² "Przekrój" 1945 nr 9. ["Przekrój" 1945 no.9]

³ Ibidem.

⁴ "Kurier Poranny" 1945 nr 38 s. 3. ["Kurier Poranny" 1945 no. 38 p. 3]

terloff, which essay was to begin a series of critical statements, since, as it was written in the preface from the editors, the problem concerned "the thorough investigation of the issue whether all the fairy tales were at all suitable for a Polish child, or only for some of them."⁵ In his analysis, Osterloff maintained the line of criticism of his predecessors, adding the claim that also the picture of family in the tale is not edifying either, since the parents deliberately leave their children in the forest to a sure death, which points, as he put that, to a "school of egoism, the hardening of heart and social amorality." It is time then, he postulated, to give children books that would teach them: faith and respect for one's neighbour – in the name of true neohumanism."⁶

In his second, much longer article, *Criminology and The Brothers Grimm's fairy tales* published in "Odrodzenie", Osterloff voiced a whole array of accusations expressed in the following formulations: "the aura of most tales is soulless," "revenge is invariably the key motif," "the stepmother is a priestess of revenge," the death of the victims in the tale is a "premeditated murder" and it is often marked with "sadistic relishing in thinking up physical torments and absurd tasks." This was still accompanied by: a "lack of sympathy for one's neighbour's sufferings, extorting confessions by beating" or even "the issue of incest" present in the tale *Allereirauh*. The social aspects were present in the fact that "the evil spirit in a family is always a stepmother," that "a father always succumbs to a woman," and that "children always connive against their parents." The pedagogical mistakes lied in turn in the propagation of "philistine ethics" which is expressed in: "the cult of gold, greediness and desire for wealth" - to put it shortly - in "crude materialism." Against this amoral background there appeared sometimes "a weird mixture of sympathy and soullessness" along with "an unusual love of animals." The articles ended with the conclusion that the reading of such tales is not edifying and does not shape social values in a child's consciousness. It does not show an image of collective life based on principles of a legal and ethical order. It does not aspire to spiritual ideals and does not stir in the reader a longing for true nobleness of heart and mind, a longing constituting a condition of individual education and social making perfect. It is thus the pernicious, or at least unnecessary reading."⁷

It should be noticed that the edge of Osterloff's criticism was also aimed at Polish literary criticism represented among others by Krystyna Kulickowska for ignoring the fact of a "highly negative influence of German tales on Polish writings." Osterloff did not prove his thesis to be right but provoked Maria Szczepańska to demand that the problematics of the German tales be treated as necessarily a foremost subject and quoted the following passage from her short

⁵ "Życie Szkoły", 1946, nr 10. ["Życie Szkoły" 1946, no. 10]

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Reprinted [in:] *Beniaminek czy podrzutek. Głosy o literaturze dla dzieci i młodzieży. Wybór tekstów* [A Baby or a foundling. Approaches to children's and young readers' literature. Selected texts], Warszawa 1982, p. 16.

article: "Our children were fed the product of the grim German imagination. Although the Slavic blood is resistant to instigations of sadism – it certainly was not pedagogic. And in Germany a young German read avidly The Grimm's fairy tales, and an adult German murdered, looted and got rich in a depraved way. History has shown that it is a short road from a German tale to a German atrocity." And she added: "That I was not the only one to condemn The Grimm's fairy tales was confirmed by the fact that when in a Cracow theatre an adaptation of The Grimm's *Hansel and Grethel* was staged it was received with criticism in the press and with discontent of parents."⁸

Osterloff's views immediately met with a response from Krystyna Kuliczowska, who in "Życie Szkoły" published a balanced article *In Defence of Cinderella and Snow White*. She argued in it that not all motifs of The Brothers Grimm's displayed negative features and that there were themes of cruelty present also in other collections of tales, as in the fairy tales in *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* (for example, in *The Wonderful Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Bandits*), and the character of evil stepmother was as well to be found in the French version of *Cinderella*. The asocial attitude of protagonists, their division into good and "evil" characters, were a product of folk phantasy and constituted for a child a "meaningful hierarchy of values." Even the death of the cruel stepmother in the red hot iron shoes could be presented in such a way that it was not an image of revenge but was a consequence of the social sense of justice. Considering the fact that in 1945 the Allied Forces banned the publication of these fairy tales as too close to the spirit of Hitler⁹, Kuliczowska had the courage to voice a more balanced view. "It should be remembered," she argued, "that although a battle with the German element is an obvious and desired reaction, it would be harmful if it was limited to showing contempt in an easy and superficial way – like writing the word "German" with a lower case letter or discrediting Wagner because of his national identity. Despite the appearances, it would mean succumbing to influences of their method and a proof of enormous primitivism of thought. A far better advantage resides in pointing out the elements of the German spirit in the psyche of young readers that should be resisted and those – rooted in a newer culture and from a moral point of view harmless – that should be retained."¹⁰ Moreover, she was of the opinion that even in the case of adaptation one should carefully handle a peda-

⁸ "Odrodzenie" 1946 nr 21, s. 11. ["Odrodzenie" 1946 no. 21, p.11]

⁹ See S. Wortman, *Baśń w literaturze i życiu dziecka. Co i jak opowiadać.* [*The fairy tale in literature and life of child. What and how to tell.*] Warszawa 1958, p. 52 The same fact is given by S. Simonides in the dissertation *Jakub i Wilhelm Grimmowie a folklor polski, [James and Wilhelm Grimm and the Polish folklore.]* (In:) *Bracia Grimm i folklor narodów słowiańskich: materiały z międzynarodowej konferencji, Warszawa 18-19 listopada 1985* [*The Brothers Grimm and the folklore of the Slavic nations. International conference proceedings (Warszawa, 18-19 November 1985)*]. Eds. J. Śliżiński and M. Czurak, Wrocław 1989, p. 48.

¹⁰ "Życie Szkoły" 1946 nr 11, s. 277. ["Życie Szkoły" 1946 no. 11, p. 277]

gogic and artistic points of view. Thanks to Kuliczowska's position, the centre of the debate began to shift from the accusations of The Grimm's fairy tales towards editorial questions and, to be more precise, towards the editing of the tales dictated by sensitivity and morale of young readers. It should be though said that The Grimm themselves, bearing in mind doubts of pedagogues, censored some themes in the 1825 edition of their tales, making less vivid or eliminating the drastic moments. By the way, this corresponded with the Romantic concept of the beautified folklore accepted also among our Polish collectors in the period, treating a folk tale as a potential read for "children and home." This is evident in the collections of Kazimierz Władysław Wójcicki, Roman Zmorski, and Antoni Józef Gliński, the collections not devoid of sadistic and macabre motifs relished by the common people and the Romantics. Adapting the Polish folk tale, they indirectly paved the way for The Brothers Grimm towards a Polish child, despite the aversion directed towards the literature and culture of the occupiers.

In the light of the research of Wrocław-based German scholar Marek Hałuba¹¹, the first books with The Grimm's themes reached Polish children only in the 1860s, and a larger selection of titles appeared on the market in later decades. It was actually the period of modernism, opening to young readers fairy-tale literature, that brought the first distinct deluge of publications inspired by The Grimm's texts, adapted anew in prose (Cecylia Niewiadomska, Maria Kreczkowska, Maria Artwińska), in verse (Artur Oppman), or adapted for stage (Oppman, Maria Markowska). The year 1896 brought the first complete translation of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* done by Zofia Kowerska and published under the title *Home and Children's Tales* in which an additional place, as an annex, was given to *Legends (Kinderlegenden)*. Yet it was a one-time edition and for the use of ethnographers. A serious goal was present in the edition of original texts with vocabulary explanations on each page which constituted volume four of "The German Library" including *Selected readings for high-school students* (2nd ed. 1912). It can be assumed that in this case the edition served language purposes.

The regaining of independence stimulated an even greater wave of commercial publications for children variously approaching the values of the original; among them were, for instance, the adaptations of Maria Reszczyńska, Elwira Korotyńska, Edmund Jezierski, Mieczysław Rościszewski, Janina Colonna-Walewska and Marcei Tarnowski. Altogether there were as many as 155 titles¹². Even during the German occupation, Gebethner and Wolff (Warsaw)

¹¹ See M. Hałub, *Die Märchen der Brüder Grimm in Polen*. (In:) *Brüder Grimm Gedenken*. Band 6. Hrsg. Von L. Denecke, N.G. Verlag Marburg 1986, p.215 – 240.

¹² See *Bibliografia literatury dla dzieci i młodzieży 1918-1939. Literatura polska i przekłady*. Oprac. B. Krassowska i A. Grefkowicz. [*The bibliography of literature for children and young readers: 1918 – 1939. The Polish literature and translations*]. Eds. B. Krassowska and A. Grefkowicz, Warszawa 1995, p. 153-162.

and not quite unidentifiable Publishing House of Legends and Fairy-Tales (Cracow) published 14 titles under The Brothers Grimm's names – some of them were published even twice, and some were published again in the same versions right after the war. As A. Bromberg maintains, in the years 1945 - 1949 under discussion there were published another 14 volumes, when the debate over the fairy tales was at its peak.¹³ This is the scope of popularity which was not to be hampered by bitter years of national martyrdom. And the popularity perhaps irritated some Poles who fell prey to Hitler's barbarity, which resulted in an analysis of deliberately chosen themes and motifs not free from prejudice and slander. As a matter of fact, excluding the inaccessible translation for children by Kowerska and the original texts for high-school students, there were no fairy tales of The Brothers Grimm on the Polish publishing market that were not previously re-written if only out of hollowness or out of the adaptors' need of invention, many a time hiding the sources of the original, not to mention adaptations done with pedagogic aims in view. It is for this reason that the postulating by post-war criticism of the publishing of the fairy tales in an appropriate pedagogic and artistic formula might be seen as reinventing the wheel. Yet one should consider whether this was certainly the fact, given that the post-war reality in our country was to mean a break-up with the cultural heritage of the II Republic, and this meant also the market of commercial books on which one's responsibility for a final edition did not translate into legal restrictions.

The debate over The Brothers Grimm was thus transforming itself into a discussion about the shape of post-war literature for children and young readers and about the place of a traditional fairy tale threatened by ideological usurpations of the communist government. As if he supported the demands of the Soviet pedagogy, in his article *Towards a selection of fairy tales for children*, Ludwik Bandura wrote: "Fairy tales influence a development of the imagination, and the imagination is needed not only for a future artist, but also for an engineer, for an innovative scientist when he formulates his hypotheses, and even for an innovative tailor, a woodmaker or labourer. (...) If we consider the fairy tales of The Grimm to be inappropriate, we need to reach out towards other collections. The fairy tales of Andersen and the legends of Selma Lagerlöf introduce us into an entirely different moral climate. Like the fairy tales of The Grimm, they stemmed from folk tradition; incidentally, Andersen was a son of a shoemaker, and Lagerlöf in the early days of her career was a village teacher, so they had a chance of looking deep into the soul of their people and of seeking there the material for their artistic visions"¹⁴. Bandura even wondered if one should not then turn to the wealth of the Polish folklore which was hitherto ignored by such famous writers as Porazińska and Makuszyński, yet

¹³ A. Bromberg, *Książki i wydawcy* [Books and publishers], Warszawa 1966, p. 20.

¹⁴ "Odrodzenie" 1946 nr 43, s. 10. ["Odrodzenie" 1946 no. 43, p. 10]

he was afraid that there might be not enough "material," because in folk tales there was a whole abundance of the damned, ghosts, and scary creatures that could unhealthily stir a child's imagination, which later demanded "difficult medical-pedagogic treatments." Moreover, he argued: "In a fairy tale, hatred or love become an incentive to act. One of the reasons of the harsh criticism of The Brothers Grimm" - he maintained - "was the prevalence of hatred as a motive for action. Hatred narrows down the horizon of thought and leads to some limitation. Love in turn releases social powers, which allow one to communicate with another man and with different social groups, and this is what becomes important in democracy. Hatred creates a *closed society*, love - an *open society*."¹⁵

Krystyna Kuliczowska disagreed with the proposition to eliminate The Brothers Grimm's fairy tales from the reading list for children, arguing in turn that many themes appearing in them had their counterparts in French, English, Irish, and oriental fairy tales; the motifs of cruelty were counterbalanced by the motifs of forgiveness (*Snow White*), of brotherly love (*Brother and Sister*), and of repentance for committed sins (*The Child of the Mother of God*). Moreover: "The taking away from children the charming characters like Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood, or Cinderella and many, many others would undoubtedly be a harm and this loss not always could be compensated for by the symbolic poetry of Andersen or the sometimes macabre phantasy of Polish folk themes. The fairy tales of The Brothers Grimm contain the abundant and varied material, starting with funny anecdotes from lives of animals, through realistic tales based on commonsense, and ending with fantastical stories. An appropriate selection based on these themes results in desired pedagogic aims with little effort on the part of the translator from whom we expect only a pedagogic intuition and language pure and filled with simplicity instead of other characteristics of the original author."¹⁶ Kuliczowska was not satisfied with the post-war essays by Witold Zechenter and Magdalena Samozwaniec which, in her opinion, went beyond the scope of the accepted experiment in this case because of their refined humor. Moreover, in the tales of Andersen, so frequently juxtaposed with The Brothers Grimm, she perceived the moments of macabre, tragedy, and mysticism which in their philosophical meaning could be understood only by adolescents and adults. The ambitious literature refined in the fairy tale what folklore presented with obvious vividness.

It was good though that Stefania Wortman joined the debate, publishing the article *In defence of folk tale* two years later (1948), in which, among other things, we read: "When the cruelty in the punishment for evil is concerned - obviously, we must reject tortures, burning alive, red hot shoes in which the

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ K. Kuliczowska, *Pod znakiem bajki* [Under the sign of the fairy-tale], *Odrodzenie* 1946 nr 51 - 52, s. 19. ["Odrodzenie" 1946 no. 51 - 52, p. 19]

evil stepmother has to dance as a punishment, drowning, dragging by horses and so on. But whoever has heard a sigh of relief of children listening to a story told, when the head of the witch falls off under the golden sword of the good sultan, and the king turned into a stone regains a human shape – he or she will believe in the necessity of a specific punishment and reward.”¹⁷

The last accent of the critical debate against the fairy tales of The Brothers Grimm was the article of Jan Berger entitled *The goats in the wolf's stomach* published in 1949. The titular theme appeared as an example of a nationalistic interpretation of the tales done by the Germans themselves after the fall of the Weimar Republic. Georg Schott, for instance, read the motif of the goats devoured by the wolf as a situation of German provinces, “devoured” by adjacent countries after 1918, and he identified the fate of Cinderella with the drama of a “German girl,” condemned to a humiliating service with “the lords of Versal and Spaa.” We can add on our part the example of G. Grenz’s explication; he argued that the misfortunes of Cinderella begin when an unknown woman, an other woman, has moved into her father’s house, but the racially pure girl is still discovered by a prince, who is led to her beloved by an infallible voice of blood.¹⁸ Schott also argued that: “Princes and princesses turned into hideous creatures by malicious wizards were German men and women. (...) A tailor, by a sly cunning winning the hand of a princess was a Jew.”¹⁹ In his Germanophile impulse, Wermer von Bülow in turn claimed even that the three colours playing the dominant role in the tale about Snow White: the white of snow, the red of a drop of blood, and the ebony black of the hair of the persecuted princess were of course the colours of the flag of imperial Germany. Such exploitation of the Freudian analysis was taken by Berger to be equally unjustified as the judgments of Hitler’s victims who considered the fairy tales of The Brothers Grimm to be the “nursery of cruelty.” According to him, the problem lied in a more general issue which was the reform of children’s and young readers’ literature, and history shows that the German fairy tale may change as long as the mentality of the Germans changes.

Tadeusz Borowski, the prisoner in Auschwitz, had though no illusions about that, beginning his sarcastic poem *A life of a good German* with the following stanza:

When he was six – he was in Hitlerjugend
he marched in line and held the flag
he knew about *List* and *Tugend*
and was acquainted with The Grimm’s hag.²⁰

¹⁷ “Odrodzenie” 1948 nr 42, s. 7. [“Odrodzenie” 1948 no. 42, p. 7]

¹⁸ P. Aley, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁹ “Odra” 1949 nr 22, s. 3. [“Odra” 1949 no. 22, p. 3]

²⁰ T. Borowski, *Poezje. Wybór i wstęp* T. Drewnowski, Warszawa 1972, s. 159. [T. Borowski, *Poems*. Selected and introduced by T. Drewnowski, Warszawa 1972, p. 159].

However, the key to the German history and mentality still lies, as it seems to some contemporary German writers and intellectuals, in the subject matter of national folk themes. It is evident, for instance, in Rolf Hochhuth's novel *Love in Germany* (1978), also known in Poland, where the paradigm of the historic vicissitudes ending in the unavoidable collapse of Hitler's regime, unhampered in its desire to rule over the world, corresponds to the Pomeranian tale *Von dem Fischer und syner* (*A Fisherman and his wife*), known thanks to The Brothers Grimm. The same fairy-tale theme is taken up by Günter Grass in his novel *Turbot*. Bernard Nuss in turn has burdened the German mentality with the Faust syndrome, since the Germans: "possess Faust's *Streben* (drive) and unquenchable desire for knowledge, but also an inclination towards bringing evil upon themselves and others."²¹

In conclusion, it should be stated that despite the rational argumentation in our country in defense of The Brothers Grimm's fairy tales, the books with their names disappeared for a few years from the Polish publishing market. Their place was taken by the fairy tales of the nations of the Soviet Union glorifying the peasant cunning and directed against kulaks, Orthodox priests, and land owners. Even after 1956 Andersen and Polish regional fairy tales were held in greater esteem. However, as one of the researchers has remarked The Brothers Grimm "never claimed that they reportedly had published *German fairy tales* or even tales of the German origin; what is more, some of their informers came from the families of Hugonout emigrants and therefore the French origin must be acknowledged. The collections of their tales were always entitled simply *Kinder- und Hasumärchen* (*Tales for children and home*), without the adjective "German" which appears in their later works: *Deutsche sagen* (*German tales*), *Deutsche Gramatik* (*German grammar*), *Deutsche Rechtsaltertümer* (*Ancienthood of German law*) and (*Deutsches Wörterbuch*).²²

The publication of the complete post-war translation of *Kinder- und Hasumärchen* by Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza in 1982 became an occasion of renewing the debate over the themes of cruelty in this collection despite the explanations of Helena Kapeluś in *Afterword* where she claimed that The Grimm themselves covered up these kinds of themes, and that similar themes were abundant in Polish folklore. One of the known examples concerns the reply of Marek Hałuba to the article by the Wrocław journalist Andrzej Bułat entitled *A Dish of The Brothers Grimm* ("Magazyn Tygodniowy" of "Gazeta Robotnicza" of 31 December, 1982) that emphasized the themes of brutality and sadism in this publication. Hałub reminded his readers of analogous prejudices of the post-war criticism and added that such a method of argumentation

²¹ B. Nuss, *Syndrom Fausta. Próba opisanie mentalności Niemców*. Przeł. J. Karbowska, Warszawa 1995, s. 187. [B. Nuss, *The Faust syndrome. An attempt to describe the mentality of the Germans*, Trans. J. Karbowska, Warszawa 1995, p. 187.]

²² H. Scuria, *Die Bruder Grimm. Ein Lebensbild*, Verlag der Nation, Berlin 1985, s. 94 – 95. [H. Scuria, *Die Bruder Grimm. Ein Lebensbild*, Verlag der Nation, Berlin 1985, pp. 94 – 95.]

led nowhere, which was even more the case since the readership of The Brothers Grimm included also adolescents and adults. And moreover: "Do not we ourselves remember how many emotions, how much tension we experienced together with our fairy-tale protagonists, living with them through their toils, even tortures, but in the end rejoicing in their successes?"²³

The universal character of their fairy tales was to be fully shown only in our times; this was made possible by the book of the world-famous psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim *The Uses of Enchantment. On the Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. Bettelheim, who in the years 1938 - 1939 was a prisoner in the concentration camps in Dachau and Buchenwald, after his concentration camp experiences, came to the conclusion that the treatment of children's psychoses was possible just through fairy tales in the least uncensored versions, since only in such a form they were capable of reaching all layers of human personality. Ultimately, it is the choice of children, who with unfailing instinct reach for fairy-tale plots in the version of The Brothers Grimm as always fresh and healthy nourishment.*

²³ M. Hałub, *Potrawka z braci Grimm a la wujek Jędrus*, Magazyn Tygodniowy „Gazety Robotniczej” 21.01.1983 [M. Hałub, *A Dish of The Grimm Brothers à la uncle Andrew*, Magazyn Tygodniowy of „Gazeta Robotnicza” 21 Jan 1983]

* „Orbis Linguarum. Legnickie Rozprawy Filologiczne”. Red. Edward Białek I Eugeniusz Tomiczek. Vol. 10, Legnica 1998. [Orbis Linguarum. Legnica's Philological Treatises. Edward Białek and Eugeniusz Tomiczek (eds). Vol. 10, Legnica 1998.]

MARIA TARNOGÓRSKA, *Genus ludens. Limeryk w polskiej kulturze literackiej*,
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2012.

GENUS LUDENS. The Limerick in Polish Literary Culture

The aim of this monograph is to present the most important generic variants of the limerick in Polish literature from the 1930s until the beginning of the twenty-first century. While the origins of the genre are English and the genre relies heavily on the English sense of humour- as displayed in the introductory chapters of the book – some Polish writers have created highly original limericks and made this form popular among their reading public.

The history of the limerick in Polish literature begins in the period between the two World Wars with translations of anonymous English limericks by Janusz Minkiewicz published in the humorous-satirical magazine *Szpilki*. Undoubtedly, the main problem with the generic transfer was that Polish literature did not have this kind of nonsense humour tradition. Probably because of this, the first ‘complete’ Polish limerick collection of Minkiewicz and Julian Tuwim (also announced in *Szpilki*)- was combined with a nonsensical narrative commentary to heighten the effect of playfulness and resistance to a common sense interpretation. The limerick ‘with a commentary’ can therefore be considered a typical Polish variant of the genre and an attempt to initiate a domestic generic tradition. In comparison with English limericks, another phenomenon of this tradition turned out to be an enormous wealth of comic rhymes based on the inflected structure of the Polish language.

The post-war period has shown a sustained interest in the genre, prolifically generating various generic styles. The leading position in the process of the assimilation of the genre is occupied by the magazines which not only publish the texts of many limerists, but also familiarize the readers with the kind of humour rooted in the world of nonsense. The literary competitions organized by their editors have established the Polish limerick firmly within popular entertainment.

The sources of the originality of Polish limericks are also individual poetics invented by famous authors. They developed their own aesthetics which have a paradigmatic function giving inspiration to other writers. There are three such individual variants:

1. Maciej Słomczyński's (translator of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) obscene parody of the nonsensical world from Edward Lear's *A Book of Nonsense*: decent eccentricity is replaced by odd sexuality. One of the striking characteristics of this generic style is a refined intellectual wit which provides a marked humorous contrast to the profane subject of the text.
2. Wisława Szymborska's (Nobel prize winner) *verse de société* linked to the former tradition of drawing-room literature promoting an elegance of style and formal perfection. Szymborska, known in her private life as a wag and a lover of practical jokes, has inspired the imagination of many limerists and become a comic verse hero.
3. Stanisław Barańczak's sophisticated version of the limerick which represents a self-conscious stage in the development of the genre. The author, famous as a translator of English and American light verse and professor of literature at the University of California, Berkeley, is the inventor of many 'subgenres' of the limerick which are examples of metaliterary play. A significant feature of Barańczak's generic style is forced rhymes founded in unusual and exceptionally rare word connections.

A considerable variant of the Polish post-war limerick is also flourishing in academic folklore which has a particularly strong tradition at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Its distinguishing characteristics are a parody of academic discourse and often obscenity as a form of 'powerful' expression contrasting with the highly abstract and intellectual speech of science.

In the 1970s the limerick initiated its active presence in children's magazines. In comparison with Lear's classic model appealing to children as well as to adults certain Polish texts create an infantile version of the limerick addressed to a narrower audience of children alone. Educational aims such as learning the alphabet, or themes such as school, or employing a child protagonist are examples of how it has been adapted to the world of young readers.

A separate variant of the genre is satire, with limericks engaged in politics and providing commentaries on current events. Most often they use sarcastic conventional humour and, through an application of nonsense elements, they tend to unmask the absurdity of existing reality.

The final chapter discusses some innovations in the limerick form and topics as observed in the recent period literature. Equipped with characteristics of Internet blog poetics or generic contaminations (such as the clerihew and the rondo) or doing a humorous version of the town legend, they tend to make the genre more dynamic and experiment with its boundaries.

The wide repertoire of limericks in Polish literature and the role of the great Polish writers in starting and establishing this generic tradition demonstrate that humorous verse has grown in Poland into an important branch of literature which resists simple labelling as second class poetry. Masters of limerick invented not only a special kind of language suitable for a ludic and comic purpose, but also contributed significantly to the exploration of the field of nonsense probing it for new literary ideas.

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