SPACE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISCELLANEOUS

REVIEWS

"As Much as I belong": Space, Affect, and Identity in Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian*

ÉVA PATAKI

Affiliation: Institute of English and American Studies
University of Debrecen, Hungary
Email: pataki.eva@arts.unideb.hu

Abstract

Atmosphere, as theorized by Gernot Böhme (1993), has both mental and physical connotations, connecting people and places in mutually constitutive and transformative relations. Investigated from the aspect of emotional geography's concern with the spatiality of emotions (Davidson et al. 2007), the atmosphere of places and spaces may be inextricably linked to bodily experience, affect, and affective human relationships, and may play a vital part in one's sense of belonging and self. With a specific focus on these interconnections, my paper offers a close reading of Isabella Hammad's debut novel, *The Parisian or Al-Barisi: A Novel* (2019), mapping the protagonist, Midhat Kamal's emotional geographies through his physical journey from Nablus to Montpellier, Paris, and back, as well as his concomitant journey of the self from immigrant to flâneur, tourist to "the Parisian." I shall argue that the protagonist's bodily and lived experience and the atmosphere of the places/spaces he inhabits greatly determines and is determined by his affective relationships, as well as his sense of home, belonging, and self, contributing to his identity (re-) construction as a transnational subject and creating the emotional geographies of his life.

Keywords: emotional geographies, atmosphere, affective relationships, belonging, identity construction

Introduction

In the introduction to their edited volume, *Emotional Geographies* (2007), Joyce Davidson, Liz Bondi, and Mick Smith point out that emotional geography has "a common concern with the spatiality and temporality of emotions, with the way they coalesce around and within certain places" (2007, p. 3). As a scientific field, emotional geography "attempts to understand emotion—experientially and conceptually—in terms of its socio-spatial

mediation and articulation rather than as entirely interiorized subjective mental states" (Davidson et al., 2007, p. 3). Drawing on theories and findings of emotional geography but somewhat in contradiction with this claim, I use the term emotional geographies defined as spatially mediated and articulated emotions and indeed as subjective mental states of individuals experienced in, via, and toward the places and spaces they inhabit. This approach enables an interdisciplinary and in-depth examination of how feelings generate and mediate our behaviors in and attitudes to places and spaces through bodily and lived experience and emotional associations, that is, the feelings which they inspire, and which determine their symbolic importance (Davidson et al., 2007, p. 3). In the case of immigrants, the study of such emotional associations and affective geographies may lead to a better understanding of the intricate ways in which an individual's sense of belonging and self is constructed or re-constructed owing to immigration.

A study of literary representations of the spatiality of emotions with regard to immigrants may thus be especially suitable for unraveling the interconnections of space, affect, and identity, and with its detailed, poetic portrayal of emotions through the main character, Midhat Kamal's physical and mental journey, bodily and lived experience, Hammad's novel may provide a particularly valuable insight. *The Parisian* instantly draws the readers into its unique atmosphere and the protagonist's inner world, taking them on an emotional journey along with Midhat, who experiences a wide array of sensations, feelings, and emotions while navigating through life and conflict-ridden France and Palestine in the 1910s–1930s.

Born and raised in Nablus, Palestine, Midhat embarks on his first journey at fourteen, when he starts his studies at a French boarding school in Constantinople, "Lycée Impérial." Although he does not experience it as immigration *per se*, because the city is then part of the Ottoman Empire like Nablus, he does get his "first taste of cosmopolitan life" (Hammad, 2019, p. 33) and experience of "his own separateness;" through the process of becoming aware of his own body and its peculiarity, he realizes that

> no one else should be Midhat, or that Midhat should be no one else. [...] This realisation was like a tiny jolt of electricity that both locked him inside his body and alienated him from it. [... The] electric feeling of aloneness, victorious and agonising, unearthly. (2019, pp. 33–34)

Besides highlighting the protagonist's interiority, the quotation reveals an awareness of his body belonging to him and defining his self, with feelings of the lived body as "part of total body consciousness" (Denzin, 2017), and points to bodily experience as meaning-making (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1998), which gives the French school in Constantinople special importance as a place of difference and unbelonging, both spatially and physically.

Experienced as "victorious and agonising" at the same time, Midhat's sense of self and separateness may thus be interpreted as a conflicted embodied emotion, "intricately connected to specific sites and contexts" (Davidson et al., 2005, p. 5)—in this case, a place other than home and the body/self perceived as both 'I.'

An Immigrant in Montpellier

It is this bodily experience and embodied emotion—a yearning for belonging—that Midhat carries with him on his next journey in 1914 when his father sends him to France to study medicine and escape the war. Aboard the ship to Montpellier, the feeling of loneliness re-emerges, whereby he becomes aware of his body and feels that its outline "weighed on him as a hard, sore shape, and his heart beat very fast" (Hammad, 2019, p. 13). Midhat experiences sensible feelings, that is, unintentional bodily sensations in the lived body but also lived feelings, since loneliness as an emotion is "felt as an embodied state" and the body becomes "a sounding board for the emotion" (Denzin, 2017)—what he feels in his body echoes what he fears in his mind.

Struggling "to conjure a picture of France that was separate from" the French school (Hammad, 2019, p. 14), Midhat accepts the help of a fellow passenger Faruq, thus expanding his knowledge of the French language and culture until he feels "he managed, more or less, to soothe the hard outline of his body—which still at times oppressed him with its stinging clasp" (2019, p. 18). The gripping sense of loneliness and separateness seems to be triggered by immigration, projected onto the environment, and experienced in the body, foreshadowing "a new way of being-in-the-world" (Denzin, 2017): as a reluctant immigrant.

"Turk," "Arabian man," "the famous Oriental guest" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 70, 72)—these are but a few phrases used to refer to Midhat in Montpellier, at social events in the house of social anthropologist Frédéric Molineu, his host for the period of his studies. Interestingly, Midhat does not provide a self-identification at this point but feels that "something thawed in his chest" when Molineu's daughter claims: "Monsieur Midhat would call himself a Palestinian Arab" (p. 39). This sense of warmth signals the beginning of an emotional relationship with Jeanette, which will serve as an important tool for achieving a certain degree or sense of belonging, despite the perceived impossibility thereof, and will prompt him to identify himself as "a Palestinian from Nablus who was a citizen of the enemy" and "the fool, the foreigner unable to control his own meanings" (pp. 87, 108) when he feels he lost her. Midhat's "renewed sense of separateness and loneliness" (p. 109) triggers a yearning for belonging and becoming, much may be interpreted as a "desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places or modes of being" (Probyn, 1996, p. 19).

At this point, however, Midhat is scared by instability as much as by yearning, and although he might not be fully aware of this emotion, it is definitely bodily felt whenever he finds himself in new circumstances and stressful situations, marking the unavoidable end and uncertain beginning of something.

Upon arriving in Montpellier to start a new chapter in his life, Midhat watches "the city rise and fall and thin into alleyways" and notes that it is similar to Nablus but bigger (Hammad, 2019, p. 20). Looking for similarities between his home, Nablus, his first emotional geography, and the French town signals that his relationship with the latter is just as complicated as his feelings for Jeanette, and likewise needs affirmative sensory and lived experience to make him feel he belongs: the joyful, familiar sight of olive trees in this strange place (p. 49), regular walks with a new friend, Laurent, and his growing affection toward Jeanette. Walking around Montpellier increases a sense of familiarity and enables Midhat to observe and imitate the locals for the sake of fitting in. The role of the sauntering observer evokes, on one hand, Walter Benjamin's (1972/1999) notion of the nineteenth-century *flâneur*, a gentleman leisurely strolling the Parisian streets as a detached and unobserved observer, whose anonymity, in Baudelaire's words, is "a play of masks" (1845/2010, p. 400) in the crowd. On the other hand, Midhat as the 'Oriental flâneur' also displays Bhabhaian colonial mimicry, which takes the form of imitation and repetition, and thereby becomes "a mask, a mockery" (2005, p. 120). In Midhat's case, the mask signals both detachment and a yearning to belong, as well as otherness and mimicry.

Furthermore, when Midhat believes that his love for Jeanette is unrequited, the spatiality of his emotions is reduced mainly to his body, indicated by a recurring bodily awareness and the sensation that "he was locked inside his body" (Hammad, 2019, p. 109). What Midhat experiences is a painful sense of embodied fear; that is, a bodily reaction to a fearful situation or scenario, but it is his *mind* creating fear (Shapiro, 2014), prompting a bodily sensation that feels like locked-in syndrome or pseudocoma, a paralysis of the body. Midhat's mental states and the rollercoaster of emotions he experiences with Jeanette are also spatially projected onto and symbolically manifested in his environment: his first description of the Molineu house—noting silver, crystal, iron, and the gloomy lawn (Hammad, 2019, p. 21)—resonates with the "hard shape of his body" and his sense of separateness and loneliness; the striped yellow walls of his room (p. 25)—an intertextual reference to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892/1997)—foreshadow his later mental breakdown; while the cream salon, "closed off with sheets thrown over the furniture, turning them into secret white ranges" (Hammad, 2019, p. 147), symbolizes the intimacy, between Midhat and Jeanette, kept as a secret.

In the joyful state of requited love, however, Midhat finds out that Jeanette's father has studied him all along, to write "The Effect of a New Language Learned by a *Primitive* Brain" (Hammad, p.154; my emphasis). The realization that he is viewed as an anthropological object, an inferior being, as the Other, triggers a series of sensible and lived feelings, and quasi-hallucinations, such as "the banister became a woman's arm, and the shadow in the far corner … a black shoe … He felt a cramp in his stomach. … He looked at his reflection in the mirrored door of the armoire. He tried to see what Frédéric saw" (pp. 155–56). The shock of betrayal, the first in the line of many leading to the aforementioned mental breakdown some twenty years later, is narrated with a specific focus on his sensory, bodily, and lived experience—the shapes and shadows, the cramp in his stomach, the sense of estrangement and the intention to understand Molineu's view of him—and is highly spatialized: each sensation and feeling is localized, and both objects and places become spatial metaphors of bodily emotions; that is, bodily sensations associated with emotions, themselves embodied experiences (Denzin, 2017).

When he confronts Molineu about studying him, the doctor tries to defend himself by asserting he only wanted to humanize Midhat, to which he replies: "To humanise me? … I am—really, I am amazed. Monsieur, I am a *person*. I am—no—" (Hammad, 2019, p. 159, my emphasis). Midhat's defiant claim of being a person may be interpreted in several ways. First, it may be read as his incapability or refusal of "positing his identity as a stable state" (Probyn, 1996, p. 19), highlighting the only fixed aspect of his identity instead: being human. Second, it could point to the notion of identity as transition, constructed through both being and becoming (Fortier, 2000, pp. 1–2), that is, a fluid identity, perpetually changing, and difficult to pinpoint or label. On the other hand, his inability to name what he is not might signal that Midhat is not yet aware of this fluidity and is ashamed of his perception as the Other, which may explain the masks he wears and roles he plays in Paris, where he flees after Jeanette does stand up for him and he feels their relationship is irreparably broken (Hammad, 2019, p. 161).

A Flâneur and Tourist in Paris

Midhat starts his new life in Paris with another defiant act, when he refuses to take off his tarbush (a flat-topped, brimless hat usually worn by Muslim men), even though it is a visible marker of his difference and viewed with distaste by the passers-by (Hammad, 2019, p. 179). Although it seems that Midhat owns up to his otherness, he soon resorts to mimicry again, in terms of appearance and behavior. Staying at Faruq's, Midhat engages in heated conversations about Palestine's and Syria's future with his Arab friends,

starts studying history at Sorbonne during the day, and spends his nights visiting bars and cafes, drinking alcohol and engaging in a series of sexual relationships with various women and prostitutes. Living the life of Parisian *bon vivants* seems to resonate with Probyn's claim of "using desires for belonging as threads that lead us into unforeseen places and connection" (1996, p. 20), and Midhat's mimicry, although frequently seen as a source or symptom of disempowerment, rootlessness or non-attachment, may also be understood—as in Bhabha's theory—as a conscious strategy of identity performance in the enabling atmosphere of the city as "a stage setting" (Plesske, 2014, p. 139).

Midhat's transformation from the Other to "a Parisian" goes hand in hand with changes in his perception of the French capital. Upon arriving he notices "the cluttered pavements," "the faceless rush," "the cry of a seagull," and "the earth [muttering] beneath his feet" (Hammad, 2019, p. 179), pointing back to the painful sense of being different and betrayed as a spatialized emotion. Later, however, he notes that "the city moved from her mood of wartime grief to one of revelry, Parisian nightlife began to thrive on the electric atmosphere of the home front" (p. 181), similarly to Midhat, whose anger and grief turn into the unbridled enjoyment of all that Paris has to offer, enabling him to experience "a pure thrill of Being. It lived in the body like a drug, this being alive in the jaws of the full, flying night" (p. 181). Besides an obvious change in Midhat's bodily and lived experience, the quotation reveals a vital connection between space and emotions: emotional participation being an integral part of one's experience of space (Hasse, 2011, p. 52), and inextricable links among space, emotions and the body. As Nora Plesske points out in her discussion of Gernot Böhme's article "Die Atmosphäre einer Stadt" (1998), "the metropolitan space is intrinsically bodily felt by urbanites because the urban atmosphere is scripted in emotional states of being" (2014, p. 139). In Böhme's theory, the atmosphere of place/space may be attributed just as much to the environment as to the individuals (1993, p. 114); that is, it both influences and is influenced by the people experiencing it. Midhat's sensory and bodily experience of Paris thus results in and is the result of the atmosphere of the metropolis, an embodied emotion per se, and forms an integral part of the embodied experience of the city.

The thrilling sense of being alive may also be attributed to what Tonino Griffero refers to as the atmospheric affordance of the city: an emotional tone, or the message that a city sends out about its possible uses and functions, to which people may respond to with certain behaviors but sometimes also with a specific objectivity, and "aesthetic distance" (2014, p. 4). Due to his objectivity yet apparent thrill, as well as his behavior and movement in the city, Midhat's character may also be read as a postmodern *flâneur*,

a detached observer like his modern counterpart, whom Zygmunt Bauman describes as a man of choices, who knows "how to enhance the adventure brought about by that under-determination of one's own destination and itinerary" (1995, p. 127), leading to pleasure and a sense of freedom. Furthermore, the characteristics of detachment and pleasure-seeking also enable interpreting the protagonist's figure as a tourist, whose practices "involve the notion of departure, of a limited breaking with established routines and practices of every-day life and allowing one's senses to engage with a set of stimuli that contrast with the everyday and the mundane" (Urry, 1990, p. 2)—in Midhat's case, both Montpellier and Nablus serve as points of departure and as symbols of the practices and the lived experience he longs to break with. His memories of Jeanette, however, he finds impossible to discard—they creep up on him in the arms of the women he meets, and each time "he would hear a high ringing sound and make love half in disgust … yet he carried his longing with him … and it gave him a gravity both real and performed" (Hammad, 2019, p. 184).

To unravel the possible symbolic meanings of the high ringing sound and the con-comitant bodily and lived emotions, it is important to take a closer look at Midhat's "performed gravity." Hammad describes her protagonist's "new urbanity" in the following way:

> Midhat the Levantine … now thoroughly estranged: the figure of the Parisian Oriental as he appeared on certain cigarette packets in corner stores … He had fallen so easily into the compromise available in Paris, this type, by an embrace of otherness that at first he had admired in Faruq but which now appeared in his mind a skewed, performed version of what it was really like to be in a place but not of it, not to know it truly. (p. 187)

Midhat's estrangement from his Levantine identity signals uprooting, his "Parisianness" suggests a certain degree of re-rooting or assimilating, while his "Orientalism" implies a stereotypical representation. Thus, the dichotomous figure of "the Parisian Oriental" may, on one hand, be interpreted as a hybrid entity *par excellence*, pointing to the unavoid-able process of hybridization as a merging of cultures and identities but since Midhat seemingly consciously plays on the stereotypical nature of this (self-) representation, his hybridity may also be understood in the Bhabhaian sense as "camouflage," "a contesting, antagonistic agency" (2005, p. 193), a subversion of his projected–perceived identity.

Furthermore, Midhat's transformation in the cultural space of the metropolis indicates that his "place identity," denoting a situatedness and rootedness through an emotional bonding with a place (Proshansky et al., 1983), is overshadowed by or, perhaps, even exchanged for a situational identity: he is playing different roles in different social settings, mimicking young Parisian men in terms of their appearance, behavior, and the places they visit.

However, while men truly belong in the city, Midhat seems to have given up all hopes for and attempts at creating a sense of belonging to places and people, and chosen the easier option of conforming to and even exaggerating the stereotype of the exotic Other, in hope of the fleeting sensation of bodily pleasures—hence his real or performed gravity attracting women. Thus, the role of the Parisian Oriental may also be interpreted as an identity performance, at the intersection of performance (role-play) and Butlerian (1988/2003) performativity (a construction and display of [a gendered] cultural identity), with the diasporan being both the subject and the agent of his or her performative actions.

With all this real and pretended transformation, his submission to alleged expectations, and his performative actions, Midhat's bodily reaction to the thought of Jeanette when in the arms of other women, the felt emotion of disgust, may be understood as the bodily emotion of guilt: he betrayed her just as she betrayed him. On the other hand, he was unfaithful not only to her but, in fact, to himself—his *self*—as well, which could mean that the ringing sound he hears is a bodily emotion a symbolic alarm, warning him that he is going in the wrong direction (and thereby foreshadowing his mental breakdown some 20 years later, signaled with the same painful sound) and reminding him that belonging to someone is more important than belonging somewhere.

Yet, Midhat would not listen. He continues with his identity performances until "his life [becomes] multiple": playing the roles of "the student of history," "the companion of women," "the mysterious lover," "the debater," and "the arguing Arab" makes him realize that "the divisions, though sometimes porous, were abiding," and, as Hammad so eloquently puts it, "Midhat was learning to dissemble and pass between spheres and to accommodate, morally, that dissemblance through an understanding of his own impermanence in each" (2019, p. 194). Midhat's changed attitude and new ability point to what Probyn refers to as "the inbetweenness of belonging": "belonging not in some deep authentic way but belonging in constant movement, modes of belonging as surface shifts" (1996, p. 19). On the other hand, it seems that although Midhat can move freely between these roles "as surface shifts," he cannot (or does not want to?) leave the space they confine him in. There is no return to his old self—a realization that leads to a crisis, bodily felt and spatially projected: "He felt that some great frame had cracked … the scene trembled through the quartered glass, the room appeared dislocated, the faces of his friends unfamiliar" (Hammad, 2019, p. 194). While multiplicity and "learning to dissemble and pass between spheres" entails the possibility of reconstructing and accepting his identity as multiple and fluid, it will prove to be a long and complicated process, which the above-quoted realization is but the first stage of.

At this point, however, Midhat bodily and emotional reaction to this multiplicity gives away a sense of rootlessness experienced as loss, since the longer he continues to play these parts the more distant his roots (symbolized by his friends) become and the less he can hold on to a (sense of) fixed, national identity, especially with the national movements and impending revolution back home, rewriting the borders and dislocating identities. Midhat's and Palestine's crisis seem to happen almost parallelly, making Hammad's narration of the triumphs and traumatic events, and especially the description of the places where they take place, feel like the spatial manifestations of her protagonist's complex-conflicting identity and turbulent emotions, that is, his embodied emotions and emotional geographies.

In his first year in France Midhat claimed: "even when you leave Nablus, you take it with you" (Hammad, 2019, p. 58), clearly positing it as an emotional geography he carried around in his memories, forming an integral part of his sense of self and belonging. When Midhat returns home in 1919, he feels somewhat similarly about France, the country he professes his love for because of "her lines of rationalism, the sciences that put a veil on the unknowable" (p. 194), as well as of the bodily and lived experience connected to love and "a freedom born of strangeness" (p. 221). Though offering and embodying strikingly different atmospheres and emotions, Midhat carries both Montpellier and Paris with him as emotional geographies, the former in terms of affective human relationships, the latter as the 'birthplace' of his 'Parisian self' (with its identity performances and hybridity). As he writes in a letter to Jeanette right before returning:

> my experience with you has in fact become one of those primeval shapes of the mind, to an imprint that burdens everything that comes afterwards … I became myself here, in this country, and for that reason I cannot represent anything. I belong here as much as I belong in Palestine" (pp. 203–4)

Interestingly, just like Nablus served as a point of reference in mapping France, his affective relationship with Jeanette and France will be his benchmark and compass in making sense of his lived experience in the decades spent in Nablus, the two forever intertwined in his memories as an embodied experience he can hold on to when losing ground and both lending themselves to a certain degree or form of belonging.

The Parisian of Nablus

On the ship back to Nablus, Midhat notes that although "his old fantasies of becoming French had expired, he still clung to a particular idea of cosmopolitan life" and so he feels anxiety about returning to Palestine, fearing that a "new era of prudence was upon him" (Hammad, 2019, p. 220). The Midhat that returns is thus not the native Nabulsi

but the Parisian *bon vivant*, a cosmopolite, who hopes to be able to live and work in or, at least, frequently visit Cairo, which was "not a part of him as Nablus was. Nablus was all smells and sounds, the rushing air between the mountains" (p. 208). These perceptions indicate not only the lasting effect of France on his sense of identity but also a considerably different approach to belonging. Although his description gives away a sense of nostalgia and an affective relationship with his hometown (the smells and sounds), Nablus appears to be a confining space (surrounded by mountains) where Midhat is a transnational subject, not confined by borders and national identities (the rushing air), and would not want to take roots again. In contrast, Cairo is perceived as a cosmopolitan place "rich with possibility" (p. 220), as freedom, offering him anonymity and bodily pleasures, and as a transitory place, where he could experience a Probynian belonging as becoming and belonging in movement.

Nevertheless, when Midhat first glimpses Nablus after being away for four years, he experiences "an unexpected state of high emotion" (p. 223), which soon turns into anger and bitterness when his father gives him an ultimatum: he must never return to Paris or will lose his inheritance, he has to marry, and work as a doctor or learn the family business in Nablus (and not his father's store in Cairo). His father's ultimatum is the second instance of betrayal in Midhat's life, a traumatic experience that involves not being able to feel anything in/about his room but reliving memories of Montpellier through "uncontrollable sense-memories," that is, the memory of sensory experiences and sensible feelings: "a treacherous yearning uncoiled, … ugly and incoherent … and so rich in pain" (p. 227). The recollection highlights the spatial arrangement of memory, consisting of "image and feeling, the event and the response to that event" (Jones, 2007, p. 210), through which Midhat's mind equates the embodied emotions of his betrayal by Molineu and Jeanette with betrayal by his own father, which deprives him of the final morsel of a sense of being at 'home,' of wanting to belong.

Obeying his father but yearning for the freedom of choice and self embodied by Paris, Midhat continues his own identity performances as "The Parisian" and soon finds himself caught in a state of inbetweenness:

> All these men and boys, five years grown, had an alternative narrative of Midhat. … they surely saw aspects of him invisible to those he had met in France. At the sense of exposure Midhat grew hot. He could not conceal, nor even detect, the survival of his child-self in his mannerisms, or traces of his characteristics … Midhat wished he could isolate those traces and remove them. Not because they were defects, but because they pinned him down. (Hammad, 2019, p. 235–6)

Midhat's identification as European appears to be the result of his wish to hide traces of his old self which, ironically, he feels he has already lost. His uprooting is an irreversible process, making him keep up appearances, as he considers performing the identity of a Parisian a safer and more liberating choice than having to return to his old, fixed identity. Realizing that he was "always marked by his difference," he plays a part "as a kind of inverse of his persona in Paris" with "some kernel hidden in the folds" (p. 389), a few remaining traits of who he used to be. Midhat, the Parisian *of* Nablus, or "Al-Barisi" can thus hide his sense of unbelonging and become the epitome of the inbetweenness of belonging, an admired, envied (and later hated) dichotomy on two feet.

Interestingly, Midhat's duality is spatially manifested in Nablus as well. While Père Antoine, a French Dominican priest and scholar residing in and conducting anthropological research on Nablus portrays the city as "untouched," "the perfect specimen of the Islamic city," "impenetrable to outsiders" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 321, 325),—which is quite similar to the stereotypical perception and performance of Midhat as an Oriental subject—the locals knowingly "described the city in terms of East and West, as two separate worlds," as an "ancient opposition," or "a natural division of geography," asserting that "the two sides possessed two different cultures, and that was the root of the division" (p. 233). Apparently, the atmosphere of the city is influenced by and is the spatial manifestation of defiance and division both in terms of the unfolding freedom fight and the duality of Midhat's emotions and self. Furthermore, though firmly rooted in ancient Palestinian history and culture, due to the opposition of ancient families, and of native inhabitants and immigrant Jews, Nablus—much like Midhat—is a hybrid entity divided by an identity crisis, experiencing its—his—belonging "situated as threshold," which, in Probyn's theory "designates a profoundly affective manner of being, always performed with the experience of being within and in-between sets of social relations" (1996, pp. 12–13).

It is this liminal and marginal experience that Midhat hopes to alleviate by marrying Fatima, daughter of the prestigious Hammad family, drawn to him for his refined Parisianness. Marriage, as Midhat notes, "was the foundations of a house. He had obeyed—and he had defied. He was of them, and he was his own. He with his strong body had laid the first stone [of] the edifice that would now arise" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 378–79). These words indicate that he firmly believes marriage would endow him with a sense or aura of belonging and a secure, elite position in Nablus's complex social relations.

The third shock and sense of betrayal occurs in Midhat's life during preparations for the wedding when he learns about his father's sudden death and is forced to face the fact that he did not inherit anything. His initial grief and then anger, a doubly painful feeling,

is yet again embodied in the "searing sensation" of the "outline of his body clamped down, burning his skin" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 415–6), and prompting him to contemplate running back to Paris, to Jeanette. However, being a penniless orphan and not having heard of Jeanette since leaving Montpellier—who likewise betrayed him—Midhat decides to stay and go through with the wedding, his only chance for compensation for all that he lost.

Some thirteen years later, in 1933, Hammad's narrative portrays Midhat as an established man with his own business and four lovely children, enjoying a much-envied, comfortable life with Fatima in Nablus, and some well-deserved freedom on his frequent visits to Cairo. What has not changed is his perceived–performed identity as the Parisian, and the multiplicity of his roles played: "a man who had married above his station, a sybarite, an optimist, a success with women, a carefree lover of the West" (p. 458). Envy, however, soon turns into anger and malice towards the couple, whose wealth and aloofness towards the war is in sharp contrast with Nablus, existing in constant fear and "decaying in her provincial backwaters, subsisting on memories of former glory" (pp. 459–460)—though it must be noted, that the fossilized image of the Parisian has seemingly likewise lost much of its former glory. Thinking back on his youthful days, "caught up in the drama of 'exile' in Paris …, drunk on the notion that to argue was important," Midhat concludes: "That was not his life" (p. 61). It seems that he has forgotten the bodily and lived experience of both pain and thrill, and has played his part for so long that he has completely forgotten about who he was. There is no recognizable self behind the mask—Midhat is willingly reduced to a mere simulacrum of himself, "a real without origin or reality" (Baudrillard, 1981/2000, p. 1).

The shock of the fourth, final betrayal thus hits him even harder. After his shop is burnt down and as he is ransacking his father's house for an object that might have brought a curse on them, Midhat finds Jeanette's letter, sent in response to his, opened and then hidden by his father before Midhat's return. Again, Midhat experiences a host of sensible feelings and hallucinatory sensations: "spasms of pain," "a large translucent object, like a pool of water" on the wall, and the ringing sound reappears, feeling like "a sharp blade of silver being inserted into his eardrum. … It was pretending to be benign, it pretended to be beautiful. But it was pain, … interfering in there, it was doing things it shouldn't" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 494–96). This time, however, pain takes over his entire body and mind, and Midhat is taken to hospital with the diagnosis of psychosis.

Throughout the months spent there, Midhat feels that "his mind stopped and he became a body," while other times he thinks he is "locked up in his brain" (pp. 526, 539). The symptoms of his psychosis, generally defined as a loss of contact with reality, include hallucinations of sensible feelings (such as pain and disgust) and sensory experiences (of light,

color, sounds, and smells)—which, in fact, may also be detected in the previous accounts of his sense of separateness and thus be interpreted as early symptoms, and are closely connected to and worsened by the traumatic events of 'betrayals'—as well as delusions, illogical thinking, an extreme preoccupation of thought, and an inability to move or properly interact with the world (Sadock & Sadock, 2008), as exemplified by Midhat's recurring sensation of the hard shape, the sharp ringing sound, and being locked up in his body/mind.

What is even more intriguing about Midhat's psychosis from the aspect of the present analysis is its spatial and emotional connotations. Apparently, the symptoms occur upon immigrating to Constantinople and France, and returning to Nablus, and are connected to a rupture in his emotional relationship with Jeanette and his father, which Hammad's narrative portrays as spatially extended to his environment, whereby spaces and places become embodied emotions and—by extension—symptoms of his mental state as well.

When Midhat notes that he "danced between two, three, four ideas of himself, that is to say of Midhat Kamal, and these ideas overlapped like conflicting maps of the same place" (Hammad, 2019, pp. 526–27), his words point to both multiple identity disorder, and the multiplicity of identity performances and positions (Rutherford, 1990), and suggests that the protagonist's mental condition is a metaphor of his (cultural) identity crisis generated by a sense of otherness and his decades-long identity performance. Whenever his ability to think returns for a shorter or longer period, Midhat tries to capture and make sense of his 'real' identity behind the performed ones but finds it "hard to cling onto himself when there were so many others, … crowding him out. … He was a likeness in reverse. He was a cameo" (Hammad, 2019, p. 529). His thoughts reveal a fear that his 'true' identity has forever disappeared behind "conflicting maps," that is the various mask worn, and he relapses, feeling "his self dissolving again" (p. 530).

Eventually, it is his imagined–hallucinated return to France and Jeanette, and the palpable reality of his wife rescuing and taking him back home, which, owing to the emotional bonds recognized, helps him start recovering and seeing himself as he is, without any pretending or performance whatsoever: "There in the mirror stood a haggard man in a suit, … the bronze sound of bells thronged through the air. Nothing would ever again be contained by a map" (pp. 607, 619). Midhat may still be the Parisian but has finally started to make peace with his identity—allegorized by the map as "positionality, movement and practices" (Pile and Thrift, 1995, p. 36)—as a multiple, fluid, and hybrid identity, as well as with a renewed sense of belonging in becoming, to multiple emotional geographies, and, first and foremost, to his loved ones; as he says to his youngest daughter at the end of the novel: "we're going home" (Hammad, 2019, p. 637).

Conclusion

Focusing on the interconnections of space, affect, and identity in Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian*, my analysis mapped the protagonist's transnational movement from Palestine to France and back, as well as his metaphorical journey played out through various identity positions and performances from an immigrant and 'Oriental flâneur' in Montpellier, through a postmodern flâneur and tourist in Paris, to the Parisian in/of Nablus, in search of answers concerning how his bodily and lived experience are influenced by his emotional relationship with people and spaces/places and how the latter become spatially manifested embodied emotions, affecting his identity re-construction and sense of belonging, that is, his emotional geographies as "emotional spatialities of becoming" (Jones, 2007, p. 205).

My analysis has found that Midhat's affective human relationships are projected onto both his body and space/place, and thus influence his bodily and lived experience as embodied emotions, and heavily influence his sense of belonging, which leads to various identity performances and an identity crisis, experienced and manifested in the body through sensible and lived feelings, hallucinations, and, eventually, psychosis. Hammad presents this process metaphorically and spatially by highlighting differences in the atmosphere of Montpellier and Paris, as well as through Palestine's national movements and revolution, which impact the political status, life, and atmosphere of Nablus, itself symbolising the protagonist and his emotional geographies. As Midhat comes to terms with his (embodied) emotions, and his hybridity, multiplicity, and fluidity, he re-constructs himself as a transnational subject with multiple belongings and belonging in movement.

References

Baudelaire, C. (2010). *The painter of modern life. 1859–1860*. Penguin. (Original work published in 1845).

Baudrillard, J. (2000). *Simulacra and simulation* (S. F. Glaser, Trans.). Michigan UP. (Original work published in 1981).

Bauman, Z. (1995). *Life in fragments: Essays in postmodern morality*. Blackwell.

Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Arcades Project* (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans; R. Tiedemann, Ed.). Belknap.

Bhabha, H. K. (2005). *The Location of culture* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Böhme, G. (1993). Atmosphere as the fundamental concept of a new aesthetics. *Thesis Eleven, 36*(1), 113–26.

Butler, J. (2003). Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. In P. Auslander (Ed.), *Performance: Critical concepts in literary and cultural studies* (pp. 97–110). Routledge. (Original work published in 1988).

Davidson, J., Bondi, L. & Smith, M., (Eds.) (2007). *Emotional geographies*. Ashgate.

Denzin, N. K. & Lasky, M. J. (2017). *On understanding emotion*. Routledge. (Original work published 1984). https://books.google.hu/books?id=ayEuDwAAQBAJ&printsec=front cover&dq=Lasky+On+Understanding+Emotion&hl=hu&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage &q=Lasky%20On%20Understanding%20Emotion&f=false

Fortier, A-M. (2000). *Migrant belongings: Memory, space, identity*. Berg.

Griffero, T. (2014). Architectural affordances: The atmospheric authority of spaces. In P. Tidwell (Ed.), *Architecture and atmosphere* (pp. 15–47). Tapio Wirkkala-Rut Bryk Foundation.

Hammad, I. (2019). *The Parisian or Al-Barisi: A Novel*. Grove Press.

Hasse, J. (2011). Emotions in an urban environment: Embellishing the cities from the perspective of the humanities. In H Schmid, W.-D. Sahr & J. Urry (Eds.), *Cities and fascination: Beyond the surplus of meaning* (pp. 49–74). Ashgate.

Jones, O. (2007). An ecology of emotion, memory, self and landscape. In J. Davidson, L. Bondi & M. Smith (Eds.), *Emotional Geographies* (pp. 205–18). Ashgate.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1998). *Phenomenology of perception*. Routledge. (Original work published 1945)

Perkins Gilman, C. (1997). *The yellow wallpaper and other stories*. Floating Press. (Original work published 1892)

Pile, S., & Thrift, N. (1995). Mapping the subject. In S. Pile, & N. Thrift (Eds.), *Mapping the subject: Geographies of cultural transformation* (pp. 12–51). Routledge.

Plesske, N. (2014). *The intelligible metropolis: Urban mentality in contemporary London novels*. Transcript.

Probyn, E. (1996). *Outside belongings*. Routledge.

Proshansky, H., Fabian, A. K. & Kaminoff. R. (1983). Place identity: Physical world social-ization of the self. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 3*(1), 57–84. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(83)80021-8

Rutherford, J. (1990). A place called home: Identity and the culture politics of difference. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 9–27). Lawrence and Wishhart.

Sadock, B. J., & Sadock, V. A. (2008). *Kaplan & Sadock's concise textbook of clinical psychiatry*. (3rd ed.). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Shapiro, L., (Ed.) (2014). *The Routledge handbook of embodied cognition*. Routledge.

Urry, J. (1990). *The tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies*. Sage Publications.

Outer and Inner Space in Craig Thompson's *Blankets*: A Visual Representation Perspective

ANAMARIA FĂLĂUŞ

Affiliation: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca
North University Centre of Baia Mare, Romania
Email: anamariafelecan@yahoo.com

Abstract

Written in 2003, Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets* manages to arouse readers' attention through its complex emotional background that entwines the protagonist's constant attempts to live a normal, happy life with his psychological instability, as well as his personal coming-of-age and first love with strict religious education and a detachment from his childhood memories. This paper, however, attempts to analyse the concepts of space and time from the point of view of visual representation. I argue that the artist succeeds in creating the idea of temporal development through constant flashbacks, and inner space representations in a graphic narrative that is retrospectively narrated; at the same time, I identify a series of artfully coined images that symbolise winter's purity and cleanliness which come to oppose the ugliness of the social context (unspoiled versus ravaged outer space) that traps the hero in an impossible universe that annihilates any outbursts of creativity, ingenuity and love.

Keywords: inner space, outer space, time, visual representation, emotional interpretation

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to revisit theoretical problems related to the concept of space, defining terms and applying them to Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets*. The study examines different facets of space, such as inner and outer space, proximal and distant space, factual and counterfactual space, as well as social space in order to underline their importance in shaping the identity and life trajectory of Craig Thompson's main protagonist. The current analysis registers and distinguishes different types of space representations, from physical space (family home, school, public space)

to social space (all the characters that influenced the hero's future evolution and character development) and inner space (the realm of the self, the only refuge one might take when the adversities of outer space become unbearable) in order to emphasize their role in influencing one's life and identity formation.

Blankets—Some General Considerations

Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets* written in 2003 is a book that manages to linger in readers' minds long after they have read it, not because of the message or the painful and troubling experiences the artist goes through, not even because of the atmosphere of melancholy and solitude that seems to envelop the hero's life journey from the first to the last page, but due to a perfect mixture of words and images. It is a visual poem, as one can easily claim, a 'blanket' that covers the readers' artistic experience as they advance through the narrative. It is a real masterpiece of the genre, as far as *Time* magazine states, "a rarity: a first-love story so well remembered and honest that it reminds you what falling in love feels like. … achingly beautiful" (Thompson, 2003, cover page). Jules Feiffer, Pulitzer Prize winner, manages to explain this perfect mixture of words and images in Craig Thompson's book: "his expert blending of words and pictures and resonant silences makes for a transcendent kind of story-telling that grabs you as you read it and stays with you after you put it down. I'd call that literature" (as cited in Thompson, 2003, cover page).

And indeed, this is the effect that great stories have on readers. This book can be interpreted in various ways. In terms of its content, it is a coming-of-age narrative that describes the constrictive and cold atmosphere of an extremely religious family in which no outbursts of happiness are allowed or accepted. Art is seen as something frivolous, not enjoyed by God and in total dissonance with the percepts of a religious life dedicated to the Almighty Creator. Love seems to be the only rescuing solution, but the two protagonists (Craig and Raina) are too dedicated to their problematic, dysfunctional families to be able to follow their dreams and desires. A short episode of pure love capable of erasing the ugliness of the main characters' life is enough to throw a short instance of hope into an ocean of despair.

However, the greatness of this work of art resides not in its content or the subject tackled but in its format. As a subgenre of graphic novels,[1] *Blankets* can be simply defined as a "book-length narrative utilizing sequential images and text" (Gardner, 2011, p. 374),

---

[1] Somnath Sarkar speaks about five main types of graphic novels, i.e. superhero stories, non-superhero stories, personal narratives, mangas and non-fiction. Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets* can be included in the category of personal narratives.

in other words, a long work of fiction in pictures which tells a complete story gathered between the covers of a book. According to Francisca Goldsmith (2010), a graphic narrative "presents itself through the combined forces of image and word" (p. 4). However, images are not mere "illustrations that simply repeat or amplify text, but rather carry information not revealed verbally" (Goldsmith, 2010, p. 4). Correspondingly, the verbal content "provides information not present in the image" (Goldsmith, 2010, p. 4). As Jared Gardner (2011) states, in graphic novels (graphic memoirs included) "image and text are always in an uneasy collaboration, sometimes even working at cross-purposes in terms of the narrative information they convey" (p. 375). Traditionally, in comic books, image and text are brought together within panels, but the author of *Blankets* chooses to distance himself from the normal, classic format of juxtaposed pictures displayed in a grid that is so defining for this genre, giving his personal twist to the format of the story. The book exhibits plenty of panels that change their shape; sometimes, there are no panels at all, being replaced by bleeds that offer the feeling of timelessness and eternity; there are flower patterns that surround the image of the two lovers, as if they were meant to create a sense of protection, a distinct universe; there are pages in which there are no words, so the feeling of silence and solitude is complete. There are white, pure pages emphasizing winter, the role of the snow blanket being that of covering the ugliness of the world around. And definitely, words could not have said it better than a blank page. The well-known adage 'a picture is sometimes worth a thousand words' is perfect in Thompson's case.

Autobiography, Place, Identity Reconstruction

To clarify the terms, one should first start from the distinction between memoirs and autobiographies. Are they similar? For Rita Reali (2018), memoirs are actually a subset of autobiographies: "An autobiography is the story of the author's life, while a memoir is a *sliver* of that life" (p. 48). According to the same author, there are three basic factors that distinguish memoirs from autobiographies. The first is the scope and progression of the work: autobiographies present an author's entire life, while memoirs focus on a particular period in the author's life—a specific time period or type of experience. The second factor contrasts documentation with dramatization. Autobiographies contain more documented facts and detailed information, whereas memoirs seem to focus on "underlying themes" or "emotional revelations." The last element distinguishes between famous and ordinary people, with the former usually being the subject of autobiographies while the latter seem to predominate in memoirs.

Brooke Warner (2020) speaks about "voice" as an essential element of a memoir. It represents a mixture of writing style and message, an instance of self-expression, the memoirist's need to be heard and seen: "Memoir can help with healing, providing the opportunity to reclaim a story, especially for writers who had no voice as children or who had parts of their lives stolen by abusers or perpetrators." The same idea of healing, or "catharsis," is echoed by Ian Williams (2011) in his article "Autography as Auto-Therapy: Psychic Pain and the Graphic Memoir" (p. 353). Because of the unique presentation of information in a graphic memoir compared to other forms of autobiography or memoir, "the autographic and non-propositional nature of the medium" lends itself to a very powerful narrative that creates "empathic bonds between the author and the reader" (p. 354).

Graphic memoirs, also known as graphic nonfiction, give voice to personal stories and ultimately reveal the truth about the world we live in, but they do so in a more complex way. What makes a graphic memoir special is the "double perspective" that represents "the voice of the experiential past and the now-more-knowledgeable voice of the present, the one who can synthesize experience for the reader into an alchemical mix of wisdom, teaching, and art" (Jones, 2018, p. 177). The graphic memoir thus creates two distinct voices of the narrator, which also interact with the unique effect of the graphic format, causing the reader to shift "back and forth between image, storytelling, and action" (p. 178).

As a graphic memoir, *Blankets* presents itself as an intimate story. It focuses on the author's evangelical upbringing, his childhood and adolescence, sexual appeal and loss of faith in an orthodox Christian environment, in a small town in the American Midwest. From this point of view, the relationship between the autobiographic material in itself and the narrator's spatial or geographic existence is of great importance. According to Gerri Reaves (2001), place or geography is not something neutral, discrete or invisible having no influence at all on someone's life and identity formation. On the contrary,

> one's places […] are undeniably components of both identity and the autobiographical text. […] All writing, especially autobiography, involves placing the textual *I* in a physical context, whether real or invented. The intersection of place and identity is the obvious starting point for reconceiving the autobiographical subject. (p. 15)

What an autobiography/memoir offers is

> the illusion of ideological certitude, a historical, verifiable narrative that coincides with or reinforces an image of a reality outside the text. The narrative is all the more seductive because it 'really happened,' the reader believes—how else could it be sold as autobiography? Thus, autobiography, as a subgenre of history, comforts the reader by offering illusory truth, both in terms of objective fact and in the promised profound understanding of a human being's inner life. (Reaves, 2001, pp. 12–13)

Marc Brosseau (2017) emphasizes the same undeniable relationship that exists between space, author and narrator in the case of autobiographical writings, by stating that "autobiographies, more specifically in their novelistic forms (autobiographical novels, autofiction, etc.), maybe more so than other literary genres, provide opportunities to deepen our understanding of the dynamic links between place, narrative writing and author (or subject)" (p. 18). They are not only a "form in which to 'write life'"; much more than this, they offer the possibility to "write oneself in place, or place oneself in writing" (Brosseau, 2017, p. 19).

However, the relationship between an individual and his or her lived space is not a simple one. By incorporating all the characteristics derived from the idea of belonging to a certain place, and being part of a certain social context, identity realizes a personal reconstruction of reality, this actually leading to the conclusion that human beings, in general, use and live in a personalized space. Ego-ecology, as the meeting point of psychology and sociology (Iacob, 2003) attempts to identify the way in which the objective reality is gradually becoming subjective, the accent being placed not on the dimensions, or on the dynamics of various social relationships, but on their perception and inner transformation. What matters is not necessarily the environment in which one is conditioned to live (this is not to claim that it is less important in the economy of an individual's future personal and social development), but the way in which this reality is internalized, felt and perceived by each and every person apart. Everything seems to be filtered through the individual's emotional experience.

In the case of a graphic narrative, the subjectivity expressed verbally is accompanied by its visual counterpart. Images are expected to contribute to the making of the story, not necessarily independently but in a "creative tension with it. [...] Whatever it represents and however it is made, an image is always capable of provoking a narrative response in the mind of the reader" (Baetens, 2008, p. 81). According to Mercedes Peñalba García (2015), "graphic narratives inscribe autobiographical experience, mediate identity, and 'perform' authenticity through visual and verbal combinations" (p. 157). However, they are not expected to provide a "mimetic representation of the world," but rather an "interpretation of the events as they are subjectively perceived by the artist" (García, 2015, p. 159). The idea of "truth" and authenticity gains new valences in a graphic autobiography, the reality recreated through words being enhanced by the graphic representation of the same universe, the artist's drawing style and iconic resemblance of the lived time and inhabited place offering new insights into the entire microcosm that is to be displayed in front of the readers:

> In a medium where the textual self is represented visually, however, the notion of physical resemblance is an important signal of authenticity: the comics reader is likely to judge an author's sincerity from his or her spoken words and actions, and seek further evidence of identity in the form of a visual equivalence. (García, 2015, p. 160)

The Graphic Representation of Time

No matter how important the idea of spatial or geographic existence is in shaping the identity of the narrator in the case of an autobiographic book, 'time' cannot be ignored, as the evolution and development of the protagonist happens in time, and the events to be narrated unfold likewise. However, the normal chronological flowing of events cannot be followed in Craig Thompson's book, as different flashbacks of important episodes in the protagonist's childhood are triggered by different objects or thoughts, this fact instilling a certain kind of temporal fluidity to the entire story. Memory is the one that dictates which events and experiences are to be activated, so as "the reverberation of one character's solitary experience within another solitary experience produces a kind of network of temporal experience" (Currie, 2007, p. 77).

The main character's instant moment of happiness triggered by his spending some time with his girlfriend Raina (the protagonists simply lying on the bed, in each other's arms—see Figures 1 and 2 below) offers the reader the possibility to become witness to one of the hero's childhood episodes in which he shared the bed with his brother: "So when I was a kid, and my brother and I shared a bed, We loved to pretend the bed was a boat, and the floor was endless stretches of ocean…" (Thompson, 2003, p. 406).

Figure 1
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets,
p. 406

Figure 2
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets,
p. 408

Another similar instance might be the one in which the narrator recalls an earlier memory of his abusive babysitter while going through the experience of being humiliated in class by his teacher for writing "an eight page poem about people eating … excrement" (Thompson, 2003, pp. 27–28). "This is filth!" says the teacher, while the rest of the children laugh and make fun of him (see Figure 3), "I know your mother and she's a good CHRISTIAN lady and she would be DISGUSTED with this. She would be disgusted with you" (Thompson, 2003, pp. 28–29).

Even if the narration moves then back to the English class and the events taking place there, Craig's memory continues to dig up traumatic episodes in which he, as an elder brother, fails to protect his younger brother from the sexual abuses they were both subjected to (see Figure 4).

Figure 3
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets,
p. 29

Figure 4
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets,
p. 32

The very nature of a graphic medium makes it possible to "spatially juxtapose (and overlay) past and present and future moments on the page" (Chute, 2008, p. 453). This structuring possibility produces a "tension between the chronology of events it describes and the anachronicity of their representation in the mind of a character, or the plot itself," a certain kind of "dichotomy between clock time and mind time" (Currie, 2007, p. 92).

This visual technique offers the possibility of a graphic autobiographer to "capture the unique qualities of traumatic memory, which involves the intrusion of the past into the present in the form of repeated flashbacks, hallucinations, and dreams" (El Refaie, 2012, p. 129).

But can one speak about 'traumatic memory' in Craig Thompson's graphic novel? In order to understand the background on which the author's mind knits its episodes, one should first start from the idea of space, more precisely the lived space and the social relationships that worked together in order to shape the protagonist's personal development and further reconstruction of reality.

Space as a Mark of Identity Creation

Julie O'Leary Green (2011) begins her discussion about 'space' by sketching the general picture of the evolution of the concept according to the interest it triggered among scholars in various fields. As such, she clearly distinguishes between the initial opinions (starting with Plato and Aristotle's) which gave the term (i.e. space) a rather "ornamental" role,[2] and the subsequent evolution of the concept in time (from the 19th century onwards), which emphasized and strongly affirmed "the individual's dependence on his or her environment" (p. 792). Taking into account Ruth Ronen's criteria of spatial analysis (proximity and factuality), Green (2011) discriminates between proximal and distant spaces, the most immediate narrative space being the setting,"the place where characters in the narrative present interact and where the story-events take place" (p. 793). The setting in *Blankets* is the poor rural Wisconsin where Craig, the main protagonist of the novel and his brother, Phil, are brought up in a fundamentalist Christian family with an evangelical mother and an emotionally abusive father whose authority the boys are not allowed to question. Additionally, there is also a school environment full of bullies and teachers that do not accept any outbursts of creativity or interests that might diverge from the normal religious precepts that teach obedience and worship of God. Last, but not least, there is also a sexually abusive babysitter that Craig, as a child, could not confront and oppose and from whom he obviously did not manage to protect his younger brother.

One can also speak of secondary spaces, or "spaces near characters in the narrative present and accessible to them via their senses" (Green, 2011, p. 793), in other words, what they can hear, smell, or see in their proximity, while not being exactly in that place. These spaces can be easily identified throughout the novel and they contribute to the creation of the setting and the evolution of the events in the narrative. Imagine the two brothers,

---

[2] Any mention or relation to the concept of "space" in a narrative was considered unnecessary.

Craig and Phil, having the possibility of sleeping in different rooms for the first time after sharing the same bed for too long. They tried to listen to and imagine what was going on in each other's room by deciphering the silence and initiating short stretches of conversation (see Figures 5 and 6): "Phil? Can you hear me? Yeah? Oh, I was just wondering. How's your new bed? It's great. Good. This bed's nice and spacious. So? I mean there's just a lot of room. It's not TOO spacious, is it?" (Thompson, 2003, p. 454).

Figure 5
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 453

Figure 6
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 454

There are also the fictional or imagined spaces that might be either nearby (but inaccessible for the moment to the characters in the narrative present) or geographically or temporally distant, which due to the evolution of events in the narrative might become available. The inaccessibility in such cases is just provisional; there is always a possibility for them to become factual, the result being a "complete reorganization of the household and all of the relationships therein" (Green, 20011, p. 794), as they become physically attainable. Such an example might be Raina's home in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and her family, which includes two adopted mentally disabled siblings, Ben and Laura, Raina's older biological sister Julie and her parents who are undergoing a divorce. This new space, which seems safer and more protective for Craig, in comparison with his own household, becomes the new setting of the narrative the moment the hero decides to visit his girlfriend.

Even if it is far from being the perfect place to be in, this potential home in which Craig spends two weeks represents a change of perspective, a breath of fresh air that helps him see life with different eyes.

In terms of the factuality of space (Green, 2011), the distinction is made between factual and counterfactual spaces. If the former can be all the above mentioned instances, the nonfactual or hypothetical universes are just present in the minds of the characters, tentative desires, imaginary, escapist fantasies that might provide shelter from the harsh surrounding reality (see Figures 7 and 8).

> Every night I would scheme of running away. I'd go through the motions: sneaking some snacks from the kitchen cupboard, stuffing my backpack with clothes, and feigning a casual interest in geography as I consulted my parents' atlas. But even then, I knew I was powerless to enact such a maneuver, that the REAL WORLD could only deliver new threats. (Thompson, 2003, pp. 39–40)

Figure 7
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 39.

Figure 8
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 40.

There is also another way, another means through which the main protagonist managed to find comfort and protection against all evils, to find a way to get rid of the cold, threatening environment he was supposed to face each day of his childhood and teenage life. Drawing offered him the way out (see Figure 9):

> My other get-away car was DRAWING, where my brother accompanied me at the wheel. He didn't share my ESCAPIST approach it seemed, but drew as a means of spending time with me, of CONNECTING with me. And INDEED when we drew together, often collaborating on the same page, I felt connected to Phil. An ENTIRE DAY would be consumed by drawing, interspersed with fits of running around outside expending our energy. These were the only WAKEFUL moments of my childhood that I can recall feeling life was sacred or worthwhile. (Thompson, 2003, p. 44)

Figure 9
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets,
p. 44

In order to underline the importance of 'space' and the way it managed to find its way across the social sciences and humanities during the last 20 years or so, Nigel Thrift (2006) identifies four principles that Julie Mehretu, the Ethiopian–American artist uses in her analysis and interpretation of the concept, two of them being essential for what this paper attempts to demonstrate, i.e. the importance of an individual's social and cultural environment in his/her future development, identity formation and subsequent recreation of reality. The first principle states that

> everything, but everything, is spatially distributed, down to the smallest monad: since the invention of the microscope, at least, even the head of a pin has been seen to have its own geography. Every space is shot through with other spaces in ways that are not just consequential outcomes of some other quality but live because they have that distribution. (Thrift, 2006, p. 140)

What this principle asserts is the idea that people cannot be separated from the spaces they inhabit. The reference here should be made not only to the physical, geographical space, but also to the people one can get into contact with while being part of a certain community or social environment, as these exert a great influence on the individuals' evolution in time, the way the latter address or relate to those around them. When Craig first meets Raina's father, the latter tries to explain to him what makes people living in those cold regions different from others.

> Have you ever been to the U.P. before? Say "YAH" to the U.P., eh? They claim that the FOUR SEASONS in the Upper Peninsula are early winter, mid-winter, late winter, and NEXT winter.—HA! In fact, Marquette is the snowiest small city of the 48 states with something like 300 inches a season. You know… people that live outside the Midwest say we must be crazy to live in the snow and cold, but I think we gain a lot by ENDURING these winters. We experience a discomfort that may be foreign to others, but that pain opens up a world of beauty. (Thompson, 2003, pp. 175–176)

The second principle that Thrift (2006) focuses on states that 'space' can never be considered static or stable, being in constant motion. And this is true, again, in Thompson's graphic narrative. Nothing stays the same, the spaces people inhabit influence the residents and, following the same principle, the individuals act upon the places they belong to or are part of and subsequently subject them to a series of changes. Time plays its part in this game of forces that act upon and react against one another. Craig Thompson, the author of *Blankets* introduces the reader to his life's journey by presenting the two brothers, Phil and Craig, sleeping in the same bed. The very first pages of the book tell us that they are young and not happy about the circumstances of actually sleeping together.

As Craig states, "Shared is a sugar-coated way of saying we were trapped in the same bed, as we were children and had no say in the matter" (Thompson, 2003, p. 10). Even if the situation seems to be innocent, the boys continue living in this way until their parents decide to offer them a little bit of comfort and get them another bed and create a second bedroom. "We rearranged the playroom, Phil, so that you can have your very own bedroom" (Thompson, 2003, p. 451). Nevertheless, despite their parents' effort, Craig and Phil miss their closure and find excuses to come back together. "If you are scared, you can sleep with me" (Thompson, 2003, p. 455). What this episode best exemplifies is the fact that not only spaces change to accommodate the new realities (boys becoming older and needing more space), but also people's reactions and attitudes modify in various ways, sometimes expectedly, sometimes unexpectedly (instead of being satisfied with this new arrangement, the boys reject the change and remain somehow connected in a strange and unusual way).

According to Tim Cresswell (2004), 'space' seems to be an abstract concept, a "realm without meaning—as a 'fact of life' which, like time, produces the basic coordinates for human life" (p. 10). This abstract, lifeless concept becomes alive the moment human beings endow it with meaning, or as soon as they become attached to it in some way. That is the moment when space becomes 'place.' The human component is thus the one that matters and brings about a change of perspective. Adopting Yi-Fu Tuan's view of space, Jivén and Larkham (2003) state relatively the same idea; space, as far as they are concerned, represents "the embodiment of feelings, images and thoughts of those who live, work or otherwise deal with that space" (p. 70). This view finds its correspondent in Lefebvre's 'social space' that is the result or the product of social relations or interactions, incorporating

> the actions of subjects both individual and collective who are born and who die, who suffer and who act. From the point of view of these subjects, the behaviour of their space is at once vital and mortal: within it they develop, give expression to themselves, and encounter prohibitions. (Lefebvre, 1905/1991, pp. 33–34)

A derivative concept worth mentioning in relation to the larger category of space is what Cresswell (2004) calls a "sense of place" (p. 8) or what it is like to be in a certain location, to inhabit a specific place. The concept seems to possess a certain amount of ambiguity, the opinions of those that attempted to define it and circumscribe its limits oscillating between "objective property and subjective experience" (Alexander, 2017, p. 41). In this sense, scholars define it as either a quality of the place itself, or an attribute of human beings that display a certain sensibility in relation to a certain environment that exerts an influence on them. As a consequence, where we come from, the places we currently inhabit and even our future destinations are important for who we are, for our identities. We are shaped or defined by our 'places.'

In Craig Thompson's memoir, the place he grew up in marked his development as a social being and his relationships with those around him. Brought up in a dysfunctional family in which the mother had little to say and the father was portrayed as an intimidating, aggressive man, always shouting at the children, Craig begins his life journey as a troubled, insecure boy. Throughout the novel, Craig's recollections of his sad childhood revolve around his guilty consciousness, the result of him being unable to protect his younger brother and to be a better friend and confident. Instead of helping, encouraging and supporting Phil, Craig paints his future in dark colours, his decision to do that being the very result of him having been constantly humiliated at school for his appearance (i.e. too skinny) and also for being of Spanish origin. He seems to have endured harsh moments on a regular basis, being verbally and physically abused by almost everyone. As a consequence, he projects the bleak atmosphere of the environment that shaped his childhood onto his brother:

> I was a pathetic older brother. I neglected my protective role in dangerous situations. At other times, when Phil needed a play-companion, I demanded to be left alone. But perhaps, worst of all, I'd constantly threaten him with my discouraging discoveries of the "real world," as if my three years of seniority made me an expert. You just wait until you get to THIRD grade. Then you'll have HOMEWORK, and you won't have any friends at school… …In fact, you'll probably get BEAT UP every day. (Thompson, 2003, p. 18–19)

Gaston Bachelard (1958/1994) was the first to introduce the concept of 'lived space' (i.e. 'espace vécu' [1958]) and to relate it to the architecture of the house, which, in the French philosopher's opinion, had positive connotations, being "our corner of the world," "our first universe" (p. 4). In his opinion, "memories of the outside world will never have the same tonality as those of home" (1958/1994, p. 6). Nevertheless, in Craig Thompson's case the reality is reversed. The parental home is no longer perceived as a securing environment, as a felicitous, intimate space, but a rather threatening universe. It is the place where the parents play no protective role and the babysitter, instead of taking care of the boys, sexually abuses them. As Klooster and Heirman (2013) state,

> differences between inner and outer space, for instance, are no longer considered universal, but culturally dependent: in some cases the house can become a hostile and fearsome space, for example in the case of incest, while the public space can be experienced in terms of freedom and liberation. (p. 5)

In *Blankets*, the public space is also threatening; Craig's school experience is equally terrifying as it becomes synonymous with the place where the main character is constantly bullied. "As a child, I thought that life was the most horrible world anyone could

ever live in, and that there HAD to be something better" (Thompson, 2003, p. 38). Religion is of paramount importance for Craig's family and, apparently, for the whole community he belongs to. His family is extremely pious, the Bible playing an essential part in the main hero's life, the boy being raised to believe that it (i.e. the Bible) represented the word of God and he had no other option but to obey it. In comparison with the misery of human life that was transient and painful, heaven was depicted as a perfect painless and eternal universe, the poor, wretched child longing for that peaceful and tranquil space (see Figures 10 and 11): "At that moment, I knew what I wanted… I wanted Heaven. And I grew up STRIVING for that world—an ETERNAL world—that would wash away my TEMPORARY misery" (Thompson, 2003, pp. 51–52).

Figure 10
Source: Thompson, C., Blankets, p. 51

Figure 11
Source: Thompson, C., Blankets, p. 52

No outbursts of creativity are accepted by the strict, religious context that was meant to shape the hero's first formative years. As he attempts to escape from his caged, constrictive life through drawing and dreaming, he is criticized by one of the teachers when she finds out that he wants to spend eternity in heaven drawing "I mean, 'come on, Craig,' how would you praise God with DRAWINGS? […] But, Craig… He's already drawn it for us" (Thompson, 2003, pp. 137–138).

The experience of the church camp was similar to that in school, Craig remaining the same shy boy who did not manage to fit into the scenery. He is the prototype of the other, the odd one out who can hardly find common grounds with anyone. In comparison with the great majority of those who used to attend those gatherings, teenagers interested in having fun and initiating the first sexual experiences of their lives, while slyly pretending to worship God and dedicate their lives to the moral standards preached by their counselors, Craig performed the duty of attending those religious camp gatherings without any enthusiasm and definitely unwilling to take part in any of the activities proposed. It is, however, in one of these camps that he meets Raina, a beautiful 17-year-old girl from Michigan. The two protagonists' dramatic love story moves the centre of attention to Raina's place, as Craig decides to visit her and spend some time in her family. The reality Craig has to face in his girlfriend's house is still problematic as Raina's existential problems are not different from his. Her parents are on the point of getting divorced and the heroine is the one supposed to take care of her two brothers suffering from Down's syndrome and sometimes to be the babysitter of her young niece, Sarah. However, through Raina's recollections, we find out that her childhood, as opposed to Craig's, was a happy one, a safe, loving environment. She's portrayed as a contented little girl who was able to undertake the role of her brother's guardian in school, protecting him from the attacks of bullies, something that Craig had failed to do.

The happiness of the two lovers does not last long; Raina's problems at home prevent her from fully dedicating herself to their love story, so she puts an end to their relationship. Craig is heartbroken and tries to find strength in God but he ends up questioning his religion. However, he manages to move house and consequently makes efforts to sever his ties with his previous life. Unfortunately, his attempts to fully separate from a past that defined him and guided his steps in life are only tentative, the hero being unable to get rid of his childhood traumas (see Figure 12):

> Strange how UNCOMFORTABLE these places can be despite all the time and distance. I'll never have to relive third grade recess, So why does this give me the shivers? It's only kids playing. Likewise, my parents can no longer control my curfew or ground me in the corner, yet I feel so vulnerable around them. (Thompson, 2003, p. 559)

Figure 12
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 559

Figure 13
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 246

The only spatial freedom or liberation in Craig and Raina's case is the one brought about by nature. The sole moments of happiness that the boy experienced as a child were the ones spent outside with his brother, playing in the snow and competing against each other while trying to balance on top of thin layers of ice that normally form in winter, on partially melted snow. With Raina, they had their moments of happiness when lying next to each other in snow, the shapes of their bodies creating imaginary angels that sharply contrasted with the ugliness of Craig's childhood memories or the painful reality of Raina's broken family (see Figure 13). The visual aspect that the reader is provided with in a graphic narrative helps the author of this book create a perfect emotionally charged description of a landscape that manages to erase and cover the bleak atmosphere of the main characters' social space.

Silence plays an essential role towards the end of the book, being beautifully rendered through a series of wordless panels (see Figures 14, 15 and 16). The reader is thus invited to walk alongside the narrator/author in order to decipher the hidden meaning of the images.

**p'arts, Papers in Arts
hum' and Humanities**

Figure 14
Source: Thompson, C., *Blankets*, p. 578

Silence represents tranquility, peacefulness, a return to a state of well-being. Silence opposes the misery and cruelty of the social space that surrounds the protagonist to the unspoiled grandeur of icy winter scenery. The beauty of the deserted nature finds its counterpart in the hero's imaginary, escapist journeys that he takes or seeks refuge into in order to counterbalance the ugliness of the physical and social space that controls and conditions his life. Silence can be related to the protagonist's inner space, his unspoken fears, doubts and thought, his repressed feelings and anxieties.

The dark footsteps engraved on the white blanket of snow show the movement of the hero. He walks slowly at the beginning, looking around, somehow fixing the surroundings in his mind and then starts running.

Figure 15
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets, p. 579

Figure 16
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets, p. 580

If one might attempt to decode the hidden meaning of the images above, he should probably relate the implied message to the main character's tentative acknowledgement of the importance of living his life in the present, of uttering his worries, dissatisfaction and angst, of speaking up. He seems to enjoy the surroundings, ignoring the freezing atmosphere of a winter night. The last image can suggest his struggle to get rid of his old being, while the leap might symbolize a step forward, his distancing from a world full of prejudices and obedience. The possibility of losing himself on the way could also be symbolically rendered by the discontinuation of his footprints. Nevertheless, the last pages seem to bring old Craig in front of the reader once again by portraying the same indecisive young adult incapable of getting over his beliefs (see Figures 17 and 18): "How satisfying it is to leave a mark on a blank surface. To make a map of my movement—no matter how temporary" (Thompson, 2003, pp. 581–582).

Figure 17
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets, p. 581

Figure 18
Source:
Thompson, C.,
Blankets, p. 582

He is still the same insecure boy who balances or rather opposes the evanescent character of human life to the eternal heaven promised to all worthy Christians by the holy book. Yet, the open ending of the narrative offers readers the possibility to envisage different scenarios for the main character. One might only hope that he will finally find the necessary resources to get rid of that ravaged social space that trapped him throughout his childhood and young adult life.

Conclusion

What this paper has tried to demonstrate was the fact that people and places cannot be separated when talking about identity creation and development. People are who they are just because they belong to a certain place and that place influences them in various ways, either positively or negatively. The relationships individuals develop with other fellow beings are dictated by the environments that shaped their personalities/identities. One cannot escape his original place in this world, but can attempt to shape his or her future location.

Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets* seems to demonstrate the aforementioned hypotheses. Growing up in a small town in the American Midwest in a strictly religious family that worships God to the point of fanaticism, being sexually abused by a male babysitter and terrorized by an abusive father, and constantly bullied at school, Craig finds refuge in drawing and his nighttime dreams. The physical and social environment in which the hero is forced to live shapes his future development and influences his subsequent life decisions. Despite the fact that the premises on which his young adult's life is based are not ideal, he manages to move away from home and make a life for himself; he even appears to come to terms with his spirituality, becoming an independent young man. Nonetheless, the journey he embarks on is harsh and difficult, serving as a constant reminder of the impact one's environment has on each and every individual.

References

Alexander, N. (2017). Senses of place. In R. T. Tally Jr. (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of literature and space* (pp. 39–49). Routledge.

Bachelard, G. (1994). *The poetics of space* (M. Jolas, Trans.). Beacon Press. (Original work published 1958).

Baetens, J. (2008). Graphic novels: literature without text? *English Language Notes, 46*(2), 77–88.

Brosseau, M. (2017). In, of, out, with, and through: new perspectives in literary geography. In R. T. Tally Jr. (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of literature and space* (pp. 9–27). Routledge.

Chute, H. (2008). Comics as literature? Reading graphic narrative. *PMLA, 123*(2), 452–465.

Cresswell, T. (2004). *Place: a short introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.

Currie, M. (2007). *About time: Narrative, fiction and the philosophy of time*. Edinburgh University Press.

El Refaie, E. (2012). *Autobiographical comics: Life writing in pictures*. University Press of Mississippi.

García, M. P. (2015). Writing the self, drawing the self: Identity and self-reflexivity in Craig Thompson's graphic memoir *Blankets. Culture, Language and Representation*, XIV, 155–180. http://dx.doi.org/10.6035/clr.2015.14.6

Gardner, J. (2011). Graphic novel. In P.M. Logan (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of the novel* (pp. 374–378). Wiley-Blackwell.

Goldsmith, F. (2010). *The readers' advisory guide to graphic novels*. American Library Association.

Green, J. O. (2011). Space. In P.M. Logan (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of the novel* (pp. 792–796). Wiley-Blackwell.

Iacob, L. M. (2003). *Etnopsihologie şi imagologie. Sinteze şi cercetări* [Etnopsychology and imagology. Synthesis and research]. Polirom.

Jivén, G., & Larkham, P. J. (2003). Sense of place, authenticity and character: A commentary. *Journal of Urban Design, 8*(1), 67–81.

Jones, L. (2018). Commentary on the graphic memoir. *Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction 20*(1), 175–180. https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/689397

Klooster, J., & Heirman, J. (2013). The ideologies of 'Lived Space,' Ancient and modern. In J. Klooster & J. Heirman (Eds.), *The ideologies of lived space in literary texts, ancient and modern* (pp. 3–11). Academia Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space.* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Blackwell. (Original work published 1905).

Reali, R. (2018). Memoir vs. autobiography: What's the difference, anyway? *Institute for Writers*. https://www.instituteforwriters.com/memoir-vs-autobiography-whats-the-difference-anyway/

Reaves, G. (2001). *Mapping the private geography: Autobiography, identity, and America.* McFarland Publishers.

Sarkar, S. (2020). Graphic novel: definition, examples, movie, types. A complete guide. *eng-literature.com*. https://www.eng-literature.com/2020/10/graphic-novel-definition-examples-guide.html#Graphic_Novel_Types

Thompson, C. (2003). *Blankets: An illustrated novel.* Top Shelf Productions.

Thrift, N. (2006). Space. *Theory, Culture & Society, 23*(2–3), 139–155.

Warner, B. (2020). Memoir, uninterrupted. *Publishers Weekly.* https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/authors/pw-select/article/82012-memoir-uninterrupted.html

Williams, I. (2011). Autography as auto-therapy: Psychic pain and the graphic memoir. Journal of Medical Humanities, 32(4), 353–366. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10912-011-9158-0

The Conception of Space in Two Late Nineteenth-Century Writers, Thomas Hardy and Josef Karel Šlejhar

ZDENĚK BERAN

Affiliation: Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures
Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic
Email: zdenek.beran@ff.cuni.cz

Abstract

The famous English novelist and poet Thomas Hardy and the little-known Czech short story writer Josef K. Šlejhar share a similar position in literary history, both being frequently, and rather inaccurately, discussed in the context of European naturalism. Though being partly influenced by the same ideas as the French naturalists, they both developed an individual mode of representation, especially in the way they structure the space of their fiction. The present paper attempts to analyse their approach and to demonstrate the fundamental difference of their conceptions. The prevailing form of space in Hardy is structured landscape where the nodal points are loci characterized by specific semantic density determining the issues the major characters are confronted with. Contrary to this, Šlejhar's conception tends to present space as an exteriorizing projection of his characters' situation, very often representing a moral dilemma of an individual or a community; due to this his space is less structured but more intense, deriving its meaning from the character, while in Hardy the process is reverse. The principal focus of the paper is thus on the semantics of the interaction between character and its environment or circumambient space.

Keywords: Thomas Hardy, Josef K. Šlejhar, naturalism, symbolism, semantics of space, poetics of space, Gaston Bachelard

> The experimental novelist is therefore the one who accepts proven facts, who points out in man and in society the mechanism of the phenomena over which science is mistress, and who does not interpose his personal sentiments, except in the phenomena whose determinism is not yet settled, and who tries to test, as much as he can, this personal sentiment, this idea *a priori*, by observation and experiment. I cannot understand how our naturalistic literature can mean anything else.
> —Émile Zola, *The Experimental Novel* [Le Roman expérimental]

The famous English novelist and poet Thomas Hardy and the little-known and somewhat neglected Czech short story writer Josef K. Šlejhar share a similar position in literary history, both being frequently, but rather inaccurately, recognized as naturalists, i.e. followers of the French school of literary naturalism whose proponents were Émile Zola, Guy de Maupassant or the Goncourt brothers. There are certain features, undoubtedly, which they had adopted: in particular, their conception of characters, people determined by the environment in which they live, by the social conditions and even by their own mental and moral setup, corresponds closely with the ideas of French naturalism. Hardy's and Šlejhar's characters, too, tend to be passive, to resign to the circumstances and to meet their inevitable tragic end. The biological theories of Darwin and the pessimism of Schopenhauer had found their way into their work as well as that of Zola, who expressed the issue of "the determinism of phenomena" clearly: "without daring, as I say, to formulate laws, I consider that the question of heredity has a great influence in the intellectual and passionate manifestations of man. I also attach considerable importance to the surroundings" (1893, section II, para. 8). And because man is "not alone; he lives in society, in a social condition," Zola believes that "our great study is just there, in the reciprocal effect of society on the individual and the individual on society" (1893, section II, para. 8). In this primary task of modern literature, Hardy and Šlejhar seem to agree with Zola; where they differ is how to achieve it, which means of aesthetic representation to employ to sound as true and convincing (and modern) as possible. A considerable difference can be found in their conception of literary space and, more specifically, landscape.

In the following discussion I intend to focus predominantly on landscape as a specific type of space, prevailingly as an open space of the countryside. I understand landscape basically as a structured space but at the same time I admit that for various reasons its structured character can be suppressed to accentuate one dominant and defining feature. Landscape consists in *places* and their *deployment* in the topography of the landscape. These places carry meanings by which they are not only characterized but also distinguished from other places; the dynamism of a text ensues from the interplay between these meanings and the position of characters is decided by their relationship to particular places. In this way the theme of a literary text is constructed.

It is obvious now that I view landscape, as well as other types of spatial representation, as a semantic area, a distribution of meanings within the defined space of a literary work, and that what I want to pursue is the *semantics of landscape*. I believe that a different conception of landscape with the authors influenced by naturalism lies in their different approach with which they deploy meanings in landscape, how differently they *semantize*

their landscapes, and how differently they understand the role of meanings in the topography of their works. It is therefore necessary to closely view the *strategies* they use when they create the semantic space of a landscape.

A number of critical works have dealt with the character of space in fiction. In his *Production of Space* (1991), Henri Lefebvre discusses various meanings of places and distinguishes several basic types of places, as constituent parts of literary space. Similarly, Leonard Lutwack's *Role of Place in Literature* (1984) addresses the issue of constructing a meaning of places, this time through action. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan applies people's notions and feelings about space and places to a non-literary sphere in his famous *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977) and shows how our affections concerning places are conditioned by the sense of time. On the other hand, more recent scholars, such as Gabriel Zoran, problematize the status of space in works of art and stress the ambiguity with which the role of space is presented.

It seems that the principal impetus for these (and other) studies came from Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* (1964), in which he examines especially the images of *felicitous space*, in the investigations he calls topophilia. He focuses on the sorts of space that may be grasped, defended and loved, as opposite to the hostile space of hatred and combat, which can only "be studied in the context of impassionate subject matter and apocalyptic images" (1964, p. xxxvi). This definition rests on the condition space is a projection of the subject, created by the subject and thus in possession of this subject.

> Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination. Particularly, it nearly always exercises an attraction. For it concentrates being within limits that protect. (Bachelard, 1964/2014, p. xxxvi)

Such a concept of space can, characteristically, be found in lyrical poetry, where the lyrical subject exists in unity with the circumambient space, which is in fact a projection, expansion and externalization of the subject. Even the hostile space allows for such a view: it stands for the projection of what the subject is not, of the non-subject, which it is necessary to defeat and thus win this space for possession. In naturalist fiction, however, the relationship between a character and space seems to be more complex and varied; landscape here is not a character's circumambience only (in the sense Bachelard works with). On the other hand, a character can "appropriate" a piece of landscape to possess it, in a broader sense, but at the same time, in the semantic dynamics of these texts, landscape also tends

to "appropriate" the character and thus confirm his or her fatal passivity. Notwithstanding that, Bachelard's conception points out an inevitable interaction between character and space in a literary work and may be found useful for analysis of various literary texts.

In a prototypical naturalist novel landscape plays a role which can be discussed in Bachelard's terms, however cautious one must be with their application. Zola's only novel set entirely in the French countryside, *La Terre* (1887), contains one significant description of the local landscape in Part Three, when one of the major characters, Buteau, a greedy and cunning peasant, surveys with much pleasure the flat country of La Beauce. He does so as an owner because he has just acquired the fields of his wife's family and can start farming. Even if his possession is purely materialistic, it seems that a kind of unity between a character and the space he watches has been achieved: the meaning of the landscape depends on what he inputs there, how he submits it to his desires: "Never when he had hired himself out to others had he ploughed so deeply into the bowels of the earth. It was his; he wanted to penetrate and fructify its inmost parts" (Zola, 2008, p. 168). Yet Buteau's possession is, semantically, a false and illusionary one, a result merely of his instinctive desire to conquer; the actual, intrinsic unity has not been achieved and land-scape can never truly become the character's felicitous space.

> Thus La Beauce spread her verdure before him, from November to July, from the moment when the green tips first emerged to that when the lofty stalks turned yellow. Wishing to have the country under his eye without leaving the house, he unbarred the kitchen window—the rear one that looked out on the plain—and there he used to station himself and survey ten leagues of country: an immense broad bare expanse, stretching under the vaulted skies. Not a single tree; nothing but the telegraph posts of the Châteaudun and Orleans road, running on unswervingly till they were lost to the sight. At first, there was a greenish, scarcely perceptible shade, peeping just above the soil of the large squares of brown earth. Then this soft green strengthened into velvet stretches, almost uniform in tint. Then, as the stems grew taller, each plant developed its own tinge of colour. He distinguished from afar the yellowish green of the wheat, the bluish green of the oats, the greyish green of the barley; infinite expanses of ground spread out in all directions, amid glowing patches of crimson trifolium. It was the time when La Beauce is fair and young, thus clothed about with spring, and smooth and cool to the eye in her monotony. [...] As the wheat grew, his enjoyment increased. A grey islet formed by a village had disappeared on the horizon behind the rising level of verdure. There only remained the roofs of La Borderie which, in their turn, were submerged. A mill, with its sails, remained alone like a waif. On all sides there was corn—an encroaching, overflowing sea of corn, covering the earth with its immensity of verdure. (Zola, 2008, pp. 168–9)

In relation to the character of Buteau, this presentation of the landscape reveals two basic desires of this man: his lust for the family possessions, especially fields, and his lust for Françoise, the younger sister of his wife, who he repeatedly harasses. His surveying of the possessed soil teems with erotic overtones, being expressive of Buteau's sensuality: "he wanted to penetrate and fructify its inmost parts." The same atavistic desire, which attracts him to the young and fresh girl, dominates his attempts to appropriate as much of the family possessions, including the part owned by Françoise. Greed and sensuality define this character and they are projected into the landscape description, with its over-arching motifs of nearly devouring fertility.

In Zola's novel, the semantics of the character *is* imprinted in and projected into the semantics of the landscape. Nevertheless, the purpose of this strategy is not to create a unity between a character and its setting, but to expose and condemn the defining traits of one of the central characters; the sense of affinity between character and landscape becomes a tool of subversion, an ironic comment on the human values distorted by the prevailing egoism of the whole region. The semantics of the landscape of La Beauce thus correlates with the principal theme of the novel, making it graphic, palpable and intense. The Zolaesque landscape plays a semantically *intensifying* role; as such, it is in fact unstructured, "monotone," unified around the central idea of his work.

On the other hand, the landscape in the novels of Thomas Hardy is markedly structured and semantically more complex. Eithne Henson characterizes the Hardy landscapes as "intensely visual; they are heavily loaded with symbolic meaning; they are physically instrumental to the plots, and, above all, they are inescapably gendered" (Henson, 2011, p. 127). This implies that the Hardy landscape is, first, a structured entity, and second, a textual entity. Supporting this fact, Ken Taylor first quotes W. G. Hoskins's proposal which states that the "'landscape itself, to those who know how to read it aright, is the richest historical record we possess,'" and adds his own conclusion that the modern approach tends towards "the expression of landscape as cultural process 'by which … identities are formed'" (Taylor, 2008, p. 2).

This characteristic can be best demonstrated on Egdon Heath, the stretch of land where the story of *The Return of the Native* (1878) is situated. Egdon is a self-absorbed enclave, which in fact makes up the sole scene of the novel, a stage of human passions and desires. Its basic landmarks, as the map attached to the first edition and drawn by Hardy himself shows, are the dwelling places occupied by the major characters one time or another—Bloom's End, the home of Captain Vye and his granddaughter Eustacia; Mistover, where Mrs Yeobright and her niece Thomasin live and where Clym Yeobright returns;

the Quiet Woman Inn, owned by Eustacia's former lover Damon Wildeve; and Alderworth, a new home of Clym and Eustacia. These points ensure the basic semanticity of the story, at these places complex meanings are generated: e.g. Bloom's End is connected with water and fire, the nearby pond reflecting Eustacia's signal fire she uses to attract Wildeve, the motif that predicts her symbolic death by fire (as a wax effigy) and actual death by water in the Shadwater Weir at the end of the novel. Much of the action consists of the characters' traversing the Heath, moving from one point to another, either physically (as when Mrs Yeobright takes a long and exhausting walk to her son's new home), or just mentally (in which case, Eustacia's desire for Wildeve is even supported by her use of telescope). This way the meanings of the individual landmarks (or semantic markers) are confronted and the semantic dynamics of the structured landscape is established.

Egdon is, however, structured not only within its own domain but also in relation to what lies outside of it, especially to places such as Budmouth or Paris, which make the semantic opposites to Egdon. Therefore, it seems useful to introduce two types of meaning, which can be called (a) "endogenous meanings," (i.e. the meanings generated within the focalised enclave), and (b) "exogenous meanings," (i.e. those pertaining to the world beyond the bounds of the enclave). This distinction, of course, applies not only to landscape or its parts but to each place within it—every house and every natural formation has its own endogenous meanings standing in opposition to exogenous meanings, which at the same time can be the endogenous meanings of another place. "Closeness" with Alderworth, "security of home" with Mistover, "obscurity" with the Quiet Woman Inn (where Clym and Eustacia meet for the first time in disguise during a Christmas mumming show), or "death" with the Celtic barrows are examples of such meanings.

This inclusive and exclusive structuring of Egdon is horizontal, (i.e., purely topographic). But the Heath is also structured vertically. At the very beginning of *The Return of the Native* we learn that "overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor" (Hardy, 1985c, p. 53). Thus a unity of two contrasting spatial phenomena is introduced, predicting frequent conflicting motifs characteristic of the novel:

> The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking dread. (Hardy, 1985c, p. 53)

The vertical dimension, however, stretches even further, beyond the tent-like canopy of the sky, into the universe itself: in the scene of Clym and Eustacia's first dating during a lunar eclipse, the terrestrial events are projected, as on a screen, on the bright surface of the Moon, being ultimately diminished by the distance. This vertical, cosmological perspective makes the events of the horizontal plane relative and insignificant.

The Heath is, simultaneously, endowed with a temporal dimension, becoming a spatio-temporal entity, where the present of the enclave is positioned against its past and, on a symbolic plane, life against death. This temporal aspect is symbolized by other constituent parts of the Egdon landscape, namely the remnants of the old Roman road, on which the first characters we are allowed to see enter the place, and especially the Celtic burial mounds called barrows; they both represent the notion of "landscape as cultural process" (Taylor, 2008, p. 2). During the evening when fires are lit to com-memorate the Guy Fawkes rising, Eustacia makes her own fire on one of these barrows, as if to reveal her intrinsically pagan nature; more importantly, when later on old bones are dug out by accident on a barrow, Clym changes his mind to present them to his mother and instead he gives them to Eustacia, which introduces a motif foreshadowing the death of both women who are close to his heart and problematizes the motif of Clym's return, putting the blame at least partly on him.

It seems obvious now that the complex spatiotemporal character of the Hardy land-scape plays a significant semantic role in his fiction; some of its parts manifest striking semantic density and invite detailed interpretation and perhaps even speculations about the typology of Hardy's semantic strategies connected with landscape. Let us demonstrate some of them. It is noticeable that most of Hardy's major novels open in a similar fashion, presenting in fact an analogical situation—a single person is seen walking through a specific part of landscape, and as such entering the space of the novel. The place he finds himself in encodes meanings which indicate the central theme of the novel, long before the story begins to develop in that direction. This means that the reader must, at the very beginning (or rather during a repeated reading when he or she has become aware of the author's strategies), decode the landscape symbolism he or she is confronted with. Thus one of the early novels, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), opens with a scene in which Dick Dewy, the male protagonist, hurries to his village to join a group of friends, members of the local church quire, with whom he intends to go carolling, since it is Christmas Eve.

He enters a wood which is described as follows:

> To dwellers in a wood almost every species of tree has its voice as well as its feature. At the passing of the breeze the fir-trees sob and moan no less distinctly than they rock; the holly whistles as it battles with itself; the ash hisses amid its quiverings; the beech rustles while its flat boughs rise and fall. And winter, which modifies the note of such trees as shed their leaves, does not destroy its individuality.—On a cold and starry Christmas-eve within living memory a man was passing up a lane towards Mellstock Cross in the darkness of a plantation that whispered thus distinctively to his intelligence. (Hardy, 1985d, p. 39)

Here we have a scene in which every tree preserves its individuality as far as its voice is concerned yet the entire wood produces its chorale all the same, winter being its unerring and confident conductor. The image of a natural orchestra to which each member contributes with its individual sound anticipates one of the central themes of the novel, a planned dismantling of the traditional church quire and replacing it by the music produced by a single person playing the harmonium. The very first motif of the novel thus strikes the note of deviation of the human community from the world of nature, or from what is natural, and a potential conflict that may arise from such an ambition. Such initial symbolism is present in some other novels too; this specific semantic role of the Hardy landscape can thus be viewed as *thematic*.

A more complex conception of landscape as a semantic clue can be found in another earlier novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). The two main characters, Gabriel Oak and Bethsheba Everdene, stand out early in the novel in the emblematic images presenting them in a symbolic connection with space. Oak is a shepherd whose only entertainment is playing the flute. The scene in which we learn this is described in these words:

> To persons standing alone on a hill during a clear midnight such as this, the roll of the world eastward is almost a palpable movement. The sensation may be caused by the panoramic glide of the stars past earthly objects, which is perceptible in a few minutes of stillness, or by the better outlook upon space that a hill affords, or by the wind, or by the solitude; but whatever be its origin the impression of riding along is vivid and abiding… Suddenly an unexpected series of sounds began to be heard in this place up against the sky. They had a clearness which was to be found nowhere in the wind, and a sequence which was to be found nowhere in nature. They were the notes of Farmer Oak's flute. The tune was not floating unhindered into the open air: it seemed muffled in some way, and was altogether too curtailed in power to spread high or wide. (Hardy, 1985a, p. 58)

Once more, as in *The Return of the Native*, we have a cosmic vision here; the narrator, who is an observer of the scene, feels overcome by his sense of being involved in the cosmic movements and the muffled tones coming from Oak's hut may seem to be the music of the spheres to him. Definitely Oak is, in his modest way, included as part of this cosmic vision and thus identified with the endless space into which he symbolically expands. This idea is supported slightly later by the persisting universal vision:

> The Dog-star and Aldebaran, pointing to the restless Pleiades, were half-way up the Southern sky, and between them hung Orion, which gorgeous constellation never burnt more vividly than now, as it soared forth above the rim of the landscape. Castor and Pollux with their quiet shine were almost on the meridian: the barren and gloomy Square of Pegasus was creeping round to the north-west; far away through the plantation Vega sparkled like a lamp suspended amid the leafless trees, and Cassiopeia's chair stood daintily poised on the uppermost boughs. (Hardy, 1985a, p. 61)

Such is the true character of Oak's ambience, the space in which cosmic objects mix up with earthly ones to make up one unified image. Bathsheba, coming to the place to live on a farm with her aunt and later to become a farmer herself, is also introduced in an emblematic image, but a strikingly different one; we see her, for the first time, sitting on a waggon amidst all her belongings:

> The handsome girl waited for some time idly in her place, and the only sound heard in the stillness was the hopping of the canary up and down the perches of its prison. Then she looked attentively downwards. It was not at the bird, nor at the cat; it was at an oblong package tied in paper, and lying between them. She turned her head to learn if the waggoner were coming. He was not yet in sight; and her eyes crept back to the package, her thoughts seeming to run upon what was inside it. At length she drew the article into her lap, and untied the paper covering; a small swing looking-glass was disclosed, in which she proceeded to survey herself attentively. She parted her lips and smiled. (Hardy, 1985a, p. 54)

The scene obviously defines Bathsheba as vain, as Oak himself remarks, but the looking-glass conveys a more important symbolic meaning: while Oak, in the previous image, was presented as participating in the life of the entire universe, the looking-glass actually makes a screen which does not allow Bathsheba to share nothing else but a reflection of her face. At that moment her landscape vanishes and her space is contracted to herself, or, more accurately, to an illusion of herself. The two principal characters thus enter the novel in this stark contradiction, in this semantic contrast of space symbolism.

The scene also has a predictive function: it anticipates the key moment when Bathsheba falls irresistibly in love with Sergeant Troy. This young soldier, whose future involvement with the farmer is suggested by the entanglement of his spur with her skirt during their first meeting, invites Bathsheba to see his art of fencing and takes her to a secluded place called the Hollow amid the Ferns, where he dazzles her when he shows how dexterous he can be with his sword. The place is described in the following way:

> The pit was a saucer-shaped concave, naturally formed, with a top diameter of about thirty feet, and shallow enough to allow the sunshine to reach their heads. Standing in the centre, the sky overhead was met by a circular horizon of fern: this grew nearly to the bottom of the slope and then abruptly ceased. The middle within the belt of verdure was floored with a thick flossy carpet of moss and grass intermingled, so yielding that the foot was half buried within it. (Hardy, 1985a, pp. 237–8)

We notice the place's unique features, its seclusion from the rest of the world, its closeness, its circular shape and its sufficient shallowness allowing sunshine just to get in. It resembles a chamber made by nature, a magic spot, where Troy acts like a magician of a kind. Bathsheba is dazzled by his masculinity as well as the reflections of sunshine from the highly polished blade of his phallic sword. The looking-glass motif is repeated here; while earlier Bathsheba was fascinated by her own reflected beauty, blind to the surrounding world, now she is blinded by her love for Troy. This owes much to the fact that they are isolated from the surrounding world during this obvious ritual of sexual initiation, that the girl is confined within endogenous meanings and separated from the exogenous meanings signifying her responsibility as farmer.

This principle of mutually exclusive endogenous and exogenous meanings then finds its full development in Hardy's masterpiece, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1892). A critical moment in the life of the novel's eponymous protagonist takes place in the Chase, referred to as the oldest wood in this part of England. Here Alec seduces Tess, making use of her exhaustion after the whole day at a market and after her row with other girls and taking her on horseback to a secluded, magic place, lit by a midnight moon. At a symbolic level, Tess becomes helpless against Alec's attempts not only because of these special circumstances, but because the place is virtually free from the intolerant Christian moral code; it is presented as pagan space, its existence reaching back to Celtic, druidical, times, and Christian signifiers are dismissed with a sneer:

> But, might some say, where was Tess's guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other god of whom the ironical Tishbite spoke, he was talking, or he was pursuing, or he was in a journey, or he was sleeping and not to be awaked. (Hardy, 1985b, p. 119)

Tess is then persecuted not because she has sinned against nature or transgressed the law of nature (the scene rather confirms her "pagan" unity with nature, her sacrificial role to natural deities); she is persecuted because she has broken the narrow moral norm of the English Victorian society. But the point is that this norm does not apply in the Chase, this specific natural formation within the symbolic structure of the novel's landscape. Christian normativity is not part of the endogenous semantics of the Chase.

Though the seduction scene in the Chase plays a key role in the story of Tess's life, its semantic potential reaches beyond its presentation in Chapter XI. Just as the scene of Bathsheba's initiation in the Hollow amid the Ferns, in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, has its predictive equivalent in the scene with the looking-glass, so is the scene of Tess's seduction signalled by an earlier passage. These earlier moments clearly stand for the thematically *anticipatory* function of the Hardy landscape. In Chapter II of *Tess*, one part of Tess's home country called the Vale of Blackmoor is introduced in these terms:

> The district is of historic, no less than of topographical interest. The Vale was known in former times as the Forest of White Hart, from a curious legend of King Henry III's reign, in which the killing by a certain Thomas de la Lynd of a beautiful white hart which the king had run down and spared, was made the occasion of a heavy fine. In those days, and till comparatively recent times, the country was densely wooded. Even now, traces of its earlier condition are to be found in the old oak copses and irregular belts of timber that yet survive upon its slopes, and the hollow-trunked trees that shade so many of its pastures. (Hardy, 1985b, p. 49)

Here the readers get acquainted with the main theme of the novel for the first time: a complete destruction of innocent beauty. They are provided with it indirectly, in a symbolic fashion, but rather than through parallel equivalence this is done through a contrasting image, polemically, by way of a vertical rather than horizontal structuring. The legend says that the transgressor, who destroyed the innocent beauty of the hart, was heavily fined by his sovereign, whereas the Victorian society with its pervert understanding of Christian morals punishes the victim, not the transgressor, or, in other words, the sovereign, i.e. God, fails to secure justice in modern society because he is just the Aeschylean "President of the Immortals" for whom human fate is a mere sport,

as Hardy says in the last chapter (Hardy, 1985b, p. 489). As we can see, the vertical structuring in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is not merely temporal, representing landscape as "cultural process," but more complex: the construction of space is also used as a means of ontological confrontation of two modes of being, mythological and actual, related to concrete historical conditions.

The above confrontation of the ways Zola and Hardy employ the topos of landscape in their novels reveals not only a far greater structural complexity of space in Hardy's work, but a principally different function. By projecting the meanings pertaining to his characters into the surrounding space, the landscape of La Beauce, Zola accentuates his central theme. This theme is, however, already represented by his characters, their behaviour, their desires, their vices. The semantics of the landscape depends on the semantics of the people and is derived from it, however much his peasants are determined by their relation to their landscape, its fertility and productivity. Hardy's landscape, in which the determining factors are employed more on a symbolic plane, becomes, on the contrary, a clue to his characters and their fates; decoding the meanings imprinted in Hardy's space we come to understand the theme of his work.

Exploring Šlejhar's writings for passages dedicated to landscape descriptions, one is surprized by a relative scarcity of them. Though set prevailingly in the country, among north Bohemian peasants, his stories focus on man in an extreme situation, usually as a victim of adversity, egoism, disrespect or hatred of his or her antagonist(s). The landscape image, when employed, plays an even more profound role in such moments than in the novels of Thomas Hardy. The outer world becomes part of the inner being of a character, of his consciousness or his soul. One of these characters can even be the narrator, otherwise taking no part in the situation and posing just as a witness, though a very affected one. As such, the landscape in Šlejhar tends to be unstructured with just one dominant feature conveying the desired meaning. Such a conception may remind us of the famous dictum of Henri-Frédéric Amiel, the Swiss moral philosopher and diarist, who said that "any landscape is a condition of the spirit."

This principle can be well demonstrated on a passage from a short story called, in its magazine version, "Kaplička" ("The Chapel," published in *Lumír*, 1900), and later included in the collection *Z chmurných obzorů* (From the Gloomy Horizons, 1910) as "Na Krchovcích" (the place name Krchovce being suggestive of a burying ground). In it a nameless character, an old rich miller, walks from his village to a little chapel he built amid his fields several miles away from home as a sign of his repentance for the crimes he had committed in his youth.

It is raining heavily and other villagers either stay in their cottages or crowd in the local church. The protagonist, however, does not share communal religiosity, he needs to communicate with God in his own individual and—as he believes—more profound and genuine way. It is his last journey: at the end of the story we see him dying on the steps of the chapel. The landscape he passes through consists of all his fields, now soaked with water, with crop mostly destroyed. The scene is presented in its utmost intensity:

> The whole country was growing black, dressed in the immense water robes which it was impossible to get rid of. Everything was soaked with water, in the tight grasp of heavy wet arms. The pouring from the clouds, destructively flooding the earth, was ceaseless and overpowering. Streams of water ran darkly across the blackened meadows and banks, fields and roads. Blackened houses, blackened grass, blackened woods and hillsides, vanishing gloomily in the undistinguished distances of the horizon, everything so black and dismal and vanishing in that persistent watery chaos.—By the road a flooded brook rolled its waters with dark and wild force, whirling occasionally on the meadows like a disturbed red sea and roaring darkly in one muffled but terrible echo of the rain. The alders lining its banks rose like dark, steep walls. (Šlejhar, 1900, p. 56—My translation)

The landscape Šlejhar presents so persistently is in fact a reflection of the hero's harrowed conscience, the mind shaken by the uncertainty of God's mercy. The picture of the landscape almost collapsing under the raging torrents is analogous to the hero's inner fight with God's wrath, the fight he must undergo before he reaches his goal, however illusionary this goal may turn out to be. At the end of his final journey, the transgressor's consciousness meets its critical point and the inner world of the man collapses in the same existential cataclysm as that which defaces nature around him.

Interiorized landscape plays a similar role in other texts as well, e.g. in "Nehoda mesiáše" (The Accident of Messiah), a short story collected in the volume *Temno* (Darkness, 1902), where the protagonist makes his desperate trip to a local healer, in whose powers he sees the last hope for his limping horse; in a long story called "Jen si odpočiň…" (Just Take a Rest…) from the same collection; or in "Předtuchy" (Premonitions), the title story from a later collection (1909), in which the landscape destroyed by a storm represents the climax of a series of disastrous events serving as psychological torments under whose working a greedy and obstinate farmer transforms into a religious person and recluse. The landscape of these texts is no more a background or a matrix of symbolic meanings; it becomes an agent actively participating in the fate of Šlejhar's characters. It acts as a test of the heroes' moral integrity, their endurance and will.

Occasionally, a different use of landscape image occurs: in *Peklo* (Inferno), Šlejhar's only industrial novel, the barren and exploited landscape reflects the disintegration of values caused by a transfer of the traditional, rural society, in which life was based on a general respect for the laws of nature, towards a dehumanized, purely vegetative form of industrial society. Even this is, however, represented as a point of reference defining the state of the hero's own mind, as a picture resulting from an interaction of the hero's inner world with the outer conditions:

> Walking the other days through this unpleasant landscape, whose entire beauty and amazing fecundity of its soil was oriented purely to beet growing, the quickest profit, and where nothing else was left to bring comfort, where only a calculating matter-of-factness of life was at work—he felt all the intense, hopeless grief of his own life, the helplessness of any other effort, any other desire, the confinement of his own being in some dull, low, wobbling sphere, the servitude to matter from which there is no escape. (Šlejhar, 2002, p. 25, my translation)

This initial image is later contrasted with its opposite, with an idealized picture of pure nature, unpolluted by civilisation, the landscape of his home, a place of return, as the hero promises to his lover, an idealized girl called, quite tellingly, Mary:

> But I know a different country than this one, my country far away in the mountains, a country of green meadows as if made of emeralds, of shadowy woods with their unceasing rustle. That country is still unravished by the touch of mammon. That country is holy, feeding blessedly those who have entrusted themselves to its truth. We shall entrust ourselves to it, we shall leave this place. (Šlejhar, 2002, p. 261—My translation)

The text dynamics develop towards the landscape of the mind, the landscape of memory, an ideal pastoral and Christian landscape of childhood. The redeeming power of such space is the only hope for one who has become familiar with the industrial inferno. However illusory such hope turns out to be eventually, Šlejhar's strategy clearly indicates the dominant position of the interiorized pictures of landscape in his fiction.

Šlejhar's conception here bears closely upon his prevailingly impressionist method of representation, suggested already by the title of his first collection of short stories, *Dojmy z přírody a společnosti* (Impressions from Nature and Society, 1894). It is in this respect that Šlejhar differs substantially from Zola's definition of the naturalist writer as one "who does not interpose his personal sentiments" (Zola, 1964/1893, Section V, para. 13). Emotional involvement is a feature marking a number of Šlejhar's writings. Even if his narrator witnessing the scenes in which evil is at large in all its cruelty never interferes

with what is going on and does not become a character participating in the actions, he nevertheless realizes the presence of evil with great sensitivity and feels tormented by it so much as to experience hallucinatory states which are close to a kind of mystic ecstasy.

Thus in *Vraždění* (Murdering), a novel set in a village where Šlejhar lived for a time, an autobiographical character records the events that have taken place within the last half-year. He first comments upon them with a deal of ironic aloofness or only slight compassion and presents them as "documents" (respecting the subtitle of the novel). But with the escalation of these events, his narrative perspective changes and what he shares with the reader is his mental processing of these events, images of his exalted mind, a mystic vision projected against a specific night scene of a starlit landscape. The objective world becomes, due to the narrator's emotional intensity, a transcendental vision. The semantics of the text changes from the meanings of the objective, external reality to those formed not rationally but emotionally, springing right from a painfully torn soul, which is no more able to bear all the evil it witnesses: "and for long are my senses unable to comprehend what is going on, what is the purpose of that inexplicable stupor in which as if some mystique storm was about to break. My soul seems to grope in the dark" (Šlejhar, 1910, p. 224). Šlejhar's landscape has its true origin in the human soul; sensual perception and subjective impressions are mere conditions for its existence.

This tendency towards subjectivity of Šlejhar's space culminates in his short story "V mhách březnové noci" (In the Fogs of a March Night) from the collection *V zášeří krbu* (In the Shades of a Hearth, 1899), where the actual landscape seems to vanish entirely and become, in the observer's consciousness, something unknown or even uncanny; the intangible other:

> I don't recognize the familiar dwelling places, objects, shapes […] Everything I have been so far certain of knowing is changed into groups curiously deprived of their substance, garlanded with vapours and shadows, blurred, eluding all the notions and dimensions of experience—into groups dislocated from their positions and shelters and formed in poses of some intense waiting, blown up out of all earthly proportions, terribly—into something of entirely different, mysterious and unsolved meaning. (Šlejhar, 1899, p. 258—My translation)

This is the most extreme example of deviation of naturalist fiction from the original conception of space as practised by Émile Zola. The scene is created entirely by the narrator's mind swayed by the overwhelming impressions of the moment, and the actual landscape of the scene emerges only very slowly and gradually behind this purely sub-jective vision. In such parts of Šlejhar's fiction landscape plays a *psychological* role, being determined by one's consciousness, or, in Amiel's words, "a condition of the spirit."

The purpose of discussing extracts representing landscape in its various semantic functions was to demonstrate how the authors from whose work these passages were selected, Hardy and Šlejhar, transformed the original naturalist conception of literary space and in doing this deviated from the school of French naturalism. Both of them seemed to find the original intensifying role of environment, as employed in Zola's novel, inadequate. Hardy exploits the broad semantic potential of landscape to provide ample interpretive clues through his spatial imagery. His use of endogenic and exogenic meanings in the construction of places provides his novels with a specific form of interaction between character and environment: instead of simple Darwinian determination he offers a concept based on symbolic understanding of his topography. We can thus identify various functions of his use of landscape, such as thematic or anticipatory.

Šlejhar goes even further in his farewell to Zolaesque naturalism: he internalizes landscape and turns it into an aesthetic instrument for the examination of the human mind, accentuating a psychological function of landscape. For him subjective reflection of outer reality, prompted by an intense emotional involvement of his protagonists in the depicted situations, is much more important than an objective, detached representation of reality. Both Hardy's and Šlejhar's complex strategies contributed to building a bridge between traditional realist fiction and modernist literature of the early 20th century.

References

Bachelard, G. (2014). *The poetics of space* [La poetique de l'espace]. (M. Jolas, Trans.), Penguin Books. (Original work published in 1964)

Hardy, T. (1985a). *Far from the madding crowd*. Penguin Books.

Hardy, T. (1985b). *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Penguin Books.

Hardy, T. (1985c). *The return of the native*. Penguin Books.

Hardy, T. (1985d). *Under the greenwood tree*. Penguin Books.

Henson, E. (2011). *Landscape and gender in the novels of Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy: The body of nature*. Ashgate.

Šlejhar, J. K. (1899). *V zášeří krbu* [In the Shade of a Hearth]. Edvard Beaufort.

Šlejhar, J. K. (1900). *"Kaplička"* [The Chapel]. Lumír 29(5–12). J. Otta.

Šlejhar, J. K. (1910). *Vraždění* [Murdering]. B. Kočí.

Šlejhar, J. K. (2022). *Peklo* [Inferno]. LEVYN.

Taylor, K. (2008, Sept. 29–Oct. 4). "Landscape and memory: Cultural landscapes, intangible values and some thoughts on Asia" (conference paper). In: 16th ICOMOS General Assembly and International Symposium: "Finding the spirit of place—between the tangible and the intangible." http://openarchive.icomos.org/id/eprint/139/1/77-wrVW-272.pdf

Zola, Émile. (1964) "The experimental novel." In *The experimental novel and other essays*. (B. M. Sherman, Trans., Transcribed by Cody Jones.) (Original work published 1893). https://www.marxists.org/archive/zola/1893/experimental-novel.htm

Zola, Émile. (2008). *The soil. A realistic novel* [La Terre]. (H. Vizetelly, Trans.) Vizetelly and Co. (Original work published 1888).

Space and Silence as a Possible Form of It: Thoughts of a Literary Translator

ÁGNES SOMLÓ

Affiliation: Institute of English and American Studies
Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Hungary
Email: somlo.agnes@btk.ppke.hu

Abstract

Space is often referred to as a vacuum and sound cannot travel in it, thus the silence experienced in space. At the same time, space is full of movement, thus, silence is part of that perpetual vitality and energy present in outer space as well as in other spaces defined as such in our everyday life, for example space between letters in this paper. Silence in space is gaps between particles while gaps or blanks in other fields such as literature are part of the explanation reception theorists, Iser (2006) among them, give us to the question of why we have different readings of the same text arguing that these gaps, in given parts of the text "trigger synthesizing operations in the reader's mind … [as they] lead to collisions between the individual ideas formed" (p. 66). Studying silence in the literary space also allows us to reflect on it as an important question of literary translation from several aspects. First of all, translation is bridging the space between different cultures. We will see that silence as a certain form of appearance associated with all kinds of space is universal and at the same time culture-bound and, thus, it also acquires meaning in context while we try to capture and trace the different meanings and notions of it in different fields and consider it from a dialectical aspect as well.

Keywords: concept of space and silence; the language of God and Natursprache; translation as an empty space between cultures; 'translated man'; semiotic trichotomy of Peirce; ellipsis

On seeing a word a translator will immediately think about its possible interpretations and ways of conveying its meaning into another language. To do so one has to look for and find the strongest connotations that would help to transmit its meaning in the target language.

The word *space* evoked the notion of *silence* in me and I was not able to escape the thought of that inevitable connection between them firstly as the silence of the universe. I also saw this connection in the case of human communication, which is my narrower field of interest, where space might mean a break in speech or an omission, a hiatus, a gap or pause that may be a blank space in writing, or simply the space between words; all these would mean a kind of silence, the lack of sounds or thoughts that are there but not pronounced, thus further elaborating the meaning of silence. Giving further considerations to it, and following my practice as a literary translator, I decided to go around the topic and look at it from different aspects because this connotation can be tackled in philosophy or music as well as in the religious or political space, thus silence can be considered as one of the forms of space that we are able to find in different fields and detect via different approaches.

Space, namely outer space is said to be empty and soundless and is often referred to as a vacuum and we suppose that sound cannot travel in it, thus the silence experienced in space. On the other hand, based on Einstein's thought, scientists now found that space is not silent after all; it is full of vibrating movement and lively energy and sound as well. From this respect space as vacuum can also be seen as immense gaps of nothingness between these vibrating and moving particles. As a result, silence, viewed as an integral part of space, can be defined as the gaps between sounds and thus a link between them.

In her famous essay, *The Aesthetics of Silence*, Susan Sontag (1983) also explains silence as a gap in our 'earthly' space and time: "Something takes place in time, a voice speaking which points to the before and to what comes after an utterance: silence [which] then, is both the precondition of speech and the result or aim of properly directed speech" (p. 196). In our everyday space, in our life-space it also means that silence is not only a part but also a means of communication and its "meaning differs depending on who is silent" (Shivani, 2007, p. 143). So silence is not only the opposite of language but also part of it; a message, a form of speech and according to H. D. Thoreau (2006) "In human intercourse the tragedy begins, not when there is misunderstanding about words, but when silence is not understood" (p. 407). Therefore, silence itself can be considered a sort of language on its own, a language without a dictionary proper so, in the case of any communication but especially interlingual communication, the translator should rely on his/her own resources when trying to convey the meaning of different silences to a target text because, as a result, silence and the space it takes is also culture-bound. We should add here that silence in our social and historical space contains a general human aspect,

a kind of common memory and culture we all understand. So we might say with Shivani Singh Tharu (2007), the Nepalese playwright and media personality that silence

> plays an integral part in human nature, philosophies, and discourse. We express ourselves through languages made up with words, grammatical structures and even body language. And, when we exhaust visible or audible mediums, we use silence to complete it. It comes spontaneously. Every sentence finishes with full stop; a punctuation mark, [that] represents the absence of sound for a moment. Therefore, every sentence requires silence in the end, which could mean think over, or start another. (p. 407)

Shifting slightly towards religious as well as philosophical spaces of silence we will see the difference between silences that may be defined as outside noise that goes unnoticed such as the music of the spheres and inner silence, which is so important in religious contemplation. The first is outside us and based on an ancient philosophical thought recalled by Andrew Edgar (1997) in his essay on music and silence: "The music of the spheres becomes a noise that goes unnoticed, and as such is silent, as is any sound that falls outside our immediate concern and attention" (p. 320). The other is inside us and according to Ramana Maharshi, an Indian thinker and Hindu spiritual leader, "silence is never-ending speech. Vocal speech obstructs the other speech of silence. In silence one is in intimate contact with the surroundings" (as cited in Godman, 1985, p. 65) and thus, silence is "the highest and most effective language" (as cited in Godman, 1985, p. 65). In fact, it is this *inner silence*, this "most effective language" that many religious traditions strive to reach, emphasizing the importance of a silent, quiet mind and spirit to provide the possibility of true contemplation that would lead us and make able to commune with God.[1] It often conveys more information than speech and can thus be regarded as a part of the universal human aspect of communication which is common in all cultures. According to a Chinese philosopher, "Silence speaks because [it] has its invisible, inaudible, intangible, and yet indispensable content and context to be silent about … [Thus] we all communicate with one another through silence …, which is not only culturally specific but also universally meaningful" (Chen, 2007, p. 37).

Western culture has reached the same conclusion, as a random example from Thomas Carlyle (2001), the Victorian satirist, will show. In his essay on Walter Scott—originally, a review assessing John Gibson Lockhart's account of the *Life of Sir Walter Scott*—he claims the following: "under all speech that is good for anything there lies a silence that is better. Silence is deep as Eternity; speech is shallow as Time" (p. 6).

---

[1] We will see this thought in another light when discussing Jakob Boehme's idea of 'natural language.'

Despite the truth of this statement we will also see that eventually, it is usually speech or language use that embraces silence and provides context to it—otherwise the significance of silence would be lost. Susan Sontag (1983) also emphasizes this dialectic relationship between silence and sound, silence and language for the notion of silence is not understandable unless it implies its opposite in a given time and space: "without the polarity of silence, the whole system of language would fail" (p. 193). And we must see: "just as there can't be 'up' without 'down' or 'left' without 'right' […] one must acknowledge a surrounding environment of sound or language in order to recognize silence" continues Sontag (1983) and enhancing the existence of silence in time she adds that "any given silence has its identity as a stretch of time being perforated by sound" (p. 187).

Empty space is just like silence; as long as we see and can look at things, we inhabit empty spaces. Susan Sontag's famous example is taken from Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (1872/2012); it is the scene when Alice suddenly finds herself in a shop that

> seemed to be full of all manner of curious things—but the oddest part of it all was that, whenever she looked hard at any shelf, to make out exactly what it had on it, that particular shelf was always quite empty: though the others round it were crowded as full as they could hold. (p. 47)

"A genuine emptiness, a pure silence are not feasible—either conceptually or in fact" continues Sontag (1983) and adds that "the artist who creates silence or emptiness must produce something dialectical: a full void, an enriching emptiness, a resonating or eloquent silence" (p. 187).

According to John Cage (1961), composer of *4'33"*, "there is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time. There is always something to see, something to hear" (p. 8). Elsewhere he also says "there is no such thing as silence. Something is always happening that makes a sound" (Cage, 1961, p. 191) and so it is during those 4 minutes and 33 seconds, in which the audience is waiting all ears. This experimental composition is "a piece that could be played on 'any instrument'; a piece with no musical notes … that would highlight to the world that it was absence of silence, not absence of sound, that truly defined the limitations of music" (Woolfrey, n.d., para. 3). Certainly, it also means that we are not bound by a place or time because there can be a performance of this piece anywhere and anytime; "all we have to do is think to listen to it" (Woolfrey, n.d., para. 13). Thus we can deduce silence seems to pervade our lives as well as the space we live in:

> [it] is the space in which our planet spins relentlessly. It is the space between the words on this page. It is the screen on which you watch the movie in your favourite multiplex.

> It is the traffic signal at the crossroads. It is the photo in your living room, which speaks fondly of a distant memory of a special time spent with loved ones. It is the space between two thoughts. It is the silence all around you. It is the silence outside when you are not talking. It is the stillness inside when you are not thinking. (Sachdeva, 2008, p. 66)

Accordingly, there are different silences or different ways of understanding silence in our everyday lives as well. Thus, silence is not only a part of communication but also a means of it and can appear in any situation, as when a subordinate, an employee is standing in front of his boss; or it can affect someone who is mourning the loss of a beloved one.

Let us see how this psychological sense of silence in our literary space affects the work of translators. They have to try to determine the hidden meaning and message (the sub-text) of a particular silence, which might imply surprise, love, agreement, anger, dissatis-faction, and frustration, or the portentous silence that precedes an emotional storm. For example, such a heavy and ominous silence seems to be present in *The Raven* by E.A. Poe, when the narrator, brooding over the loss of his Lenore, hears some gentle rapping and finds only the silent darkness outside. "Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,/ Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;/ But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token," (1959, p. 234).

In a very different text, in a novel by Daniel Gray Marshall titled *Still Can't See Nothin' Comin'* (2001), Mandy, who has been suffering from continuous sexual abuse by her father falls into a frightened and impotent silence that finally culminates in her suicide. When translating her silence the ensuing tragedy should be built up by finding a way to convey it through tiny moves; the choice of those subtle words that will psychologically prepare the reader for the inevitable.

Another, more formal aspect of silence in literary context focuses on the different possible ways and levels of how we might interpret the different kinds of silences, from silence manifested in spaces or pauses or blank places along with the meaning of words and texts to the silence of the text itself separating cultural spaces.

Reading literature is an entertaining way of acquiring knowledge. All readers of a literary work form their own interpretation of it, and the translator, who is also a reader, is no exception. In this respect, the translation of a work of foreign literature can be considered nothing more than the personal interpretation of its translator as a reader. Therefore, target language readers with no knowledge of the source language text or its cultural background will, paradoxically, have to rely on the translator's personal interpretation

to be able to form their own interpretation of that work. Consequently, without the work of translators, writers from different languages and different cultures would remain in the shade: formless, soundless, and unknown in hidden nooks out of the literary space of the translator's national culture.

The basic material of a literary work is language; moreover, the unique language of the writer and silence as well as the use of silence is an integral part of it. According to reception theorists, readers play an active even creative role in interpreting a text, and part of their answer to the question of why we have different readings of the same text is that these gaps or blanks are filled or linked by the knowledge or experience of the individual reader. Wolfgang Iser (2006), for example, argues that these gaps, in given parts of the text "trigger synthesizing operations in the reader's mind [as they] lead to collisions between the individual ideas formed" (p. 66).

In the process of translation, this basic material is first destroyed, then recreated in another language, and so the unique language of the writer is at the mercy of the talent and the competence of the translator that transforms and transmits the foreign literary text and its overall cultural content for the reader who in turn crosses borders, approaches the foreign and becomes familiar with it and with the imagination, traditions, and ways of thinking of others. (Somló, 2011a) In the meantime, between languages the text is silent and in this case silence is the cradle of a new text that will be recreated in another language and culture.

"Silence is the language of God, all else is poor translation" (Rumi as cited in Kononenko, 2010, p. 134). When I came upon this thought of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi, the 13th-century Sufi poet, and philosopher, I thought we had better remain silent. Yet, the translation of 'all else' might contain a phase when we try to approach this silence, the language beyond languages. During the process of translation, the translator approaches a point beyond languages, a phase that we might consider a kind of meta-text between the source text and target text. It is described by the British translator, Anthea Bell (2019) as "passing briefly through a no-man's-land where neither really exists, only the meaning and the tone of voice. It's difficult to explain because of the absence of language in this interim phase" (para. 2).

The absence of language, those languages, which appeared after the fall of the tower of Babel leads us to the thought of the late 16th century Christian mystic and theologian Jakob Boehme (2008) who spoke about a 'natural language' (*Natursprache*) of the senses in which there was perfect agreement between the name, the sound, and the essence.

It was the language that "Adam spoke when he named the animals in the Garden of Eden" (Boehme, 2008, para. 7). Boehme (2008), just like a good translator, had a "God-given insight into the interpretation of the sounds and forms of his own language" (para. 7) revealing some facets of that primordial language. Structures and design in the creation of artificial languages were often based on the assumption so common in the 16th–17th centuries "that the hoped-for philosophical language would copy the function of Adam's language, thus recapturing a measure of the insight into nature and the unity of knowledge that had been lost" (Boehme, 2008, para. 7), that is to say, into the real meaning of a space created by God.

There is yet another approach to this interim phase; that of the writer writing in a foreign country in a foreign language, which might be considered a kind of self-translation. "A foreign language is a paradoxical escape" (p. 5) says the Bulgarian-born writer and poet Kapka Kassabova (2005). "To translate is to travel this unpredictable landscape. To live between languages … is to be constantly moving over untrodden territory, negotiating internal and external boundaries of identity and meaning" (Kassabova, 2005, p. 5). This thought corresponds with what Susanne Sontag (1983) says about the approach modern art requires; she compares it to approaching a landscape because it "does not demand from the spectator his 'understanding,' his imputation of significance, …; it demands, rather, his absence, it asks that he not add anything to *it*" (p. 191).

Nearly all cultures in human history reach a point when discontent with distorted, contaminated language, and loss of meaning leads to a critique of language. Such an instance is shown in the absurd drama that Martin Esslin (1965) calls "an attack … on fossilized forms of language… [that] has become a kind of ballast filling empty spaces" (para. 13). Thus, it is silence that purges art and language, "the most exhausted of all the materials out of which art is made" (Sontag, 1983, p. 189). Kassabova's silence, the 'muteness of her mind' was due to her leaving her homeland and mother tongue behind. When a writer emigrates to a foreign country, to a different unknown space, s/he/ loses all intellectual background, 'the language house' s/he used to 'inhabit' and as a result: becomes speechless.[2] When Kassabova (2005) realized that she had to start writing in English she "became stuck between two languages"[3] and found herself "stranded in a mental no man's land, with no shelter in sight and no familiar landmarks" (p.10). Now she writes and publishes books in English yet "yearning for the language house [she] used to inhabit persists" (Kassabova 2005, p. 12).

---

[2] It is in fact a form of silence—refusal or failure to speak, communicate—reminding us of Mandy's silence discussed earlier.

[3] Compare Anthea Bell's 'no-man's-land' that interim phase characterized by the absence of any particular languages.

Salman Rushdie is yet another emigrant writer who, on the other hand, calls *himself* 'a translated man.' His life has led him to different parts of the world where he managed to gain insider's access to those worlds.

> But something happens to individuals who move across the planet: out of language, out of culture, out of place ... Something is lost in translation. However, you can also add to whatever it is you think of as yourself, as a result of such a journey, such a translation. (Rushdie cited in Campbell, 2006, para. 14)

After all, this strange silence of the writer and the 'muteness' of the mind will finally appear in his/her writing either by expressing the feeling of loss or being lost or simply by becoming an integral part of his/her artistic expression.

Silence in a text may denote an effective break such as the caesura or the rhetorical device of the pregnant pause[4]; concurrently it might be a description in the text conveying the different emotional, philosophical, artistic, or social, or other meanings of silence some of which we have already touched upon. "[S]ilence is a multifaceted linguistic construct, with a range of forms, serving different functions and whose meaning can be extended into the visual domain" (Jaworski, 1997, p. 32). At the same time, due to its communicational role, silence often functions as a sign. Using the semiotic trichotomy of Peirce (1995)—icon, index, and symbol—Chris P. Miller (2007) explains silence as follows: "An empty space between words is *iconic* ... it both resembles and functions as an absence. As an *index*, silence both maintains a presence and refers to the physicality of absence, exemplified in the function of ellipses."[5] (para. 3). From the point of view of the *symbolic* usage of silence he makes a functional distinction between language and rhetoric.

> Similar to a symbol, silence functions as a law (language) and association of ideas (rhetoric). This is true in so far as silence can be seen as a body of rules organized under a common authority (similar to language), such as the legally structured and structuring 'moment of silence.' The 'moment of silence' denotes a prescribed system of behaviors and regulations, a Symbolic ground for the gestural space of law, as can be seen in many public/private places of study (classroom), veneration (church), and due process (courtroom). In terms of rhetoric, silence (as a Symbol) can be articulated through a series of associations, such as a constellation of ellipses/absences in a given text or speech. (Miller, 2007, para. 3)

---

[4] Certainly, in speech, we also might have thinking breaks or breathing breaks as well as 'timing.'
[5] Emphasis mine.

Most of the time, a break in the text, such as the caesura, is part of the form, the structure —say of a poem—that should be maintained in the translation. The first two lines of Yeats's poem "Down by the Salley Gardens" offers a good example of how a caesura is translated in two different Hungarian versions. The exact place of the caesura—a feminine caesura in this case—is slightly different but the aim of it denoting a rhythmic pause in the middle of the line is clear in both versions.

> Down by the Salley Gardens
>
> Down by the salley gardens/[6] my love and I did meet;
> She passed the salley gardens/ with little snow-white feet. (Yeats, 1978, p. 7)
>
> A kertben
>
> Találkoztam veled/ a kertben, kedvesem,
> Fehér lábad szökkelt,/ ragyogva csendesen. (Kosztolányi, 1966, p. 218)
>
> Lent a fűzkertek alján …
>
> A folyóparton álltunk,/ körülöttünk a rét;
> Támaszkodó vállamra/ tette fehér kezét. (Szabó, 1964, p. 350)

Although from the point of view of form, both translations seem to fulfill the requirements of the caesura that is present in the source text, the first line of the first target text (Találkoztam veled/ a kertben, kedvesem,) is less successful. There is another stop following the comma in the second part of the first line, while the first line of the second translated text (A folyóparton álltunk,/ körülöttünk a rét;) strengthens the caesura by an additional comma which is, however, also required by Hungarian syntax. On the other hand, in the case of the second line, it is Kosztolányi's version enhancing the caesura by a syntactically essential comma proving the rule: whatever is lost will be gained at another point of translation.

The pregnant pause or dramatic pause—usually a beat or two of silence with no dialogue— might be represented by an ellipsis, which is sometimes marked by the use of blank spaces or, more often, by three periods in writing. It might be used to heighten tension or refer to hesitation as well as let a joke sink in. The interpretation of a pause in translation is always defined by its linguistic surrounding and by the overall meaning of the text.

Here I have to mention a special, rather frustrating kind of silence in translation called untranslatability. Some poems, poetic forms, or devices might momentarily prove

---

[6] Slashes in the following lines denoting the caesura are mine.

impossible to translate into another culture but the innovative talent of translators will brave

the impossible and try to solve these problems[7] as well as convey proverbs or puns or jokes, which are generally shrugged off as untranslatable. For example, in a 19th-century text, I came across the following English proverb or idiomatic expression: 'Worse things happen at sea.' It is generally used to tell someone not to worry so much about tiny personal problems and the message could only be conveyed by changing the cultural dimensions of the context: a dangerous and tragic sea voyage is similar to the aftermath of the lost battle at Mohács in Hungarian history[8] appearing in the corresponding Hungarian saying: 'Több is veszett Mohácsnál' (More has been lost at Mohács). So, we have a near equivalent of the phrase but the word as well as the notion of Mohács will not fit into the Hungarian translation of an English text. Looking for a way to convey the meaning of the English proverb by evoking the feelings present in the Hungarian phrase I used the connotations of the words 'több is veszett' (*more has been lost*) to steer the thoughts of the reader toward the meaning I wanted to make clear and then finished it by adding the words 'at sea'—Hungary has no seaside, at all—to maintain distance and foreignness in the target text and, thus, to evoke the filling of a different cultural space.

When examining different national cultures operating in a particular political space we can see that they "construct their images of writers and texts" in different ways, and, consequently, there is a difference between "the ways in which texts become cultural capital across cultural boundaries" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998, p. 138). Cultural capital itself has a twin role: first, it represents a kind of national standard *within* a nation's culture or the dominant cultural values that are present in a particular society at a certain point in time. At the same time, especially in the case of translation, it represents a kind of cultural capital *imported* from outside to enrich and develop the target cultural system and appear on the target scene to inhabit a special space in it. Certainly what the target culture *imports* mostly depends on those dominant cultural values *within*, so the choice of what is translated is basically defined by the very state of the target culture and its literary tradition. In other words, the quality and the cultural value of the cultural capital chosen to be presented and offered for further use is determined by the cultural standard of the target public; but it is also governed by people in power positions as well as the dominant poetics (Somló, 2011b). The producer of symbolic goods—the writer or the literary translator in our

---

[7] For example, the 14th-century Petrarchan sonnet was introduced as a new poetic form in English literature via translation in the 16th century and got incorporated into English culture as an innovation in the form of the Shakespearean sonnet.

[8] 1526: The overall victory of the Turkish army over the Hungarian, which led to the country's division into 3 parts for nearly a century.

case—aims to create intellectual values to enrich and become part of the cultural capital and appear on the national cultural market that is controlled by other players present,

namely the powers adding their political and ideological values to it (Somló, 2011b). When a writer remains silent, it can be intentional or an imposed state of muteness; thus, silence, on the one hand, might be a kind of resistance or radical speech, and on the other, a kind of punishment imposed on the artist by outside forces. In her article on the functions of silence in modern Spanish literature, Janet Pérez (1984) describes some instances when Spanish writers used "literary silence as a reaction" (p. 115) to Franco's regime and ideology. As Susan Sontag (1983) claims: "silence is the artist's ultimate other-worldly gesture: by silence, he frees himself from the servile bondage to the world, which appears as patron, client, consumer, antagonist, arbiter, and distorter of his work" (p. 183).

Traditionally Hungarian writers often turn to translation for different reasons; one of them is silence imposed upon them. During our stormy history, most prominent writers as well as our national literature often became entangled with politics. Those poets and writers who did not die in action were silenced as a punishment—or remained silent by their own choice. Thus we have yet another possible connection between space and silence as the political space where anyone struggling against the ruling power might be silenced. For example, after World War II or 1956, Hungarian writers suffered various fates: some were supported by official cultural policy for helping, one way or another, the actual political system; others were just tolerated or suppressed. Suppressed or merely tolerated writers were to turn to translation because it offered the possibility of occasional employment as well as a hidden way of expressing their thoughts and views by way of interpreting the message of a foreign writer.

Conclusion—or Something Like That

Following the way a translator approaches his/her task, trying to experience meaning from many aspects, we find that silence is always followed by movement in our life-space; sounds such as words or just inner sounds such as thoughts will finally acquire meaning in context, moreover in the context of silence, and will eventually fill a given space or link different spaces.

We have also seen that silence as part of our space is an integral part of the text as well as a language in its own right and has as many interpretations and roles in the translated text as any other parts of the source text. We have touched upon many aspects and interpretations of silence thus instead of a proper conclusion I would rather propose

an open mind so that we would be able to incorporate into our national selection of foreign literature the works of all those silent figures and cultures of foreign literary systems that are still out in space, in the shade, unknown and hidden for our culture.

References

"Boehme, Jacob." (2008). *Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography.* Charles Scribner's Sons. https://www.encyclopedia.com/science/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/boehme-jacob

Bassnett, S., & Lefevre, A. (1998). *Constructing cultures: Essays on literary translation.* Multilingual Matters.

Bell, A. (2019, August 19). A Q&A with Anthea Bell, *London Review Bookshop.* https://www.londonreviewbookshop.co.uk/blog/2019/august/a-q-a-with-anthea-bell

Cage, J. (1961). *Silence: Lectures and writings.* Wesleyan University Press.

Campbell, J. (2006, September 30). A translated man. *The Guardian.* http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2006/sep/30/fiction.salmanrushdie

Carlyle, T. (2001). Sir Walter Scott 1838. *Harvard Classics*, Vol. 25, Part 5. P.F. Collier & Son, 1909–14. https://www.bartleby.com/lit-hub/hc/sir-walter-scott/paras-124-2

Caroll, L. (1872/2012). *Through the looking glass.* (S. Thacker, Illust.). Radford. https://rb.gy/7w3ld

Chen, S. (2007). Searching for a voice of silence across cultures: Does silence speak? In D. Jones (Ed.), *East-West Connections: Review of Asian Studies*, Vol. 6, Issue 1 (pp. 37–52).

Edgar, A. R. (1997). Music and silence. In A. Jaworski (Ed.), *Silence: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 311–328). Walter de Gruyter. http://books.google.com/books?id=OM4ueFfoRfcC&lpg=PR9&hl=hu&pg=PA389#v=onepage&q&f=false

Esslin, M. (1965). Absurd Drama. In. E. Ionesco, A. Adamov, F. Arrabal & E. Albee. *Penguin Plays. Absurd Drama.* (Introduction). Penguin. http://www.samuel-beckett.net/AbsurdEsslin.html

Godman, D., (Ed.). (1985). *Be as you are: The teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi.* Arkana-Penguin Books.

Iser, W. (2006). *How to do theory.* Wiley-Blackwell.

Jaworski, A. (1997). Aesthetic, communicative and political silences in Laurie Abderson's performance art. In A. Jaworski (Ed.), *Silence: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 15–35). Walter de Gruyter. http://books.google.com/books?id=OM4ueFfoRfcC&lpg=PR9&hl=hu&pg=PA389#v=onepage&q&f=false

Kassabova, K. (2005). Polyglot peregrinations. In D. & H. Constantine (Eds.), *Between the Languages, Modern Poetry in Translation*, 3rd Series, no. 4 (pp. 5–14).

Kononenko, I. (2010). *Teachers of wisdom.* Dorrance Publishing Co. Inc,

Kosztolányi, D. (1966). 'A kertben.' In *Idegen költők* [Foreign poets]. Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.

Marshall, D. G. (2001). *Still can't see nothin' comin': A novel.* Regan Books.

Miller, C. P. (2007). Silence. In *Theories of media: Keywords Glossary*. The University of Chicago. http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/silence.htm

Peirce, Ch. S. (1995). *Philosophical writings of Peirce.* (J. Buchler, Ed.). Dover.

Pérez, J. (1984). Functions of the Rhetoric of Silence in Contemporary Spanish Literature.

South Central Review, 1(1/2), 108–130.

Poe, E. A. (1959). The Raven. *The Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe.* Corvina.

Sachdeva, G. (2008, August). Silence Speaks. *Lifepositive.* https://www.lifepositive.com/silence-speaks/

Shivani Singh, T. (2007). The philosophy of silence. *Wave, 143* November.

Somló, Á. (2011a). Across disciplines: Translation as knowledge crossing borders. In K. Balogné Bérces, K. Földváry, & V. Schandl (Eds.), *Faces of English* (pp. 2–9). Faculty of Humanities, Pázmány Péter Catholic University.

Somló, Á. (2011b). Literary translation and the changing concept of 'cultural capital.' In K. Földváry, Zs. Almási & V. Schandl, *HUSSE10-LitCult. Proceedings of the HUSSE 10 Conference* (pp. 233–238). Hungarian Society for the Study of English. http://mek.oszk.hu/10100/10171/10171.pdf

Sontag, S. (1983). *A Susan Sontag reader.* Vintage Books Random House.

Szabó, L. (1964). 'Lent a fűzkertek alján…' In *Örök barátaink I.* [Our friends, vol. I]. Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.

Thoreau, H. D. (1854/2006). *Walden and other writings*, Elibron Classic series. Adamant Media Corporation

Withers, S. (1997). Silence and communication in art. In A. Jaworski (Ed.), *Silence: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 351–367). Walter de Gruyter. http://books.google.com/books?id=OM4ueFfoRfcC&lpg=PR9&hl=hu&pg=PA389#v=onepage&q&f=false

Woolfrey, C. (n.d.). John Cage. 4'33": Theories of Sound and Silence: The Most Experimental Composition in Avant-Garde Classical Music. http://music-composition.suite101.com/article.cfm/john_cage_433_theories_of_sound_and_silence

Yeats, W.B. (1978). *Selected Poetry.* (A. Norman Jeffares, Ed.). Pan Books (reprint of Macmillan & Co., 1962).

The Topography of Memory: The Constitutive Relation Between Body Memory and Place Memory[1]

LAJOS HORVÁTH

Affiliation: Department of Philosophy
University of Debrecen, Hungary
Email: horvath.lajos@arts.unideb.hu

Abstract

The current work aims to examine the relation between body memory and place memory. The paper will rely on a phenomenological standpoint, but it will also utilize literary and clinical studies which are closely connected to the problem of body memory. First, the paper will define body memory and place memory with the help of Edward S. Casey's and Thomas Fuchs' work. Second, the paper will discuss the connection between these two types of memory. Third, the paper will shed light to the processes through which body memory and place memory alters the structure of the lived space. Finally, the paper will consider the question whether there is a constitutive relation between body memory and place memory.

Keywords: body memory, place memory, lived body, lived space, phenomenology

Introduction

The modest aim of the paper is to briefly describe the characteristics of body and place memories and consider the nature of their relation. Philosophers and psychologists have introduced several metaphors to illustrate the working of memory.[2] Recent philosophical discussions of memory focus on the representational and the non-representational forms of memory storage and recollection. Casey mentions that the famous mnemo-technic of antiquity, the method of *loci*, suggested that memories can be placed and stored in the recesses of the soul.[3] In addition, memorable places might play significant

---

[1] This paper was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (BO/00189/21/2) and by the No. 138745 project of the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund.

[2] Including the wax tablet, Freud's mystical writing pad, or Pribram's hologram. For the detailed list of analogies, including spatial and non-spatial analogies, see, Roediger (1980).

[3] According to Casey, in the Ancient Greek mnemotechnique place acts as a grid for memorizing, place situates the memorial life. The model of the wax-tablet, which represents the preservation of memories, constitutes the topology of the remembered (cf. Casey, 2000, p. 182).

role in the constitution of autobiographical memory; for example, the memory and atmosphere of the childhood home or other dwellings are etched in our memory.[4] However, the processes of storage and retrieval are not restricted to mental localization and place memories. Skills and habits can also preserve the past in a non-representational form. In the latter cases the past is enacted rather than remembered. From a phenomenological viewpoint, memory, including the process of recollection, is a multifarious intentional accomplishment that could take the form of conscious recollection or enacted bodily skills. Still, the emphasis of bodily elements in the process of recollection is not the invention of phenomenologists like Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. The observation that knowledge can be preserved in practical skills can be traced back to Descartes (1640/1996., cf. Fuchs, 2012b, p. 9). Maine de Biran and Bergson have also placed emphasis on the process of developing habits. Consequently, they have also seen the difference between conscious recollection and the memory of the body (Fuchs, 2012b, pp. 9–10).

In *Matter and Memory*, Bergson differentiated between two forms of memory. Recollections are stored in our memory as images. However, memory has a non-representational form as well. Memory in action, like writing or walking, is lived and acted out rather than represented in imagistic forms. The body can store past actions by means of its motor mechanisms. The habit memory no longer represents but rather *acts*, or, with contemporary phrase, *re-enacts* the past. Bergson claims that the role of habit memory is not to conserve bygone memories but to prolong their effects into the present moment. One type of memory imagines and the other repeats (Bergson, 1896/1991, pp. 82–83).[5] The two types of memory support each other in cases of aphasia and dementia. Bergson argues that automatism shows intelligence in these circumstances. A patient who suffers from dementia sometimes is able to give an intelligent answer (Bergson, 1896/1991, p. 86).

Inspired by Bergson, Fuchs argued that body memory enables us to explore the lower levels of the sense of self beyond the stage of conscious recollection and autobiographical memory. In dementia or in extreme forms of amnesia, patients can no longer remember

---

[4] Casey describes a situation in which the "indistinct image" of the basement of his childhood home is associatively awakened. Casey contends that this memory came as a surprise, because it came from the distant past and lacked reinforcement. He also underscores the frequent occurrence of place memories (Casey, 2000, p. 28, 183).

[5] According to Tewes, Bergson's concept of habit is in line with contemporary views on habit. Habit can be seen as part of procedural or non-declarative memory. When a stimulus triggers a habit then it behaves as an automatically performed action scheme (Tewes, 2018, pp. 137–138). Fuchs also draws on Bergson's habit memory. He cites Bergson's example according to which a learned poem lives in the subject as a sensorimotor or bodily disposition. He defines habit memory in the following way: "habitual memory […] does not represent the past, but rather re-enacts it implicitly or unconsciously in bodily-practical implementations" (Fuchs, 2018, p. 54).

their previous experiences, yet they preserve a "pre-reflective experience of self" which is basically pre-verbal, or, pre-personal. Fuchs mentions the case of a patient who suffered from dementia but when his grandchildren visited him, he suddenly awakened from his lethargic state and played football with them. It turned out that the patient was a member of a football club. Fuchs also recounts the story of Clive Wearing, a British musicologist, conductor and tenor, who suffered from severe amnesia but managed to preserve his ability to play the piano and conduct (2017, p. 311).[6] Fuchs claims that a life story remains implicitly present in the spontaneous interactions of people suffering from dementia (2021, p. 311, cf. Fuchs, 2012b, pp. 78–79). Following in the footsteps of Bergson and Merleau-Ponty, Fuchs argues that the unity and identity of the person is not restricted to conscious remembering (2021, p. 198). In other words, under the level of personal self, a more fundamental level of selfhood establishes a non-representational connection with the past. Body memory may play role in the constitution of an *experiential self* that can be positioned between the minimal self and the person (Fuchs, 2017, p. 312). The former is, as Zahavi formulated, pre-reflective self-awareness which means the *minenesss* or *for-me-ness* of first personally presented experiences occurring in the immanent sphere of consciousness. As Zahavi puts it: "the mineness refers to the distinct manner, or *how*, of experiencing. It refers to the first-personal presence of all my experiential contents; it refers to the experiential perspectivalness of phenomenal consciousness" (2014, p. 22). The latter is the level of personal identity based on conscious recollection and narrative self-understanding.[7] Between the formal evidence of pre-reflective self-awareness and retrospectively constituted personal identity, one can find another basal self-experience which is constituted by body memories.[8]

---

[6] Concerning the problem of the loss of personal identity, Shaun Nichols mentioned studies according to which the family members of patients with neurodegeneration claimed that the changing moral traits of patients altered their identity more radically than the loss of memory. According to Nichols, the study indicates that morality plays a more important role in assessing personal identity than memory. Furthermore, Nichols argues that while the typical philosophical debates focus on the role of episodic memory in the constitution of personal identity, personality traits can also be stored in semantic memory (2017, pp. 173–74, cf. Strohminger & Nichols, 2015). Hydén's case studies (2018) demonstrated that procedural memory and embodied episodic memory (a memory mediated by gestures and enactments) made it possible for subjects with Alzheimer's disease to preserve a sense of self in social interactions.

[7] There is no room here for a detailed account of the various formulations of personal identity. Nichols argues that the typical, philosophical notion of personal identity is based on immediate memory connections that chain together the mental states of the person and establish diachronic identity (2017, p. 170). For a thorough historical overview, see Thiel (2011). For the narrative view of personal identity see, for example, Schechtman (1996) and Goldie (2012). In the current work I follow Fuchs who highlights the importance of "affective self-experience" in contrast to the continuity thesis, including Descartes' and Locke's solutions to personal identity (2017, p. 293).

[8] As Fuchs puts it: "all performances of life enter into the memory of the body and remain preserved as disposition and potentialities: as Merleau-Ponty pointed out, the body is 'solidified existence' and, for its part, 'existence [is] perpetual incarnation' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 148)" (Fuchs, 2021, p. 200).

In what follows, I will show that the above-mentioned bodily self-experience is connected to place memories. Casey and Fuchs regard body memories and place memories equally important in the explanation of the diachronic continuity of the subject. That is, body memories are not restricted to dispositions and skills, but they also enable the emergence of place memories which contribute to our sense of self and allow re-identification with the past.

Body memory can be divided into subtypes. Casey distinguished between three types of body memory: (a) habitual memory, (b) traumatic memory, and (c) erotic memory (2000, p. 154). By contrast, Fuchs distinguishes twice as many types of body memories as Casey, including procedural, situational, intercorporeal, incorporative, pain, and traumatic memory (Fuchs, 2012a, p. 12). There is a consonance between Casey's habit memory and Fuchs' procedural memory. Fuchs mentions that we can learn to type with two hands or drive a car effortlessly and forget the process of learning. Fuchs' notion of procedural memory is also connected to places: our bodies anticipate the places of objects and we become disoriented when we cannot find them in their right location (2012a, p. 12).[9] It is worth mentioning that traumatic memory is another common category between Casey and Fuchs. Traumatic body memory refers to the process of re-enactment of the past including the intrusion of disturbing experiences into the present.[10]

The main feature of traumatic body memory is the re-enactment or re-living of the past in the present. For instance, Fuchs mentions Aharon Appelfeld's autobiographical story. The writer spent his childhood (7 to 13 years) in the Ukrainian forest during the Second World War, and an insignificant stimulus can trigger his avoidance behavior and anxiety in the present.

---

[9] Hutto and Myin argue that procedural memory does not store representations of the external world but rather an "amalgamated response pattern" is created from repeated performances (Hutto and Myin, 2017, p. 206).

[10] Fuchs' body memory is a *philosophical psychological* concept inspired by the phenomenology of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, and studies on implicit memory. Because of the hybrid nature of the notion, body memory can be approached from philosophical and psychological angles as well. For example, Petra Jansen claims that body memory is not commonly employed in cognitive psychology because of the lack of appropriate testing methods. According to Jansen, *body schema* means the sensorimotor map of the body, *body image* is the pictorial representation of the body, and, as Fuchs has already formulated, *body memory* consists of invisible dispositions (cf. Jansen, 2012, p. 118). Interestingly, Sabine C. Koch made a content analysis of Fuchs' body memory taxonomy and found that Fuchs' categories were mirrored and even extended with the help of the participants' accounts. She contends that habitual/procedural memory can be equated with procedural memory in cognitive psychology; nonetheless, the other types of body memory are not investigated by cognitive sciences (see Koch, 2012, p. 183). Most recently, Gentsch and Kuehn introduced the concept of *Clinical Body Memory* (CBM), which designates the harmful impact of negative bodily experiences stemming from the past. These past experiences may contribute to the development of mental health problems such as somatic symptoms, traumatic re-experiences, or dissociative symptoms (Gentsch & Kuehn, 2022). Body memory is also a recurrent theme in neuroscientific investigations as one of the components of the complex system of body representation. For reviewing the taxonomy of body representation and body memory see Riva (2018), Damasio (1999), and de Vignemont (2010).

In these intrusive symptoms the past, as an "entire segment of life," is not only embedded into the present but also overshadows it through its immense affective impact. The memories of suffering, including the places of suffering, sedimented, and constituted an implicit body memory in the subject (Fuchs, 2012a, p. 18).

Habitual memories and traumatic memories may resurrect the past in different ways. Casey speaks of the immanent presence of the past, more precisely he imagines a "co-immanence" between the present and the past. On the one hand, our past is preserved in our skills, but, on the other hand, individual memories may occur in representational form by the mediation of emerging bodily sensations. Therapeutic interventions shed light on the fact that the painful past can be altered and worked through in the present. Habitual memories establish the fusion between the past and present, however, in case of traumatic memories, defense and narration generate a greater distance between them (Casey, 2000, pp. 168–169).

Familiarization and Kinesthetic Awareness

Body memory not only establishes a connection with the past but also generates the feeling of familiarity in an environment. The familiarity of our environment is established by our acquired practical and procedural skills. For example, if someone reorders the room in which we work we must familiarize ourselves again with our surroundings. In this respect, there is a strong correlation between Fuchs' situational memory and Casey's place memory. Fuchs claims that implicit memory extends to space and situations where we find ourselves. With citations from Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, he describes how the house of our childhood is preserved by means of accumulated past experiences. As Bachelard put it: our home is "physically inscribed in us," or "engraved within us" (1958/1964, p. 14, cf. Fuchs, 2012a, p. 13). Casey distinguishes *site* from *place*, the former is the impersonal, geometrical understanding of space and the latter is a "qualitative whole" owning to our kinesthetic experience (1997, p. 219). In a similar vein, Fuchs speaks of the "atmosphere of familiarity" that permeates our childhood home when we arrive back to there. He introduces the concept of *situation* in which bodily, sensory, and atmospheric perception is fused. His examples are a roaring stadium, a boat trip on a sea, and a night walk in a brightly light city. Situations and places bring forth the atmospheric character of locations that seem to emanate from their expressive qualities (Fuchs, 2012a, p. 14., cf. Casey, 2000, p. 199).

The qualitative and atmospheric character of place can be preserved and recollected through body memories and the familiarization of space takes place through the lived body. The body centralizes the phenomenal field of perception, it provides the zero point

of orientation.[11] Furthermore, the ego is anchored in the lived body, or, as Husserl has formulated, the body constitutes an absolute "here" (Husserl, 1907/1997, cf. Moran, 2013, p. 293). The lived body constitutes the surrounding *lived space*. Casey argues that Husserl is on the brink of the discovery of lived space when he begins to examine kinesthetic activities like walking or standing still. Husserl did not immediately discover lived space. At first, he considered the visual space that lies between the lived body and the objective space. In this regard, Husserl uses place (*Ort*) and position (*Lage*) interchangeably which, as Casey argues, suggests the image of an invariable space that is always given. However, the analysis of kinesthesia reveals the subjective character of place. As Casey has put it: "such a place cannot be a mere site; it is a complex qualitative whole that answers to my kinesthetic experience of it" (1997, p. 219). According to Casey, Husserl had no concept of lived space as such, but he had various substitutes like "visual space" (*Sehraum*) or "the nears-sphere" (*Nah-sphere*) that can be accessed through kinesthesis (Casey, 1997, p. 219). Based on Husserl's draft from 1914/15, Casey considers the term "bodily space" (*Leibesraum*) to be identical with lived space. He defines it as the place that the lived body experiences at any given moment (Casey, 1997, p. 220).

Place Memories and Affective Atmospheres

According to Casey, there is a constitutive relationship between body memory and place memory. The memory of the past is not necessarily a disembodied episodic memory. The passage of life is felt in the lived body, we feel that we are getting older. However, not only time leaves the mark on and *in* the body but also the lived body realizes an intimate relationship between memory and place. As Casey formulates it: "the body's maneuvers and movements, imagined as well as actual, make room for remembering *placed scenes* in all of their complex composition" (2000, p. 189, emphasis in the original). If we, for example, consider the recurrent memory of our childhood home, then we can recognize the intimate connection between place and memory. Memories are frequently revolving around places; that is, we remember our home, an event, or a person who is situated in a certain place. It is hard or even impossible to imagine a person without the surrounding place, or an event without a "specific locale." In general, place situates one's memorial life and provides a "local habitation" to it (Casey, 2000, p. 183–184).

---

[11] The present moment of the stream of consciousness is also bodily founded. The living present is constituted by a complex set of intentional and bodily accomplishments. As Marosán has formulated: "my stream of experience is made up of three fundamental components: interoceptive, affective-emotional, and exteroceptive experience. The first two refer to a bodily subject's self-experience. The latter relates to one's own body (as experienced from the outside) and its surrounding world" (2022, p. 114).

From the perspective of the history of philosophy, Casey argues that Descartes overshadowed the concept of place by the idea of site. Site is not a container but an open area, a cartographic representation of a homogeneous and isotropic space. Site can be defined by the distances between positions. According to Casey, the idea of site implies emptiness, that is, site has no obstructions, cues, or points of attachment onto which memories can be attached. By contrast, place is a personalized space, it is full of "potencies," "protuberant features," and "forceful vectors" that enhance memorability (Casey, 2000, p. 155–156). Casey suggests that memories are massively place-oriented. His thoroughly examined "Yosemite memory" is a "virtual tour of places." In addition, his "Small Change memory" is also imbued with places. In this memory, he recounts the succession of places that were attended during the approach to the movie theater. Casey argues that the theater building itself reminded him of memorable movies, therefore it "held the past in place." Place as "a nebulous setting" may occur even in recollections of isolated items, like the number of Casey's office door (2000, p. 187–188). Casey also suggests that body memory and place memory are virtually indistinguishable in many ways of remembering. The body recollects its "local history" in the present by habits and enactments.

The lived body enables us to experience places as familiar and memorable places. In our day-to-day living, the lived body transforms the lived space into a shelter. The loss of the sense of habitable space leads to disorientation and anxiety. The importance of places may occur retrospectively. As Casey suggests, places are "retrospectively tinged," they may have a "nostalgic spell," or we can get stuck in them because we have created our memories in them. Feeling at home in a place is eventuated by our lived body, and it also makes possible to remember what it was like dwelling in our childhood home. In short, when familiarization is completed, we have the conviction of being at home in the world; however, if it fails then we may experience *Heimatlosigkeit* (Casey, 2000, p. 195).

The affectively charged and empowered places constitute the implicit horizon of the lifeworld. Contrary to site, in which space is determined by relative positions, lived space is endowed with expressive qualities, a kind of "inherent emotionality." Based on Ervin Straus' and Lawrence Durrell's considerations, Casey accentuates the *landscape-character* of places. Spaces can inspire or repel us, and these physiognomic qualities, which are outside of the authority of the subject, contribute to the encoding and recollecting of memories. We may remember vividly the landscapes that sparked our interest. Casey argues that the expressive qualities of landscapes could be so overwhelming that we sacrifice the explicit consciousness and the emotion moves us out of the body; in this case, place and the lived body may dissolve into a unity (Casey, 2000, p. 200).

The lived space is colored by affective atmospheres. These atmospheres may come from the past in cases of familiarization or de-familiarization. The above-mentioned *Heimatlosigkeit* can be seen as the absence of familiarity. According to Fuchs, we must abandon the idea that emotions are introjected feelings in the psyche. We do not only live in the physical world, but rather experience space accompanied by affective qualities:

> We feel something 'in the air,' or we sense an interpersonal 'climate,' for example, a serene, a solemn, or a threatening atmosphere. Feelings befell us; they emerge from situations, persons, and objects which have their expressive qualities, and which attract or repel us. The *emotional space* is essentially felt through the medium of the *body* which widens, tightens, weakens, trembles, shakes, etc. in correspondence to the feelings and atmospheres that we experience. (Fuchs, 2014, p. 186, emphasis in the original)

Affective atmospheres cannot be reduced to moods because of their ability to modulate the actual mood of a subject. Atmospheres are closely connected to perceptions of places, they are intersubjectively shared pre-reflective experiences.[12] Affective atmospheres are the holistic qualities of interpersonal and spatial situations. The place-oriented examples of atmospheres could be the "awe inspiring aura of an old cathedral" or "the uncanniness of a somber wood at night" (Fuchs, 2013, p. 616–617). Atmospheres could challenge the intellect. In cases of the uncanny (*Unheimlich*) and delusional mood (*Stimmung*) the atmosphere of the environment seems indefinable and engenders anxiety, tension, and emptiness. In addition, even paranoid delusions may follow from delusional mood (Fuchs, 2019, p. 110).[13] The felt familiarity, the bodily resonance with the near and distant sphere of perception has been lost in these situations and the ambiguity of perception occurs. The foreboding and alienating affective atmospheres indirectly show the role of place and body memories in the constitution of the self. In these situations, the felt sense of familiarity begins to fade away and the basal experience of the self also disintegrates or diminishes.

Lived Space and the Horizontal Unconscious

According to Fuchs, the lived space is not only permeated by affective atmospheres but also the unconscious can be spatialized. Fuchs contends that the Gestalt-analysis of our surroundings may have psychological and psychopathological implications.

---

[12] Trigg (2020) defines atmospheres in the following way: "atmospheres are affective phenomena, which are grasped pre-reflectively, manifest spatially, felt corporeally, and conceived as semi-autonomous and determinate entities" (p. 1).

[13] For the detailed account of delusional mood, see, for example, Sass (2017), Sass and Pienkos (2013, 2014), Sass and Ratcliffe (2017). For the analysis of the uncanny, see Trigg (2012).

Merleau-Ponty has already reinterpreted Freud's metapsychology in an illuminating way. The crux of Merleau-Ponty's argument was that subjectivity is extended in the life-world and the unconscious expresses itself in our visible behavior during day-to-day living. In short, the structure of the lived space is characterized by unconscious motivations. Fuchs argues that a person's corporeal and intercorporeal experiences are not hidden in an intrapsychic reservoir but rather actualized in the horizontal dimensions of the lived space. Past actions and situations are fused together in body memory and re-actualized as *attitudes*. The virtual presence of the past enables us to feel at home in situations (Fuchs, 2012b, p. 73). That is, the lived space is schematized by the lived body, in which the past resides in sedimented forms, however, the present circumstances can enrich and extend the scope of sedimented body memories. We can acquire new skills, develop new attitudes and habits, and traumas can also leave their mark in our body and behavior.

Fuchs employs Kurt Lewin's field psychology to exemplify the intertwining between the lived body and lived space. According to Lewin, the lived space of a person can be divided into sectors including their physical and symbolic boundaries.[14] Sectors can be peripersonal spaces around the body, claimed territories, or the spheres of influence. However, the zones of prohibition or taboo are also significant ingredients of sectors. The lived space is structured by dynamic forces. One can see fields of attraction and aversion in the lived space because of the underlying attracting and repelling forces (Fuchs, 2012b, p. 74). Fuchs contends that the analysis of lived space enables the reformulation of two psychodynamic concepts, namely, defense and repetition compulsion. The effect of emotional trauma is the deformation of the lived space: the traumatized person takes up an avoidance stance toward certain locations. Resistance or *defence* in psychotherapy takes the form of "relieving or avoidance posture." In case of *repetition compulsion*, the person is stuck in the past and early life experiences unconsciously dominate the present. Someone who has experienced abusive and violent relationships in the past may encounter similar situations in the present. According to Fuchs, for such people, the lived space contains "attracting spaces" that afford negative attachment patterns for the subject. These patterns of behavior and the distortions of the lived space indicate that the unconscious is not a hidden realm in the psyche but rather embodied in the ways of living and surrounds the subject (Fuchs, 2007, p. 432).

---

[14] Fuchs utilizes Lewin's term of "life space" which is, in this context, compatible with the phenomenological notion of lived space. For the sake of consistency, I will employ the notion of lived space in this succinct presentation of the horizontal unconscious (cf. Fuchs, 2012b, p. 74).

Body memory and the topology of the lived space enables the introduction of the *horizontal unconscious* that lies in front of the perceiving subject. Fuchs also reformulates Freud's theory of repression. Certain drive or wish can act as a "field force" in lived space and takes shape by the mediation of ambiguous or uncertain perception. Fuchs takes the example of Heinrich von Kleist's story in which an abstinent soldier relapses because he heard the names of various brandies in the tolling of bells. In this short story the body and environment are intertwined: a suppressed desire finds its way and crystallizes around ambiguous perceptions. The latent desire found its satisfaction through displacement. In this context, displacement means that the subject confronted with his drive in the ambiguous perceptions of his experiential field (Fuchs, 2012b, pp. 75–76).

Implicit body memory may offer several opportunities to organize or hinder day-to-day living. Prominent examples are the avoidance behavior and the zones of prohibitions of a child. The lived body is not an isolated pattern of experience, rather its constitution depends on "intercorporeal encounters" (Fuchs, 2012a, p. 15). The body integrates bodily, emotional, and behavioral dispositions, resulting in embodied personality structures that can be activated in the interpersonal realm. Past experiences may lead to certain types of conduct, for instance, submissive behavior has its typical components including emotions, interaction, and posture (Fuchs, 2012a, p. 15). Unconscious fixations can be seen as restrictions in the lived space. Fuchs argues that the traces of fixations remain present in the blind spots, empty spaces, and curvatures of the lived space. The life of the person is filled with avoided spaces, missed opportunities, recurrent relationship patterns thatconstitute a negative curvature in lived space. These can be transformed and symbolically presented in neurotic or psychosomatic symptoms (Fuchs, 2012b, p. 80).

Bodily Place Memories

It is worth considering that, in Fuchs' view, body memory is not only identical with dispositions of perceiving and behaving, including the above-mentioned horizontal unconscious, but it can also be seen as the carrier of "memory cores of our biographical past" (2012a, p. 20). Fuchs shows that the spontaneous "explication" of memory cores during Proust's madeleine experience begins with emerging bodily sensations. Specific regions of childhood and the whole Combray and its surroundings are associatively awakened during the memory retrieval. Casey also examines Proust's famous description, and he compares place memories to a Chinese garden. The garden symbolizes the microcosm of nature and is filled with great emotional charge. On the one hand, it is a memorable place in itself, and, on the other hand, its inherent expressiveness may evoke prior experiences of landscapes or paintings.

That is, it facilitates memory retrieval and it can also be transformed into a memorable place, later. According to Casey, the madeleine experience and the Chinese garden clearly represent the three main characteristics of place memory: one can find different *pathways* (the streets of the town, the roads of the garden) and specific *things* inside them, and they are also filled with internal and external *horizons* (for example, the Swann's estate and its surroundings in Proust's passage) (Casey, 2000, p. 207).

Fuchs argues that the past as well as the actual perception are given in the present moment. Autobiographical memory represents events as belonging to the past. However, bodily remembering (*leiblicher Erinnerung*) re-actualizes the past in the present; that is, the past becomes living present, again. As we have seen, the identity-constitutive effect of body memory can be supplemented by literary and clinical examples. For Fuchs, Proust's madeleine experience represents the situation where a condensed and seemingly forgotten period of biography resurfaces owing to the taste of the cake.[15] Bodily sensations can be the signs of the explication of "implicit meaning cores" (*Sinneinsclusses*). During the madeleine experience, childhood memories and an entire world have been awakened. In general, we are not only connected to the past by means of an autobiographical episode, but we also carry the emotional weight of a terrible past or the joy of a cloudless childhood in implicit memory cores. Both explicit and body memory are the "carrier of our life history" (Fuchs, 2008, p. 52; cf. Fuchs, 2012a, pp. 19–20).

The idea that there is a close connection between autobiography and body memory can also be represented with a clinical case study. Fuchs recounts the story of Madame I., whose limbic system was seriously injured resulting in the loss of bodily experiences. She was unable to feel her limbs and underwent the process of alienation; that is, her identity became abstract and intangible. The collapse of her bodily experiences correlated with the deficits of autobiographical memory. She claimed that she cannot retrieve the sight of her own house or other familiar places, and she was unable to remember the taste of a meal, the scent of flowers, or even the voice of her children. In general, she felt her memories as alien and untrustworthy (Fuchs, 2008, p. 51). According to Fuchs, a familiar scent, taste, melody, or the atmosphere of places could bring the distant past back into the present in a condensed form.

---

[15] Recent memory research claims that the tasting of the madeleine (three times) was a multimodal experience in which smell played a significant role. For instance, Smith argues that smell constitutes a "wordless form of contact with a time one didn't know one had remembered" (Smith, 2016, p. 40). Proust's madeleine episode sparked the interest of contemporary neuroscience. According to Gibson, the madeleine moment demonstrates how subconscious emotions color our memories, and it helps the past to guide the present (Gibson, 2016, p. 48).

Remembering can take us back to the childhood home including the feelings and prospects of that time. However, if the basal, bodily self-experience collapses, then the places of the present as well as of the past may seem unreal and alien (Fuchs, 2008, p. 51).

Is it not paradoxical to talk about the presentiment of the past in bodily sensations and place memories? Fuchs argues that the implicit meaning cores of bodily remembering are not just amalgamated, condensed biographical episodes, they can also be seen as sparks of interest from which new meaning may arise. The sensations, movements, and forebodings of the lived body engender not only echoes of the forgotten or repressed past, but they can also open the gate to the future, to the unpredictable and unexpected. The unraveling of latent motives may orient the subject to the open possibilities of the future (Fuchs, 2008, p. 52). Or, as Gendlin has formulated Fuchs' ideas: the past reshapes itself in the body's present performance and the present experience reshapes the past. This bidirectional interaction between the past and present is the manifestation of life itself (Gendlin, 2012, p. 74).

Conclusions

As it was discussed above, both Casey and Fuchs contended that body memory comprises habits. That is, habits and skills establish our bodily familiarity with the environment. Body memory also provides the foundation of an underlying self-experience including individual attitudes, modes of expression, and behavior. We can differentiate between shy, submissive, or considerate ways of behaving. It is important to note that body memory is intersubjectively structured and significantly shaped by traumatic experiences (Fuchs, 2017, pp. 306–307). In general, body memory anchors the subject in the past, lays the foundations of character traits and skills. However, the role of body memory is not limited to the habitual and procedural characteristics of the person. It can also contain and express autobiographical memories. Fuchs designated this process as the explication of implicit meaning or memory cores. The process of explication can be triggered by various ways.

Casey's analyses of place memory have shown the predominance of spatial elements in occurring body memories. Based on the previous discussions, it seems reasonable to assume that in these affectively charged experiences mental time travel and spatial transportation occurs at the same time.[16] The remembering subject is fascinated by the re-emerging past and re-located into a long-forgotten place.

---

[16] Mental time travel (MTT) is the revised definition of episodic memory that emphasizes the subjective experience of remembering. Contrary to traditional philosophical analysis, it does not assume a gap between remembering the past and imagining the future. For a detailed analysis of the models of episodic memory, see, for example, Sant'Anna et al. (2020) and Michaelian (2016).

The retentional modification of primal impressions suggest that the present cannot be given again in its totality. However, in emerging place memories the subject experiences a *bi-locality*; that is, owing to the affective-associative reproduction of distant memories we are "implaced" into the past, as Casey has suggested.

While habitual body memory provides a basal experiential reality to our lives, place memories revitalize and reinforce our sense of self on the level of explicit recollection and, at the same time, resurrect the condensed affective atmospheres of long forgotten lived spaces. This kind of bolstering effect was demonstrated by Proust's madeleine experience. In addition to this process of re-familiarization with the past, including the memory of significant places like childhood home, Appelfeld's account illustrated the process of de-familiarization where the seemingly forgotten place of suffering causes fright and alienation in the present. In sum, we can imagine situations in which positive or negative affective atmospheres of distant and long forgotten places intrude into the present. In case of the madeleine experience the connection between bodily sensations and Combray is explicit. However, in the case of Appelfeld's avoidance behavior the place of former suffering is not necessarily explicated during the state of fright but rather implicitly present in the author's habit. In this latter case, place memory may not necessarily occur in explicit form despite of its impact on conduct. That is, not all body memory indicates the explicit recollection of places, but places and situations are necessary for the constitution of body memory and bodily remembering.

References

Appelfeld, A. (2005). *Geschichte eines Lebens* [The story of a life]. Reinbek.

Bachelard, G. (1964). *The Poetics of space* (M. Jolas, Trans.). Beacon Press. (Original work published 1958)

Bergson, H. (1991). *Matter and memory* (N. M. Paul, & W. S. Palmer, Trans.). Zone Books. (Original work published 1896)

Casey, E. S. (1997). *The fate of place: A philosophical history*. University of California Press.

Casey, E. S. (2000). *Remembering: A phenomenological study*. Indiana University Press.

Casey, E. S. (2022). *Turning emotion inside out: Affective life beyond the subject*. Northwestern University Press.

Damasio, A. (1999). *The feeling of what happens: Body, emotion and the making of consciousness*. Harcourt Brace and Co, Inc.

Descartes, R. (1996). *Euvres de Descartes* [Descartes' collected works]. (C. Adam & P. Tannery, Eds). Vrin. (Original work published 1640)

de Vignemont, F. (2010). Body schema and body image – pros and cons. *Neuropsychologia, 48*(3), 669–680. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2009.09.022

Fuchs, T. (2007). Psychotherapy of the lived space: A phenomenological and ecological concept. *American Journal of Psychotherapy, 61*(4), 423–39. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.psychotherapy.2007.61.4.423

Fuchs, T. (2008). Leibgedächtnis und Lebensgeschichte [Body memory and life history]. In F. A. Friedrich, T. Fuchs, J. Koll, B. Krondorfer & G. M. Martin (Eds.), *Der Text im Körper. Leibgedächtnis, Inkarnation und Bibliodrama* (pp. 10–40). EB-Verlag.

Fuchs, T. (2012a). The phenomenology of body memory. In S. C. Koch, T. Fuchs, M. Summa & C. Müller, (Eds.), *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement* (pp. 9–22). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Fuchs, T. (2012b). Body memory and the unconscious. In D. Lohmar & J. Brudzińska (Eds.), *Founding Psychoanalysis Phenomenologically* (pp. 69–82). Springer.

Fuchs, T. (2013). The phenomenology of affectivity. In K. W. M. Fulford, M. Davies, R. G. T. Gipps, G. Graham, J. Z. Sadler, G. Stanghellini & T. Thornton (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (pp. 612–631). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199579563.013.0038

Fuchs, T. (2014). Depression, Intercorporeality, and interaffectivity. In M. Ratcliffe & A. Stephan (Eds.), *Depression, Emotion and the Self* (pp. 183–198). Imprint Academic.

Fuchs, T. (2017). Self across time: the diachronic unity of bodily existence. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences, 16*, 291–315. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-015-9449-4

Fuchs, T. (2018). The cyclical time of the body and its relation to linear time. *Journal of Consciousness Studies, 25*(7–8), 47–65.

Fuchs, T. (2019). The uncanny atmosphere. In G. Francesetti & T. Griffero (Eds.), *Psychopathology and atmospheres. Neither inside nor outside* (pp. 101–118). Cambridge Scholar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.3390/bs7040070

Fuchs, T. (2021). *In Defense of the human-being*. Oxford University Press.

Gendlin, E. T. (2012). Comment on Thomas Fuchs: The time of the explicating process. In S. C. Koch, T. Fuchs, M. Summa & C. Müller (Eds.), *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement* (pp. 73–82). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Gentsch, A., & Kuehn, E. (2022). Clinical manifestations of body Memories: The impact of past bodily experiences on mental health. *Brain Sciences, 12*(5), 594. https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci12050594

Gibson, E. L. (2016). Proust recalled: A psychological revisiting of that madeleine memory moment. In S. Groes (Eds.), *Memory in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 42–50). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137520586_4

Goldie, P. (2012). *The Mess Inside: Narrative, Emotion, & the Mind*. Oxford University Press.

Hutto, D. D., & Myin, E. (2017). *Evolving enactivism: Basic minds meet content*. The MIT Press.

Husserl, E. (1997). Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907. In R. Rojcewicz (Ed. and Trans.), *Edmund Husserl Collected Works VII*. Springer. (Original work published 1907)

Hydén, L-C. (2018). Dementia, Embodied Memories, and the Self. *Journal of Consciousness Studies, 25*(7–8), 225–241.

Jansen, P. (2012). Implicit body memory. In S. C. Koch, T. Fuchs, M. Summa & C. Müller (Eds.), *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement* (pp. 115–120). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Koch, S. C. (2012). Testing Fuchs' taxonomy of body memory: A content analysis of interview data. In S. C. Koch, T. Fuchs, M. Summa & C. Müller (Eds.), *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement* (pp. 171–186). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Marosán, B. P. (2022). Husserl on Minimal Mind and the Origins of Consciousness in the Natural World. *Husserl Studies, 38*, 107–127. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10743-021-09299-6

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968). *The visible and the invisible* (A. Lingis, Trans). Northwestern University Press. (Original work published 1964)

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2005). *Phenomenology of perception* (C. Smith, Trans). Routledge. (Original work published 1962)

Michaelian, K. (2016). *Mental Time Travel: Episodic Memory and Our Knowledge of the Past*. MIT Press.

Moran, D. (2013). The Phenomenology of Embodiment: Intertwining and Reflexivity. In R. T. Jensen & D. Moran (Eds.), *The Phenomenology of Embodied Subjectivity* (pp. 285–304). Springer.

Nichols, S. (2017). Memory and personal identity. In S. Bernecker, & K. Michaelian (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Memory* (pp. 169–179). Routledge.

Riva, G. (2018). The neuroscience of body memory: From the self through the space to the others. *Cortex, 104*, 241–260. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cortex.2017.07.013

Roediger, H. L. (1980). Memory metaphors in cognitive psychology. *Memory & Cognition, 8*, 231–246. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03197611

Sant'Anna, A., Michaelian, K. & Perrin, D. (2020). Editorial: Memory as mental time travel. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology, 11*, 223–232. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-020-00484-8

Sass L, & Ratcliffe, M. (2017). Atmosphere: On the phenomenology of "atmospheric" alterations in schizophrenia – overall sense of reality, familiarity, vitality, meaning, or relevance (ancillary article to EAWE domain 5). *Psychopathology, 50*, 90–97. https://doi.org/10.1159/000454884

Sass, L. (2017). *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the light of modern art, literature, and thought* (revised edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sass, L. A., & Pienkos, E. (2013). Delusion: The phenomenological approach. In K.W.M. Fulford, M. Davies, R. G. T. Gipps, G. Graham, J. Z. Sadler, G. Stanghellini & T. Thornton (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (pp. 632–657). Oxford.

Sass, L. A., & Pienkos, E. (2014). Space, time, and atmosphere: A comparative phenomenology of melancholia, mania, and schizophrenia, part 2. In M. Ratcliffe & A. Stephan (Eds.), *Depression, Emotion and the Self* (pp. 103–123). Imprint Academic.

Schechtman, M. (1996). *The Constitution of Selves*. Cornell University Press.

Smith, B. C. (2016). Proust, the madeleine and memory. In S. Groes (Eds.), *Memory in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 38–41). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137520586_3

Strohminger, N., & Nichols, S. (2015). Neurodegeneration and Identity. *Psychological Science, 26*(9), 1469–1469. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615592381

Tewes, C. (2018). The habitual body and its role in collective memory formation. *Journal of Consciousness Studies, 25*(7–8), 135–157.

Thiel, U. (2011). *The Early Modern Subject: Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume*. Oxford University Press.

Trigg, D. (2012). *The Memory of Place: A Phenomenology of the Uncanny*. Ohio University Press.

Trigg, D. (2020). The role of atmosphere in shared emotion. *Emotion, Space and Society, 35*, May 2020, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2020.100658

Zahavi, D. (2014). *Self & Other: Exploring subjectivity, empathy and shame*. Oxford University Press.

The Austerity in Japanese Spaces

IRINA-ANA DROBOT

Affiliation: Faculty of Engineering in Foreign Languages
Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest, Romania
Email: anadrobot@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to look at austerity present in Japanese culture spaces, such as Japanese gardens, Japanese interior design, which is minimalist, Japanese haiku poems settings, and their connection with Buddhist philosophy. The Japanese do not seem keen on accumulating objects. Instead, they prefer to keep their space minimal. The emptiness in Japanese Buddhist philosophy appears in interior design and garden design. Moreover, the Japanese focus more on their surroundings, for instance on contemplating the seasons and on their awareness of the changing seasons. Buddhist temples allow a large view of the landscape. Meanwhile, the interior design remains minimalist, and it also allows the inhabitant to be surrounded by empty space. The Japanese are not so much focused on accumulating objects during their lifetime as Westerners are. What could be such reasons? Why is their focus on the aesthetics of the surroundings? What could this tell us about Japanese culture that makes it unique?

Keywords: wabi-sabi, meditation, temples, Buddhism, minimalism

Introduction

Spaces in Japanese culture can be seen as open and uncluttered. Whenever we look at photographs on the Facebook pages related to Japanese culture, we can see large amounts of unoccupied spaces in homes, as well as in temples and gardens. Objects are never accumulated as we are used to in Western cultures. When we see illustrations of objects related to the tea ceremony, there is a large amount of empty space all around. In both personal homes and temples, even the furniture is selected to the minimum. Instead, there is a widely open window towards the natural landscape, in order to admire and especially to meditate in front of the specificity of each and every season. One reason for the openness towards nature is the original Japanese religion of Shintoism, according to which there are *kami*, which name spirits found in nature, everywhere around.

The *kami* are considered "an expression of their native racial faith which arose in the mystic days of remote antiquity" (Ono & Woodard, 2011, p. 4). Temples are often situated in forests. According to Ono and Woodard, "The word Shinto" means, "literally, the 'Kami Way'" (2011, p. 5). If we look at the word itself, Shinto "is composed of two ideographs," one being read as *shin*, and "which is equated with the indigenous term *kami*," and "*do*" or "*to*," two terms which are "equated with the term *michi*, meaning 'way'" (Ono & Woodard, 2011, p. 2).

Why do the Japanese prefer to focus on the beauty of nature, and to keep opened towards nature, living so close to it, in both temples and personal homes, instead of preferring to concentrate on accumulation of wealth, such as valuable objects of decoration, valuable paintings, for instance, as well as lavish furniture? The answer is believed, by the author of the present paper, to lie, first of all, in the fact that minimalism is one significant and specific value to the members of Japanese culture. The minimalist frame of mind urges anyone to think whether one really needs or cares about certain objects and is made to declutter one's home. The experience of giving up unnecessary objects or objects that are no longer relevant leads to the person doing this to understand decluttering of the home as the equivalent of decluttering at a psychological level. Decluttering will, thus, result in helping the respective person focus on what matters at present in his/her life. Such an example of practice has been described in the book *Goodbye, Things. On Minimalist Living by Fumio Sasaki* (2017). In this book, readers are told about the experience of understanding someone's priorities and things that can be set aside, since they are no longer important. What is not a priority anymore or things that we no longer care about, once they are set aside, we can be free to focus on what matters during our present time. Marie Kondo, another author of a popular book about Japanese culture among members of Western culture, believes that decluttering is, "a dramatic reorganization of the home causes correspondingly dramatic changes in lifestyle and perspective. It is life transforming" (2014, p. 8).

The focus on the present is part of the Zen Buddhist mindset and meditation, together with "being present to what is experienced rather than focusing on the need for change" (Edwards, 1997, p. 442). The present becomes part of a minimalist home setting due to the absence of objects from the past and of things that we would never actually use, but gathered at some point in our lives. At the same time, we find with Zen Buddhism focus on the present as a means of not being swallowed up by grief. We may feel sad about aspects which we cannot change, such as not being able to own a certain object or the loss of a dear person. Right from this philosophy we can move towards *wabi-sabi*, meaning accepting the imperfection of things, and not trying to change them.

The objects that are old and a bit broken can still retain their charm. We can also enjoy a simple life, which is corresponding to a simple setting. We do not need to accumulate riches or to pile them up in order to live life meaningfully, and to experience enlightenment. This is what Zen monks suggest to us.

The aesthetic of *wabi-sabi* is said to come from the following situation: the "uncultured lot" in the 16th–18th century wanted to gather lots of material possessions related to the tea ceremony, as we notice in the way the warlords "were competing for the ownership of artefacts necessary to enrich their tea ceremony experiences, such as pottery, paintings and other paraphernalia" (Yazawa, 2018, p. 65). We could go for reference to the story of Hideyoshi, who "created a tea ceremony room in his residence which was made of gold, in an ostentatious show of his power and wealth. His tea ceremony was filled with exquisite porcelain imported from China" (Yazawa, 2018, p. 66). Such an attitude is not supported by Japanese values, as they value minimalism and not the accumulation of material goods or riches. Rikyū, "Hideyoshi's instructor in the art of the tea ceremony" was disapproving of "Hideyoshi's ostentatious extravagances." As a result, Rikyū's "aesthetic philosophy" of *wabi-sabi* is about "modest circumstances," in the case of *wabi* (2018, p. 65). This is in tune with the Japanese general aesthetic of simplicity: "Rikyū encouraged his followers to seek quiet satisfaction in less than opulent surroundings, and to find beauty in the modest beauty that shines more in contrast to its seemingly shabby environment" (2018, p. 65). Regarding the other term, "*Sabi* refers to internal quiet and peace. Rikyū proposed that true appreciation of beauty is borne out of the person's quiet contentment, rather than avarice" (Yazawa, 2018, p. 65).

At the same time, the concept of empty space in Japanese culture can also provide an explanation for having large unoccupied spaces in personal homes and temples. According to the Japanese mindset, empty spaces are all right, and not to be avoided, as is generally the belief in the Western cultures' mindset. Austerity, in Western cultures, could be mainly associated with deprivation, and removing oneself from the joys of every-day life. Perhaps austerity evokes in the minds of Westerners the atmosphere of loneliness and deprivation, of giving up the worldly joys of life and retreating to a monastery. Empty spaces could be, in turn, for Westerners, associated with lack of comfort, with lack of what they had been used to, with grief, as well as with punishment. When a child misbehaves in Western culture, he/she is being punished by having his/her toys or smartphone taken away from them. They may feel that their room is empty, since what they cared about had been taken away.

Having empty space does not mean not being rich enough, as would be the tendency to believe in Western cultures. In Japanese culture, emptiness is understood differently from Western culture, namely as something desirable, and worth meditating on. It is not a sign of something to be filled, but, instead, a sign of balance, harmony, and relaxation. While Western culture would equate emptiness with lack of material goods, status and, briefly put, poverty, for Japanese culture this is the norm. Emptiness can be understood by examining the concept of *ma*, which "basically means an 'interval' between two (or more) spatial or temporal things and events" (Pilgrim, 1986, p. 255). This concept can refer to just to "space between," but also to "time between," as well as to any "gap" or "opening." One example of understanding a room in terms of *ma* is the following: "A room is called *ma* […] as it refers to the empty space between the walls" (Pilgrim, 1986, p. 255). Music can contain "a rest," which is called *ma* as it refers to "the pause between the notes or sounds." The empty space, or *ma*, therefore, refers to a "reflection of a Japanese religio-aesthetic paradigm or 'way of seeing'" (Pilgrim, 1986, p. 255). The Western mindset cannot conceive of a room defined in terms of empty space, generally, but in terms of a space filled with furniture and decorated with various objects. The room can be conceived of as an empty space by the Western culture members only when they see it freshly built, or freshly emptied by the former owner, and at their disposal to decide how to change the wall colours, fill it with furniture, as well as decorate it with their own belongings, such as posters, paintings, lamps, carpets, etc.

We could correlate the Japanese value of empty space with that of the simplicity from *wabi-sabi*, as well as with minimalism. According to Haimes (2020), *ma* is a "Zen Buddhist concept," which is actually "usually translated as space," and which, for Westerners, evokes their understanding of Japanese minimalism (p. 2).

The temples in Japan are not overcrowded with riches, or overly decorated with art. In Western culture, churches as places of worship include a very richly decorated space, with icons and golden ornaments. What is more, poetry in Western culture is generally made up of figurative language, which can be regarded as a decorative element as in physical spaces. Meanwhile, in Japanese culture, the example of haiku poems shows appreciation for lack of figurative language, focusing on simplicity and on the visual elements. While Western poems can be quite long usually, haiku poems consist of three lines, and a pattern of 5-7-5 syllables. Contemporary haiku authors can even write it in fewer syllables, especially when it comes to haiku written in the English language. In the case of traditional haiku, as in the famous case of Basho, the setting is located beside a lake: "an old pond/ a frog jumps in/ the sound of water" (Lunberry, 2019, p. 22).

This is one of the oldest haiku poems written by a haiku master, in 1686, and which is constantly being cited, in various versions, due to the different translations into English from Japanese. What is visible in the poem above is that the setting is very simple, just as the language used. The action of the poem sounds, for the reader uninstructed in haiku, like an everyday life scene, of not much importance. However, if we look closer at it, we notice how what is going on is pictured by the reader by being recomposed from various images mentioned. First of all, in line 1, we have the setting, which is "an old pond," thus, a setting of extreme simplicity, and which evokes lack of agglomeration, a free, empty space lying ahead. Minimalism is suggested further by the second line, with a frog that "jumps in." Next, in line 3, the detail that matters is only "the sound of water," and not an extremely detailed description of the way the frog jumps in the lake and moves. Minimalism can be understood as the lack of overcrowded details, which do not matter. The scene looks a bit sketchy, yet by all means it is enough to suggest all the sounds, movements, and sense of sight that are relevant to the scene. Other descriptions of the surroundings of the lake, vegetation, clouds, sun, stones, were not considered necessary for the reader putting together the scene.

A Japanese garden contains an empty space in the form of sand made into the shape of water waves. In this case, the sand symbolizes water. The purpose of these gardens is to make the person walking through them and watching them to meditate. Gardens made of sand and stone are associated with Zen monasteries. These gardens are left natural, allowing withered plants to stay. They are not artificially decorated. Among the austere elements of the setting we can find stones, which symbolize mountains. The gardens in Japan appear similar to the setting evoked in Basho's famous frog poem, with a lake which is then made to have waves, as it is inferred from hearing "the sound of water" after the "frog jumps in" (Lunberry, 2019, p. 22). Moreover, the Japanese Zen garden is considered to help the person walking in and meditating to feel close to the spirits of nature in Shintoism belief, *kami*.

Space is a reflection of a way of understanding life, and of living it personally, and this mindset is mirrored in the way interiors are looking like in Japanese culture, as well as in the way they present the natural space in their poems. A Western culture member would focus on comparing nature to various riches, for instance the yellow leaves of autumn to gold, a precious metal, for example. The Japanese haiku poem by the master Basho seems to present reality in a blunt way, without anything more that describing a fact that anyone can notice while walking by a lake. At the same time, the scene is created after careful observation and pruning it of all unnecessary details. In spite of this haiku poem sounding so natural and simple, the scene has been carefully composed to look this way.

It is a reflection of Zen Buddhist philosophy, minimalism, *wabi-sabi* (as the pond is old, and that could evoke the image of a worn-out object, which still has its charm), and of showing how a poem may not contain the usual figurative language, with personification of nature, metaphors, abstract notions, and other features to which Western readers have been used in their poetry.

We could divide space in relation to Japanese culture members' understanding from the point of view of interior spaces, present in personal homes, temples, or palaces, and exterior spaces, which relate to the setting where a shrine can be found, as well as to the way gardens are built. Moreover, we have the settings created in poetry specific to the Japanese language, which is predominantly visual. The impact with the space that is created in these poems is striking.

The present paper interprets these simple, minimalist spaces, which are also leaving room or empty spaces for the viewer, as austere spaces. This is because, unlike the Western mindset, the Japanese mindset does not value an accumulation of objects. The paper will go through existing research on the Japanese mindset in order to understand it better. Simplicity, minimalism, and the empty space could be relevant, to some extent, to Western culture members, understood from drawing a parallel with the saying that "less is more," when speaking about beauty, elegance and good taste. Up to a point, therefore, the two cultures may not be that different, and they could reach a common ground for understanding. This could help explain the appeal of the Japanese culture to Western culture members, and their adoption of the minimalist lifestyle described by books such as those of Fumio Sasaki and Marie Kondo. At the same time, another common ground for understanding the positive aspect of empty spaces could be Westerners' belief that, at some point, in any relationship, someone needs his/ her personal space. This is similar to the idea of empty space, in the sense that they need to have some privacy, and to be alone with their own thoughts, and not always surrounded by other people. Another idea that could unite the two cultures' mindset, Asian and Western, could be the search for spirituality as opposed to materialism. However, the understanding of space, based on the way empty space is generally understood in the two cultures is different. This is, because, from anyone's intuitive observation, the space in Western culture is perceived as a background, especially when other elements are present, including persons. However, in Japanese culture, the space can be the focus of a photograph or of a painting, just as much as the human figures present there. Nature can be regarded as larger than the human beings, if we take into consideration the paintings from ancient China, whose style was then passed on for further development and interpretation in a way specific to their culture by the Japanese.

For the Japanese, humans can always be seen as below the natural setting, and below the empty space. The empty space can be regarded as merging with the viewer, at some point, through meditation, and through the relationship with nature and *kami* present in Shintoism.

Literature Review

Going through previous research for the present paper should start with the relationship between human beings and their environment. One reason is because the architecture "is deeply influenced by the environment" (Yagi, 1982, p. 6). With respect to Japan, we should mention that the four seasons are not clear-cut, and the usual ones are completed by "a short rainy season in early summer and typhoons in early fall." Japanese homes are built "to ameliorate the discomfort of rain and humidity," which can appear during "the rainy season, summer, and typhoon season." These seasons "are hot and muggy." The Japanese believe that their homes can be built on the principle that "the human body can bear the discomfort of the only remaining season that poses a problem, winter" (Yagi, 1982, pp. 6–7). While the ideas on which empty spaces are founded can be philosophical or religious, they also have a practical foundation for the Japanese, explainable by the way the houses can provide comfort for the human body according to the seasons.

Another reason why the environment should be considered for research on the topic of space is that humans are constantly working to changing their environment. According to Baciu (2013) this is a usual feature of human nature: we can under-stand "humans as creators of both their environment and of their own values" (p. 14). Human beings could be regarded as being able to both adapt to the environment, as well as to make changes to it in such a way so as to feel more comfortable.

The relationship between human beings and their surroundings have been the topic of a field of psychology: "Environmental psychology examines transactions between individuals and their built and natural environments" (Gifford, 2014, p. 541). Research in this domain is needed, since we always interact with one environment or another: "Every aspect of human existence occurs in one environment or another, and the trans-actions with and within them have important consequences both for people and their natural and built worlds" (Gifford, 2014, p. 541).

We could go as far as to claim that having contact with another culture means having contact with an entirely different environment. As tourists, or as travelers due to various purposes (business, studying) we can have a first contact with the different environ-ment by noticing what is around us, from the way the city, town or village looks like,

the way shops are situated, the way parks and public gardens are more or less present, the way we are surrounded by very modern or old, historical buildings on various streets. The way homes are built can be seen as ways of possible psychological influence on the person living or staying there temporarily.

Crowding, for instance, from the point of view of environmental psychology, is not regarded as beneficial. In fact, it is considered a "stressor." Research has indicated that "residential crowding" could be related to "poorer cognitive achievement in children" (Wells et al., 2016, p. 66). Moreover, "people who live in denser residences handle stress less well," which means that, in situations such as that of "giving a speech to an audience," these persons would "show elevated cardiovascular reactivity" (Wells et al., 2016, p. 66). Being exposed to a crowded environment on an everyday life basis "appears to create elevated chronic stress" (Wells et al., 2016, p. 66).

We may conclude from these findings that the benefits of the minimalist approach can be checked through a universal psychological reaction to crowded environments (which could include both lots of objects and lots of other people). The topic of the present paper could be related to the topic very relevant today, that of stress, anxiety and need to relax in a busy world, and which is constantly under discussion: "The importance of free time and calm spaces has been frequently emphasised in recent times, often against the backdrop of anxiety that the world is 'speeding up'; that is, becoming busier and more digitally controlled" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 1).

Getting into an unfamiliar environment could lead to the experience of culture shock. This experience occurs in stages (Pedersen, 1994), ranging from feeling very much adapted in a very short time, or even right away, to the new environment, of a different country and culture, and feeling that we are resonating with its values, lifestyle and mindset, to the point where we can become unable to function as expected in the new environment, to no longer enjoy exploring the different culture, until we reach the final point where we understand and accept the differences between our own culture and the new culture we have been immersed in.

We could consider the studies done on the topic of identity and place, and consider them from a different perspective in the case of space in Japanese culture. The Zen Buddhist philosophy and Shintoism could be considered to make the Japanese understanding of space an aspect that is specific to and symbolic of the larger, geographical space of the Japanese culture. Ross and colleagues (2003) consider places as able to "embody social symbols" (p. 210). To begin with, "places represent personal memories" (Ross et al., 2003, p. 210).

This is due to the fact that we can always associate a certain incident in our lives to a certain place. Therefore, "The memory of interactions in the place invest [*sic*] the place with personal significance" (Ross et al., 2003, p. 210). Second, places can also "reflect and represent social memories," or "shared histories" (Ross et al., 2003, p. 210).

The empty and minimalist spaces specific to Japanese cultures can thus be considered to be part of the "social memories" and of the "shared histories" of the members of this culture. According to Verhetsel and colleagues (2013), emptiness is correlated with sobriety in Japanese culture as far as the domain of architecture is concerned: "A point of reference for this ideal," that of sobriety, "is the Japanese architectural tradition of quietness, sobriety and harmony of mind, spirit and nature" (p. 30).

Judging from the point of view of "culture identity manifestations," which offer the following categories of "carriers of identity for a culture": "(a) symbols, (b) heroes, (c) rituals, practices and traditions, (d) values" (Baciu, 2013, p. 32), we could claim that the empty spaces are found in various symbols of Japanese culture, such as personal homes interior design, temple interior design, garden arrangements, haiku poems, and paintings. According to Eastgate (2018), one example of empty space in painting is from "the late 16th century," when "An early modern artist who depicted Ma through art was Hasegawa Tōhaku," in his painting "'Shōrin-zu byōbu' ('Pine Trees')" (para. 7). The painting consists of two screens, where "it is the empty space between the shadowy pine trees that creates the landscape in the mind of the viewer" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 7). An example of using the symbol of the empty space is the practice of using silence during conversations. Pauses are frequent and considered part of minimizing "tension," while "a Western listener might find" such moments of silence "uncomfortable" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 4). The example of the practice of conversation with silent moments comes from their belief that it is "important to create and maintain spaces of *Ma*, in order to minimise tension and favour contemplation" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 4).

The symbols presented above are part of the empty space and minimalism as promoted by Zen Buddhist religion and philosophy.

Materials and Methods

This section will look into the philosophical understanding of the concept of emptiness. It can help us understand better the way an empty space can be significant and substantial in cultural products such as paintings, poems, gardens, and interior house design. Examining the traditions coming from the origins of Buddhism and the contact of Indian and Chinese traditions with Japanese culture can help us develop an understanding

of the way Japanese culture members understand the empty space. The next step is to understand why the Japanese do not have, in their mindset, the wish to collect many material possessions and prefer to keep their rooms in a minimalist style.

Previous research done in the domain of Japanese culture's understanding of architecture and gardens, especially, mentions that by grasping the way of thinking of the Japanese, we can better understand the ideas behind their cultural products. According to the previous research done by Gropius and Tange (1960 as cited in Antariksa, 2001), "we can understand the architecture of nations and period only as we win an inside knowledge of their way of thinking and their philosophy" (p. 75). Engel's research on Zen philosophy is also mentioned, as it has "influenced all phases of Japanese life more profoundly than has any of the other sects" (1964 as cited in Antariksa, 2001, p. 75). What is more, it "was closely associated not only with the arts, social institutions, but also, particularly, with architecture and landscaping" (Engel, 1964 as cited in Antariksa, 2001, p. 75).

Antariksa (2001) mentions how Buddhism originated in India (p. 75). Buddhism referred to practicing meditation in a cross-legged position, and achieving the experience of enlightenment, after going through a state of trance. The enlightenment meant "a state of cosmic consciousness as far above the mental plane of ordinary mortals as the level of human consciousness is raised above" (Antariksa, 2001, p. 75). Emptiness as a concept comes from Buddhism. What is more, "Emptiness in the translation of the Sanskrit word *sunyata*, which means 'everything is no-substantial'" (Antariksa, 2001, p. 77). The positive side of emptiness is highlighted: "Sunyata is an Emptiness so full of potentiality that all emerges from it, all is reabsorbed in it. In Emptiness, forms are born" (Antariksa, 2001, p. 77). It is like a moment of revelation. To illustrate the idea of the significance of the empty space in Japanese culture, we could have in view the following use of the word that stands for both emptiness and the sky in their language: "The Japanese word for emptiness is *ku*, which also means 'sky'" (Antariksa, 2001, p. 77). The empty space has been understood as what lies between heaven and earth, like a pillar. It is, thus, an "intermediate world," called "Midspace" (Antariksa, 2001, p. 77). According to legend, "At first the worlds (Heaven and Earth) were together; and when they parted asunder the space which between (antar) them became that Midspace" (Snodgrass, 1985 as cited in Antariksa, 2001, p. 78).

The empty space could be regarded in connection with the practice of meditation's stage of Enlightenment through trance. It is part of a spiritual practice, since "The void in Buddhist sense is not concept arrived at by rational thought, but an expression of an incommunicable individual experience, accessible to a person practicing meditation" (Nitschke, 1988 as cited in Antariksa, 2011, p. 77).

Zen Buddhist religion and philosophy, however, was not the only system of beliefs to influence the Japanese culture members' understanding of space. There is an interconnection of interaction among spaces, objects and people: "Japanese conceptions of space are influenced by Shinto, a spiritual tradition that places almost as much importance on the spaces and relationships between objects and people as it does on the objects themselves" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 3). The strong connection shows the following: "that all things are made up of not only themselves, but also the space and relations that they affect" (Eastgate, 2018, para. 3).

The Zen Buddhist and Shintoist religions and philosophies form the mindset of the Japanese people. If we understand their way of seeing the empty space, as compared to other ways of seeing it, such as the ones specific to Western culture, we can reach an understanding of various practices in their culture. We can minimize or even avoid the experience of culture shock, given the differences in thinking and behaviour. Once we are aware, for instance, that silence does not mean discomfort and a negative impression of the interlocutor on us, we can communicate more efficiently and feel more at ease in a different world. Through information, we can minimize or reduce culture shock, since we can make an unfamiliar culture look more and more familiar to us. As a definition of culture shock, we could consider the following one: "Contact with culturally unfamiliar people and places can be unsettling, and the term 'culture shock' is frequently used to describe how people react to novel or unaccustomed situations" (Bochner, 2003, p. 1). Any culture is learned. We are not born with its values and frame of mind. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that we can also learn another culture. We shall always be tempted to draw comparisons with the first learned culture, into which we were born, since, as adults, any knew knowledge is compared and introduced having as a foundation what we have already learnt until then. However, it is not impossible, with a bit of effort, to "learn how to unlearn" (Baciu, 2013, p. 45) and start anew, benefitting from the experience offered by the features of a different culture.

Results

Contact with other cultures is a given in our contemporary world, just as it had been inevitable throughout the course of history. Even if Japan has a period when it was closed to the Western world, this was just a temporary situation.

We tend to look for comfort by searching for the "familiar surroundings," such as those places "where we grew up." Gradually, those people around us "tend to be similar to ourselves, in the sense of having comparable ethnic backgrounds, matching beliefs, shared values, and speak the same language or at least a dialect variant of it" (Bochner, 2003, p. 3).

This is the description of "culturally homogeneous space" (Bochner, 2003, p. 3). However, we do tend to break this pattern of familiarity at times, and then it is best to be prepared by keeping informed, in order to have empathy for other ways of thinking and for other values.

The understanding offered by the present paper of the way in which empty spaces can be significant, positive, and searched for in a culture, while in another culture they can be regarded as meaningless, can help raise awareness about the different ways of viewing and understanding various aspects in life, in our surrounding everyday reality and in the course of history of a culture. In order to understand cultural differences, we can focus on a cultural product and analyse the way it relates to the wider mindset, religious or philosophical beliefs of a culture. The example of the empty space is a means of getting the opportunity to go through the history of the root of the values and ways of thinking of the members of Japanese culture.

The empty space offers the opportunity for meditation and relaxation. While this topic is a relevant one today, a familiar one and a frequently discussed one, we cannot directly understand how an empty space can make us feel comfortable, as members of Western culture. We tend to invest various objects, such as furniture, jewelry, toys, books, clothes, with meanings of affection, since we associate them with persons dear to us that have given them to us. Meanwhile, Buddhism teaches us that we need to accept the transience of everything in life, we need to accept that life is suffering and that we can lose someone we care about at any time. The Western culture members' mindset appears to rely on material possessions for support, and associate them with memories, while the Japanese focus not on material possessions and on what is ephemeral, but on an empty space. This empty space will always exist, just as the sky with which it shared the term in the Japanese language will. It is a space of spirituality, and an instance of moment of enlightenment, as it cannot be achieved by means of using judgement and reason.

Discussion

We may have the tendency to accumulate wealth, in order to surround ourselves, psychologically, with something to hang on to, to ease our anxieties. Gathering material goods could be seen, in some cases, as a sign of compensation for no longer having a loved person around, or for not receiving enough affection, or for any other experience of missing or losing something. This could be an explanation related to the appeal of materialism, and to accumulating wealth. Natural disasters and wars may, however, make us realize that nothing is forever, and we could grow more and more aware of the transience of life.

The early days of the United States of America saw the emergence of individualism, through the freedom to allow anyone build his/ her own life from zero, and to have the possibility of becoming rich. This is a tendency towards materialist philosophy, and on practical thinking. Indeed, we do need our basic conditions for survival, and only afterwards we can focus on other needs, intellectual, artistic and spiritual included.

The world today oscillates between spirituality, represented by minimalist spaces, visible in the physical world in the domain of architecture and design, and between display of riches, and maximalism: "Emptiness in a contemporary interior design is often sought by architects and designers in order to achieve order, frugality and purity as a counterpoint to the stressful, busy and noisy outside world" (Verhetsel et al., 2013, p. 30)

Therefore, we can find in studying the Japanese culture mindset of austerity in spaces answers to today's dilemmas related to dealing with the best approach to the universal question of life here and life in the afterworld dilemma, as well as to the dilemma of what matters most in life, and how we should approach life in order to feel happy, or to feel that our lifestyle is meaningful.

For the Western culture members, the emptiness, or the empty space could be frightening, as they are used to being told that there is an afterlife, that beyond this world is a better one. The Paradise has been imagined in lavish ways. Thinking about an empty space could spark suggestions of something negative and undesirable, as well as scary. The belief that there is a world beyond this one can help many Western culture members go on, and hope for the best.

The empty space and the lavish Paradise can be regarded as two different ways of dealing with the ephemerality of life here in our world. On the one hand, we are taught by Buddhism to live grounded in the here and now, while for Christian religions we need to prepare for the afterlife and consider all our deeds.

We are at all times situated in certain spaces and we cannot ignore their significance on our state of mind. We can feel impressed by our surroundings, when we visit different styles of homes and gardens than those we are used to. Western culture members can feel impressed by the Japanese paintings with empty spaces, as well as by their understanding of interior design with empty space. Cultures can exchange their products when coming into contact, and adapt different styles to suit their needs.

Conclusion

Judging from the analysis of the concept of emptiness and the empty space, we can notice how two cultures can attach an entirely different, even opposite, meaning to a similar idea. The spaces can seem austere to a Western culture member, compared to what they are used to. It can seem austere in a Western culture which is focused on entertainment. It is also an example of differences in the ways two largely different cultures relate to space. Comparing the understanding of empty space in Western and Japanese cultures, we can notice how different cultures' members can feel differently about a given element of reality due to the way they have been taught to perceive it. The Japanese have been taught to value the empty space and invest in creating such spaces in their interior design and in the sand and rock gardens, as well as in paintings, while the Westerners have been taught to fill in such spaces.

At the same time, the Japanese have a closer relationship with their surroundings, meaning that it is a more spiritual experience. In the case of Westerners, it is a purely decorative experience, coming from aesthetics, wishing to try a new style of design, or from the idea of practicality, of using a certain space for certain activities. Meanwhile, the Japanese culture members use their surrounding spaces indoors to maintain their connections with nature, for instance by using painted slide-door screens with elements from nature, such as cherry blossoms or cranes. The very strong connection between the Japanese and the passage of seasons is seen by their constant awareness of the natural elements that surround them, marking a certain season that is, currently, there. Just as Westerners have the habit of placing the date in the calendar to mark certain events, the Japanese mark these in their paintings and poems by mentioning an element in nature that is specific to one season or another. Here we notice the profound connection between humans and nature in Japanese culture, a feature which is not so pronounced in Western cultures. Western culture members are more attached to indoors surroundings. Eventually, they do take walks, but only when they have time and when the weather is enjoyable. They can shut the windows towards what is going on outside in nature if they do not like it. They also tend to judge nature by analogy with their own feelings, as we can notice in the personification in their poetry. We also hear about depression due to absence of light, especially during the long winters and especially in Northern countries, where the sky is dark a long part of the year. Westerners also express their feelings of hating the cold or much too rainy weather. In the Japanese haiku poems we never encounter such expressed emotions. The characters in the painting or the poetic persona in haiku poems find something positive in the landscape, and feel connected with the season at any time.

References

Antariksa, A. (2001). Space in Japanese Zen Buddhist architecture. *DIMENSI (Journal of Architecture and Built Environment), 29*(1).

Baciu, S. (2013). *Culture: An awareness-raising approach*. Cavallioti Publishing House.

Bochner, S. (2003). Culture shock due to contact with unfamiliar cultures. *Online readings in psychology and culture, 8*(1), 1−12.

Eastgate, T. (2018). Useful emptiness: Conceptualization of space in Japanese art. In *The Oxford Student. Oxford Student's University Newspaper*. https://www.oxfordstudent.com/2018/12/14/useful-emptiness-space-japanese-art/

Edwards, M. (1997). Being present: Experiential connections between Zen Buddhist practices and the grieving process. *Disability and Rehabilitation, 19*(10), 442−451.

Gifford, R. (2014). Environmental psychology matters. *Annual review of psychology, 65*(1), 541−579.

Haimes, P. (2020). On Japanese Minimalism. *Contemporary Aesthetics (Journal Archive), 18*(1), 10. https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/liberalarts_contempaesthetics/vol18/iss1/10

Kondo, M. (2014). *The life-changing magic of tidying: A simple, effective way to banish clutter forever*. Random House.

Lunberry, C. (2019). Writing on Basho's Pond. English Faculty Publications. 11. https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/aeng_facpub/11

Ono, S., & Woodard, W. P. (2011). *Shinto. The Kami Way*. Tuttle Publishing.

Pedersen, P. (1994). *The five stages of culture shock: Critical incidents around the world*. ABC-CLIO.

Pilgrim, R. B. (1986). Intervals ("Ma") in space and time: foundations for a religio-aesthetic paradigm in Japan. *History of Religions, 25*(3), 255−277.

Sasaki, F. (2017). *Goodbye, Things: on Minimalist Living*. Penguin.

Ross, C. T., Bonaiuto, M., & Breakwell, G. M. (2003). Identity theories and environmental psychology. In M. Bonnes & T. R. Lee (Eds.), *Psychological theories for environmental issues* (pp. 203−234). Ashgate.

Verhetsel, T., Pombo, F., & Heynen, H. (2013). Emptiness as potential. Different conceptions of the sober interior. *Architectoni. Ca, 2*(1), 30−41.

Wells, N. M., Evans, G. W., & Cheek, K. A. (2016). Environmental psychology. In H. Frumkin (Ed.), *Environmental health: From global to local* (pp. 203−229). Wiley.

Yagi, K. (1982). *A Japanese touch for your home*. Kodansha International.

Yazawa, Y. (2018). *How to live Japanese*. White Lion Publishing.

Stars and Planets as a Divine Source of Design: Talismanic Shirts

HAVVA MERYEM İMRE
Affiliation: Faculty of Fine Arts
Istanbul Aydın University, Turkey
Email: meryemimre@aydin.edu.tr

SINEM BUDUN GÜLAS
Affiliation: Faculty of Fine Arts
Istanbul Aydın University, Turkey
Email: sinembudun@aydin.edu.tr

Abstract

For centuries, people believed that supernatural forces would solve the problems and disasters that they could not know the source of and could not solve. They tried to protect themselves by using objects and formations that they knew or believed to be sacred, such as stars and planets. People benefited from their positions to determine the appropriate time to find solutions to the problems of life and to gain success. They have resorted to astrology for these purposes. In the production of talismanic shirts, which are designed with the belief that they will protect the wearer from evil, help from astrology was taken. At the same time space, planets and stars were considered as design images on the shirts.

For this purpose, talismanic letters, prayers and verses were brought together at the most accurate time, as determined through the positions of the stars and the planets, which were used as design objects/visual elements in the design of the talismanic shirts; on the other hand, astrology was used to determine the divinely correct time of their production.

In this context, astrological elements in Ottoman culture were written with ink on shirts that had paper features by using certain geometric forms and combining them with prayers related to the subject. Geometric forms and symbols used in connection with each other to create a visually strong composition have been visualized in accordance with the basic principles of design such as rhythm, balance, visual hierarchy and emphasis.

In this study, Ottoman talismanic shirts, known as healing shirts, as well as their fabric features, astrological elements, stars, planets, geometric forms and sacred symbols used on them, have been examined through reviewing literature on design. Since the shirts themselves could not be reached, researches and published works were taken as reference.

Keywords: astrology, design, geometric forms, talismanic shirts, symbol

Introduction

All over the world, from the early periods of human history to the present day, people have used objects called talismans based on a belief that cannot be explained by science. From the moment of their existence, human beings have been in different pursuits under the influence of natural or celestial events.

Man has developed a creative approach dominated by the talisman in order to become stronger against the supernatural forces that he cannot make sense of (Edgü, 2003). The talisman was born from the mutual communication of human beings with nature and space. Making the invisible visible, the unknown known, changing events in reverse and directing events according to one's own expectations have developed from this consciousness. In order to solve the mystery of the universe and make it useful for themselves, by integrating the positions and movements of the stars with religious significance, people used them in the form of an artistic product in clothing (Berk & Taşkin, 2003). The dictionary meaning of talisman refers to an object with supernatural powers, some secrets, an unsolvable knot, a mysterious and closed word (Çelebi, 2012).

When looking at historical sources, one sees that the first texts regarding the talisman belong to the III. Ur period of the Sumerian civilization. The first example of the kind is the healing talisman made for Sukal, the son of King Gudea, who was struggling with an unknown disease. The texts found in Nippur are from the Assyrian-Babylonian period. It is understood from them that in the Sumerian and Assyro-Babylonian culture, talismans were made of stone or metal, as hand or moon figures of round shapes, and were hung on necks, arms and houses (Snodgrass, 1997, p. 11). As a continuation of local pagan beliefs as seen in Anatolia, practices such as talismans etc. in Turkish society date back to pre-Islamic times (Cilacı, 1994, as cited in Çelebi, 2012).

In order to make a talisman, it is necessary to know the location of the stars, to determine the position of the star suitable for the situation, and to know the symbols appropriate to the nature of the work to be done with the talisman. Mankind believed that all social events

and changes on earth were related to the movement and properties of celestial bodies, and used this by making it a tradition. All living beings, plants, minerals have good or bad luck according to the characteristics of the star they are under the astrological influence of (Büyükkarcı, 2003).

However, not all written garments from the Islamic world are talismanic. Some of the written garments from the seventh century have woven, embroidered or painted inscriptions, sometimes containing historical information and sometimes quotations from the Qur'an. These inscriptions are often shaped as khil'a [honorary garments] given to valuable administrative and military subjects. Rarely, textile garments from the early and medieval periods, epigraphic ornaments on products contain blessings for the wearer, and although these have talismanic properties, they should be considered separately from this group (Munroe, 2019, p. 9).

As seen in Ottoman history, talismanic shirts are also known in different geographical areas. In China, Buddha and his teachings are in a circular form on the back body of a shirt made according to Buddhist beliefs. In India, during the period when Islam was effective, in the 15th and 16th centuries when the effects of Indo-Islamic unity were seen, there is an example written in Bihari font from the 16th century using gold gilding.

It is known that these healing or talismanic shirt samples were also seen in Iran and India after the adoption of Islam. It is known as well that there are talismanic shirts mentioned in Dede Korkut stories. On the Safavid shirts, there are divided symmetrical squares with prayers inside. These divisions are mostly related to the 12 imams. Shirts decorated with planets, stars, zodiac signs and cultural symbols are found in almost all cultures (Porter et al., 2017, p. 549).

Astronomy, Astrology and Astrologer in Ottoman History

Astronomy is the science that makes the drawings showing the movements of the sun, moon and stars annually, in accordance with calculations. Primarily, knowledge of astronomy and astronomical instruments were used in Islamic belief to determine prayer times, iftar time and the direction of Mecca (Maddison et al., 1997). The science of making future interpretations of the zodiac signs according to their positions in the sky on certain dates during the movement of the sun is called astrology, in Islamic civilization it is called İlm-i Nücum. They used the names, shapes and orders of the zodiac signs like Western astrologers. In Ottoman history the relations of the horoscopes with both themselves and other celestial bodies and their effects on human life were examined by the astrologers in the palace.

Apart from the advancement of science in the historical process, there are also dynamics that societies have created within their own traditions. The concepts and rituals of these dynamics have continued their existence for centuries. With this point in view, the concepts of astronomy and astrology should be examined together with the astrology ritual (definitions of concepts are explained at the end of the article). In this study, the functioning and importance of astrologers in the Ottoman Empire is revealed.

God, who rules the fate of all living and inanimate beings in the universe, has determined the positions of the stars according to this. For this reason, it is emphasized that it is important to have knowledge of the science of astrology. Thus, the position of stars and planets at the time of birth determines important events in a person's life.

There is no exact information about when the chief astrologer was established in the Ottoman Empire. However, according to records belonging to the palace, it has been determined that the earliest of this structure dates back to the period of Sultan II. Bayezid (Aydüz, 2004). In Ottoman society, as in other societies or civilizations, the high-level administrators who ruled the state kept the chief astrologers in their palaces with the desire to learn the future, life, death, war, the state of their enemies, and the duration of their empire (Aydüz, 2006). In Ottoman history, the sultans performed wars, the movement of the army, and political decisions in accordance with the zayiçe and the Ashraf hour arranged by the astrologers (Uzunçarşılı, 1984). The chief astrologer, following and interpreting the movements of the sun, lunar eclipse, comets and celestial bodies, reported astronomy-related events to the palace. (İhsanoğlu, 2000).

Figure 1

Manuscript regarding astronomy from Kandilli observatory

In Ottoman history the establishment of the Istanbul observatory has an important place for astronomy and astrology. Takiyüddin Rasid, who worked on astronomical clocks and wall dials in regards to astronomy came to Istanbul from Damascus in 1570 and started to work in the Ottoman Palace as chief astrologer. He continued his astronomy studies and while doing his duty, he realized mistakes in the previously prepared Zic, (for astrologers to prepare the Zic calendars with astronomical rulers is important in determining the Ashraf hour) and revealed that the mistakes should be corrected by making new observations. Sultan Murad III appointed then Takiyüddin Rasıd for the establishment of the observatory and the palace covered all expenses for it (Aydüz, 2004).

Figure 2
Takiyüddin Raşid and scientists (Miniature) *Şehinşâhnâme*, 1581.

In the process that began with the establishment of the observatory, the period of examining the stars for talismans and healing started. To make a talisman, it is important to know the location of the stars, their position. In particular, the stars in the appropriate time and position should be chosen according to whichever subject the talisman will be made about. After this selection, the symbol matching the star that is suitable for the nature of the work is found (Safak, 2007, p. 182).

These symbols are objects belonging to the human or animal body, such as eyes, hands, hair, bones, horns, stones, which are believed to protect people (Çelebi, 2012, p. 91). The stars, their shapes, positions and symbols were created in geometric forms, for prayers by creating a rhythm structure. Shapes and prayers designed for this process were written on tailor-made shirts with black and colored ink.

Şerefeddin Musa, known as Firdevs-i Tavil in Ottoman history, was interested in celestial bodies and astrology and wrote a book called *Davetname* (Invitation to this subject). *Davetname* has entered literature as the bedside book of astrologers who prepared the talismanic shirts (Tezcan, 2013, p. 680).

Talismanic Shirts and Their Features

The first step in making the talismanic shirts belonging to the Topkapı Palace Sultan Robes collection part of our cultural heritage was made in 1961 by Hayrullah Örs, the director of the Topkapı Palace Museum (Gökyay, 2003). Extensive studies on talismanic shirts were made by Hülya Tezcan.

Although there is not much information about how the talisman shirts were prepared, it is known that they were prepared within a framework of certain rules. Compliance with these rules has an important place in the effect of the talisman. In order for the talisman to be functional, it must be placed on the shirt suitable for the spinning of the thread, the weaving of the cloth, and the astrologically determined position of the talisman. It should be prepared in a pre-calculated time period for astrologers and it is important for the effect of the talisman to be completed before sunrise. It is one of the important issues to examine the "Hurufilik" movement in order to make sense of and interpret the numbers, letters and symbols on the talismanic shirts."Hurûfism," which emerged in the 19th century, took breath and came to life in Anatolian lands and Sufi lodges, and reached the Ottoman palace. The clear and great effect of "Hurûfism," which interprets the created universe with symbols, letters, numbers and dots, is seen on shirts (Gölpınarlı, 1989).

Shirts are usually made of white cotton fabric. There are also shirts made of silk. In some shirt forms, the body and sleeves are made of cotton fabric, and the armhole, collar edge and hemline are made of silk fabric. The forms of the shirts also show differences. They are designed as collarless, open-collar, half-open, button-up front, short-sleeved, sleeveless and long-sleeved. Differences in arms are likely to be related to weather conditions. Shirts with unopened collars are thought to be opened according to the shape of the head and neck of the person it is prepared for. Forms with slits on both sides, front slits or slits on both sides and front were found in shirts with different sizes ranging from 63 centimeters to 1.38 meters in length (Gökyay, 1988). It is assumed that the differences in measurements are prepared according to the body weight and height of the wearer. In order for the fabric to be prepared according to the characteristics of the person who will wear the shirt, the sizing process must be done.

Talismanic Shirt: The Process Of "Aharlama"

First of all, in order to be able to write and pattern with ink on the talismanic shirts, the properties of paper should be given to the cotton shirt cloth. This process is called scaling. Scaling is a process that reduces moisture absorption and reduces abrasion and ensures that the ink penetrates and adheres to the base well. Due to this process performed on the cotton fabric, the divine design's pattern made up of color, form, and prayer become durable for a long time. This process was mostly used to make the surface of raw paper smooth (Loveday, 2001, p. 50).

"Aharlamak" is done with a special solution called "ahar." The most used method is "ahar starch." Starch is made into slurry in one bowl then is added to boiling water in another bowl. It is placed on heavy fire for a long time until the smell evaporates and is then filtered (Kütükoğlu, 1994, pp. 22–23). Afterwards, the cotton fabric is either dipped into the ahar or spread homogeneously with it and left to dry. Once dried, it can be written on with ink.

Talismanic Shirt Cloths and Forms

The Sultan's Dresses Collection has an important place in Topkapi Palace. There are approximately one hundred items of eighty-seven talismanic shirts, a false collar, five caps, and covers with riding on them in the collection (Tezcan, 2006). Shirts are generally made of finely woven cotton cloth. The shirt is cut after the sizing process and is combined after the patterns and prayers are written on it. There are very few items made of silk and canfest. Shirts with different forms were identified: collarless, open-collar, stand-up collar, button-up front, button-down front, half-open from the front and buttoned, according to the clothing characteristics of the period. The inside of the shirts is usually lined with white cloth. Shirts cut as sleeveless, short sleeved, wide and long sleeved are also available with slits on the sides. There are records about a shirt is buttoned from under the arm to the hem and is combined with the piping (Gökyay, 1988).

Geometric and Other Symbols on Shirts

Geometric forms and patterns are described as compositions that are formed from the union of god and human and they express eternity. Lines and geometric forms were used more because of the restriction of figurative depiction in Islamic art. It shows the harmony, order and rhythm of the infinity of the universe (Demiriz, 2000). However, the relationship with the sky has always been important for Turks, and various events have been interpreted together with the moon, sun and big stars, which are the correspondent

of important beliefs in Turkish mythology. Moreover, the motifs of these astrological elements have been frequently used especially in fabric and clothing patterns since pre-Islamic times (Soysaldi & Çatalkaya Gök, 2020, p.136).

It is stated that the geometric patterns seen on talismanic shirts represent universal symbols. There are forms such as circle, square, triangle, semicircle and star on talismanic shirts. The circle is one of the most sacred and most powerful symbols describing the universe. It represents the sun and the moon. When abstract meaning is added to this representational narrative, it is understood that it symbolizes unity. The circle reproduces itself, creates different forms and defines infinity (Jung, 2015).

It was used in Islamic symbols that are on talismanic shirts. The most important are prophet Muhammad's footprint (Kadem-i Şerif), arrow and bow, Zülfikar (The Sword of Hazrat Ali), the seal of prophethood in the shape of a heart (Nübüvvet) can be counted (the mole on the back of Prophet Muhammad between the shoulder blades). Stars and symbols are designed and placed on the shirt in a way that strengthens its effect when it is combined with the body.

The astrologers tried to predict the future by calculating celestial movements. These calculations made specifically for the person were transferred to the shirt by placing the verses and prayers according to the positions of the stars in the style of the hattat (calligrapher) (Tunç Şen, 2017). At this point, as Munroe mentioned; it is understood that these garments were produced by hattat (calligrapher) and illuminators rather than garment makers or weavers. However, these garments are not only illuminated manuscripts. These are talismans specially designed to be worn on the body for protection (Munroe, 2019, p. 6) There are also patterns related to outer space on the shirts. They refer to comets and single stars, as well as to a cross section from space. Astrologers have interpreted the drawings that help determine the appropriate time to have a greater effect on the person wearing the shirt (Tezcan, 2011).

Beduh's name is frequently mentioned on talismanic shirts next to prayers (Gökyay, 1976). Although the meaning of Beduh is not known exactly, it is believed that it may be the name of a being living on the planet Zuhal (Saturn) (Bayram, 1991).

Colors and Inks Used in Talismanic Shirts

The most commonly used colors in shirts, black ink, blue, green, red, gold and silver gilding were meant to define the lines of geometric forms. These colors are also used in Central Asian Turkey The surface of the shirt is segmented with black and red. The geometric forms created are filled with green, red and blue ink and *vefk* (It is a branch of the science *huruf*, which deals with the characteristics of letters individually or in combination, and it is thought that letters and numbers carry magic) and *cifr* (It refers to the science that claims to inform of the future with different methods or the works that include this science) (Çelebi, 2012).

Gold gilding was used for base painting, not writing, to increase aesthetic and visual impact. Although it is used for the same purpose in silver gilding, it appears to have lost its shine on the samples since it is a material that oxidizes quickly. The use of different colors on shirts is thought to be distinguished by the different writings such as vefk and cifr, and it is believed that the color blue, in particular, has a magical power (Tezcan, 2011).

Examples of Shirts, Symbols and Placements

The measurement of celestial bodies, lunar and solar eclipses, the effects of stars and planets on earth and human beings, and their physical powers were interpreted with astrological maps. Changes and developments in human life have been designed and visualized within the framework of these analyses (Carey, 2010, p. 91). Based on this context, in order to protect the Ottoman sultans from the enemy, in a certain geometric order. According to the position of the stars, prayers and symbols of faith, stars and planets were placed on shirts in geometric shapes such as squares, triangles and circles.

All civilizations have tried to perceive and interpret the universe in a holistic way. Ancient civilizations designed a universe in accordance with their own culture and traditions within the framework of these interpretations. Thinking of the universe as an infinite space, all elements that can be seen on earth have an important place in making sense of the universe (Roux, 2005, p. 32). It is known that in the Far East, shirts with talisman features protect people from evil and are kept as religious objects in Buddhist temples and are not shown to anyone (Tezcan, 2011, p. 27).

Although the history of talismanic shirts dates back to ancient times, the first known shirt is mentioned in the Qur'an in the chapter of Yusuf. The shirt that the Prophet Yusuf sent to his father through his brothers was a healing shirt. When the shirt was rubbed on his face, his eyes, which were blind from crying, were opened because he had fallen part with his son (Gökyay 2003, p. 64)

The talismanic shirt belonging to Cem Sultan is registered in the Topkapı Palace Museum with inventory number 13/1404. The making of the shirt started on March 29, 1477 and was completed on March 30, 1480. The date of its making and completion is written in Persian with black and red ink inside the yellow gilded square on the hem of the shirt. The astrologers were informed that the shirt would be prepared, and the hour of the gentry was determined when the making would begin. Sultan Cem's shirt's making was started when the sun is in Aries at 19 degrees 57 minutes past three, and was completed on Tuesday, March 29, 1480 when the sun was at 19 degrees in Aries. Aries, the first of the twelve signs, is from the fire group and is variable in character. In the first minute of the Sun in Aries, day and night are equal. Letters, signs, prayers and numbers, the names of angels and the names of Allah are written in certain geometric shapes on the shirt. Symmetrical placement of geometric shapes, the big and small relationship and the light-dark balance of the colors reflect the strength of the composition. The shirt, which remains unbuttoned, has never been worn or could not have been worn.

Figure 3

Talismanic Shirt belonging to Cem Sultan, front and back (detail).

The seal of Solomon constitutes a synthesis pertaining to the unity of the universe. Symbols seen on the seal show the planets denoting the triangle mines.

It symbolizes Silver-Moon, Iron-Mars, Copper-Venus, Tin-Jupiter, Chromium-Mercury, Lead-Saturn. In this design the sun is in the middle of the two lead bullets (Sözeri, 2014, p. 260). The Seal of Suleiman and Zülfikar (the sword of Hazrat Ali), symbolizing victory, power and reign, are featured on talismanic shirts (Felek, 2017). Seals and symbols are of great importance in terms of transferring abstract concepts to the objective world. (Gruber, 2012, pp. 2–3).

Figure 4

The seal of Solomon, detail from Sehzade (prince) Selim's talismanic shirt

Figure 5

The talismanic shirt prepared by Dervish Bin Ahmet for Sehzade (prince) Selim. (Tezcan, 2011, p. 53).

The placement of the star system in outer space is seen on the back body of a shirt dated to the 16th to 17th century (TSM 13/1392). It looks like a complex tex integrity. Although the texts are not separated by a clear line, they are separated from each other in a way that certain forms are formed. The writings that connect with the lines seem to ensure the continuity of the movement in a rhythm.

Figure 6

Talismanic shirt dated to the 16th to 17th century (TSM 13/1392). (Tezcan, 2011, p. 127)

On the shirt, which is registered with the inventory number of (TSM 13/1401) at the Topkapı Palace Museum, there are circles on the front body, prayers in squares and a depiction of the Kaaba. Circular shapes describe comets, usually single stars.

Figure 7

Shirt with Kaaba depiction (TSM 13/1401). (Tezcan, 2011, p. 121)

The cotton shirt belonging to the 17th century is registered in the Topkapı Palace inventory with the number (TSM13/1402). In the pattern on which there are herbal motifs and prayers the cypress tree symbolizes a healthy and long life. In addition, cloud motifs, curved branches and leaves are designed as embellishments. The cypress tree symbolizes unison and eternity. This motif has increased its power with the combination of writing and a pattern which is to be combined with prayers and verses (Leoni, 2020, Chapter 12).
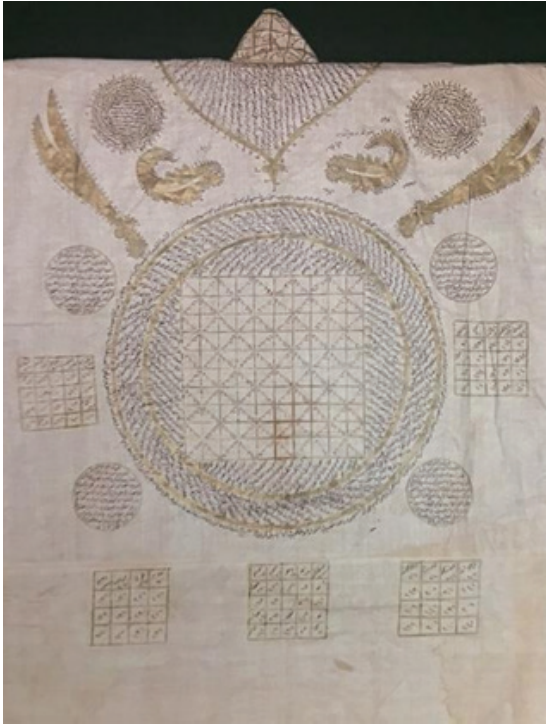
Figure 8

Shirt with floral pattern and prayer (detail TSM 13/1402)

Figure 9

17ᵗʰ century cotton shirt with floral motifs and doublets (TSM 13/1402).

On the front body, which is opened in the form of an oblique front and has a stand-up collar, on the left side of the shirt, there are prayers and the Seal of Solomon in four circles obliquely. Semi-circles and squares are formed and embellished with prayers (TSM 13/1138). Symmetrical placement is important in design in terms of establishing visual impact and integrity. Verses and prayers are mostly written on the upper body of the shirt. There are usually decorations on parts placing lower to the body.

Figure 10

Cotton shirt, with a different color lining and back detail (TSM 13/1138). (Tezcan, 2011, p. 103)

There is a Zülfikar (Sword of Hazrat Ali) and a scorpion pattern on the back of the shirt near the collar. Prayers were written by placing small circles and squares around the large circle (TSM 13/1138).

The placement of circles and squares provides uninterrupted visual design and space creation (Davis, 1996). Geometric shapes and symbols on shirts, cultural and social coding in social life have been aimed at making sense of the connotations created by the myths. These symbols and figures represent concrete facts that people can understand. At the same time, giving meaning at the secondary level represents subjectivity. With the symbols gaining meaning, the shapes and prayers on the talismanic shirts forms a unity.

The linen shirt, which is one of the talismanic shirts dating back to the 17th century, belongs to Sultan Veled, the son of Mevlana. The shirt is in the Konya Mevlana Museum. The information that the shirt belongs to Sultan Veled is included in the work of Hafız Hüseyin Zühdü Effendi, who was sent to Konya during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid, with the name Elsinetü'l-Halk Aklamü'l-Hakk (People's Languages, Pens of Right) written in 1904 (Effendi, 2008, p. 26).

Cepken is registered in the Konya Mevlana Museum with inventory number 706 (Bakırcı, 2020, p. 126). The shirt is made of blended cotton fabric with inner lining, is 62 centimeters long, and has a chest width of 54 centimeters. The sun is placed symmetrically on both shoulders and the Nalın-ı Şerif motifs are placed symmetrically on the front body. On parts divided into squares the verses are in black ink; however, the prayers written with the abjad account are written in red ink with numbers placed around it. The astrological map seen on the back of the shirt in Figure 11 is similar to the astrological map seen in Figure 1.

Figure 11

Konya Mevlana Museum, Sultan Veled's shirt, astrological map on the back body. Inventory registration no: 706.
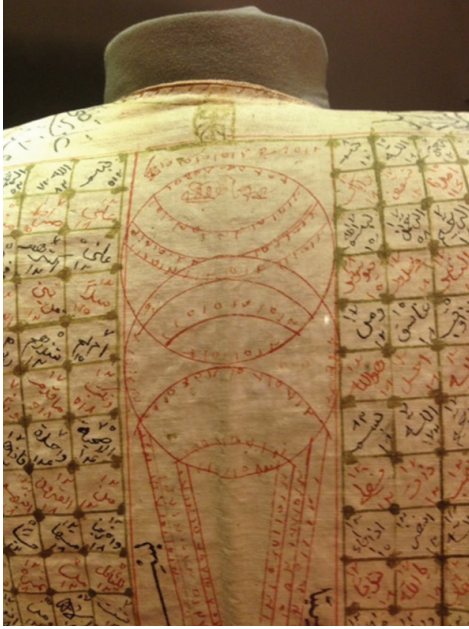
Figure 12

Konya Mevlana Museum, sun pattern on the shoulder. Inventory registration no. 706.

Figure 13

Konya Mevlana Museum, Nalın-ı Serif on the chest. Inventory registration no: 706.

Studies and research on the shirt belonging to Sultan Veled in Konya Mevlana Museum have not been completed yet. In particular, multi-dimensional studies continue on the analysis of what the verses, prayers, the sun and the astrological image on the back body symbolize, in the context of belief symbols and cultural characteristics of the period which it belongs to.

Figure 14

Konya Mevlana Museum, Nalın-ı Serif and the sun on the back body. Inventory registration no: 706.

A similar shirt attributed to Sultan Veled is registered in the Topkapı Palace archive with inventory number 24/2074. On both sides of the chest, Nalın-ı Şerif is in a tomb-like dome structure (Muravchick, 2014, p. 243).

When the two shirts are examined, although there are similarities, there are also differences in the astrological shape on the back body and the writings inside. On the shirt in the Topkapı Museum, the figure in the square area under the astrological map on the back body gives the impression of being made on a later date. Perhaps the area was left blank since the prayer to be written could not be written by the calligrapher, therefore drawings such as herbal motifs were hand painted instead by the hattat. It can be seen that this pattern is different in terms of drawing and workmanship. Another difference is the Nalın-ı Şerif and the sun motif on the back of the shirt that belongs to Sultan Veled.

The shirt mentioned in the existing literature is recorded as belonging to Sultan Veled. However, he fact that the shirt found in Topkapı Palace belongs to the 17th century raises question marks when considering the period Veled lived. At this point, the opinion of Dülya Tezcan, who has made important contributions to the fields, has been taken.

Tezcan stated that the shirts in question could not belong to the 17th century, and Örcün Barışta also stated that it was not possible for the shirt in question to have been made in the 14th century (V. Milli Selçuklu Kültür ve Medeniyeti Semineri Bildirileri, 1996).

Considering that the praise for the prophet Mohammed began with the 17th century in Divan literature and alsot the presence of Nalın-ı Serif's on the shirt, it can be dated back to around or after the 17th century.

The relationship between the two similar shirts mentioned above is unknown. Although two similar shirts are dated to the 17th century, the fact that Sultan Veled lived in the 14th century requires more detailed studies on both shirts.

Figure 15
Topkapı Palace Museum,
The sun motif on the back body.
Inventory registration no: 24/2074.

Figure 16
Topkapı Palace Museum,
Nalın-ı Serif on the front.
Inventrory registration no: 24/2074.

Along with these the study laid the groundwork for a new research that will be shaped as a comparison of the two similar talismanic shirts mentioned in the last part of it.

Conclusion

After the Turks accepted Islam, they integrated some symbols and rituals of their previous belief system into their understanding of life and belief. The universe describes three places that form and complete the rings of a chain. The space, which is the main source of life, is expressed as "sky," those who act against the order as "underground" and the world that unites these two spaces as "earth." The earth is, first of all, a living space on which man tries to exist in relation to other beings. In this relationship, the desire of human beings to achieve success, to gain power and to ensure the continuity of this power, to know their own future has an important place throughout history.

From the time period between the 15th century and early 20th century the talismanic shirts belonging to the Ottoman Empire are important objects specially prepared for the wearer by designing the whole universe and life on fabric with symbols, prayers and numbers. The preparation of these shirts, which can only be worn once, has been made according to certain rules. Symbols, numbers, celestial bodies are designed interconnected in geometric shapes and have the characteristics of being symmetrical. In general, numbers, symbols and Islamic motifs were used, prayers were written specifically according to the values of numbers and letters.

Talismanic shirts decorated with herbal motifs were also made, and herbal patterns express eternal life and cycle in the understanding of Islam. When we look at the placement of prayers in geometric shapes, the big circle represents God and the sky, the infinity as it has no beginning and no end, and the squares define the earth and man. In the designs, the herbal motifs and nature, by establishing a connection between the use of color, shape and line, have gained continuity. Objects such as Zülfikar, Kadem-i Şerif, Nubüvvet Seal and Seal of Süleyman, which are important in the belief system, represented supernatural and metaphysical power. On a simple shirt the order, composition, divisions, colors, the positions the shapes and spaces the designs take depending on the movements of the stars exhibit infinity and motion. The empty spaces on the background are created in a way to contain the design in place. The lack of empty spaces lessens the sense of fragmentary in the arrangement.

The muneccim (astrologer), by visualizing the placement of the stars and planets, which show the divine power of the design in the sky, will thus make the reflection and effect of the same power strong in terms of design on the shirt. Since the evaluation of many religious and belief-oriented elements on the shirts is the subject of the Havas Science, it is thought that the examination of it by experts who research and do work on this subject will help to illuminate many moments from the past to the present and to understand beliefs in the context of symbols.

What the astrological symbols, cultural objects on the shirts mean in terms of shape and form, within the phenomena of time and space, and how they create power, should be further analyzed with more extensive research. With the analysis of the design codes of this system, it is important to determine the place of the symbols, which are significant in Turkish-Islamic culture, in the structure of belief and thought, in line with the design principles. In this context, examining it as a work of art from the perspective of aesthetics and design, examining it in terms of color, composition and form will also create artistic value.

It is hoped that this study will be a resource for other researchers on this subject. In addition, the discovery, examination and decoding of known or unknown talismanic shirts found in museums, collectors and antique shops will contribute to world culture and belief heritage.

References

Aydüz, S. (2004). Osmanlı Astronomi Müesseseleri [Ottoman Astronomy Institutions]. *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi, (2)*4, pp. 411–453. http://www.talid.org/sunus.aspx?SAYI=4 https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/652087

Aydüz, S. (2006). Osmanlı Devleti'nde Müneccimbaşılık Müessesesi [The Institution of Chief Astrologer in the Ottoman Empire]. *Belleten, (70)*257, pp. 68–169. https://doi.org/10.37879/belleten.2006.167

Bakırcı, N. (2020). Mevlâna İle Oğlu Sultan Veled'e Ait Kıyafetlerin Yeni Belgelerle Değerlendirilmesi ve Konservasyon Önerileri [The Evaluation and Conservation Recommendations of the Clothing Belonging to Mevlâna and His Son Sultan Veled with New Documents]. *Idil, 65*, pp. 117–129. https://doi.org/10.7816/idil-09-65-0

Barışta, Ö. (1996). *Konya Mevlana Müzesindeki Sultan Veled'e Ait Olduğu Düşünülen Gömlek Üzerine*. V. Milli Selçuklu Kültür ve Medeniyeti Semineri Bildirileri (pp. 53–71).

Bayram, S. (1991). "Istanbul Vakıf Hat Sanatları Müzesinde Bulunan Tılsımlı Iki Gömlek ve Kültürümüzdeki Yeri" [The Two Talismanic Shirts Found in Istanbul Foundation Calligraphy Arts Museum and Their Place in Our Culture]. *Vakıflar Dergisi, 22*, pp. 355–364.

Berk, S., & Taşkın, B. (2003). Osmanlı Tılsım Mühürleri [Ottoman Talisman Seals]. *P Sanat Kültür Antika*, Spring 29, pp. 22–31.

Bir, A., & Kaçar, M. (2012). Usturlap [Usturlap]. *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansikolpedisi, 42*, pp. 195–198. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/usturlap

Büyükkarcı, F. (2003). Firdevs-i Tavil'in Davetname'sinde Ruhlar Alemi Büyülü Kitap [Enchanted Book of the Spirit World in the Invitation of Firdevs-i Tavil], *P Sanat Kültür Antika Dergisi*, Issue 29, p. 44.

Carey, M. H. (2010). "Judicial astrology in theory and practice in later medieval Europe." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 41, pp. 90–98.

Cilacı O. (1994). "Tılsım," Şamil İslâm Ansiklopedisi, İstanbul , VI, p. 218.

Çelebi, İ. (2012). Tilsim [Talisman]. In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi. 41.* pp. 91–94 Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tilsim

Çelebi, İ. (2012). Vefk [Vefk]. İn *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansikolpedisi. 42.* pp. 605–607. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/vefk

Davis, M. L. (1996). *Visual design in dress, Third edition*. Peason College Div.

Demiriz, Y. (2000). *İslam Sanatında Geometrik Süsleme* [Islamic Geometric Ornamentation in Art]. s, 39,Yorum Sanat ve Yayıncılık.

Edgü, F. (2003). Büyü ve Sanat [Magic and Art], *P Sanat Kültür Antika Dergisi*, Issue 29, p. 6.

Effendi, H. H. Z. (2008). Elsinetü'l-Halk Aklamü'l-Hakk (Halkın Dilleri Hakk'ın Kalemleri) [Languages of the People, The Pens of Hakk]. (compiled by A. Nedim Hattap), Argema Press.

Felek, Ö. (2017). "Fears, Hopes and Dreams: The talismanic Shirts of Murād III." M. Melvin-Koushki, (Ed), *The Occult Sciences in Islamicate Cultures (13th–17th Centuries), Arabica, 64*(3–4) pp. 647–672.

Gökyay, O. Ş. (1976). Tılsımlı Gömlekler [Enchanted shirts]. Türk Folklor Araştırma Yıllığı, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları. p. 101.

Gökyay, O. Ş. (2013). Tılsımlı Gömlekler [Enchanted shirts]. *P Sanat Kültür Antika Dergisi*, 29, pp. 64–66.

Gökyay, O.Ş. (1988). Tılsımlı Gömlekler [Enchanted shirts]. *Gergedan, Yeryüzü Kültür Dergisi*, 14, pp. 70–79.

Gölpınarlı, A. (1989). *Hurûfîlik Metinleri Kataloğu* [Catalog of Hurufi Texts]. Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi.

Gruber, C. (2013). "Power and Protection: Late Ottoman Seal Design." *Hadeeth ad-Dar*, 38. pp. 2–6. Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah.

İhsanoğlu, E. (2000). An Overwiev of Ottoman Scientific Activities. In Çiçek (Ed.), *The great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization. Vol. 3*, Yeni Türkiye. https://www.muslimheritage.com/uploads/An_Overview_of_Ottoman_Scientific_Activities1.pdf

Jung, C. G. (2015). *İnsan ve Sembolleri* [Man and his symbols]. (Trans. H. Mukaddes İlgün). Kabalcı Yayıncılık.

Köroğlu, G. (2003). *Bizans Uygarlığında Muskalar*, P Sanat Kültür Antika Dergisi, 29. p. 16.

Kütükoğlu, M.S. (1994). *Osmanlı belgelerinin dili (diplomatik)* [Language of Ottoman documents (diplomatic)]. Kubbealtı Publications.

Leoni, F. (2020). A Stamped Talismanic. In I. Saif, F. Leoni, M. Melvin-Koushki & F. Yahya. *Islamicate Occult in Sciences Theory and Practice*. (pp. 527–571). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004426979_013

Loveday, H. (2001). *Islamic Paper, A study of the Ancient Craft*. PJ Print.

Maddison, F., E. Savage-Smith, & R. Pinder-Wilson. (1997). *Science, tools & magic part two: Mondane Worlds*. The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Vol. XII. Oxford UP.

Munroe, N. H. (2019). Wrapped Up: Talismanic Garments in Early Modern Islamic Culture, *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice, (7)*1, pp. 4–24. https://doi.org/10.1080/20511787.2019.1586316

Muravchick, R. E. (2014). God is the Best Guardian: Islamic Talismanic Shirts from the Gunpowder Empires. *Publicily Accessible Penn Dissertations*. 1380. https://repository.upenn.edu/edissertations/1380

Özşenel, M. (2007). Nezîr Hüseyin. In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansikolpedisi, 33*.

Porter, V., Saif, L., & Savage-Smith, E. (2017). Medieval Islamic amulets, talismans, and magic. In F. B. Flood & G.Necipoğlu (Eds.), *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture* (pp. 521–557). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119069218.ch21

Roux, J. P. (2005). *Orta Asya'da Kutsal Bitkiler ve Hayvanlar* [Sacred Plants and Animals in Central Asia]. (Trans. A. Kazancıgil, & L. Arslan). Kabalcı Yayınevi.

Safak, Y. (2007). Nizâmî-İ Arûzî [Nizâmî-İ Arûzî]. In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 33. pp. 182–183.

Snodgrass, M. E. (1997). *Signs of the zodiac: A reference guide to historical mythological and cultural association*. Greenwood.

Soysaldi, A., Çatalkaya Gök, E. (2020). Crescent-star Motif in Turkish fabrics. Milli Folklor. 126.

Sözeri, T. (2014). *Mistik/Gizil Simgeler Gelenek ve Kavramlar* [Mystical/Esoteric Symbols, Traditions, and Concepts]. Kastaş Yayınevi.

Şener, H. İ. (1995). Eşref-i Saat [Noblest of Hours]. In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansikolpedisi. 11*. pp. 476–477. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/esref-i-saat

Tezcan, H. (2006). *Topkapı Sarayı'ndaki Şifalı Gömlekler* [Healing shirts in Topkapi Palace], Euromat Entergre Matbaacılık A.Ş, p. 37.

Tezcan, H. (2011). *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Koleksiyonundan tılsımlı gömlekler* [Talismanic shirts in the collection of Topkapı Palace Museum]. Timaş Yayınları.

Tezcan, H. (2013). Dolmabahçe Sarayındaki Sultan II. Abdülhamid'e ait Tılsımlı Gömlek [Dolmabahçe Palace's Enchanted Shirt Belonging to Sultan Abdul Hamid II]. International Istanbul Historical Peninsula Symposium 2013. Istanbul.

Tunç Şen, A. (2017). "Reading the Stars at the Ottoman Court: Bāyezīd II (r. 886/1481-918/1512) and His Celestial Interests." *Arabica, 64*(3–4) pp. 557–608. https://doi.org/10.1163/15700585-12341461

Unat, Y. (2008). *Tarih boyunca Türklerde gökbilim* [Astronomy among Turks throughout history]. Kaynak Yayınları.

Unat, Y. (2013). Zîc [Astronomical table]. *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansikolpedisi. 44.* pp. 397–398. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi. https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/zic

Uzunçarşılı, İ. H. (1984). *Osmanlı Devleti Saray Teşkilatı* [The Organization of the Ottoman Empire Palace]. TTK Yayınları.

List of Figures

Appendix

Vocabulary

Ashraf Hour: (Zayiçe): The chief astrologers had duties related to astrology apart from their astronomy duties. This task is to prepare the zayiçe, the appropriate hour to determine the timetable of the sultan's personal affairs and important affairs of the state. Zayiçe is the process of choosing the most suitable time to start a business, and it is studied with a special ruler that shows the locations of the stars. It is also known as Ashraf hour, Vakt-i Muhtar or Vakt-i Sa'd (Şener, 1995).

Astrolab: It is defined as a moving celestial map that allows the sky to be shown from a wide angle (panoramic) on a plane. The positions and definitions of the sun and some stars are written on it (Bir and Kaçar, 2012).

Astrologer: Derived from the Arabic word nacm, which means star. The person who studies solar and lunar eclipses and tries to predict future events by looking at the stars is called an astrologer. Tools such as calendars, zayiçe, zic are the tools used by the astrologers.

Cifr: It refers to the science that claims to inform of the future with different methods or the works that include this science.

Muwaqqit: Muwakkits are the disciples of the astrologers. When they reach a certain level by being educated in the field of astronomy, they are the people who perform the task of calculating prayer times, the month of Ramadan and the season of pilgrimage according to the movements of the sun.

Observatory: These are structures with telescopes inside for the astrologers to study the sky, determine the time, and get news from the future.

Vefk: It is a branch of the science huruf, which deals with the characteristics of letters individually or in combination, and it is the thought that letters and numbers carry magic.

Zic: For astrologers to prepare the Zic calendars with astronomical rulers is important in determining the Ashraf hour. With these studies, the results of astronomy observations are recorded in tabular form. In observatories, the stars in the sky and the five planets visible to the naked eye, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, are examined and their positions are recorded in Zic's (Unat, 2008, p. 397).

Possibilities of Utilizing Historical Heritage for Tourism in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and Its Surroundings Nowadays

TIBOR ELEKES

Affiliation: Faculty of Earth Science and Engineering
University of Miskolc, Hungary
Email: tibor.elekes@uni-miskolc.hu

FERENC SZILÁGYI

Affiliation: Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences
Partium Christian University, Romania
Email: ferenc.szilagyi@partium.ro

ATTILA MELEG

Affiliation: Education and Society Doctoral School of Education
University of Pécs, Hungary
Email: reformatusmiskolcbelvaros@gmail.com

Abstract

Our present study focuses on Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its surroundings located in the southwestern part of historical Transylvania. In recent decades, many historical, cultural sites have been restored in this area. The studied area has favorable natural and socio-geographic features and a varied history. Its historical and cultural center is Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár. The secular and ecclesiastical buildings and monuments of the castle are the cultural achievements of the Roman era, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Principality of Transylvania, the Habsburg Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Romania after World War I. Before 1990, it was mostly possible to visit memorial sites and monuments related to Romanian history. The university, founded in 1991 to commemorate the historic event in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár on December 1st 1918, uses some parts of the buildings on the castle grounds. The cultural sites restored between 2013–2015 with the support of the European Union were integrated in the tourist offer. The Habsburg period of the city's history is described illustratively. The cathedral of the Roman Catholic Bishopric of Transylvania, founded in 1009, preserves the ecclesiastical, historical and architectural values of several centuries.

Nowadays it is not possible to visit the building of the Reformed Academy located in the castle, the priceless Batthyaneum library, as well as the remains of the 10th-century church. Making them accessible to visitors would significantly increase the tourist facilities and possibilities of the city and the region.

Keywords: historical heritage, the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, accessibility

Introduction

The new opportunities of tourism, which began to develop spectacularly at the beginning of the 21st century, and then reached a crisis during the Covid epidemic, may put tourism in Romania, including Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its region, back into a development phase. In the last two decades, many artistic and architectural values and historical monuments related to different historical eras have been renovated in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its region. The most significant renovations took place in the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár. The vast majority of the historical, architectural and cultural tourism values of the studied area can be visited today and operate as tourist destinations. In this study, we primarily describe the tourist attractions of the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and the historical and architectural heritage renovated and made accessible in the area of the city after 1990.

Methods and Used Sources

Nowadays, we have at our disposal a wide range of specialized literature related to the formation, development, sectors and research methods of tourism. The works of De Beer (1952), Towner (2000), Buzzard (2002), Michalkó (2007), Gyuricza (2008), Nedelcu (2011), Lukács (2012), Gherghilas (2014), Mason (2017) enriched various branches of tourism and tourism geography literature.

The majority of publications presenting the historical and touristic values of the research area of this study were published after 1990. During the decades of socialism, Romanian-language travel guides (Cioculescu, 1967; Murgu, 1967) were distributed, presenting Romania, the Romanian counties, cities, and mountains. Among the contemporary publications describing Romania and Transylvania in Hungarian, the most significant are the Hungarian-language guidebooks published in the Hungarian Panoráma publishing house (Ádám et al., 1979), which have gone through several editions, presenting Romania in the widest and most comprehensive way, as well as the several published "Travels in Transylvania" (Mátyás, 1986). In the sophisticated works written at the scientific level of the time, an important aspect was the presentation of the ideology of the time, the *achievements of the time* (Elekes, 2020).

In the changed political, social and economic environment after 1989–1990, a huge variety of Romanian, Hungarian, German, English and French-language publications and scientific works were published describing the tourism and attractions of Romania. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we mention Heltmann–Servatius (1993), Koszta Nagy (1998), Elekes (2004, 2019), Deák–László (2004), Sós–Farkas (2005), Pascaru–Andreescu (2007), Guide (2010), Juler (2010), Szilágyi (2011) books. Gudor's books published in 2012 and 2018 contributed to a deeper understanding of the historical heritage of the region.

The most significant sources used in this study, which present attractions in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its region, are the books by Tileagda et al. (2011), Gudor (2020) and Elekes (2019). In addition to studying and summarizing the professional and method-ological source works, we identified and updated the historical monuments that can be visited during the field trip.

The Historical Heritage and Architectural Monuments of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and Its Wider Region

The most important city is Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár county seat in the valley of the Mureş/Maros river. The area of the city is a hilly area gradually rising from the Mureş/Maros flood-plain. Located in the *shadow of wind and rain*, the area with a pleasant climate is suitable for growing plants and fruit, as well as animal husbandry. The salt mined in the area, the gold, silver and non-ferrous metal ore mines of the Munţii Metaliferi/Transylvanian Ore Mountains as well as the extensive forests played an important role in the economic life of the easily accessible landscape along the Mureş/Maros river. Its dense population was inhabited for centuries by Romanian, Hungarian, German (Saxon), Jewish, and Gypsy population (Badea, 1987; Kocsis, 2018; 2021).

The historical events of the 20th century significantly changed the settlements of the region, primarily the economic, ethnic, denominational and age structure of the urban population, as well as the number of people. Similarly to other areas of Transylvania annexed to Romania after the First World War, Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its region is characterized by an in-crease in the number and proportion of Orthodox Romanians and a decrease in the number of people of other nationalities and denominations. The economic restructuring that began after December 1989, the political and existential uncertainty resulted in a significant popu-lation decline in Romania, which continues to this day.

The population of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár municipality in 1910 was 17,100 (10,415 Romanians, 5,418 Hungarians, 839 Germans, 428 others; 5,492 Orthodox, 5,065 Greek Catholics, 3,084 Roman Catholics, 1,168 Reformed, 503 Evangelicals, 1,644 Israelites, 137 Unitarians),

in 1992 71,168, in 2011 63,536 (55,671 Romanians, 1,010 Hungarians, 1,119 Gypsies, 115 Germans, 130 other, 5,490 undeclared; 51,659 Orthodox, 1,226 Greek Catholics, 1,195 Roman Catholics, 582 Reformed, 93 Lutheran, 14 Israelite, 47 Unitarian, 3,100 other, 5,620 did not declare). Another important town in the region is Aiud/Nagyenyed. Its population in 1910 was 15,536 (7,923 Hungarians, 7,178 Romanians, 167 Germans, 268 others; 2,024 Orthodox, 5,792 Greek Catholics, 5,227 Reformed, 267 Evangelicals, 175 Unitarians, 476 Israelites, 3 other denominations), in 1992 31,894, in 2011 22,876 (16,955 Romanians, 3,364 Hungarians, 930 Gypsies, 15 Germans, 7 other, 1,598 undeclared; 16,487 Orthodox, 730 Greek Catholics, 2,759 Reformed, 4 Evangelicals, 225 Unitarians, 949 other, 1622 did not declare) (Elekes, 2005; 2008; Németh & Elekes, 2006; Szilágyi et al., 2021; Erdélystat Statisztikák, n.d.; Institutul Național de Statistică, n.d.).

Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its surroundings which has an advantageous geographical location and natural and economic features, preserves a rich cultural heritage. The ruins of a significant number of military and secular buildings survived in the period A.D. 106–271 on the territory of the province of Dacia, which was part of the Roman Empire. The cultural heritage of the Roman era can be visited in the form of well-organized tourist destinations primarily in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, in the Roman-era Apulum area. The migration period between 271–895 (Goths, Huns, Gepids, Avars, Danube Bulgarian Empire) left little archaeological and cultural value for posterity. After the Hungarian conquest (895/896), with the adoption of Latin-rite Christianity centered in Rome, the Kingdom of Hungary, which also included Transylvania, became part of the Western European cultural circle for centuries. This is confirmed by the buildings of Roman Catholic Bishopric (archdiocese since 1991) of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, founded in 1009 as the ecclesiastical center of Transylvania. At the same time, Orthodox and other cultural influences prevailed in Transylvania.

Western European streams of ideas, cultural trends, art styles (Romanesque style, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, classicism, Art Nouveau, etc.), Orthodox and other influences created diverse cultural geographical values in the territory of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its regions. (Tileagda et al. 2011; Gudor, 2020).

Centuries of construction were destroyed by rebellions and wars. Architectural and cultural values were destroyed in 1848–1849, during the two world wars, border changes in the 20th century and during the period of extreme political systems. Ideological *revaluation*, cultural values, and a change in function of buildings took place in the last century, more strongly during the decades of communism. In the two decades between the two world wars and after 1990, the rise of Orthodox culture prevailed in Transylvania, Partium and Banat. Economic development, artistic values, renovation, improvement, establishment

of historical monuments, *strengthening* their former function characterized the first two decades of the *political détente* of the 21st century. Cultural values have been learned and presented in several languages, with the help of scientific publications and guidebooks.

In the books of Gudor (2020), Tileagda et al., (2011) we find a whole series of attractions operating as tourist destinations, as well as renovated cultural, artistic and architectural values *suitable for touristic use* in the studied area. The following are among the most valuable, which are listed below. In the village of Geoagiu/Algyógy, which was settled near Orăştie/Szászváros, north of the Mureș/Maros river, known in Roman times for its thermal waters and called Thermae Dodonae, there is the oldest standing circular church in Transylvania, dated to 1077. Şibot/Alkenyér was settled nearby, along the driveway and railway following the Mureş/Maros valley. The statue of Pál Kinizsi, renovated a few years ago, stands in the area of the railway station. It commemorates the battle of October 13th, 1479, when the combined army of the Transylvanian voivode István Báthory and Pál Kinizsi defeated the Ottomans invading Transylvania.

Even a one-day program can be organized between Sebeş/Szászsebes and Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár to get to know the renovated cultural heritage of Vinţu de Jos/Alvinc, which is located along the Mureş/Maros river and has rich tourist attractions and adequate infrastructure. The Reformed church, built in the 13–15th century, was opened to the public after renovations in 2013 and 2020. The Habans, who belonged to the historical legacy of the former market town, settled here during the time of Gábor Bethlen. They knew more than 30 crafts, were excellent craftsmen, and played a significant role in the economic life of Transylvania. A whole series of historical and cultural figures are connected to the settlement: the 16th–18th Baron Alvinci-Borberek family, who played a significant role in the military and civil life of Transylvania, György Martinuzzi (1482–1551) Governor of Transylvania, István Pongrácz (1582–1619) canonized Hungarian Jesuit monk, martyr, Gábor Bethlen (1580–1629) Prince of Transylvania, Zsigmond Kemény (1814–1875) writer, publicist, politician, László Pataki (1856–1912) painter, István Szőts (1912–1998) film director. Their presence in Vinţu de Jos/Alvinc is reminded of a mansion, a memorial house, a cemetery, and a ruined castle. Visitors to the settlement are welcomed in the guest house of the Roman Catholic Franciscan monastery, the Bethlen hostel operating in the Reformed parish, and the Horváth-Inczédy castle operating as a Martinuzzi hotel. The Roman Catholic church of Bărăbanţ/Borbánd, belonging to Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, which is still standing today, was rebuilt after the destruction in 1277. Its original Romanesque style, Gothic reconstruction, was later enriched by Baroque elements. The reformed church of Sântimbru/Marosszentimre, renovated for 2022, preserves similar values.

The 12th-century building was remodeled in Gothic style after 1442, by order of Ioan de Hunedoara/János Hunyadi, to commemorate the victory over the Turks. Its stone-framed door is a unique monument of Hungarian architectural history, it contains rosette motifs known from folk art woodcarvings. Perhaps the most beautiful baroque church in Transylvania can be visited in Ighiu/Magyarigen. For centuries, grapes have been grown in the area of Alba/Fehér county with an average annual temperature above 9ºC, *shaded by wind and precipitation*. Ţelna/Celna's cellar, excavated by the Teleki family in 1784, is now being used again according to its original function. It is an important center of the county's wine industry and plays a significant role in tourism. In the last two decades, the 13th–15th century Reformed church of Petrisat/Magyarpéterfalva, which belongs to Blaj/Balázsfalva, the Reformed church of Ciumbrud/Csombord near Aiud/Nagyenyed, built in the 14th and 16th centuries, and the Romanian Greek Catholic church of Rădeşti/Tompaháza, built in baroque style at the beginning of the 20th century, have been renovated. The Bánffy castle in Sâncrai/Enyedszentkirály was built in the last decade of the 19th century. Its current owner, the Alba County Council, renovated it a few years ago and is planning a tourism function for the castle (Gudor, 2020; Tileagda et al. 2011; Elekes, 2019).

The Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár Castle

Extraordinary historical and cultural values can be found in the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár. It was built on the site of castles of earlier historical times during the time of Charles VI (III) of Habsburg, between 1714 and 1738. It is an Austrian Baroque fortification covering 70 hectares. It was called Alba Carolina (Karlsburg, Károlyfehérvár) after its builder. The largest castle in East-Central Europe preserves the memory of historical eras. Its ecclesiastical and secular buildings and monuments are the cultural achievements of the Roman era, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Principality of Transylvania, the Habsburg Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Romania after World War I. It preserves Romanian, Hungarian, Saxon and Austrian historical and cultural values. Between 2013–2015 the castle was renovated with the support of the European Union.

Before 1990, it was mostly possible to visit memorial sites and monuments related to Romanian history. Behind the Roman Catholic cathedral, in front of the princely (bishop's) palace, the equestrian statue of Mihai Viteazul, the first unifier of Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania, was unveiled in 1968. The prince was the resident of the princely palace for a few months from November 1599. Until 2022, he was the only Transylvanian prince to be remembered by a statue in the castle. The Horea monument was erected in 1937 on the square between the second and third gates of the fortress. The monument commemorates the Romanian peasant uprising that was suppressed by the Austrian army in 1784.

From the point of view of Romanian history, the neo-Byzantine Orthodox cathedral built in 1921–1922 is of outstanding importance. The church built after World War I in the princely center of Transylvania, has been the coronation church of King Ferdinand of Romania and Queen Mary.

The function of the two former military buildings built in the castle during the Habsburg era has changed. Today, they function as a Romanian historical monument and museum. The former Officer casino is the Unification Museum. It commemorates the Romanian assembly in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár on December 1st, 1918, which announced the unification of Transylvania with Romania. During the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the "Building of Babylon" housed officers' apartments. Nowadays, it is a museum presenting the history of Alba/Fehér County. It describes the history of the region from prehistoric times to the present day, with a significant emphasis on the events of December 1st, 1918. This historic event is commemorated by the bronze bell or unification monument made in the early 2000s. In 2018, for the centenary of the general assembly, the centenary monument of the unification was completed.

In 1991, the 1918 December 1st University was founded in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár in honor of the same historical event. Several renovated buildings on the castle grounds are used by the University. The rector's office operates in the baroque Bethlen-Apor manor palace, built between 1670–1690 and restored after 1990. The former Jesuit College and the former main building of the former Count Majláth Gusztáv Károly Catholic Gymnasium, erected between 1903 and 1906, retained their centuries-old educational function. Both are the educational buildings of the university (Gudor, 2020).

The scientific research of the Roman-era monuments of Alba Iulia/ Gyulafehérvár was started in 1889 by Béla Cserni, a teacher at the local Roman Catholic Gymnasium, known as the father of Transylvanian urban archaeology. The Roman relics he collected were exhibited in the museum of the city. The renovation of the later Roman monuments discovered over the course of more than a century and their operation as a modern tourist destination was realized at the beginning of the 21st century: the former Castrum and its gates, the main roads (Via principalis), the site of the military camp, the Roman headquarters, the Principia Museum. (Tileagda et al. 2011; Gudor, 2020).

Between 2013–2015 with the financial support of the European Union, the castle and the historical monuments of the Habsburg times were renovated: the castle gates, walls and bastions, as well as the military monuments of the time. At that time, the obelisk erected in honor of the Austrian general Losenau in Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár was renewed.

On February 9th, 1849, the general was injured in a losing battle with Bem's troops at the Simeria/Piski Bridge and died a few days later. The monument to the officers of the 50th Austrian infantry regiment, who stationed in the castle and fell near Custozza in 1866 and Transylvanian soldiers, was renovated. The restored cultural values are integrated into the tourist offer illustratively describing the Habsburg period of the city's history (Gudor, 2020).

The Roman Catholic cathedral preserves the historical and architectural values of several centuries. It was partially accessible even during the decades of anti-church communism. Today its role as a tourist destination is strengthened by its multiple cultural and historical importance. It was built in several stages at the seat of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Bishopric, founded in 1009. To this day, it is the *symbolic building* of the church center. For centuries, the episcopate and, since 1991, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár has been of significant ecclesiastical and architectural value. The Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque elements confirm the "Western and Central-European cultural continuity." It has been the burial place of bishops and historical figures for centuries. Several members of the Hunyadi family, János Hunyadi/Ioan de Hunedoara, János Korvin the Younger, László Hunyadi, György Fráter Martinuzzi, the governor of Transylvania and the Transylvanian princes Zsigmond János, István Bocskai, Gábor Bethlen and György I. Rákóczi were buried here (Gudor, 2020; Elekes, 2019).

The remains of the 10th century church excavated in 2011 in the square, in front of the Roman Catholic cathedral, are known but not open to visitors. The ruins of the Byzantine church of Gyulák in Transylvania were reburied shortly after the excavation. The building of the Reformed Academy (Collegium Academicum), founded by Gábor Bethlen in 1622, is used by the army and cannot be visited. The library, founded in 1780 by the Roman Catholic bishop Ignác Batthyány, is a cultural institution of outstanding importance. The first observatory in Transylvania was operated here. 607 ancient prints, 1,700 medieval manuscripts, 100,000 printed books from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, rare codices and books (the Codex Aureus made in the 800s, the 12th century Psalm of David, the 13th century Bible, the 13th-century Bible Sacra, the Romanian New Testament of Gyulafehérvár in 1648, etc.), a collection of ecclesiastical art, minerals and, medals are preserved in the Batthyaneum. In the Gyulafehérvár codex, the Hungarian language record known as the Gyulafehérvár glosses (1310–1320) survived. The library has been closed to visitors and researchers since its nationalization in 1948. To this day, it has not returned to the possession of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese (Gudor, 2020).

The full-figure statue of Gábor Bethlen was inaugurated on 21st May, 2022 near the building of the Reformed Collegium Academicum, which was founded by him. The statue strengthens the *representation* of the one and a half century of the Principality of Transylvania.

Making the remains of the Reformed Academy, the Batthyaneum, and the 10th century church open to the public, would make it more complete to learn about the extremely rich history of the city. The tourist attraction of the city would also be significantly increased by opening the priceless cultural values of the Batthyaneum to visitors and researchers.

Conclusions

Today's Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár and its region, which has advantageous geographical features, preserves centuries of rich historical, cultural and artistic values. Cultural values are connected to historical eras, they represent currents of ideas and artistic styles. Before 1990, it was mostly possible to visit the Roman era and values related to Romanian history in the area of the Castle of Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, which is considered the historical center of the region.

After 1990, the presentation of the historical event of December 1, 1918 became more powerful. A university was founded in its honor, and many renovated buildings of the castle are used by the higher education institution.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the renovations carried out with the support of the European Union made a number of values, primarily related to the period of the Habsburg Empire, open to visitors.

The cathedral of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Bishopric, founded in 1009, preserves centuries of ecclesiastical, historical and architectural values and memories.

Nowadays, the *partially accessible* and non-accessible potential tourist destinations in the castle are mostly related to the period of the Principality of Transylvania. Renovating them, making them accessible to visitors, and *rediscovering* them would significantly increase the touristic importance and touristic attractiveness of Alba Iulia/ Gyulafehérvár and its region.

The tourist attractiveness of the city and its surroundings could be increased by involving its natural features more significantly. The landscape potential is suitable for nature walks and adventure tourism. Conference tourism opportunities are available in Alba Iulia/ Gyulafehérvár, Aiud/Nagyenyed and Sebeş/Szászsebes. A unified market representation of the three cities and their regions would help in selling the tourism potential. Another incentive could be the creation of a unified image and joint product development. The implementation of 1–2 day programmes instead of *transit tourism* would be a step forward.

References

Ádám, L., Kosály, M., Belia, Gy., Kovács, Gy., Csatári, D., & Szávai, J. (1979). *Románia* [Romania]. Panoráma Kiadó.

Badea, L., Bogdan, O., Buga, D., Cioflică, G., Cucu, V., Donisă, I., Gâştescu, P., Ianovici, V., Iordan, I., Niculescu, Gh., Oancea, D., Pană, I., Pisota, I., Posea, G., Savu, A., Sencu, V., Şandru, V., & Velcea, V. (Eds.). (1987). *Geografia României III. Carpaţii Româneşti şi Depresiunea Transilvaniei.* [Romania's geography, vol. 3. The Romanian Carpathians and the Transylvanian Basin]. Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România.

Buzzard, J. (2002). The Grand Tour and after (1660–1840). In: P. Hulme, & T. Youngs (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to travel writing* (pp. 48–50). Cambridge University Press.

Cioculescu, S. (1967). *România. Ghid turistic* [Romania. Tourist guide]. Meridiane.

De Beer, E. S. (1952). The development of the guide-book until the early nineteenth century. *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd series, 35–46.

Deák, F., & László, L. (2004). *Erdély útikalauz* [Transylvania guide]. Erdélyi Gondolat.

Elekes, T. (2004). *Erdély* [Transylvania]. Cartographia.

Elekes, T. (2005). A városi népességszám változásai Romániában 1948–2002 között [Changes in urban population in Romania between 1948 and 2022]. In N. Pap & A. Végh (Eds.), *A Kárpát-medence politikai földrajza: IV. Magyar Politikai Földrajzi Konferencia* (pp. 95–103). Pécsi Tudományegyetem TTK Földrajzi Intézet.

Elekes, T. (2008). Demográfiai, gazdasági–társadalmi folyamatok Románia városaiban 1948-tól napjainkig [Demographic, socio-economic processes in the cities of Romania from 1948 to the present day]. *Tér és Társadalom*, *22*(2),183–201.

Elekes, T. (2019). *Erdély útikönyv*. Útikönyvsorozat. [Transylvania guidebook. Guidebook series]. Cartographia.

Elekes, T. (2020). Az útikönyvek típusai és XXI. századi lehetőségei [Types of travel guides and the possibilities of 21st century]. *Acta Carolus Robertus, 10*(2), 57–67.

Erdély (Transilvania). In Erdélystat statisztikák. http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/erdely/3280

Erdélystat Statisztikák. (n.d.). A magyar szempontból releváns (legalább 250 magyar etnikumú lakossal rendelkező) városok, községek adatlapjai [Datasheets of cities and municipalities relevant from the Hungarian perspective (with at least 250 inhabitants of Hungarian ethnicity)]. http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/gyulafehervar/1

Erdélystat Statisztikák. (n.d.). A magyar szempontból releváns (legalább 250 magyar etnikumú lakossal rendelkező) városok, községek adatlapjai [Datasheets of cities and municipalities relevant from the Hungarian perspective (with at least 250 inhabitants of Hungarian ethnicity)]. http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/nagyenyed/2

Gherghilaş, A. (2014). *Geografia Turismului. Metode de analiză în turism* [The geography of tourism. Methods of analysis in tourism]. Editura Universitară.

Gudor, K. B. (2012). *Az eltűnt Gyulafehérvári református egyházmegye és egyházi közösségei* [The disappeared Reformed diocese of Gyulafehérvár and its church communities]. Kriterion-Tortoma.

Gudor, K. B. (2018). *Bod Péter (1712–1769), a történetíró* [Péter Bod, (1712–1769), the historian]. Tortoma.

Gudor, K. B. (2020). *Erdélyi-Hegyalja és térsége. Rendkívüli természeti, történelmi és kulturális értékek* [The Alba Iulia-Turda corridor. Extraordinary natural, historical, and cultural values]. Bod Péter Alapítvány Gyulafehérvár.

Guide, I. (2010). *Romania. Ghid turistic* [Romania. Tour guide]. Aquila.

Gyuricza, L. (2008). *A turizmus nemzetközi földrajza* [The national geography of tourism]. Dialóg Campus.

Heltmann, H. H., & Servatius, G. (1993). *Reisehandbuch Siebenbürgen* [Transylvania guidebook]. Kraft.

Institutul Naţional de Statistică. (n.d.) Recensământul populaţiei şi locuinţelor. Populaţia stabilă după etnie—judeţe, municipii, oraşe, comune. Tab. 8. [Population and housing census. Population with residency—Ethnic categories—counties, cities, towns, rural settlements. Tab. 8.]. https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rpl-2011/rezultate-2011/

Juler, C. (2010). *Romania*. National Geographic Traveler.

Kocsis, K. (Ed.) (2018). *Magyarország nemzeti atlasza. 2. Természeti környezete* [National atlas of Hungary. Vol. 2.]. MTA Csillagászati és Földtudományi Kutatóközpont, Földrajztudományi Intézet, Budapest.

Kocsis, K. (Ed.) (2021). *Magyarország nemzeti atlasza. 3. Társadalom*. MTA Csillagászati és Földtudományi Kutatóközpont, Földrajztudományi Intézet.

Koszta Nagy, I. (1998). *Erdély*. Cartographia.

Lukács, A. (2012). *Műfajspecifikus megfeleltetési stratégiák az útikönyvek fordításában*. ELTE BTK, PhD disszertáció.

Mason, P. (2017). *Geography of tourism*. Goodfellow Publishers.

Mátyás, V. (1986). *Utazások Erdélyben* (4th ed.). Panoráma.

Michalkó, G. (2007). *Magyarország modern turizmusföldrajza*. Dialóg Campus.

Murgu, M. (1967). *Braşov* [Braşov]. Meridiane.

Nedelcu, A. (2011). *Geografia turismului* (p. 287). Editura Universitară.

Németh, J., & Elekes, T. (2006). *Evoluţia numărului populaţiei urbane în România după 1990. Comunicări de Geografie vol. X*. Editura universităţii din Bucureşti.

Pascaru, M., & Andreescu, F. (2007). *Romania. Ghid touristic*. Ad libri. (in French in 2006, in English in 2007).

Sós, J. & Farkas, Z. (2005). *Erdély útikönyv* [Transylvania: Guidebook]. Jel-kép Bt.

Szilágyi, F., & Elekes T. (2021). Urban growth and language shift in county seats in Transylvania between 1900 and 2011. *Regional Statistics 11*(4), 150–169.

Szilágyi, P. P. (2011). *Erdély legszebb túraútvonalai*. Totem Kiadó.

Tileaga, F.-R., Cofaru, C., Haţegan, O., Cutinici, D., & Iordache, C. (2011). *Judeţul Alba. Ghid turistic*. Vega Prod.

Towner, J. (2000). Guidebook. In J. Jafari, (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of tourism* (pp. 267–269). Routledge.

The Role of Errors in Fallibilist Theories of Knowledge[1]

DANIEL L. GOLDEN

Affiliation: Institute of Philosophy
Research Centre for the Humanities in Budapest, Hungary
Email: golden.daniel@abtk.hu

Abstract

Fallibilism in epistemology is the view that we as human beings can never be in the position of acquiring ultimate truth, there is always a chance for discovering that we were in error. Nevertheless, fallibilists are not sceptics: they still stick to the idea that we are always in the position of holding a set of temporary truths, prevalent until the moment of getting denied and replaced by a better or more attractive candidate. On the other hand, fallibilists do side with the sceptics in their opposition to dogmatics, since they do not find compelling closed systems of knowledge, as they plea constantly for genuinely new insights. According to the presented fallibilist models of knowledge, trials are necessary steps in acquiring new knowledge; there is no growth of knowledge without exercising the practice of trial and error. Errors are the necessary components of the procedure, since the usability of deductive and inductive methods getting to necessary truths in real life are strongly limited. In practice alternative strategies, like abductive reasoning, are coming to the front in our pursuit for maintainable propositions.

Keywords: epistemology, fallibilism, philosophy of science, refutation, trial and error

Introduction

Fallibilism in epistemology is the view that we as human beings can never be in the position of acquiring ultimate truth, there is always a chance for discovering that we were in error. In that sense all knowledge should be considered *fallible*, that is, constantly open to falsification. Nevertheless, fallibilists are not sceptics: they still stick to the idea that we are always in the position of holding a set of temporary truths, prevalent until the moment of getting denied and replaced by a better (or simply more attractive) candidate.

On the other hand, fallibilists do side with the sceptics in their opposition to dogmatics, since they do not find compelling closed systems of knowledge, as they plea constantly for genuinely new insights. This means also that the traditional concept of 'error' shall be reformulated as in the fallibilist framework there will be no clear cases of knowing the truth or not-knowing the false what classical theories of knowledge would like to see. Instead, as the diversity of authors presented in this paper argue, we have to transform our thinking about errors into a more sophisticated one, where it will become the source of invention and discovery.

1.

Regarding the status of our beliefs, Haack (1979) tells us that "fallibilism, though it stresses our liability to hold false beliefs, doesn't deny that we have true beliefs" (p. 55). Similarly, Reed (2002) resumes fallibilism as combining two claims: (a) we are fallible, (b) we do have quite a bit of knowledge. That means that the place of *epistemological certainty* is over-taken here by a certain kind of *epistemological optimism*: "Despite our tendency to get things wrong occasionally, we get it right much more of the time" (p. 143).

This approach, however, provides us with a general scheme of human understanding and manipulating of the world as an endless procedure of *trial and error.* This scheme can be applied both for systematical and historical investigations. In fact, historical studies prove that the origins of trial and error go back to the 18th century as a narrow technique within teaching mathematics, later widened to the realms of psychology and education, finally to arrive at the already metaphorically generalized usage of the phrase today. In that way it got transformed from a specific tool of logical reasoning to a general theory of learning:

> In the history of 'trial and error,' we see how a peculiarly modern tool—the error, recon-ceived as a necessary step on the path to knowledge—was transformed into a theory of how both the individual mind adapts and scientific progress is made. The application of such theories in a range of fields helps naturalize them, so much so that we some-times lose sight of their contingent origins. As a result, 'trial and error' may now be one of the 'metaphors we live by,' a tool drawn from a particular pedagogical context that continues to structure how science is done, how history is written, and how we under-stand our own limited capacities. (Cowles, 2015, p. 644)

This special relationship between trials and errors is also described as a *symbiosis*, since "trying invites failing," where "errors follow attempts" (Cowles, 2015, p. 644).

2.

Trial and error became a central topic in the philosophy of science due to Karl Popper. According to him, scientific theories are always conjectural, which means that they can never be ultimately *justified*, only *corroborated* over time. The only thing we can do with logical certainty is *falsification*, i.e. finding such counterexamples or contradictions which may prove a given statement or theory false. In that sense the cathedral of human knowledge is built up by the process of constant trials leading to errors which will show the way for the next trial, and so on bringing us closer and closer to truth.

So in Popper's world errors are getting a dual character: they may seem to be evil at first glance, but in fact they also serve for the good, as they provide indispensable help for us to go further in searching for a better model and a better understanding of the world. As the first sentences of Popper's preface to his essays say, they: "… are variations upon one very simple theme—the thesis that *we can learn from our mistakes*. They develop a theory of knowledge and of its growth" (Popper 1940/1963, p. vii).

Popper also admitted that this scheme of trial and error was not an original invention of him. As it was shown by himself (Popper 1940/1963), Hegelian dialectics, for example, may qualify also as a subtype of this pattern for the growth of knowledge, where the *antithesis* is created precisely by declaring the *thesis* erroneous, and the *synthesis* will aim at evading the errors of both in order to ascend to a next level of knowledge. In that context, Popper's falsification can be considered only giving a new name for an old idea, now applied specifically to the realm of scientific discovery.

Popper considered as one of his major philosophical achievements his development on Hume's critique of induction. He believed that after refuting the idea of induction, that is, presenting it as a rationally unjustifiable procedure, Hume chose the wrong way giving in to irrationalism saying that then all our knowledge "is merely a kind of belief—belief based on habit" (Popper, 1957/1963, p. 45). Instead, Popper argued, we shall strive to stay within the rationalist framework and find a model in which we may "obtain our knowledge by a non-inductive procedure" (1957/1963, p. 45). Popper's great idea was the following:

> I proposed to turn the tables upon this theory of Hume's. Instead of explaining our propensity to expect regularities as the result of repetition, I proposed to explain repetition-for-us as the result of our propensity to expect regularities and to search for them. … Without waiting, passively, for repetitions to impress or impose regularities upon us, we actively try to impose regularities upon the world. We try to discover similarities in it,

and to interpret it in terms of laws invented by us. Without waiting for premises we jump to conclusions. These may have to be discarded later, should observation show that they are wrong. (Popper 1957/1963, p. 46)

So the role of errors will change substantively: they should not be frustrating collisions experienced painfully when our beliefs prove to be in contradiction with brute reality, but relieving experiences which help in adjusting our deliberately conditional belief systems to the needs of life. In that way Popper arrives at a new understanding of scientific inquiry as follows:

This was a theory of trial and error—of *conjectures and refutations*. It made it possible to understand why our attempts to force interpretations upon the world were logically prior to the observation of similarities. Since there were logical reasons behind this procedure, I thought that it would apply in the field of science also; that scientific theories were not the digest of observations, but that they were inventions—conjectures boldly put forward for trial, to be eliminated if they clashed with observations; with observations which were rarely accidental but as a rule undertaken with the definite intention of testing a theory by obtaining, if possible, a decisive refutation. (Popper 1957/1963, p. 46)

Thus, Popper succeeded in giving a new and coherent model of science as an *inventive and self-regulating institutional system*. At the same time, he was well aware of changing also the content of the philosphical notion and epistemological status of our beliefs in general:

If 'belief' means here our inability to doubt our natural laws, and the constancy of natural regularities, then Hume is again right: this kind of dogmatic belief has, one might say, a physiological rather than a rational basis. If, however, the term 'belief' is taken to cover our critical acceptance of scientific theories—a *tentative* acceptance combined with an eagerness to revise the theory if we succeed in designing a test which it cannot pass—then Hume was wrong. In such an acceptance of theories there is nothing irrational. (Popper 1957/1963, p. 51)

However, there are important consequences following from that regarding the status of our knowledge, since we shall admit then that all theories or laws will "remain essentially tentative, or conjectural, or hypothetical, even when we feel unable to doubt them any longer. Before a theory has been refuted we can never know in what way it may have to be modified" (Popper 1957/1963, p. 51). In this new view suggested by Popper it is at the same time a necessity and a deliberate decision of human beings to organize their lives as adaptive behaviours making use of postulated explanatory laws and theories:

If we have made this our task, then there is no more rational procedure than the method of trial and error—of conjecture and refutation: of boldly proposing theories; of trying our best to show that these are erroneous; and of accepting them tentatively if our critical efforts are unsuccessful. (Popper 1957/1963, p. 51)

The next step in this line of thought will be a generalization, where Popper presents a continuity between the intellectual procedures in human inquiry and the elementary biological counterparts.

The method of trial and error is not, of course, simply identical with the scientific or critical approach—with the method of conjecture and refutation. The method of trial and error is applied not only by Einstein but, in a more dogmatic fashion, by the amoeba also. The difference lies not so much in the trials as in a critical and constructive attitude towards errors; errors which the scientist consciously and cautiously tries to uncover in order to refute his theories with searching arguments, including appeals to the most severe experimental tests which his theories and his ingenuity permit him to design. (Popper 1957/1963, p. 52)

At the same time, Popper is not especially interested in that psychological background of living organisms coping with their environment by trial and error. He was absorbed by the systematic processes which may lead to a certain piece of knowledge. That was because Popper held in common with the logical positivists that the real challenge is to find out the general laws, the 'logic' of science; while individual moments of specific discoveries will have their unique and contingent stories only. Thus, all aspects of science relating this latter shall go to the *psychology of experience*, which is outside the philosophical–methodological *logic of science*.

Thus, the method of trial and error practiced more and more consciously should turn into a scientific method, which can be described like this:

Theories are put forward tentatively and tried out. If the outcome of a test shows that the theory is erroneous, then it is eliminated; the method of trial and error is essentially a method of elimination. Its success depends mainly on three conditions, namely, that sufficiently numerous (and ingenious) theories should be offered, that the theories offered should be sufficiently varied, and that sufficiently severe tests should be made. In this way we may, if we are lucky, secure the survival of the fittest theory by elimination of those which are less fit. (Popper, 1940/1963, p. 313)

In this scheme condition (3) is referring to 'trial,' and Popper makes it clear that the severness of testing means that there are no middle ways: the theory concerned will qualify as either true or false. But to have the whole system work, conditions (1) and (2) seem to be all too important for leaving them only to mere chance, since producing numerous and varied theories is one of the major challenges for any scientific enterprise.

In the end, Popper thinks that what really makes us humans is *critical attitude*—the ability of learning from our mistakes in a highest possible complexity. Later in designing his model Popper (1972) made extensive use of the evolutionary approach also: new theories born the same way as mutations occur, and those who are capable to learn the best will be the fittest to survive. Therefore, critical attitude becomes in a very pragmatic sense *life important*. No wonder then, that Popper felt like he made a really great serve not only for scientific, but for philosophical thinking as well.

3.

As a matter of fact, the modern history of fallibilism has started much earlier, namely with Charles Sanders Peirce, who proposed *abduction* as the primordial model of real life reasoning instead of traditional logical induction and deduction. As Haack (1979) put it:

> What Peirce calls 'fallibilism' is, in part, an epistemological *thesis*—a thesis about our propensity to hold false beliefs—and, in part, an epistemological *recommendation*—that we should always be willing to revise our beliefs in the light of new evidence. (p.41)

According to Margolis (1998) fallibilism is "much too casually invoked by contemporary discussants," as joining so different theses as "Peirce's evolutionism, his views on the logic of relations, on realism, on thirdness, on the theory of thought and mind, and on progressivism in science" (p. 535). Haack also notes that Peirce is giving rather diverse examples to underpin his concept of fallibility:

> Induction, he points out, always involves extrapolation, from a sample to a larger class, and this introduces an *unavoidable element of uncertainty*. Furthermore, he urges, there is irreducible indeterminancy in the world, there are, that is, no absolutely necessary and exceptionless laws, and in consequence, he claims, *our knowledge must fall short of universality*. (Haack, 1979, pp. 42–43)

It seems that Peirce's arguments for fallibilism rely on limitedness of our cognitive apparatus (intuitions), weaknesses of our cognitive methods (errors in measurement; uncertainty within inductive reasoning), and the inferiority of our knowledge (indeterminism).

In Haack's (1979) suggestion fallibilism is a thesis not only about *cognitive agents*, but also *cognitive methods*, which means that one may hold a false belief "if *either* he employs fallible methods (methods liable to yield false results) *or*, even if he uses perfectly reliable methods, if he employs them carelessly, *or*, of course, *both*" (pp. 54–55). Her example is that an error in our belief about the temperature of a room can be caused either by a faulty thermometer, or by the misreading of a reliable thermometer.

Interestingly, Peirce made an important exception from fallible knowledge with the case of mathematics. He thought that while factual beliefs cannot be other than fallible, mathematical beliefs must remain infallible. This may seem to be obvious, if we think about mathematics as a result of deductive reasoning leading from axioms through deductions to propositions which are thus necessarily true. However, there is a vision of mathematics shared among others by George Polya, which tells that this conjecture about the infallibility of mathematics is at least half-erroneous:

> Yes, mathematics has two faces; it is the rigorous science of Euclid but it is also something else. Mathematics presented in the Euclidean way appears as a systematic, deductive science; but mathematics in the making appears as an experimental, inductive science. Both aspects are as old as the science of mathematics itself. (1971, p. vii)

The latter type of mathematical activity was called by Polya *heuristics*, and he maintained that there should be a place for genuine discoveries in the description of real mathematics: "Heuristic reasoning is reasoning not regarded final and strict but provisional and plausible only, whose purpose is to discover the solution of the present problem" (1971, p. 113). In that sense classical *induction* in itself (contrasted to *mathematical* or *complete induction*) for Polya functioned similarly as *abduction* for Peirce.

In contrast, Hanson (1958) drew heavily on Peirce, but he was not aware of Popper at the time of writing his book. However, as Walton (2004) noted, there is a striking similarity which raises the question how far the descriptions of Polya and Peirce can be taken as analogous, since the logical form of *abductive reasoning* and *heuristic thinking* are described both as a reversed *modus ponens*. Here is how the case of an *abductive inference* is presented by Peirce (CP 5.189) and Hanson (1958): "The surprising fact, C, is observed./ But if A were true, C would be a matter of course./ Hence, there is reason to suspect that A is true" (p. 86).

So abduction may acquire a very special place between induction and deduction. It will suggest a possible theory which can serve as a ground for the known facts, but without any logical constraint. While induction will always fail to arrive at a general theory, deduction may lead from that to necessary individual consequences, but it will fail to provide us with any genuinely new knowledge.

Margolis (1998) contrasts two possible lines in understanding fallibilism. The *Deweyan fallibilist* maintains only an optimistic hope, without a real epistemic claim, while the *Peircean fallibilist* has in mind some regulative ideals helping us to fix errors, thus resulting in an epistemically focused *metaphysics of inquiry*. According to Margolis (1998) there are three distinct "themes" composing fallibilism:

1. Fallibility = all our assertions may turn out to be false (an exact counterpart of Cartesian indubitability).

2. Self-corrective inquiry = "it is both possible and likely that, for any mistaken belief, a society of inquirers can, in a pertinently finite interval of time, discern its own mistakes and progress toward discovering the true state of affairs" (p. 537).

3. Metaphysics of inquiry = doctrines like evolutionism, thirdness, the social construction of the self, the growth of knowledge to ensure the value of holding the merely epistemic position of fallibility.

As Margolis points it out, Dewey and his followers usually combine claims (1) and (2), but Peirce and Popper seem to need claim (3) as well. While Popper tries to avoid metaphysics and to give a methodological solution based on the concept of verisimilitude, "Peirce's account is thoroughly metaphysical, fixed on the supposed underpinning of our abductive powers" (Margolis, 1998, p. 544).

In line with that Paavola (2006) already speaks about "a Peircean–Hansonian research programme by developing abduction as a way of analyzing processes of discovery" (p. 5). Hanson (1958) discovered abductive logic for his own aims, that is, reintroducing the creation of hypotheses into the framework of a rational methodology of science. He thought that with the help of induction and deduction we can only justify knowledge that we already have, but revolutionary new ideas will never come from there; great scientific discoveries always start from guessing, abductive reasoning, or trial and error.

4.

Imre Lakatos, in his paper on Popper's idea of crucial experiments (1974), puts the question into the context of learning with its opening phrase: "Exactly how and what do we learn about scientific theories from experiment?" (p. 344). And he answers that in the actual history of science we can hardly find such decisive moments as Popper liked to imagine; instead we will see researchers working hard on correcting their errors within their original conceptual frameworks, without giving up their so-called *research programs*.

In connection with that Margolis (1998) makes the following compliment to Lakatos: "I was surprised to find that Lakatos summarizes Popper's conception of scientific progress as 'increased awareness of ignorance rather than growth of knowledge… '*learning*' without ever '*knowing*,' for although it is accurate it is not an entirely obvious reading" (pp. 547–548).

Lakatos's criticism on Popper is quite parallel with that of Haack on Peirce: that all we get, is some set of rules about how the game of science should be played without any epistemologically substantive content. In Popper's account, says Lakatos, scientists should be able to give the falsifiers, the results, the facts—that is, the possible "errors"—coming out from the crucial experiments which should decide about the fate of the theory. This would serve as a demarcation criterion as well: theories which cannot point out against themselves such crucial experiments or falsifiers should not be qualified as science at all.

In Lakatos's vision "no experiment is crucial at the time it is performed," so that falsification and rejection must be handled as logically independent. Thus Lakatos (1974) considered his own version also as "a falsification of the falsificationist theory of 'crucial experiments'" (p. 350). In fact, Lakatos made already some inquiries along similar lines in his former work within the philosophy of mathematics. Actually, the best case studies about how anomalies are turned into perfections can be found in his brilliant essay *Proofs and Refutations* (1976). The history of mathematical theorems is presented here as an ongoing discussion in an imaginary classroom giving an extensively generalized model for the growth of knowledge. At the same time, referring also to the dialectics of Hegel and the heuristics of Polya, Lakatos succeeded in extending fallibilism to the realm of mathematics—in that respect correcting the error committed by Hegel, Peirce and Popper as well. That is how Lakatos became "the first fallibilist heuristician" (Marchi, 1980, p. 448). Here is how Haack (1979) captures what is going on there (please, also note the special appearance of *abduction*):

> Interestingly, a major theme in Lakatos' fallibilist philosophy of mathematics is that the process of mathematical discovery is by no means a straight forward matter of deducing 'theorems' from 'axioms,' but a complex interaction of conjecture (abduction?), counter-example, modification of conjecture, rejection or revision of counter-example, and so forth. This is an idea of which—for all his stress on the importance of abduction for empirical science—there are at most occasional, fleeting glimpses in Peirce's writing. (pp. 58–59)

In fact, within the history of the philosophy of science the narrative can be constructed in a way that the error at that point made by Popper was his insistence on keeping the *context of discovery* and the *context of justification* apart, because with that he stayed within

the research programme of the Vienna Circle's basically justificationist world view (and hence he arrived later at his notion of *verisimilitude*). Lakatos's criticism against Popper here can be formulated as the claim that the latter is committing a category mistake concerning the role of errors in science, as he thinks *testing* and *error* to be relevant in the description of kuhnian *normal science*, but cannot give an account of their role in the *revolutionary periods*.

According to Kuhn (1970/1977) himself a paradigm seems to be flawless within its boundaries—errors may become visible only after the paradigm change. Errors committed within the paradigm will be clear miscalculations, which can be easily noticed and quickly corrected without doing any serious harm to the entire knowledge system. Thus in the normal phases of science not theories, but only scientists can be and will be tested, if they look for finding their place within the scientific community. Those puzzles will be well-formulated, so if a mistake happens, it will be clear that it was the scientist's fault. On the other hand, when a serious anomaly takes place, itt will change the whole disciplinary framework, so in that kind of revolutionary period the notion of error itself will be completely inadequate for the situation.

Real-life scientists are more likely to work along so-called *positive heuristics*, that is, research questions and experiments designed on the assumption that the theoretical framework they are working within is essentially right and correct. In the very case when from a certain experiment an unexpected result emerges, they give themselves the time to be able to explain it using the old theory and not throwing it away immediately.

> In general he rivets his attention on the positive heuristic rather than on the distracting anomalies, and hopes that the 'recalcitrant instances' will be turned into confirming instances as the programme progresses. … This methodological attitude of treating as *anomalies* what Popper would regard as *counter examples* is commonly accepted by the best scientists. (Lakatos 1974, p. 348)

Therefore, Lakatos suggested that we shall always think about complete research programs, which means that simple falsifications of certain elements should not result immediately in the abandonment of our whole knowledge system. He called this position *methodological falsificationism*, and contrasted it to Popper's *naïve falsificationism*. The latter was successful in presenting a greater proportion of what is going on in real science than traditional inductivism, while the new proposal was able to give an even better result in that respect.

5.

According to all these fallibilist models of knowledge, trials are necessary steps in acquiring new knowledge; there is no growth of knowledge without exercising the practice of trial and error. Errors are the necessary components of the procedure, since the usability

of deductive and inductive methods getting to necessary truths in real life are strongly limited. In practice alternative strategies, like abductive reasoning, are coming to the front in our pursuit for maintainable propositions.

Thus we may consider, as Hintikka (1998) did, the 'problem of abduction' to be a basic question of contemporary epistemology: "Purely logical (in the sense of deductive) reasoning is not ampliative. It does not give me any really new information. Yet all our science and indeed our whole life depends on ampliative reasoning" (p. 506).

In this Peirce-Hanson-Polya-Lakatos paradigm—called *fallibilist heuristics* by Marchi (1980)—there will be no sharp boundaries between normal and revolutionary periods, but basically the same logic of abductive inference will be in work. This can also help in saving the picture of science as a rational enterprise from the threats of irrationalism coming from Polányi, Kuhn, Feyerabend, and others.

The key issue in this model is assuring development by an ongoing procedure of correcting errors, constantly leading inquiry to a higher level. For example, Reed (2002) in a thoroughly Lakatosian spirit arrives from analysing the original standard account of *fallibilist knowledge* (represented by the equivalent alternative expressions FK1 and FK2) to a completely generalized concept (FK6, resp. FK7) by eliminating all the 'errors' of the previous versions, and in this sense providing "a deeper explanation of fallibilism than has been previously offered" (p. 153):

> (FK1) S fallibly knows that p = df (1) S knows that p on the basis of justification j and yet (2) S's belief that p on the basis of j could have been false.

> (FK2) S fallibly knows that p = df (1) S knows that p on the basis of justification j even though (2) j does not entail that S's belief that p is true.

> …

> (FK6) S fallibly knows that p = df (1) S knows that p on the basis of justification j and yet (2) S's belief that p on the basis of j could have been either (i) false or (ii) accidentally true.

> (FK7) S fallibly knows that p = df (1) S knows that p on the basis of justification j where (2) j makes probable the belief that p in the sense that S's belief belongs to the class of beliefs which have the same (type) j and most, but not all, of which are true. (p. 153)

Which, of course, should not be taken as the last word on the topic; its status should be held as fallible, that is, waiting for a next inquirer to find an 'error' in those definitions to also be 'fixed.'

Conclusion

In my paper I showed by textual evidences from several theoreticians with various professional contexts how their fallibilist accounts can give a better understanding of the role of errors in processes of knowledge production (including even mathematical knowledge being relatively rarely seen in that way). Thus, this interdisciplinary essay aimed at showing the resemblances and commonalities among those approaches which can be developed into a comprehensive fallibilist theory of errors.

References

Cowles, H. M. (2015). Hypothesis bound: Trial and error in the nineteenth century. *Isis, 106*(3), 635–645.

Haack, S. (1979). Fallibilism and necessity. *Synthese, 41*(1), 37–63.

Hanson, N. R. (1958). *Patterns of discovery. An inquiry into the conceptual foundations of science.* Cambridge University Press.

Hintikka, J. (1998). What is abduction? The fundamental problem of contemporary epistemology. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, 34*(3), 503–533.

Kuhn, Th. S. (1977). The logic of discovery or psychology of research. In: Th. S. Kuhn, *The essential tension* (pp. 266–292). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1970)

Lakatos, I. (1974). The role of crucial experiments in science. *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science, Part A, 4*(4), 309–325.

Lakatos, I. (1976). *Proofs and refutations. The logic of mathematical discovery.* J. Worrall & E. Zahar (Eds.), Cambridge University Press.

Marchi, P. (1980). Intellectual maps. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences. 10*(4), 445–458.

Margolis, J. (1998). Peirce's fallibilism. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society. 34*(3), 535–569.

Paavola, S. (2006). *On the origin of ideas: An abductivist approach to discovery.* University of Helsinki.

Peirce, C. S. (1960). *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, vol. 5. Pragmatism and pragmaticism, vol. 6. Scientific metaphysics.* C. Hartshorne & P. Weiss (Eds). Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1931)

Polya, G. (1971). *How to solve it. A new aspect of mathematical method.* Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1945)

Popper, K. R. (1963). What is dialectic? In: K. R. Popper, *Conjectures and refutations. The growth of scientific knowledge* (pp. 312–335). Routledge and Kegan Paul. (Original work published 1940)

Popper, K. R. (1963). Science: Conjectures and refutations. In: K. R. Popper, *Conjectures and refutations. The growth of scientific knowledge* (pp. 33–65). Routledge and Kegan Paul. (Original work published 1957)

Popper, K. R. (1972). *Objective knowledge: An evolutionary approach.* Oxford University Press.

Reed, B. (2002). How to think about fallibilism. *Philosophical Studies, 107*(2), 143–157.

Walton, D. (2004). *Abductive reasoning.* University of Alabama Press.

Book Review. Jane Austen to Screen: Transcoding *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*

DOREL-AUREL MUREŞAN

Affiliation: Romanian-English Filology Specialization
Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania
Email: muresanaurel@yahoo.com

In one of her essays, renowned scholar Pia Brînzeu attempts to find out what makes Shakespeare so attractive for such a wide range of artists, from writers to painters and movie directors, who rewrite, reframe, reimagine Shakespeare's work, offering "an ever-increasing list of […] productions" (2016, p. 29). Brînzeu's conclusion is that the enormous amount of Shakespearean revisions demonstrate "without doubt that Shakespeare is frantically haunting us. Like a ghost. Like an ineluctable intertextual ghost" (pp. 29–30).

Interestingly enough, Harold Bloom decides to open his *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Jane Austen* with a parallel between Shakespeare and Austen:

> The oddest yet by no means inapt analogy to Jane Austen's art of representation is Shakespeare's … Like Shakespeare, she gives us figures, major and minor, utterly consistent each in her or his own mode of speech and being, and utterly different from one another. Her heroines have firm selves, each molded with an individuality that continues to suggest Austen's reserve of power, her potential for creating an endless diversity. (Bloom, 2009, p. 1)

It becomes obvious, thus, that just like Shakespeare, Austen also haunts us through a plethora of adaptations, both on paper as well as on screen. This is something that Iuliana Borbely also points out in the currently reviewed book, *Reading and Watching Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice*:

> In the timeline of English literary history she is the second most frequently adapted author—Shakespeare being the first—and the first most frequently adapted novelist.

Dorel-Aurel MUREŞAN. Book Review. Jane Austen to Screen: Transcoding *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*

141

> All her novels have been adapted to film at least twice, her first two works, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, have been adapted four and nine times, respectively. These adaptations have also given birth to a score of other products like posters, fan-sites, calendars, entertainment columns in newspapers. Helen Fielding based her hero Mark Darcy in *Bridget Jones's Diary* on the Mr Darcy played by Colin Firth in the 1995 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*. (p. 6)

Such is the conclusion of a great number of researchers, one of which aptly states: "the past fifteen years have witnessed a boom of film and television adaptations based on Jane Austen's novels, her life and various cultural phenomena in some way connected to her" (Selejan, 2010, p. 115). Moreover, Selejan (p. 116) quotes famous writer Martin Amis, who, in a 1996 *New Yorker* article compares Jane Austen to prolific director Quentin Tarantino, considering the former more popular in the film industry, and she concludes that the situation is very much the same. Therefore, both literature and film scholars are presented with rich research material, and in her book, *Reading and Watching Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice*, Iuliana Borbely sets up to such a task.

From the introduction, Borbely emphasizes that despite the vast range of texts adapted to movies, some raise considerable difficulty due to a lack of action. Moreover, literary classics fall into the same category of challenging texts to adapt, due to their popularity: "being more widely known, the readers' expectations with the adaptations of classics are also higher" (p. 5), since readers generally look for film versions that are as faithful to the written text as possible. Such an expectation, the author persuasively argues, introduces the topic of fidelity, a "hazy" term, in Borbely's words, still difficult to define. Thus, the scholar opts for Andrew Dudley's more complex definition, as the American film theorist distinguishes between "fidelity to the letter or to the spirit of the novel" (p. 28). However, the author clarifies the following points regarding fidelity: firstly and most importantly, the term should not have a value judgment, but a descriptive one; and, secondly, fidelity is not possible, since the comparison deals with two different media.

Nonetheless, the reader is informed that the book does not intend to focus either on the multiple whys and wherefores the novels of Jane Austen have become so popular or on the use of fidelity as a value judgment. The purpose of the book is to analyze the relation between the novels and their screen adaptations through the lens of the cinematic rhetoric used in the adaptation process. In addition, the author sets up to demonstrate

that diversification of cinematic rhetoric applied to transcoding Austen novels to film, and the heavy reliance on visual storytelling techniques offer a romanticized view of characters, reform them radically and allow physicality to seep into the story against a historically highly accurate backdrop. (p. 8)

Moreover, this shift towards visual storytelling techniques in Austen adaptations contributes to their growing iconicity.

As far as the choice of Austen's novels as well as their screen adaptations to be discussed, Borbely clearly justifies her choice. The selection of these two novels is predicated upon their recurrent adaptation within the past two decades, occurring in succession with sufficient proximity to manifest the trends posited by the author's analytical framework. The novels are examined through the lens of their adaptability, while the meticulous analysis of the adaptations centers on the specific aspects of the original works accentuated by the producers and the cinematic rhetorical strategies employed to accomplish such emphasis.

The book begins with a well-structured introduction, providing an overview of the topics covered and setting the stage for the subsequent chapters. Chapter I serves as a foundation, introducing readers to adaptation theory and its relevance to Austen's works. The subsections within this chapter cover a range of essential aspects, including the previously mentioned fidelity discourse, the relationship between the novel and the adaptation, reception theory, and intermediality. One important aspect that the author insists upon when discussing adaptation and intermediality is the clarification of terminology: Borbely stresses the fact that due to the presence of two media, novel and film, an adaptation deals with a transfer of meaning from one sign in a medium to another in the second medium. Thus, the term proposed and used throughout the book is transcoding. The eight sub-sections of the first chapter effectively lay the groundwork for understanding the subsequent analysis of adaptations.

Chapter II delves into a comprehensive analysis of Austen's novel *Sense and Sensibility* and its subsequent adaptations, specifically focusing on two miniseries produced in 1981 and 2008, as well as a feature film released in 1996. The chapter begins with a concise overview of the novel's themes and critical reception during the Regency era. The examination of the novel encompasses three key dimensions: firstly, the novel's capacity for social criticism; secondly, the significant role played by a multitude of minor characters in facilitating this critique; and finally, the narrative devices employed by Austen to safeguard her text from descending into sentimentalism. The author then examines these three specific adaptations, starting with the 1981 adaptation, which

Dorel-Aurel MUREŞAN. Book Review. Jane Austen to Screen: Transcoding *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*

143

demonstrates a nuanced portrayal of the social scene. The 1995 adaptation is explored in terms of its restrained yet sentimental approach, the foregrounding of male characters, and its modern interpretation. The author also analyzes the 2008 adaptation, highlighting its use of visual techniques to express social criticism.

Chapter III undertakes a focused investigation of *Pride and Prejudice* and its adaptations, encompassing four notable renditions. The examination of the novel entails a comprehensive exploration of its distinctive aspects, including the central emphasis on Elizabeth Bennet's narrative trajectory within the symmetrical framework of the novel, wherein both Elizabeth and Darcy must undergo personal reform to attain their ultimate reward. Furthermore, the novel presents certain challenges and facilitations for filmmakers. Notably, the absence of authoritative character descriptions poses both a hurdle and a convenience. The absence of explicit physical portrayals allows for creative interpretation by producers who rely on hints regarding stature, attitude, and behavior to identify suitable actors. Additionally, the dialogues, resembling transcripts, necessitate considerable interpretative efforts, as the emotional nuances and reactions of the characters are rarely explicitly indicated. Lastly, the adaptation of the epistolary elements present in the novel, while capable of impeding the pacing and rendering an adaptation less engaging, is also acknowledged as a significant aspect deserving attention.

In the pursuit of identifying a series of temporally consecutive adaptations, the 1940 version stands out as an exception. Nevertheless, its inclusion in this analysis is warranted for several reasons. Firstly, according to the author, it aligns with what Thomas Leitch refers to as the Tradition of Quality, characterized by a meticulous adherence to faithfulness. While the 1940 version cannot be unequivocally described as slavishly faithful, it does modify the plot, significantly reformulates the portrayal of the Bennet family, and places Elizabeth on a pedestal. Remarkably, it is the only adaptation that has undergone two levels of separation from the original source material, as it is based on a Broadway play. Furthermore, the 1940 version represents the sole mainstream feature film adaptation available, although a Latter-Day-Saints rendition exists, albeit with limited distribution. Lastly, a compelling argument for the inclusion of the 1940 adaptation lies in its exceptional utilization of humor as a primary tool in transposing the novel to the screen. The 1980 adaptation is examined for its exploration of character and narrator fusion, while the 1995 adaptation is analyzed in terms of its gaze, fetishization of Darcy, and transcoding of the original material. The 2005 adaptation is explored for its blending of modernity with tradition, romanticized protagonists, and the portrayal of a happy family.

Dorel-Aurel MUREŞAN. Book Review. Jane Austen to Screen: Transcoding *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*

144

One of the book's strengths lies in its clear and organized structure, with each chapter and sub-section building upon the previous ones. The comprehensive coverage of various adaptations, spanning different decades, provides a comprehensive view of the evolution of Austen's works in different contexts and media. The author's analytical approach, combining literary criticism with insights from film and media studies, adds richness and depth to the exploration of the adaptations. By examining themes, narrative devices, character portrayals, and visual techniques, the author offers a well-rounded perspective on the successes and challenges of adapting Austen's novels.

While the book primarily focuses on *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, the inclusion of chapters dedicated to adaptation theory and its fundamental concepts enhances the book's academic value. This broader theoretical foundation not only allows readers to grasp the complexities of adapting Austen's works but also invites further exploration and discussion within the field of adaptation studies. Moreover, the author suggests future paths for exploration, pointing out that subsequent investigations could ascertain the generalizability of these findings across adaptations of all Austen novels or discern their specificity to solely the initial two works. Additionally, Borbely proposes, future research endeavors could center on the examination of cultural transpositions of Austen's novels, particularly given that three of her works have already undergone adaptation by Bollywood producers, namely *Pride and Prejudice* (Bride and Prejudice, 2004), *Sense and Sensibility* (I Have Found It, 2000), and *Emma* (Aisha, 2010).

Overall, *Reading and Watching Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice* is an essential resource for scholars, students, and enthusiasts interested in the adaptation of literary works. The author's expertise in the subject matter, combined with the comprehensive analysis of adaptations, makes this book a valuable contribution to the field of adaptation studies and Austen scholarship.

References

Bloom, H. (Ed.). (2009). *Jane Austen, new edition*. Bloom's modern critical views. Infobase Publishing.

Borbely, I. (2020). *Reading and watching Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice*. Mauritius: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing.

Brînzeu, P. (2016). "After Four Centuries: Shakespeare's Ghostly Shadows". *The annals of Ovidius University Constanța: Philology Series 1*, 29–40.

Selejan, C. (2010). "Jane Austen's Emma seen through the cinematic lens". *East-West Cultural Passage*, 9, 115–135.

Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

EDITH DEBRENTI

Affiliation: Faculty of Economics & Social Sciences
Partium Christian University, Romania
Email: debrenti.edit@partium.ro

The *Bolyai-Sommázat* is for everyone interested in "the boy who bent space," the biography of the Bolyai father and son, and the circumstances of the creation of one of the most significant achievements of the human spirit, *The Absolute Science of Space.* It provides lavish reading to anyone interested in the history of Transylvanian culture, the era of language renewal, and the 1848 War of Independence in Transylvania. 3 November 2023 marks the 200th anniversary of János Bolyai's famous letter to his father in Timisoara, in which he informed him that he had created a new and different world out of nothing (Oláh-Gál, 2022). To mark the occasion, UNESCO has declared 2023 as the Bolyai Memorial Year.

The book aims to show the human side of the two mathematicians and their work, not only through their research activities but also through their everyday human tasks and actions and their relationships with family members, acquaintances, friends, neighbors, and servants. We also learn more about the relationship with each other and gain a better insight into a more nuanced, more human father-son relationship. Perhaps we will better understand the father's dissatisfaction, sometimes frustration, and impatience with his son, and we will also better understand the son who, for a lifetime, does not receive the recognition he deserves for his work and achievements. There is no other scientist for whom there is such a gap between achievement and the recognition it deserves.

According to the author, the *Bolyai-Sommázat* is not a traditional biography of Bolyai, or a volume presenting the work of Bolyai, but a selection of writings which have contributed to sharpening and clarifying the image of the Bolyai and correcting some biographical errors. Throughout the 351 pages—the result of thirty years of work—Oláh-Gál contributed a great deal to the study of the Bolyais by presenting the Bolyais' letters, from family correspondence to letters written to contemporary scholars, such as Farkas Bolyai to Friedrich Gauss.

Edith DEBRENTI. Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

146

What is new in the book, compared to previous biographies, is that it sheds a different light on the history of the Bolyai family of Bólya, which goes back 700 years, being one of the oldest families in Transylvania and Hungary. The family's history is worthy of a novel, tracing the history of Transylvania from the conquest to the present day. The family's genealogy goes back to 1296, and its ancient nobility can be verified by archival records from 1770. The writing of the history of the ancient Bolyai family is the merit of Farkas Bolyai's brother, Antal Bolyai, who was a true Bolyai family researcher, as his correspondence reveals. We learn about the history of the family coat of arms—over time, the Bolyai used many different coats of arms because, through their marriage, there were times when they used their wives' family coat of arms. The ancient coat of arms has a right hand holding a sword.

Farkas Bolyai's younger son, Gergely, drew the family tree. The book contains a record of the most prominent members of the Bolyai family. Almost all the Bolyais were extra-ordinary people in some way. János Bolyai mentions several times in his writing that the Bolyais were ill-tempered, even pugnacious, people. In the Bolyai documents preserved in the Teleki-Bolyai Library, the author found a note which reveals that Farkas Bolyai's grandfather, Gábor Bolyai, was murdered by peasants in Bólya in 1769—a strange finding because researchers of family history do not mention this sad aspect.

The book contains many letters and manuscripts concerning how the Bolyai family property, money and inheritance were distributed. He concludes that János Bolyai was the only member of the Bolyai family who, as far as we know, was able to give up the benefits due to him by right to preserve brotherly love. His brother, Gáspár Bolyai, wrote a very 'wicked' biography of his brother János at the request of the then Secretary General of the Academy. This writing was the source of the false image of János Bolyai, which is still in the public consciousness today, that he was a duelist, a man-avoider, a self-serving, self-deluded bad man.

The author also wants to nuance the image of János Bolyai's mother, Zsuzsanna Benkő, by emphasizing that, compared to the bourgeois girls of her time, she was an educated, sensitive, modest and very religious soul, an extraordinary individual, a clever woman who could value spiritual values over material ones.

We also learn a lot about Farkas Bolyai's greatest patron and mentor, Baron Simon Kemény Jr. All the Bolyai monographs, even the most eminent Bolyai researchers and historians, have wrongly given his date of birth. Oláh-Gál reveals from the Hungarian National Archives that the baron was born in 1774 and was one year older than Farkas Bolyai, not four years younger as everyone had believed until then. Farkas Bolyai and the family of Baron Simon Kemény of Magyargyerőmonostor were closely connected throughout their lives.

Edith DEBRENTI. Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

147

We get to know other members of the Bolyai family. Gergely Bolyai, the younger brother of János Bolyai by 24 years, born of his father's second marriage, and the last of the family to live in the company of the two great Bolyai, who wrote the family history and who was a little bit in the background, with a quiet fate. We also get to know Antal Bolyai, Farkas Bolyai's younger brother, a bachelor. The notary in a Hungarian county took care of the ancient Bolyai farm. For nearly 20 years, he fought without success to regain the old Bolyai estates; with his death, the successors came to an agreement, the contract of sharing became love, and Gergely Bolyai married his cousin Karolina. (Of the three Bolyai men, Gergely was the only one to live a long, quiet, and peaceful family life.)

We can read about Farkas Bolyai's meeting with Gauss, their years together in Göttingen, their shared interests, especially in philology (they were both excellent philologists), and their friendship and correspondence that lasted until the end of their lives. When they parted, they gave each other a pipe, with the instruction that on the last evening of each month, preferably between 7 and 10 p.m., they should smoke a pipe, thinking of each other, recalling each other's spirits and meditating on each other. Anecdotes about Farkas Bolyai are also included in the book, as legends about him were still being written in his lifetime.

We also learn a lot about János Bolyai's childhood, which was perhaps the happiest period of János's and his parents' lives. John loved the village of Domáldo, where the nature, the open sky, the unlimited space, the quiet life left a deep impression on the little child (Oláh-Gál, 2022). His talent for maths showed itself early on, his interesting thoughts on maths occupied him from an early age, he asked questions, wondered about the world, knew the stars, learned German, Latin and the violin. Mathematics was taught to him by his father. At the age of nine he was introduced to the first six books of Euclid. Besides number theory, he was also interested in problems of analysis. In terms of geometry, he was interested in a famous problem of antiquity and claimed to have written a new method he found for squaring the parabola (Oláh-Gál, 2022). The idea occurred to him as a simple thought without formula when he woke up one morning.

Farkas Bolyai and Sándor Kőrösi Csoma had many teachers in common at the famous Bethlen Gábor College in Nagyenyed, and we can read many interesting stories about them. Ádám Herepei was the former teacher of Farkas and Csoma Sándor Körösi, who made them learn about the prehistory of the Hungarians. Farkas Bolyai was also greatly influenced by Mihály Szathmáry Pap, professor of theology. János Bolyai's favorite teacher was Samuel Köteles, who taught philosophy, logic, and ethics in Târgu Mures, and whom he often quotes in his manuscripts. It is also possible to know who his classmates were and whom he studied with in 1817.

Edith DEBRENTI. Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

148

The book reveals that Farkas Bolyai did not send his son to Göttingen, on the one hand, because Gauss did not respond to his request; on the other hand, because he changed his mind and saw the financial advancement of the Bolyai family being ensured if János became a military engineer or at least an officer. At that time, the military academy in Vienna was the elite training school of the Austrian monarchy, perhaps the highest level of teaching in the monarchy (János Bolyai's tuition fees were very high, almost 8,000 forints). During his studies in Vienna, he visited Károly Szász—later a professor at Aiud, on Sundays—who was an educator in Vienna, and they developed a warm friendship.

We also read about János Bolyai's children. Most biographies refer to two children, but here we learn that he had three children who carried the Bolyai name; moreover, his wife had a fourth child during their marriage. János Bolyai was ill all his life and had a close relationship with his servants and doctors, about whom we can also find details.

The Bolyais were not revolutionaries in the political sense at the time of the 1848 revolution, but they dared to take responsibility for their political worldview. János Bolyai was very fond of Târgu Mureș; he even calls it his hometown, although we know that he was born in Cluj Napoca. The relationship between the city and the mathematician is also more nuanced than we have known. We find out where he lived, whom he befriended during his retirement years, and who his neighbors were. He was also willing to work for the community. For example, he did a free design to upgrade the city dam and mill, performed at charity concerts. He liked to socialize, and loved to play chess. He was as much a citizen of Târgu Mureș as people born there.

From the book, we learn in which house János Bolyai died, and that his grave has been moved in the meantime (his ashes were exhumed on 7 June 1911). He was buried next to his father, and a gravestone would finally be erected in his honor from public donations. The author remarks that the common grave is a place of pilgrimage for all those who can appreciate the values of science (Oláh-Gál, 2022).

The book gives us an image of the philosophical background to the geometry of Bolyai—János was aware of the meaning of Kantian philosophy and fully grasped its depth. According to him, from our birth, our view of space can only be Euclidean. In Oláh-Gál's wording, he was the first to reject this idea, showing that there was another geometrical system. In his work, he arrived at the possibility of non-Euclidean geometry in a purely logical and philosophical way.

In the book, we get an insight into the most significant elements of Bolyai geometry, its nature, and its characteristics, and by reading it, we accept that the problem of parallelograms is only a matter of detail. In his geometry, for example, the circle can be squared—

Edith DEBRENTI. Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

149

in other words, with the help of a pair of compasses and a ruler a circle can be constructed into a square the area of which is equal to that of the circle—something that is impossible in Euclidean geometry. Other differences are that in Bolyai geometry, the sum of the angles in a triangle is less than two right angles, that two (non-intersecting) parallel lines can be drawn from a point outside a line, that there are also divergent lines, that there is no similarity, that the area of a triangle depends only on the size of its angles, and that the triangle with all its angles zero has the largest area.

In our ordinary world, there is no good, natural, simple example of an object on which Bolyai geometry is fully valid. Non-Euclidean geometry works on a very, very small part of the pseudosphere, or on a kale leaf, but this is finite, it cannot be stretched to infinity. János Bolyai's mathematical research has always been characterized by originality and to the point, and he did not stop working in this field even after the creation of *The Absolute Science of Space*.

In the remainder of the book, the author presents many more interesting facts about Bolyai discovered during research, such as János Bolyai's ideas on freedom of the press and his manuscript evoking Sándor Petőfi. It presents images of Domáld, analyzes some of János Bolyai's comments, and redefines the relationship between Gauss and János Bolyai.

A very important part of the book is the Bolyai chronology, which we find in great detail—broken down into a day by the day account—when and where the Bolyais were, what happened to them over a period of almost a hundred years between 1768 and 1860.

References

Oláh-Gál, R. (2022). *Bolyai-Sommázat*. Editura Pro-Print.

Edith DEBRENTI. Book Review. Oláh-Gál Róbert's *Bolyai-Sommázat*

150

Art Review. Hybrid Spaces: Digital and Physical in Rural Context

ROZÁLIA KLÁRA BAKÓ

Affiliation: Department of Social Sciences
Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Email: bakorozalia@uni.sapientia.ro

The House Turned Inside Out

Imre Bukta's exhibition *We Must Cultivate Our Garden!*[1] opened on 26 November 2022 at Godot Institute of Contemporary Art in Budapest, and attracted over 10,000 visitors as of 26 April 2023. Given the interest for the *Exhibition of the Year* at Godot Institute, organizers have extended it until 27 August 2023. The artist turned 70 in 2022 and this is his second anniversary exhibition, after the 60 year's anniversary in 2012[2] at Kunsthalle Budapest: both were curated by Gábor Gulyás. He explains: the message of the 2022 exhibition is the experience of rurality, sacrality, and the difficulty of feeling at home.

Photo 1

The artist explaining the *House Turned Inside Out* on the guided tour, 16 April 2023

Both exhibitions' iconic piece was the house as a space of clashing values, habits, and generations. While in 2012 *The House* was a monumental art installation presenting the space of rural dwelling from the outside, in 2022 the *House Turned Inside Out* gives us a different perspective: not as a clash, but rather as a contemplative endeavour (Radnóti, 2023). While in 2012 the house had four very different sides in terms of social standing and values, in 2022 there is an archetypical space imagined around the stove, pots, and tomato soup.

---

[1] https://www.godot.hu/post/bukta-imre-muveljuk-kertjeinket
[2] https://mucsarnok.hu/kiallitasok/kiallitasok1.php?mid=561c352617416

As Radnóti (2023) put it, "the new exhibition did not bring a thematic or fundamental stylistic change, but calmness, the contemplative registration of the sights, the dominance of the vita contemplativa over the vita activa." The artist explained at his guided tour: before 2000 I was swept away by avant-guarde, now I have returned to realism. What kind of realism though?

Real and virtual, physical and digital

Contemporary rural life as reflected in Bukta's exhibition is a mix of spaces and paces, from rusty pots to Larousse encylopedias (Hornyik, 2023). There is a recurring motif of books, either piled as a doghouse, offered for sale, or serving to trap water overflow: a failed utopia of people reading, the end of an era (Radnóti, 2023). On the other hand, here comes the digital in a rather grotesque form, at the Pensioners' Club: old wax ladies scrolling pictures on their tablets, in disco-light—gen Z's favourite, instagramable place of the exhibition.

Photo 2
The Pensioners' Club
(installation)

A mix of "fairy realism" and grotesque, so much in line with Central-American and Central-European culture. Not the magical realism of Garcia Márquez, but rather the "realism" of folk tales mixed with the nitty-gritty details of rural life (Hornyik, 2023).

Perhaps the most humorous element of the exhibition was the "intelligent hoe" or iHoe, an installation combining the traditional agricultural instrument with so-called digital features. The ad-video of the iHoe turned out to be so authentic, that many visitors thought it was for real, and called to order one, the artist explained on his guided tour.

Photo 3

The Intelligent Garden Hoe

Mezőszemere, the rural space where Imre Bukta lives, seems like the Hungarian Macondo, with a twist: its realism is not magical, but rather grotesque. Gabriel Garcia Márquez made the imaginary Macondo very real through its magical stories, whereas the artist portrayed the real Mezőszemere in a harsh, yet poetic light.

References

Hornyik, S. (2023). Életkép láncfűrésszel és sarlós boldogasszonnyal. Bukta Imre „tündéri" realizmusa ["Life picture with a chainsaw and a reaper's scythe. Bukta Imre's 'fairy' realism."]. *Exindex 1*, 18. http://real.mtak.hu/160551/1/18.pdf

Radnóti, S. (2023). Bukta Imre: Műveljük kertjeinket! / Godot Intézet. *Revizoronline*, https://revizoronline.com/hu/cikk/9971/bukta-imre-muveljuk-kertjeinket-godot-intezet