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**O. M. BEKETOV NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
of URBAN ECONOMY in KHARKIV**

**TRENDS IN AMERICAN LITERATURE:
CONTEMPORARY DIMENSION**

A COURSE BOOK

Kharkiv

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Starostenko T. M.

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The textbook on the subject “Trends in Contemporary Native and English-Language Literature” is aimed to help the students of philological department to prepare for practical classes in this discipline. It consists of 13 units. Its structure and issues guide to the systematic organization of the educational process and are a part of teaching materials in English for students of philological department. The textbook will be useful for students of philological department and teacher at higher educational institutions who study or teach literature of the United States of America.

For the students of the second higher education level (Master’s degree) of specialty 035 – Philology. Germanic languages and literatures (including translation), Primary – English).

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Introduction

The purpose of the current course book is to expose students to the fields of Contemporary American Literature that are growing rapidly, such as trauma theory in literature, colonial studies, eco-fiction, urgent social issues reflected in fiction today, gender, cyber-space, urbanity, as well as Native-American, African-American, Latin-American, Asian-American and other literatures of multi-ethnic origin, intertextuality. The course introduces students to the prevailing literary trends (Modernism, Post-modernism, Post-postmodernism, Meta-modernism) in American literature of the XXth-XXIst centuries, studies the coexistence and interaction of styles in leading literary texts, develops in students the ability of textual analysis, to express and justify their own opinion regarding the phenomena of art / literature, to cultivate aesthetic taste.

The practical section includes the latest texts of fiction (often excerpts), poetry and drama for literary analysis. Each section provides key terms, relevant quotations, introductory questions for pre-reading discussions, algorithms for during- and post-reading analysis, suggested topics for presentations and reports to deepen students' understanding, creative writing exercises, a glossary, a list of recommended readings, and theoretical sources.

The appendixes suggest the algorithm of literary analysis for the texts of various genres and their main components.

PART I: *THEORY*

PACE 1

WHAT TRENDS SHAPE MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LITERATURE?

Key terms: *Fin-de-siecle, fragmentation, alienation, literary movements, the Great wars, the world in front of disaster, metafiction, intertextuality, paradox, unreliable narration, temporal distortion, fin-demillenium*

1. *What is American literature? What is the platform it stems from?*
2. *The literary tendencies in the development of the independent American literature.*
3. *The mainstream trends in literature in the XXth century and their specificity – Modernism (including pre-Modernism) vs Postmodernism. Realism. Magic(al) realism.*
4. *What shapes contemporary American literature? Post-postmodernism and Meta-modernism: European and native core.*

Despite the fact that English-language American literature gets shaped as a result of colonization, various its branches received a diverse rooting: thus, the source of the Native-American literature deals with the Indian orality before the Anglicanization; Latin-American writings sprout from Mexican, Dominican, and Puerto-Rican literary tradition, dating back to the Mayan and the Aztec orality; African-American texts borrow from the oral tradition of the Black continent; Asian-American literature is diversified and recognizes multiple Asian sources; while the white-American literature itself is linked to the Celtic and Germanic mythology and folklore, as well as the literatures of the European continent. Thus, the dominant English-language American culture and American literature, “white” at their core, initially borrow from the white Anglo-Saxon and Western-European tradition, brought to the New World on the board of Christopher Columbus’ vessel, getting mixed with multiethnic code of the colonized nations and further immigrants, who found themselves on the American land both

willfully and unwillfully. The development of the North American literature has been marked by some distinct stages which either noticeably differed from the parallel British literature, or echoed it with a range of local peculiarities. Arnold Krupat structures the North American literature according to both periods and themes:

a) Periods: *Early American Literature, Nineteenth-Century American Literature, Civil War to World War I, Twentieth-Century American Literature, etc.*

b) Themes: *The American Adam, The Machine and The Garden, American Romanticism, Love and Death in the American Novel, etc.* [11, p. 4].

The periodization of the North American English-language literature embraces the early years of colonization of the New World and stretches up to the contemporary period.

Table 1 – *Periods in the literary history of the USA*

Dates	Periods		Genres	
1	2	3	4	5
		<i>Authors of lyric texts</i>	<i>Authors of dramatic texts</i>	<i>Authors of narrative texts</i>
17 th – mid-18 th century	Early (colonial) literature	Anne Bradstreet, Ebenezer Cooke, Edward Taylor		John Cotton, Thomas Morton
Mid-18 th – early 19 th century	Literature of the early republic	<i>Connecticut Wits</i> (Joel Barlow, Timothy Dwight, John Trumbull), William C. Bryant, Lydia H. Sigourney	James Nelson Baker, William Dunlap, John Howard Payne, Richard Penn Smith, Royall Tyler	Charles B. Brown, James F. Copper, Washington Irving, Catharine Sedgwick
1830-1860	Romanticism and American Renaissance	Emily Dickinson, Ralph W. Emerson, Henry W. Longfellow, Walt Whitman, John G. Whittier	Dion Boucicault, William W. Brown, Anna C. Mowatt	Alice Cary, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe

Continuation of table 1

1	2	3	4	5
1865-1910	Realism			Charles W. Chesnutt, William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, Edith Wharton
1893-1914	Naturalism			Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Jack London
1910-1945	Modernism	E.E. Cummings, H.D., Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Marriane Moore, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams	Susan Glaspell, Lilian Hellman, Arthur Miller, Eugene O’Neil, Elmer Rice, Thornton Wilder, Tennessee Williams	Djuna Barnes, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Katherine Anne Porter, Gertrude Stein
1945-2004	Post-modernism	Alurista, John Berryman, Charles Bukowski, Susan Howe, Denise Levertov, Aundre Lorde, Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich	Edward Albee, David H. Hwang, LeRoi Jones, David Mamet, Marsha Norman, David Rabe, Sam Shepard, Wendy Wasserstein, Lanford Wilson, Robert Wilson	Paul Auster, Saul Bellow, Loise Erdrich, Toni Morrison, Vladimir Nabokov, John Carol Oates, Philip Roth, J.D. Salinger, John Updike
The end of the 1990s - today	Post-post-modernism			“ <i>The Expanse</i> ” series by James S.A. Corey (a pen name of two authors Daniel Abraham and Leviathan Wakes), represented by the novels “ <i>Leviathan</i>

Ending of table 1

1	2	3	4	5
				<p><i>Wakes</i>” (2011), <i>“Caliban’s War”</i> (2012), <i>“Abbadon’s Gates”</i>(2013), <i>“Cibola Burn”</i> (2014), <i>“Nemesis Games”</i> (2015), <i>“Babylon’s Ashes”</i> (2016), <i>“Persepolis Rising”</i> (2017), <i>“Tiamat’s Wrath”</i> (2019), <i>“Leviathan Falls”</i> (2021); <i>“Silo”</i> series (2011-2013) by Hugh Howey, represented by the works <i>“Wool”</i> (2011), <i>“Wool: Proper Gauge”</i> (2011), <i>“Wool: Casting Off”</i> (2011), <i>“Wool: Unraveling”</i> (2011), <i>“Wool: The Stranded”</i> (2012), <i>“First Shift – Legacy”</i> (2012), <i>“Second Shift – Order”</i> (2012), <i>“Third Shift – Pact”</i>(2013), <i>“Dust”</i> (2013) plus the short stories <i>“In the Air”</i>, <i>“In the Mountains”</i>, and <i>“In the Woods”</i></p>
	<p>Meta- modernism <i>as a part of post- postmodernism</i></p>			<p>David Foster Wallace; Jonathan Earl Franzen; Jennifer Egan; Ben Lerner; Dave Eggers; Jonathan Safran Foer; Junot-Diaz</p>

The contemporary period of the North American literature is shaped by a succession of dominant literary trends, namely modernism and post-modernism (the XXth century), and their further evolution into post-postmodernism and meta-modernism (the XXIst century). Despite being opposed to the realism, modernistic trends don't substitute it fully and develop in parallel with its forms. Therefore, neo-realism can be viewed as a refreshed embodiment of realism, whereas naturalism could be perceived as its extreme transformation.

Literature preceding the Modernist era was often rather realistic or divided a range of characteristics endemic for the previous literary milestones – romantic bend, gothic features, mysticism, appeal to historical event, etc.

REALISM is a literary technique, dealing with the depiction of the reality in its genuine form, deprived of 'window dressing' or any kind of hyperbalisation, making an emphasis on ordinary people, whose social position and cultural background is reflected through their speech and behavior against the mundane settings. Realism functioned a certain response to **Romanticism**, which had exhausted itself. In opposition, realism departed with feelings and individualism for the sake of the truth. It put an emphasis on 'reality' in order to portray the subject in the most precise way, abandoning the romantic veil. Thus, realism acted as a counter-romantic trend, characterized by plain means of expression and eliminated articism in language. American realism portrayed the present-day social situation with a common person in the center of narration. "Realism" in American literature is linked to the temporal scratch between the Civil War to the turn of the epoch and gets manifested through the works by William Dean Howells, Rebecca Harding Davis, Henry James, Mark Twain, as well as those whose texts explored American life in various contexts.

NATURALISM is a late stage of development of Realism (the second part of the XIXth – the beginning of the XXth centuries), when there are no 'forbidden topics' for the author, and the truthful depiction of the details gives the story a lion's share of documentalism and photographic naturalness.

NEO-REALISM (or *neorealismo*) is also called ‘a traditional prose’ which borrows from the classical tradition (a relapse to the realistic aestheticism of the XIXth century) and spotlights historical, social, moral, philosophical and aesthetic problem of the period, contemporary to the author. Gets shaped in the post-WWII Italy, which influenced the subject of depiction – the consequences of the war and post-war life in it is. **AMERICAN NEO-REALISTS** embraced William Faulkner (1897-1962) and John Steinbeck, as well as Ernest Hemingway.

Thus, the XXth century is featured by the development of realism, however, unlike it is in the XIXth century it doesn’t define the major trends and the character of the literary epoch, yielding to modernism.

Starting from the end of XIX century art forms are fundamentally changing, with modernism taking over the dominant role.

MODERNISM
= *a brand-new literature*

Ezra Pound: “Make it new!” (1934)

The XXth century is the epoch of the global shifts in the world literature and culture. As an international trend **MODERNISM** in literature gestated on the verge of WWI and getting its peak in 1920s both in Europe and the USA. Modernism represents a revolution in literature, proclaiming the disruption with both the tradition of the realistic depiction and the Western cultural literary tradition as such. Every preceding literary trend used to define itself through its relation to the classical tradition, when the Antiquity was viewed as the artistic model, while Modernism is the first cultural and literary epoch, which has finished with this heritage and dared to give the answers to the “eternal” questions. The epoch manifests itself out of any conventions of the past. Literally, the XXth century starts with the death of the God (F. Nietzsche). Other events, which contributed to the concept of ‘modern’, were the publication of the “*Origin of Species*” (1859) by Charles Darwin, as well as the three volumes of “*Das Capital*” (1867, 1885, 1894) by Karl Max, the emergence of the psycho analysis theory

by Sigmund Freud, the presentation of Albert Einstein’s Theory of Relativity combined with Quantum theory. The generation of modernists sharply felt the exhaustion of the forms of realistic narration and their aesthetic fatigue. For modernists realism meant “the absence of efforts for an independent comprehension of the world, the mechanical nature of creativity, superficiality, the boredom of value descriptions when the interest to the button of the coat of the protagonist overshadowed the interest to their emotional condition. Modernists, however, put the value of the individual world perception in the center. The created worlds are unique and dissimilar, marked by some bright artistic individuality.

If to define the philosophical core, framing pre-modern, modern, and later the post-modern eras, we will get the scheme, suggested by Paul Coppan in his text “*What is Postmodernism?*” [6]:

Premodernism (up to 1650)	Modernism (1650-1950s)	Postmodernism (1960s – present)
The divine or supernatural realm serves as the foundation for principles of morality, human dignity, truth, and reason.	Morality, human dignity, truth, and reason are grounded in sources other than God (reason, science, race, etc.).	All metanarratives (systems or grand stories) are suspect-whether religious or not. No universal foundation for truth, morality, human dignity exists.
French Revolution (1789)	Fall of the Berlin Wall (1989)	

Modernism marks the collapse of the culture of humanism. The slaughter of the WWI, the invention of the weapons of mass destruction naked the true value of the human life for the contemporary world with its ban on pain, its shift from spiritual and physical violence towards the concentration camps and mass shootings. According to a Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset, Modernism – is “*an art of the dehumanized epoch*”. The modernist attitude towards the humanistic values is

uncertain, while the world is represented in some harsh and cold light. *Joseph Conrad compares the modernistic character with a traveler who stays for a night in a comfortless inn on the verge of the world with rather suspicious owners, in a shattered room, lit by the merciless light of the lamps without any lampshade.* The human existence is viewed as a brief fragile moment. The protagonist may or may not comprehend the tragedy and fragility of our absurd world, and it's a job of the artist – to depict the terror, greatness and the beauty enclosed in all the moments of the human being. The social problematics, which used to play the leading role in the XIXth-century realism, is rather indirect within the frames of the modernist text, being an extricable part of a person's portrait. The human being gets into the center of the artwork as an independent category, a unique peculiar world with its own laws. The characters stop being so-called "social types". The artists try to identify what distinguishes one person among the others. A "whole person" gets changed for an **"unusual personality", "a human being as a symptom"** (O. Zvieriev). Daniel Joseph Singal, quoting the declaration by Virginia Woolf, states: *"On or about December 1910, human character changed"*. He adds: *"Though historians tracing the origins of Modernist culture have quarreled with Woolf's exact choice of date, they have increasingly come to agree that sometime around the turn of the century the intelligentsia in Europe and America began to experience a profound shift in sensibility that would lead to an explosion of creativity in arts, transform moral values, and in time reshape the conduct of life throughout Western society"* [14, 20]. The main realm of depiction in Modernism is interaction of conscious and subconscious in person, the mechanisms of perception, the way the human memory functions. The modernist characters are depicted within the integrity of their frustrations, of their subjective being, although the scale of their life can be minor and insignificant.

MODERNISM grows out of decadence (pre-Modernism) and has stages of embodiment:

Table 2 – *The Stages of Modernism*

MODERNISM		
DECADENCE	EARLY MODERNISM	“MATURE” MODERNISM
<p>- is a general term of the worldview in crisis, emerging in literature, art and culture. Gets widespread in the European literature on the verge of XIX-XXth centuries.</p> <p><u>In the center</u> is a human being, who feels a certain alienation in the world, loss of moral compass and face into the future.</p> <p><u>The dominant motifs</u> are sadness, despair, pessimism, disappointment</p>	<p>- is a conditional name for the early modernist trends, which appeared in the last third of the XIXth century and preceded the final formation of modernism as a new cultural trend.</p> <p>The early modernism refuses to depict “life with the life forms”. Aesthetic problems take the dominant role. A work of literature is no more “a device of the societal insight and upbringing, but the manifestation of the artist's creative freedom. An independent and spiritually rich personality, their thoughts, hallucinations, and consciousness determine the development of the plot, which increasingly gets rid of fabulousness and moves into the plane of self-focus and self-contemplation.</p> <p>The early modernism breaks with the traditions of realism and naturalism of the XIXth century, however exploits the Romantic system as its core.</p>	<p>- gets formed in the first decade of the XXth century.</p> <p>Departures from the contemptuous denial of reality in favor of its investigation, the search for the new forms of spiritualization of reality. The “mature” modernism embraces surrealism, imagism, acmeism, futurism, expressionism.</p>

The mainstream modernist trend is a constant decrease in the character’s social status.

A character in Modernism is an “everyman”, any and every person. Modernism started to depict the protagonist’s state of mind, dismissed by the previous literature. The detailing of the description and its persuasive nature led to the stigmatization of the modernistic texts as immoral ones. The intimate, sexual problematics, the moral relativity, the stressed apolitical approach, the unusual narration caused sharp rejection.

Modernism brought about profound changes in various artistic disciplines such as painting, sculpture, music, dance, literature, drama, architecture, poetry, and thought. In the realm of painting, during the 1920s and 1930s amidst the Great Depression, modernism found expression through Surrealism, late Cubism, Bauhaus, De Stijl, Dada, German Expressionism, and the works of masterful colorists like Henri

Matisse. Additionally, artists such as Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky explored abstraction, shaping the European art scene. In Germany, painters like Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, and George Grosz infused their work with political themes, anticipating the onset of World War II. Meanwhile, in America, modernism manifested through American Scene painting, as well as the social realism and regionalism movements, which provided poignant political and social commentary and dominated the art world.

One of the characteristic features of the Modernist era is the interaction of different types of art: the metaphorical painting of P. Picasso shapes the creative style of H. Apollinaire, P. Eluard and B. Sandrar, the impressionistic style of C. Monet benefits the artistic practice of R.M. Rilke, T.S. Eliot, K. Gamsun, Cubist aesthetics gets reflected in the language and composition of the works of G. Stein, V. Mayakovsky, H. Apollinaire, the use of cinematic montage is “imprinted” in the “stream of consciousness” novels of J. Joyce, M. Proust and others.

The “artistic revolution” is marked by the move from the analysis to synthesis at the level of structure, composition, content and language of the literary work. Literature dwells on the principles of multi-thematic representation, the methods of daring combination of different temporal perspectives and spaces, montage. Mythology holds a significant position in modernism, which is closely linked to the concept of transformation. Whether it’s the alteration of form, expression, or societal norms, the movement is fundamentally about radical change. The poet Ezra Pound's famous injunction in 1934 to “*Make it new!*” encapsulated the movement's rejection of what it viewed as the outdated culture of the past. In line with this ethos, modernist innovations such as the stream-of-consciousness novel, atonal or twelve-tone music, divisionist painting, and abstract art all had roots in the developments of the XIXth century.

Transformation, as a theme, also encompasses shifts in beliefs, opinions, and identities, symbolizing a metaphorical rebirth. Fueled by experiences of loss, destruction, and the trauma of war, authors experienced fragmentation, which became another facet of this theme. An exemplar of the concept of transformation can be retraced in Franz Kafka’s absurdist work, “*The Metamorphosis*”.



Les Desmoiselles D'Avignon by Picasso, 1907: Picasso is a ubiquitous example of a modernist painter

Thus, **MODERNISM** (*from French* modern, the newest) is the general name of the new literary and artistic trends of the XXth century of non-realistic direction, which arose as a denial of traditional forms and aesthetics of the past. Appeared in France (Sh. Bodler, P. Verlen, A. Rembo), Modernism is characterized by the shift from classic novel in favor of the search for a new style and radical reconsideration of the literary forms. Modernism features the development of the artistic mind and its transition from the classical world perception to the modern ones. Instead of creation of its own world and suggesting the reader some of the ready-made concepts, the literature of Modernism turns into a pure reflection of the reality or its total antithesis. The author is no more a holder of the absolute truth and demonstrates its relativity. As a result, the wholeness of the work of fiction gets interrupted: the linear narration gets substituted by the fragmented ones, granulated into a set of separate episodes, and represented through several / multiple characters, who are the bearers of the opposite views in relation to the narrated events or facts.

Key points of Modernism:

- The focus on the individual and their alienation and confusion (INTROSPECTIVE = inward looking, self-analyzing; ALIENATION = isolation, detachment);
- The radical disruption of linear flow of narrative. The search for the new formal means in art (metalanguage, symbolism, myth-making, etc.).
- Creating a new artistic reality, equivalent to the surrounding reality, and experimenting (literary game) with this reality;
- Modernists made language central to exploration. Modernism had an interest in rhythm and fragments of “everyday” language. Jay’s point is that British and U.S. literary studies in the modern era of globalization are “becoming defined less by nation than by language” [10, pp. 32–47];
- Heavy use of symbolism and setting;
- The draft to mysticism and subconscious;
- Intellectualism and anti-realism

In general, Modernism is based on a “*philosophy of life*”

A “*Philosophy of life*” is a subjective-idealist trend in philosophy that arose in Germany (F. Nietzsche, V. Dilthey) and France (A. Bergson) at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, at its center is the understanding of life as an absolute, boundless beginning of the world, diverse in its manifestations. Life is forever moving, it cannot be understood with the help of reason or feeling, but only thanks to intuition, personal experience. Modernism declared not science but poetry to be the highest knowledge, considering its ability to spiritualize the world, to penetrate into the most intimate depths.

Thematic characteristics of MODERNISM:

- Realistic embodiment of social meanings;
- The meaning and the contexts as independent entities;
- The character’s desperate actions in front of the future they can’t escape;
- Sense of spiritual loneliness;
- Sense of alienation;
- Sense of frustration;
- Sense of disillusionment;
- Rejection of the history;
- Rejection of the outdated social system;
- Rebel against traditionality of morality or a way of thinking;

- Objection of the religious thoughts;
- Substitution of a mythical past;
- The inquiry into the authenticity of lived experiences;
- Seeking for the meaning in the world, deprived of God;
- The negation of traditionalism in culture;
- The deprivation of meaning and loss of hope in the updated reality, as well as the comprehension of the received trauma;
- Breakdown of social norms and cultural sureties;
- Negation of history and the swapping of a mythical past, adopted out of chronology;
- A character as a product of the metropolis, of cities and urbanscapes;
- Overwhelming technological changes of the XXth century.

Formal characteristics of MODERNISM:

- Free indirect speech;
- Stream-of-consciousness;
- Juxtaposition of characters;
- Wide use of classical allusions;
- Figure of speech;
- Intertextuality;
- Personification;
- Hyperbole;
- Comparison;
- Quotation;
- Pun;
- Satire;
- Irony;
- Antiphrasis;
- Unconventional use of metaphor;
- Symbolic representation;
- Psychoanalysis;
- Discontinuous narrative;
- Metanarrative;
- Multiple narrative points of view;
- Open Form;
- Free verse;
- Multiple narrative points of view (parallax).

In literature Modernism manifested itself through a variety of stylistic trends: impressionism, existentialism, symbolism, etc. One of the notable offshoots of modernism is avant-garde.

Table 3 – *Some Trends within Modernism*

STYLISTIC TRENDS IN MODERNISM	
MODERNISM	<p>Avant-garde is a reaction to the crisis in art, marked by the exhaustion of the old forms and the unshaped character of the new ones. Is determined by the radical innovation within both meaningful and formal artistic principles, and is characterized by absurdity, grotesque, denial of the tradition of the past, bizarre nature of expression, imposing of the new ideologemes and myths, aimed at the narrow elite.</p>
	<p>Imagism, is a modernist literary trend initially sourced from the “Poetic Club” in London (1908) and linked to the names of Thomas Ernest Hulme (his poem “Autumn”) and Francis Flint, as well as Ezra Pound, who joined the club in 1919. The second stage of the development finds its connection with the poetry of the UK-based American writer Hilda Doolittle and Ezra Pound’s idea that “the figurative poetry has to resemble a sculpture frozen in the word”, who distinguished structure of verse (phanopeia), melodic (meloepia) and intellectual (logopeia) part. The third stage is purely American and is shaped by the works of its leader and American poetess Amy Lawrence Lowell with her central theme voiced as “admiration of nature”.</p>
	<p>Impressionism, the name is linked to the painting by Oscar-Claude Monet “Impressionism. Soleil levant” (exhibited in Paris in 1874). Literature is defined by the tendency to center the writer’s story on the character’s mental life, focusing on the character’s impressions, feelings, sensations and emotions, rather than trying to interpret them.</p>
	<p>Existentialism, appeals to the unique character of human being and stresses the individual’s freedom, choice, and responsibility: “if there is no God, everything is aloud”.</p>
	<p>Symbolism, appeals to Plato’s theory dealing with the advantage of the ideal over real. The symbolist writers tended to penetrate into the highest dimension of ideas with the texts aimed at sensual, emotional, and sentimental perception rather than rational</p>
	<p>Fauvism, suggested imagery that interfered with the senses and evoked physical emotions. The artists exploited aesthetics and sentimentality, scarifying reality within artistic depiction.</p>
	<p>Futurism, appears in Italy in 1909 with the “<i>Futurist Manifesto</i>” by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti full of criticism directed towards the ‘old literature’ soaked in ‘inactivity’ and the ‘laziness of thought’. The futurists declared the war to conservatism, chanted rebellious spirit, suggested new senses and rhythms within the poetic structures, proclaimed the cult of the super-human. Anti-culture, dynamism, speed, global transformations, the roaring of engines, war seen as a hygiene for the world, the attempt to the synthesize of the kinds of art form the features of futurism.</p>

American modernism, much like the modernistic movement in general, is a trend of philosophical thought arising from the widespread changes in culture and society in the age of modernity. Modernism was fundamentally rooted in an optimistic vision of human life and society, as well as a belief in progress or advancement. It operated under the assumption that certain overarching universal principles or truths – be they religious or scientific – could be employed to comprehend or interpret reality. Modernist ideals extended across various domains, influencing art, architecture, literature, religious beliefs, philosophy, social structures, daily activities, and even scientific pursuits. Unlike their predecessors, modernist artists and authors didn't merely reference ancient myths from Greek and Latin traditions. Instead, they reimagined these narratives within a contemporary context. Utilized as symbols or central characters in plots, mythological tales and figures played a defining role in modernist literature.

In a modernist work, the conscious and the subconscious, the dark and the cosmic, get combined, which primarily takes place in the psychological dimension – in the soul of an individual who seeks to realize the essence of their existence on the background of eternity.



Joseph Stella's *Brooklyn Bridge*, 1939; *Tree of My Life*, 1919

Modernism in American literature is exemplified by the works of T.S. Eliot (“*The Waste Land*”, 1922), Ezra Pound (“*The Pisan Cantos*, 1948), Gertrude Stein (quasi-memoir of her Paris years “*the Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*”, 1933) – writers often referred to as the Lost Generation – as well as John Steinbeck (“*The Grapes of Wrath*”, 1939), Ernest Hemingway (“*The Sun Also Rises*”, 1926, “*The Battler*”, 1925), William Faulkner (“*Barn Burning*”, 1939, “*That Evening Sun*”, 1931), Francis Scott Fitzgerald (“*The Great Gatsby*”, 1925). Modernist literature in America also includes the Harlem Renaissance and Southern Modernism, with key figures such as Alain Locke, Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston contributing significantly to the movement.

American modernism is marked by:

1. A disbelief in the ability of a person to resist the callousness and destructive power of the surrounding world (as a reaction to the global wars);
2. Humanistic values are viewed as obsolete;
3. The human actions and behavior are determined by their biological nature, which is considered as imperfect and depriving a person of every hope for happiness;
4. Modernism proclaims a technique of the “*new consciousness*” as the only true way of individuality cognition;
5. A deep belief that the existence is generally senseless. The essence of the world and worldview is absurdity and chaos.
6. The human existence has no aim. It’s a dead end.
7. The life of a person is tragic and linked to the alienation and an outcast status.
8. The form is raised to the absolute law.
9. Decadence and the philosophy of “*the lost generation*”;
10. The topic of American dream and American tragedy. The ideal of “*healthy Americanism*”;
11. *Urbanism*: There was a huge migration and a great social shift from rural areas to the industrial urban areas;
12. *Secularity*: There came a need for changing the fate of the religion and dethroning the God and thus establishing newer principles for social organizations that are not guided by religion;
13. A *rebirth* for African American Arts, centralized in the Harlem area of New York;
14. A *voice of ethnical minorities* gets its power.

Postmodernism

At the final third of the XXth century Modernism gets challenged by the **POSTMODERNISM**. Postmodernism delineates its identity in relation to its predecessor: Modernism.

Postmodernism (Latin *post* – a prefix meaning continuity, French *modern* – modern, the latest) is the general name that outlined the trends in art, which emerged after modernism and avant-garde.

Postmodernism is characterized by a sense of completeness of history, aesthetics, and art, the variation and coexistence of all – both the oldest and the newest forms of being. Therefore, the principles of reproducibility and compatibility are transformed into a style of artistic thinking with characteristic features of eclecticism (a mechanical combination of views), a tendency towards stylization, citation, paraphrase, reminiscence, allusion (hint). Being aware of the rupture of spiritual, social and cultural ties, the postmodernists try to reflect it in their works, applying various metaphors, associations, quotations, impressions, sketches, manipulation of which makes it possible to discover the general laws of being and consciousness.

Postmodernism fundamentally denies the notion of objective truth, opting instead to investigate the concept of multiple truths and acknowledging the individual's subjective experience of reality as a legitimate form of understanding.

Postmodernism was a response to the violation of human rights, the terrors of wars and the post-war events.

Table 4 – *The features of Postmodernism*

№	FEATURE	NATURE
1	2	3
1	Rejection of the ultimate faith in science	Modernism was established on the belief in science and rationality. The devastation and trauma wrought by the two world wars instilled a pessimistic view of science and technology in the modern psyche. Postmodernists have considered scientific advancements resulting in industrialization, defacing nature and damaging the humankind.


Continuation of table 4

1	2	3
2	Anti-positivist and anti-verificationist stance	Preda [12] asserts that postmodernism emphasizes the absence of an all-encompassing explanatory framework and is characterized by the lack of universally applicable verification methods. Dealney [7, p. 263] underscores that postmodern thinkers critique the notions of objectivity in social research, an independent rational mind, and grand narratives, or grand theories.
3	Individuality	Subjective views got more emphasis. Subjective reality gets constructed through subjective personal interpretation. Nietzsche's argument in this context raised numerous significant issues that laid the basis for postmodernism. Governmental policy sacrificed to personal concerns. According to Brann, ' <i>What each human being reports as a personal conviction is always to be taken seriously</i> ' [3, p. 7].
4	Truth as a matter of perspective	In postmodernism, truth is considered as a matter of perspective and not universal. There cannot be any absolute truth. The truth is seen as something that can be constituted, and not discovered [6]. Kant's belief as to 'the universality of truth' transforms into Nietzsche's conception, assuming that 'truth is a mere illusion'. The variety of patterns of mind, leads to the variety of truth.
5	Blurring the old distinctions	Postmodernism disregards binary opposition (like male vs. female, black vs. white, east vs. west, and the like) falling into <i>anti-dualism</i> [6]. The problematics like gender roles, racial, ethnic and class differences get represented in a kind of blurred way.
6	Globalization and multiculturalism	Because of huge globalization, different cultures are getting mixed within numerous of cultural dimensions like architectural forms, cuisine, music, literature, education, fashion, organizations. Within cultural interpretation moral conclusions get stepped away.
7	Information and communication sources (media)	The vast availability of information and media complicates and distinguishes postmodern life. These days, the world community finds media covering every aspect of human life. Postmodern society is getting molded by media. Consequently, human thoughts and media defined reality have become ' <i>hyper real.</i> ' Consumption philosophy flourishes.

Ending of table 4

1	2	3
8	Emerging literary movements	Postmodern writers often employ irony and dark humor in their literary works. Serious subjects get ridiculed, fragmented and get lighthearted treatment through the playful means. Intertextuality in fictions, as well as dismantling of genres is a commonplace in this era. Pastiche, metafiction, maximalism, minimalism, temporal distortion etc. are the prevalent within the tissue of the postmodern texts.

Table 5 – *The features of the Postmodern fiction*

POSTMODERN FICTION is characterized by:	
Fragmentation and temporal distortion	
Reaction to the ideas of Enlightenment, which feature modernist literature (the frustration sourced from the inability to find the sense of existence, disillusionment in humanism, which lead to black humour, irony, and absurd). <i>In American literature black humour is linked to the figures of John Simmons Bath, Joseph Heller, William Gaddis, Kurt Vonnegut</i>	
Pastiche – the combination, mosaics of the elements coming from various works of fiction of multiple genres, which is often viewed as one of the devices of intertextuality. It is linked to the reflection of the chaotic, pluralistic and information-flooded postmodern society. <i>The narration can be done in the framework of sci-fi, detective stories, fairy-tales, westerns, the mixture of genres</i> 	
all types of experimental narration, unreliable narration, dismantling of genres	
Intertextuality	
Metafiction = deconstructive approach, which exposes the artificiality of the art, embodied in unexpected narrative leaps, unusual plot development, emotional distancing	
Fabulation – a psychological term, denoting the mixture of the real and invented (in speech and memory). <i>A postmodern author rejects the idea of the lifelikeness and mimesis, celebrating fiction and pure creativity</i>	
Poioumenon (coming from Ancient Greek ποιούμενον (<i>poioúmenon</i>), “product”, creation) a term suggested by Alastair Fowler for a special type of metaprose, which is linked to some particular act of creation. <i>Fowler considers poiomenon lets the researcher investigate the borders of fiction and reality – the realms of the fictional truth. Very often it is a book about book creation, or this process is highlighted in the narration. The typical examples are “Sartor Resartus” by a</i>	

Continuation of table 5

<p><i>British author Thomas Carlyle or “Tristram Shandy” by an Anglo-Irish novelist Laurence Sterne, in which the narrator fails to tell his biography. Another sample Vladimir Nabokov’s “Pale Fire.”</i></p>
<p>Historiographic metaprose, a term introduced by Linda Hutcheon for the works of fiction, in which the real historic events and figures are developed in an artificial way or get altered, like in <i>Julian Barnes’s (England) “Flaubert’s Parrot”</i> or in <i>E.L. Doctorow’s (the USA) “Ragtime.”</i></p>
<p>Magic realism, characterized by the mixture and juxtaposition of the realistic and fantastic, skillful time shifts, tangled labyrinths, the insertion of dreams, mythology and fairy-tales, expressionist or surreal narration, masked knowledge, appeal to the unexpected, abrupt and shocking, scary and inexplicable. <i>E.g. “One Hundred Years of Solitude” (1967) by a Columbian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez; “Historia de la infamia” (1935) by Jorge Luis Borges”</i></p>
<p>Technoculture and hyperreality. <i>Fredric Jameson considered postmodern trends within the frame of a “cultural logic of the tardy capitalism”, which infers that the society enters the information era stepping from the industrial one. Altogether Jean Baudrillard asserted that post-modernity is a transference towards hypereality, in which simulation substitutes reality.</i></p>
<p>Paranoia. <u>A frequent topic:</u> A belief in an idea that the world chaos is backed by a particular masked system of order. <u>More often:</u> There is no any ordered system for a post-modernist, and the searches for it are meaningless and absurd. Often paranoia gets intervened with the topics of techno-culture and hyper-reality. <i>E.g. “Catch – 22” (1961) by an American writer Joseph Heller, “Breakfast of Champions” (1973) by Kurt Vonnegut</i></p>
<p>Exaggeration and maximalist viewpoint. The postmodern sensitivity requires that the parody parodied the very idea of parody. The narration has to equal the object of depiction – that is the contemporary information society, spreading and getting fragmented. <i>E.g. the novels by a US writer Dave Eggers.</i></p>
<p>Opposite – trivialization</p>
<p>Self-reflexivity</p>

The womb in which the American postmodernism gestated were the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the fear of automation, and the potential for violence, the critical environments that enfolded its distribution and reception of the post-war cultural discourse. Pinning down postmodernism’s inauguration on a

calendar, however, remains tricky. The postmodern episteme proves uncongenial to the very concept of linear, divisible historical time. By the same token, one discerns in work dating from the eighteenth century (Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*), the sixteenth century (*Don Quixote*), and even antiquity (the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter). All in all, the style of experimental literature emerged strongly in the United States in the 1960s through the writings of Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon, William Gaddis, Philip K. Dick, Kathy Acker, and John Barth, who construct literary genealogies that extend across established literary period.

However, a number of writers can qualify as a Janus of the modern – postmodern divide, with a perfect example of a Russian-American author Vladimir Nabokov with his *Lolita* as a re-fashioner of the modernism. By the time he began to make of himself an English-language author (subsequent to his flight from France to America in 1940), the day of the modern was passing. The new aesthetic, still unnamed, began to manifest itself in the fictions of this Russian émigré.

Challenging the shibboleth of originality, the postmoderns transform simple pastiche (*the imitate on of a famous style*) into something rich and strange. Borges's Pierre Menard undertakes to write a version of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1939) that will be the same, word for word, as the original. First published in 1939, the story introduces in its title character the patron saint of pastiche, his vision presently realized in the proliferation of texts appropriated, cloned, recycled, reinscribed. Other works of the post-modern character are presented by Barth's *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960), Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (both 1966). These works intersected with the cultural zeitgeist alongside the Pop Art visuals of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. Subsequently, John Gardner reimagines *Beowulf* with *Grendel* (1971), while Kathy Acker creates her own version of *Don Quixote* (1986). Valerie Martin adapts *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* into *Mary Reilly* (1990), and Jane Smiley transforms *King Lear* into *A Thousand Acres* (1991), illustrating a prime instance of "literary symbiosis."

An instance of historiographic metafiction can be found in Philip K. Dick's novel *"The Man in the High Castle"* (1962), which presents an alternate history of World War II and its aftermath. In this narrative, Giuseppe Zangara assassinates President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, leading to the continuation of the Great Depression and a policy of non-interventionism by the United States at the onset of World War II in 1939. The United States' policy of non-interference allows Nazi Germany to expand its influence over continental Europe, resulting in the extermination of various groups considered subhuman by the Nazis, including Jews, Romani, Bible Students, and Slavs. Additionally, Germany, Italy, and Japan gain control over Africa and vie for influence in South America by 1962. In this alternative reality, Imperial Japan invades the West Coast of the United States, while Nazi Germany invades the East Coast. The Allies surrender in 1947, and by 1962, Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany emerge as the world's superpowers, engaged in a geopolitical cold war, particularly over control of the former United States and South America. Japan establishes the Pacific States of America (PSA) within its Co-Prosperity Pacific Alliance, with the Rocky Mountain States serving as a neutral buffer between Japan and the Nazi-controlled territories to the east. Fictional Nazi-occupied North America comprises two states – the South and the northeastern region of the former United States, referred to as “the U.S.” in the novel – both governed by pro-Nazi puppet leaders. Part of Canada remains an independent nation. Philip Dick's postmodern novel is characterized by temporal shifts, non-linear narration, and a touch of magical realism.

New genres appear: nonfiction novels are written by John Hersey, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, and Tom Wicker; “historiographic metafiction” by Barth, Pynchon, Robert Coover, and E.L. Doctorow.

Thus, the epoch of the XXth century brought about a new range of problems, which led to a literary reaction embodied in MODERNISM and POSTMODERNISM:

1. ***The chaos of World War I:*** the shattered after-war world felt nostalgia for the lost world, destroyed within the battles of the Great war.

2. ***The post-WWII trauma:*** the post-slaughter literature examines the effects of the war on individuals and societies, cultivating the themes of loss, trauma, guilt, and searching for meaning in a shattered world.
3. ***Existentialism and Absurdity:*** literature appeals to the purpose of life in an uncertain, often absurd, universe.
4. ***Postcolonial dimension:*** the loss of colonies boosted the emergence of independent nation eager to address the issues of cultural identity, problems of decolonization, the injustice of oppression, and the legacy of colonialism.
5. ***The Cold War and political paranoia:*** brought up the themes of political tension, surveillance, and the threat of nuclear apocalypses (George Orwell's "1984", the UK; Kurt Vonnegut's "Slaughterhouse-Five", the USA).
6. ***Postmodernism and metafiction:*** the traditional forms of narrative got challenged. The introduction of self-reflexivity and intertextuality within narration.
7. ***Civil rights and social movements:*** the rise of civil and social rights movements, the evolution of feminism, the focus on LGBTQ+ rights.
8. ***Globalization and cross-cultural influence:*** the trite borders provoked penetration of cultures, raising the question of national identity vs the unified world.

For Jean Baudrillard the postmodern reality suddenly dissolves into a "real which [is] more than real" has been confirmed, and then exceeded [4, p. 53-54].

The XXth century is marked by the extensive development of another genre related to Modernism, which is 'magic(al) realism. **MAGIC REALISM** has a complicated history and encompasses many variants. The notion "magic realism" is measured though the prior or parallel trends in fiction, such as pure realism itself, fantastic fiction, allegorical mechanisms, or surrealism, or the interplay with each of them. The 'magic' parameters within the genre of magic realism appeals to the mystery of life itself, implying spirituality and unrational occurrence. Magical dimension within the texts of magic realism includes ghostly figures, disappearances, unusual talents and weird atmospheres, however, is deprived of direct magic. Maggie Ann Bowers says: "Conjuring 'magic' is brought about tricks that give the illusion that something

extraordinary happened, whereas in magic(al) realism it is assumed that something extraordinary *really* has happened” [5, p. 20].

When referring to magical realism as a narrative mode, realism is often linked with the novel tradition, as its expansive nature allows for the inclusion of numerous details that contribute to a sense of realism. XIXth-century ‘Classical Realism’ *tended to ‘show’ rather than ‘tell’* the reader an interpretation of reality. However, the idea of portraying real actions in art was first discussed by Aristotle who claimed that the act of imitating life, or mimesis, is a natural instinct of humans. In the XXth-century realism it is the reader who constructs the sense of reality from the narrative rather than the text revealing the author’s interpretation of reality to the reader. Catherine Belsey suggests that realism is convincing not because it mirrors the world, but because it draws from familiar discursive elements [1, p. 89]. An oxymoron ***magical realism*** (the combination of categories ‘magical’ and ‘real’) relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real.

Magic realism is a narrative technique primarily found in Latin-American literature, influenced by the beliefs with thought patterns indigenous to pre-Columbian civilizations such as the Aztecs, Mayans, Chibchas, and Incas. It involves the incorporation of fantastical or mythical elements into what appears to be realistic fiction. The term “magic realism” was coined relatively recently, in the 1940s, by Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier, who identified this characteristic in much of Latin-American literature. Some scholars suggest that magic realism emerges naturally in postcolonial writing, as it grapples with the realities of both the conquerors and the conquered. Notable Latin-American magic realists include Gabriel García Márquez from Colombia, Jorge Amado from Brazil, Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortazar from Argentina, and Isabel Allende from Chile.

The history of magic(al) realism (the related terms magical realism and marvelous realism) embraces several periods tied to deferent locuses: 1) the first period is set in Germany in the 1920s); 2) the second period takes place in Central America in the 1940s); 3) the third period began in Latin America in 1955 and continues internationally to this day.

The terms such as heteroglossia, cross-culturalism, postmodernism and post-colonialism are often associated with magical realism by critics.

Contemporary American literature features several works that employ magical realism, such as *“The Woman Warrior”* (1976) by Maxine Hong Kingston, American novel *“Beloved”* (1987, 1988) by Toni Morrison, *“Almanac of the Dead”* (1991) or *“Sacred Water”* (1993) by Leslie Marmon Silko.

POST-POSTMODERNISM
- *moves beyond postmodernism*

At the end of the 1990s there appeared a growing feeling that postmodernism *“has got outdated”*. Despite the fact that a number of attempts were taken to determine the coming epoch, none of them survived. In 1995, Tom Turner, a landscape architect, garden designer, and historian, who taught at the University of Greenwich in London, released a book that resonated with the emerging trend toward post-postmodernism in urban design. Turner's perspective suggests that post-postmodernism aims to harmonize reason and faith.

In 2002, Canadian literary theorist Linda Hutcheon expressed the need for a new term to describe what was emerging after the era of postmodernism. She remarked: *“Let’s just say: it’s over. ...The postmodern moment has passed, even if its discursive strategies and its ideological critique continue to live on – as do those of modernism – in our contemporary twenty-first century world. ...Post-postmodernism needs a new label of its own, and I conclude, therefore, with this challenge to readers to find it – and name it for the twenty-first century”*.

POST-POSTMODERNISM is a reaction to postmodernism that seeks to reconcile the individual’s experience with the objective truth. Post-postmodernism does recognize the legitimacy of the individual’s experience, but also acknowledges that certain facts must be accepted as universal truths. Post-postmodernism integrates individual experiences with collective experiences, fostering a comprehensive comprehension of reality. *Post-postmodernism* is literally *“another modernism”* = *“altermodernism”*, *“cosmodernism”*, *“digimodernism”*, *“hyper-modernism”*, *supermodernity*, *“metamodernism”*, *“posthumanism”*, *“performism”* as a cultural

contemporary trend, which gets defined through the notion of “the digital society”. The term “*performatism*” was introduced by Raoul Eshelman as a designation to describe or substitute for the term “Post-Postmodernism”. He goes on to describe it as “a new epoch in which subject, sign, and thing come together in ways that create an aesthetic experience of “*transcendancy as a place where meaning is created*”. As a culture Post-postmodernism dwells on the stylistic devices of both Modernism and Postmodernism, while representing realistic esthetics, ethical values, and national identity.

The social preconditions for the formation of the esthetics of the post-postmodernism are associated with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, as well as the terroristic of September, 11 in 2001, linked to Al Qaeda, the start of the Third Millennium, irregularity of the globalization practices (the crisis of the “global capitalism”, new threats connected with geopolitical instability, terrorism, national colour revolutions and wars, financial crisis, job migration, the refugee phenomenon).

Post-postmodernism is characterized by “*glocalization*”, which is the accentuation and preserving of social rather than individual uniqueness, group identity, ethnic identity of people or country in the frames of global social space.

The ethical and aesthetic categories of the post-postmodernism are linked to the term of “*transsentimentality*” as a dominance of the cultural directness, eternal values, the nostalgia for the real beauty, overcoming of the postmodern irony. According to the researchers, the tendencies of “*digimodernism*” will be contributing to the formation of the new style, that will be navigated by the variants of the neo-classicism. *Pseudomodernism* (2006), or *digimodernism* (2009) is one of the concepts representing the contemporary society as a network epoch and investigating the Internet, computers, smartphones, as well as other technologies as such that abolish the postmodern and predetermine our culture, structure our life, and distinguish the interactive substance, which modifies the mode of communication and the way of being. Altogether *auto-modernity* is one of the versions of the post-postmodernism, investigating the impact of technologies on the contemporary social practices (inevitably reflected in literature within the paradigm of character construction and world architecture) on dialectics of

the individual autonomy and technological automatisisation. The major points of the concept were voiced in the article by Robert Samuels “*Auto-Modernity after Postmodernism: Autonomy and Automation in Culture, Technology, and Education*” (2007) and his book “*New Media, Cultural Studies, and Critical Theory after Postmodernism: Automodernity from Zizek to Laclau*” (2009).

Post-postmodernism is *paralleled by the rebirth of realism*, especially *historical and biographic genres of non-fiction*, where the documentarist approach gets intervened with true emotions and a particular form of creativity. Along with the constant transformation of society and culture, and therefore literature, post-postmodernism has developed a number of branches, characterizing the trend today’s “*liquid modernity*” (the term suggested by a Polish-born British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in his publication “*Liquid Modernity*”, 2000). “Liquid modernity” is a concept, which determines a new epoch as a contemporary flexible, liquid, free from various borders and conditions world, which is marked by the death of some words, forms and institutions.

Hypermodernism is one of the most coherent versions of post-postmodernism reflecting massive transformation in art and culture, society technology, media, economic structure and the personality itself. Hypermodernism is characterized by the culture of consumption, hyper-consumerism, urgency and exaggeration of everything, supersonic speedism, hyper-individualism, and strong freedom. Canadian authors Arthur Kroker and David Cook in their work “*The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics*” (1987) proved that postmodernity goes to a new level of ultra-modernity, which is getting replaced by its alternative – hypermodern. With this the term “ultra-modern” is viewed as disintegration and the ‘ruins’ of culture. There is some stress on the transformation of the aesthetics into hyper-aesthetics. Later Kroker and Marilouise Kroker suggested that the body itself became a simulacrum, while the anti-aesthetics of the post-modernism was substituted by the hyper-aesthetics of wastage.

A British theorist John Armitage in his book *“Paul Virilio: From Modernism to Hypermodernism and Beyond (Theory, Culture and Society)”* (2000) changed prefix “post-” to “hyper-”, which meant “surplus” and described hypermodernism as “a continuation of modernism by other means”.

Francois Ascher in his work *“Hypermodern Society”* (2001) studied the existence of the contemporary person in the metropolis, compact, stretched and interrupted urban spaces, investigated the mode of life and everyday practices within the hyper-modernity.

Nicole Aubert described hyper-modernity through the experience of intensity, urgency of high immediate satisfaction, and the condition of excess. In his work *“Violence of Time and Hypermodern Pathologies”* (2008) he discloses the nature of deviations in the hypermodern society.

Supermodernity is viewed as a kind of hypermodernism. While modernism was concentrated on the creation of the supreme truth and “meta-narratives”, and post-modernism was directed to the elimination and deconstruction, super-modernism deals with the “meta-truth”. The attributes get excavated from the objects of the past depending on their topicality and value, which means that their truthfulness/validity or falsity don’t matter. Super-power is a step over the realms of ontological emptiness of post-modernism and reliance on plausible heuristic truth. The most known theorists of supermodernity are British literary scholar Terry Eagleton *“The Illusions of Postmodernism”* (1996) and *“After Theory”* (2003), Kashif Vikaas *“Hyper-land”* and French anthropologist Marc Auge *“Non-places (Fr. Non-lieux): Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity”* (1992) and *“Illusory Community”* (2010).

Altermodern is linked to the rebooting of culture as one of the ways of overcoming postmodernity, suggested in the work by Nicolas Bourriaux *“Altermodern”* (2009).

Renewalism is one of the concepts of the post-postmodernism dwelling on the peculiarities of manifestation of meta-narrative and metaphysical texts in the modern art. The concept was suggested by Josh Toth in his books *“The Passing of*

Postmodernism: A Spectroanalysis of the Contemporary (Suny Series in Postmodern Culture” (2010) and “*Truth and Metafiction*” (2020).

Cosmodernity as well as “*cosmotemporality*” is a cultural paradigm, predominantly characterized by relationality and “being in connection with the other”, “the base and means for the new unity, for solidarity between people”. American-Canadian literary scientist Christian Murray in his work “*Cosmodernism: American Narrative, Late Globalization, and the New Cultural Imaginary*” (2011). It was Christian Murray who proclaimed the onset of the “cosmodern turn” and the emergence of a new culture paradigm, a new culture of the *imagined* and a peculiar worldview on the background of the accelerating globalization. Within the paradigm the theme of “*otherness*” is being studied “beyond the thematic and formal, in an ethical way”. The interconnection between self and others is altogether a “historical reality, practical necessity and an ethical imperative”. Instead of the binary division into a subject and an object, there takes place a removal of the traditional binary scheme, presupposing *a complete termination of “the other”*. In 2015 within the framework of his new book “*Reading for the Planet: Toward a Geomethodology*” Christian Murray introduces a fresh term – *planitarism*, describing a reality, alternative to neo-liberal economic globalization. According to him, the Western cosmodernity of the postmodern representing the world / fractal phenomenon is an inseparable part of the development or a turn towards the planetary proportions. And this turn is aimed at the planetarization of the places in the world. The contemporary state of things withdraws us beyond the postmodern, as it intervenes the present and the other elements characterizing it into a chronotopically new tissue.

The philosophical thought of today distinguishes *transmodernism*, *possibilism*, and *transversality*. *Transmodernism* is a philosophical and cultural movement based on the combination of modern and postmodern elements in the description of a complex identity, seeking to define itself against the global world (Enrique Dussel, Ziauddin Sardar, Paul Gilroy, David Geoffrey Smith). *Potentialism* (or *possibilism*) is a philosophical trend directed at augmentation of being, existence and entities

(Epstein). *Transversality* (from Latin transversus – ‘transverse’, trans – ‘though’ + vertere “to turn”) is a contemporary version of post-postmodernism, a new paradigm of the global world, a variant of a philosophical reflection of the reality, as well as changes, on the contemporary level of the societal and cultural development (Wofgang Welsch, Calvin Schrag).

Non-modernism is an artistic trend of post-postmodernism more close to the critical and experimental spirit of Modernism that towards its contemporary forms of the industrial and post-industrial modernization, implementing the concept “*what if*” (defined by a Russian-American cultural theorist Svetlana Boym (years of life 1959-2015)).

METAMODERNISM

METAMODERNISM encompasses various discourses about cultural advancements that surpass postmodernism by utilizing elements of postmodernism. Several metamodern theorists define it as a synthesis between elements of modernism and postmodernism, while others see it as the integration of these sensibilities with traditional cultural codes predating modernism. Metamodernism is among several endeavors aimed at delineating post-postmodernism.

The METAMODERN MANIFESTO proclaims: “*We propose a pragmatic romanticism unhindered by ideological anchorage. Thus, metamodernism shall be defined as the mercurial condition between and beyond irony and sincerity, naivety and knowingness, relativism and truth, optimism and doubt, in pursuit of a plurality of disparate and elusive horizons. We must go forth and oscillate!*” [15].

“THE METAMODERN MANIFESTO:

1. We understand oscillation as the inherent rhythm of the world.
2. It’s time to break free from the inertia caused by a century of simplistic modernist ideologies and the jaded insincerity of its opposing offspring.
3. From now on, progress will come from embracing the oscillation between contrasting viewpoints, akin to the pulsating poles of a vast electrical mechanism, propelling us into action.

4. We acknowledge the inherent limitations of movement and experience, recognizing the futility of attempting to surpass these boundaries. Instead, we should accept these limits, not to achieve a specific goal or be bound by their constraints, but to glimpse the potential beyond them. While we understand that systems are inherently incomplete, striving against these limits enriches our existence, expanding our understanding of the world.

5. Everything moves towards a state of maximum disarray, and artistic creation thrives on introducing or uncovering differences within this chaos. The highest form of emotional impact is experiencing pure difference itself. Art's purpose is to explore the paradoxical ambition of coaxing out excess and bringing it into the present.

6. Today, we are simultaneously nostalgic for the past and forward-thinking for the future. Modern technology allows us to experience and engage with events from multiple perspectives simultaneously. These emerging networks don't signal the end of history but rather democratize it, revealing the diverse paths that shape our present.

7. Just as science seeks elegance in its explanations, artists should strive for truth in their creations. All information, whether empirical or anecdotal, holds value for expanding our knowledge. Embracing a blend of scientific inquiry and poetic imagination, akin to magical realism, allows for the acceptance that errors can lead to new insights.

8. We advocate for a practical form of romanticism, unburdened by rigid ideologies. Metamodernism is defined as the fluid state between irony and sincerity, naivety and wisdom, relativism and truth, optimism and skepticism, as we pursue a multitude of diverse and elusive horizons. Let us embrace this journey of oscillation and discovery" [15].

Seth Abramson (2017) defines ten basic principles of metamodernism (*"The Huffington Post"*):

- An attempt of reconciliation of the basics of modernism and postmodernism;
- The dominance of the dialogue over the dialectics;
- The paradox in the combining of ideas;
- The combination of the juxtaposed phenomena, like the irony and sincerity;
- The replacement of the postmodernist idea of an insurmountable distance between subjects and awareness of their simultaneous remoteness and closeness to each other; the blurring of identity boundaries;
- The multiplicity of human subjectivity, self-identification;
- The simultaneous existence in different countries and the generative uncertainty, which is the dominant ones;
- The optimistic response to a tragedy, that leads to the formation of metanarrative;
- Interdisciplinary bent.

Table 6 – *The features of Metamodernism*

The technical features of metamodernism according to Greg Dember, expressed in his “ <i>After Postmodernism: Eleven Metamodern Methods in the Art</i> ” (2018) are as follows:
Hyper-self-reflexivity;
The method of double frame (<i>the existence of both outer fantastic frame of narration in the literary text, combined with the inner, absolutely serious narration, deprived of irony</i>);
Oscillation (<i>as to emotions and aesthetics rather than politics or intellectual concepts</i>);
Eccentricity and quirky inclination <i>as an alternative to the split between the irony and the enthusiasm</i> ;
“The tiny” or minimalism <i>as a manner to portray the things less-scaled or simpler than they are, also the mineralization of the décor in the descriptions</i> ;
“The epic” or maximalist bent <i>as a rebellion against the postmodern prohibition of the violent self-expression</i> ;
The combination of minimalism and maximalism
Constructive pastiche, <i>which is about paradoxical involvement in someone else’s experience, what differs from the dissociative nature of the postmodern experience</i> ;
“Ironesty” <i>as the illogical combination of sincerity and irony (the neo-sincerity). It is irony, sarcasm, sardonicism implied with the “serious” aim, in order to share the emotional experience, the protagonist had gone through</i> ;
“Normecore” <i>as a person’s attempt, who doesn’t belong to the social mainstream look like its representative, thus demonstrating the unity with somebody else’s experience</i> ;
over-projection and anthropomorphization, <i>which deal with the projection of the human qualities towards the non-anthropomorphic essences or non-beings</i> ;
“Meta-Cute” <i>as the endowment of adult characters with childish purity and innocence</i> .

The metamodern works by American writers include: David Foster Wallace (novels “*Infinite Jest*”, 1996, “*The Pale King*”, 2011, posthumous, “*Oblivion: Stories*”, 2004, etc.); Jonathan Earl Franzen (novels “*The Corrections*”, 2001, “*Freedom*”, 2010, “*Purity*”, 2015); Jennifer Egan (“*A Visit from the Goon Squad*”, 2010, “*Manhattan Beach*”, 2017, “*The Candy House*”, 2022); Ben Lerner (“*10:04: Farrar, Straus and Giroux*”, 2014); Dave Eggers (memoir “*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*”, 2000); Jonathan Safran Foer (“*Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*”, 2005); Junot-Diaz, a Dominican-American author (“*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*”, 2007).

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *American realists and the characteristic features of realism.*
2. *Neo-realism in the works by Ernest Hemmingway and William Faulkner.*
3. *American modernism, its traits and representatives.*
4. *Post-modernism in American poetry.*
5. *Postmodernism in America plays.*
6. *The contemporary examples of meta-modernist writings.*
7. *Post-postmodernism, what defines it?*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

The **Harlem Renaissance** embraces African American cultural expression through music, dance, art, fashion, literature, theater, politics and scholarship rooted in Harlem, Manhattan, New York City, spanning the 1920s and 1930s. Is known as the “New Negro Movement”, named after “The New Negro”, a 1925 anthology edited by Alain Locke.

The **Lost Generation** is the term coined by Gertrude Stein and popularized by Ernest Hemingway through the epigraph of his 1926 novel “*The Sun Also Rises*”: “*You are all a lost generation*”, meaning the “disoriented, wandering, directionless” spirit of many of the war's survivors in the early post-WWI period.

Meta-truth appeals to Socrates’ “*All I know is that I know nothing*”, stressing that the whole truth is unachievable. The concepts of truth and faulty can vary within different operational paradigms and modes of discourse.

Surrealism emerged in Europe between World War I and World War II, evolving from the earlier Dada movement, which had produced works of anti-art aimed at defying logic and reason before the outbreak of the First World War. However, unlike Dadaism, surrealism focused more on affirmative expression than negation. It was a response to what its adherents perceived as the devastation caused by the “rationalism” that had guided European culture and politics, particularly evident in the horrors of World War I. The Surrealist Manifesto, penned by poet and critic André Breton in 1924, articulated the movement's principles. Surrealism aimed to bridge the conscious and unconscious realms of human experience to such an extent that the world of dreams and fantasies would merge with everyday reality, creating what Breton termed “an absolute reality, a surreality.” Drawing heavily from theories influenced by Sigmund Freud, Breton viewed the unconscious as a wellspring of the imagination. He believed that accessing this hidden realm, which he equated with genius, was possible for poets and painters alike.

Ukrainian modernism arose not solely from the impact of Western philosophical and artistic movements but also from a revived national tradition, notably the “philosophy of the heart,” which shares numerous similarities with the “philosophy of life”.

The “**philosophy of the heart**” is the main traditional direction of the Ukrainian philosophy, which reflects the specifics of mental consciousness, manifested in bright emotional forms of “cordocentrism”. The first and the most complete formulation of the “philosophy of the heart” can be seen in the teaching of H.S. Skovoroda, who noted: “The truth of a person is the heart in a person, and the deep heart is only attainable to God, as the abysses of our thoughts, simply saying the soul, that is, an essential being, force, outside what a dead shadow we are”. The “philosophy of the heart” became particularly relevant at the beginning of the 20th century under the influence of the European “philosophy of life”. The Ukrainian modernism was formed at their intersection. “*Cordocentric*” pathos is observed in the lyrics of neo-romantics, symbolists, especially Oleksandr Oles, who knew how to beat “on the broken strings of his heart”.

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PACE 2

INTERTEXTUALITY AS A LITERARY TECHNIQUE. THE IMBODIEMENT OF INTERTEXTUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Key terms: *A multi-layered text, the layers of meaning, a text in the text, polysemy, metatextuality, the architecture of the work, allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche, and parody, the hypertext, the hypotext, hidden / explicit, interpretation, new contexts*

1. *Text as a linguistic and a literary category.*
2. *Intertextuality: the origins of the term.*
3. *The concepts of intertextuality.*
4. *Types and forms of intertextuality.*
5. *Intertextuality in the process of story interpretation.*

An Italian author Umberto Eco, whose name is tightly linked to the concept of intertextuality, points out: *“The good of a book lies in its being read. A book is made up of signs that speak of other signs, which in their turn speak of things. Without an eye to read them, a book contains signs that produce no concepts; therefore, it is dumb”* (his debut novel *“The Name of the Rose”*, 1980). The quotation by Eco deals with the very core of intertextuality, which demands a particular literary expertise from a reader, or implies that various readers will interpret the text on different semantic levels. The novel by Umberto Eco itself is a semiotically dense text, appealing to the dark mysticism of the Medieval period, as well as playing with Biblical concepts.

The comprehension of the nature of intertextuality is closely connected to the understanding of the term “text”. The term *“text”* (from Latin *textus* – tissue, interweaving, compound) has been widely used in Linguistics, Literary Studies, Aesthetics, Semiotics, Culture Studies, as well as Philosophy. According to Yu. Lotman, the term *“text”* is one of the most common terms in Humanities.

In philology, the text is an act of application of language, possessing a number of particular qualities like coherence and completion. The text is clearly limited both from verbal and non-verbal reality the surrounding it. In other words, the text has a clearly stated beginning and ending, comprising a chain of sentences, which represents an indivisible communicative unit and appeals to its perception as an indivisible whole. Thus, from the philological point of view the text is a linguistic expression of some linguistic sequence, a line of speech in the work of fiction, allocated together with the figurative aspect (the artistic world of the work of fiction) and its moral / ideological-conceptual sphere (artistic content). Within the work of fiction Linguists distinguish *the main text* and its *side text* (the title, remarks, epigraph, devotions, the author's pretext, the indication of dates and places of creation, a list of characters, asides in the dramatic text).

In the sphere of culture, the term text is a linguistic (or – wider – a semiotic) unit, having an *extra-situational value*. Utterances, however, being shortly and situationally meaningful, have nothing to do with the text from the point of view of the Cultural Studies. For example, a note left by a mother for her child telling what to eat for breakfast or what to buy in the supermarket, is a full-fledged text for a linguist, but not for a culturologist. For a culturologist the text is a result of solidification of an act of speech, an utterance, an object, forever crystalized. According to Yu. Lotman, the texts are not only fixed linguistic units, but the ones which have to be preserved, being culturally valuable for the collective memory of a certain culture. “*Not every message is worth recording*”, says Lotman, “*Everything recorded acquires a particular cultural meaningfulness, turning into the text*” [44, p. 286, 284]. In other words, culture interprets the text as *reproducible* unit (by means of retelling, repetition or replication).

In literature, the text of the verbal fiction literature is generated by author's creative will, being generated and completed by the author. Altogether the links of a speech tissue (and sometimes this tissue as a whole) find themselves in a particular complicated, even conflictive relationships towards the author's mind. The text is not always created in a single author's speech manner and is often characterized by speech

multiplicity, the diversity of thought, form and manner of speaking. Both *direct* author's word and a *non-author* "*word of somebody*" (the term by M. Bakhtin) are equally important from the artistic point of view. The "*words of somebody*" can interfere with the author's narration turning the textual units into *two-voiced / double-voiced* or multi-voiced words. Describing the correlation of the artistic units of speech in fiction, M. Bakhtin distinguished three types of words: 1) a direct word aimed at its subject as the expression of the semantic appeal of the speaker; 2) an extraneous to the mind of the speaker "object word (the word of the depicted person)"; 3) and a double-voiced word, belonging to two subjects simultaneously [3, p. 340-341]. Thus, the speech units of the second and the third groups are *non-author*, or to be precise – not only the author's words.

Within the postmodern concepts the text is viewed as '*a text without borders*' [38, p. 259]. Jacques Derrida reflected on the nature of the text as an endless canvas: "*For me text is limitless. It's an absolute totality. It means that the text is not only a speech act. Let's say that a table is a text for me. The way I perceive this table is the pre-linguistic perception – it is in itself a text for me*" [38, p. 74]. According to Khalizev, "*There is nothing outside the text*" [38, p. 260].

The approach implying that our life is a text by itself, and everything existing as a part of the objective reality is a text, agrees with the Biblical Moises calling the world *the book of God* (Exod 32, 32-33).

An original text conception was generated by Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva and Jacques Derrida. Barthes opposed a fictional text and a work of fiction, distinguishing therefore two kinds of literary text. The texts of classical pre-modern works possessing a semiotic certainty and embodying the author's position, are characterized in an ironically alienated way. According to Barthes, such a text deals with deceit and farce, as it views itself as a certain whole, having no basing for it. For Barthes the life in such a text turns into a kind of a nauseating mush of popular beliefs and a choking blanket, created out of truisms [11, p. 227]. In the contemporary texts the language speaks itself. In such texts there is no room for the voice of characters or the author's voice as a

holder of a certain position which get stepped in by a Scriptor, who is born only in the process of writing and stops their existence when the text is created. According to Barthes a text updates the old, half-forgotten cultural languages and serves as a space of convergence of all possible quotes, which form the *intertext*. The base of the intertext is not somebody's personal speech, but a faceless writing of some playful nature, able to satisfy the reader. Barthes sees the reader as an indolent person not burdened with anything, who just strolls. In such a way the text loses its endemic feature, manifested in stability and self-equality. It is thought of as the one that *emerges de novo* in every act of perception, as the one belonging to the reader and created by the reader beyond the authors will. A rhizome (Gillez Deleuze, Pierre-Felix Guattari), a garden with numerous paths (Jorge Luis Borges), a library-labyrinth (Umberto Eco) and other metaphorical interpretation of the text as “a seine net” through intertextuality (Roland Barthes) take place. Having separated the work of fiction and the text, Roland Barthes has freed the text from any genetic dependence and structural completion, comparing it to a seine net, which catches a number of senses from history, social politics, economy, culture, philosophy, previous literary texts, mythology, etc. Thus, a stereophonic flood of obvious and hidden quotes, echoes of literary and non-literary origin go through this “seine net”.

Thus, the archeology of the text in the XXth century presupposes literary communication, a polyphony of intertextual, cultural and postcolonial connections. A literary artist largely predetermines the specificity of their work, which is often characterized by high reminiscent richness as the integral property of their work. Without an intertextual reading of the works of many authors of the new generation a full perception of their artistic world is impossible. Since the XXth century the philological science has been largely focused on the study of the continuity of certain artistic elements in the process of literary evolution. This is especially true of poetry – probably the most sensitive form to the “alien” word. However, even a prosaic or dramatic text can be deeply intertextual.

The genesis of intertextuality is tightly linked to the studies by M. Bakhtin and his idea of the dialogical nature of the text. According to Bakhtin, “*the dialogical nature of the word is a phenomenon endemic to every word*” [4, p. 32]. On its way to the object every word imminently meets “a word of somebody” or a so-called “*alien*” word, interacting with it. Bakhtin didn’t use the term “*intertextuality*”, defining, however, the “*alien speech*” as “*a speech in speech*”, “*an utterance inside of another utterance*”, which is simultaneously a “*speech about a speech*”, “*an utterance of an utterance*” [7, p. 445]. Bakhtin’s method was largely based on Socratic dialogue, as well as borrows from the mimesis (imitation) theory shaped by Plato (within ethical and political context) and Aristotle’s ideas (in relation to aesthetics). Plato interpreted any poetic text as hereditary, mimicking the prior creative forms, which led to the production of a direct copy. Aristotle interprets dramatic text as a condensed entity of the previously known texts containing social codes, mythological tradition, cultural knowledge in their trimmed form. Cicero and Quintilian explained imitation as a “the completion of an act of interpretation”. Thus, polyphony and dialogism, shaped in the works by Bakhtin and Kristeva, dwell on the antique perception of composition as sourced out of multiple pre-texts.

Middle Ages, extensively borrowing from Bible with its multi-level symbolic nature, continued the Hellenic of expanding the meaning of the actual text. In the same way as Plato referred to the concept of ideas, church fathers saw the physical objects as the God’s symbolic language.

Renaissance suggested the unrestricted interpretation, wider than strictly Biblical frames. The quotation practice and allusions to the greatest works of the epoch or the previous epochs became commonplace. What initially started as an appeal to Bacon, Shakespeare, Montaigne, Ronsard, Du Bellay, expanded globally, covering the preceding men of letters of various epochs and numerous locations. Dwelling on the mimesis theory, the writers of that period accepted the possibility of interpretation and thus re-writing one and the same *Urtext* limitlessly. In such a way, one and the same mythical or historical plot could appear within the texts of different authors. The

writer's independence maintained through the imitation of the model. Therefore, Montaigne thought that “self is to be found in a distancing of the reading and writing subject from the anterior “other” (echoing the Bloóimian concept of “anxiety of influence”) and defends assort of boastful forgetfulness as the best means of escaping the tyranny of past masters” [32, p. 7-9].

From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, writers began to intensify their efforts to distance themselves from the works of previous authors and assert their own creative space. T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) was among the first to emphasize that the most distinctive elements of an author's work often reflect the influence of their predecessors. T.S. Eliot's ideas, particularly expressed in “*Tradition and the Individual Talent*”, are considered semi-intertextual. The author recognized the connection between a writer's cultural background and the resulting text, suggesting that cultural and historical contexts shape the fabric of the text.

The term **INTERTEXTUALITY** was coined on the basis of Western post-structuralism and was introduced in 1966 (1967) by Julia Kristeva in her essay “*Bakhtin, Word, Dialogue and Novel*”, in which the author generates her theory of intertextuality dwelling on the work by M. Bakhtin “*The Problem of Content, Material and Form in Verbal Fiction*” (1924), where Bakhtin stresses the interaction of the artistic world with the prior or contemporary culture. According to Kristeva, “any text is constructed as a mosaic of citation, any text is the absorption and transformation of some other text” and “thus, the concept of inter-subjectivity gets substituted by the concept of intertextuality, and it turns out that poetic language lends itself to at least a double reading” [40, p. 166]. The notion of intertextuality as Kristeva's heritage has turned into one of the major literary critical concepts. **INTERTEXT** is a body of texts reflected in some particular work of fiction, regardless of whether it is related to the work *in absentia* (as in the case of an allusion) or included in it in *praesentia* (as in the case of a quotation)”. The text is established through the current author's imitation, adaptation, splicing, and application. The essence of intertextuality theory deals with the issue of originality of the text and the authority of the author of the text.

Intertextuality is often viewed as a retrospective process whereby a text echoes existing or assumed texts, yet it also offers a renewed perspective within a new conceptual framework. Texts are perceived to interact with one another, fostering an endless dialogue and allowing for diverse interpretations. In literary works, intertextuality can take various forms:

- the generic direction;
- stylistic devices serve as the fundamental driving factor behind intertextuality;
- combination of visual and linguistic texts;
- translation intertextuality;
- parody intertextuality;
- incorporation intertextuality;
- many-voiced narration;
- global intertextuality.

All the voices represent texts interacting with each other in the course of the narration and which help create the unity of the entire story, which can be visible in Figure 1.

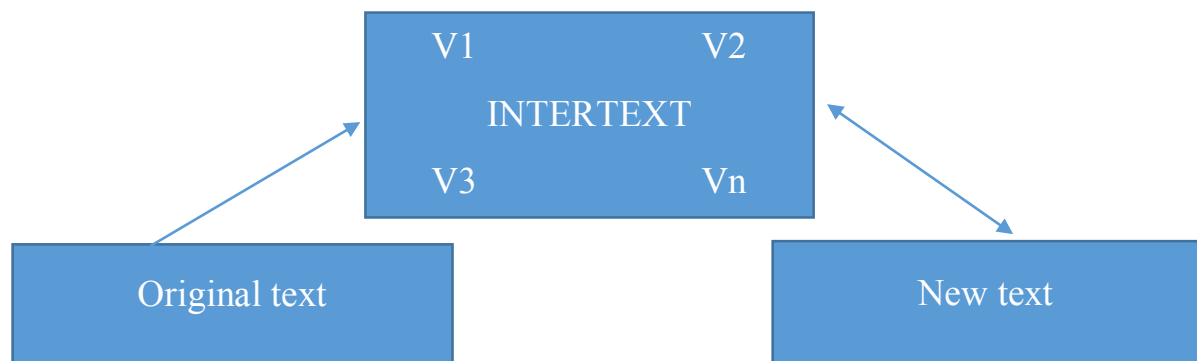


Figure 1 – *The creation of a new text as a writer's message to be decoded*

Intertextuality appeals to the idea that all the texts have common root, and interacting with the environment, can alter, producing numerous senses. These commonalities imply that, in parallel with biological evolution, literary evolution is non-linear and non-teleological.

***INTERTEXTUALITY** is one of the peculiarities of the post-modern literature, denoting the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of the network of texts inside the author's text, which impact one another. It sees every text as a component of a wider cultural text. Intertextuality refers to how a text's meaning is influenced or shaped by another text. Intertextual techniques encompass various methods such as allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche, and parody. The author's play with the textual concepts creates numerous semantic layers to be comprehended by the reader of certain linguistic expertise. The textual labyrinth with its multiplicity of senses leads different readers along the different paths, so that not everyone was able to 'attend' all the floors of the textual building. The prior text can be borrowed or transformed within the new textual tissue. Intertextuality is not marked by quotation marks or any other referencing punctuation. Intertextuality is not necessarily intentional.*

Kristeva's conception gave a tool for analysis of the bulk of the postmodern fiction. The variety of interpretations of the term "intertextuality" is sourced from the multifaceted nature of the concept itself. There is both a broad and narrow interpretation of intertextuality. Gerard Genette in his book "*Palimpsestes, La littérature au second degré*" (1982) the researcher proposes a five-member classification of different types of interaction between the texts: 1) intertextuality as the co-presence of two or more texts in one text (quotes, allusion, plagiarism, film adaptation, dramatization, etc.); 2) paratextuality as the relationship of the text to its title, afterword, epigraph; 3) metatextuality as a critical commentary to the pretext; 4) hypertextuality as a ridicule and parody of one text within another; 5) architextuality is seen as the genre connection of texts.

A broader interpretation of intertextuality was suggested by Roland Barthes in 1973. According to Barthes, every text is an open structure in relation to every other text and the reader: "*every text is endlessly open ad infinitum: neither a single reader, nor a single subject, or science can stop the movement of the text...*" [11, p. 10, 425]. According to Barthes, the main features of intertext is its limitless nature, preconditioned by the limitless character of the language (writing): "*Every text is simultaneously an intertext; other texts are presented in the text on various levels in more or less recognizable forms: the texts of previous culture and the texts of the contemporary culture. Every text is a new tissue, woven together out of the old quotes.*

The bits of cultural codes, formulae, rhythmic structures, fragments of social idioms and so on – all of them are engulfed by the text and mixed in them, as language exists before the text and around it. As a necessary prerequisite for any text, intertextuality can't be narrowed to the issue of sources or influences; it is comprised of a broader field of anonymous formulae, the origin of which can be seldom figured out, unconscious and automatic citation without quotes” [14, p. 78].

Barthes, declaring the death of the author, celebrates the birth of the reader.

The construction of a textual fabric involves numerous writings sourced from diverse cultures, engaging in dialogues, parodies, and contestations, “but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted [...] we know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author” [10, p. 148].

Barthes appeals to the death of the author as the authorship limits the text putting it in particular frames, giving it completeness. The notion “*the Author*” in “*The Death of the Author*” deals more with the metaphorical representation of the God, or the architect and less with the “*scripter*” themselves. Consequently, Barthes refuses the individual authorship of the texts to anyone, considering the semantic plurality and dynamism of the textual tissue, as well as multiplicity of its forms, which is fueled by the nature of the reader / the interpreter – the person, who comments it.

Thus, the idea of intertextuality contradicts the popular belief concerning the genuineness and autonomy of writing, which, probably goes in tune with the ancient forms of literature and its principles, like mythology and folklore, originally reconstructed and transformed in the lips of the narrator. However, if the old forms of literature were open for the modification and “editing” practices, the texts of the XXth

century and further “borrow” from a multiplicity of the previous texts or pre-texts, allowing both the author and the reader to “play” with the meanings.

THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE PIONEERS OF INTERTEXTUALITY AS A LITERARY THEORY:

Intertextuality sees a textual formation as a “*growing, evolving, never-ending process*” [33, p. 232]. Intertextuality dwells on the idea of a hereditary nature of the text as an open, limitless process of creation. The text mirrors the previous texts surching for meaning, which won’t be stable, but rather shifty and illusive, depending on the nature and the expertise of the reader, their cultural background. According to the theory of intertextuality, every text embraces a network of diversified links relating to multiple sources, and created both consciously or subconsciously. The fresh for the XXth century approach to the text interpretation perceives “*every text is an intertext*” [43, p. 59]. Heinrich F. Plett views the intertext as “*a text between other texts*” [52, p. 5].

Intertextuality was born as a post-structuralist theory, interpreting every text as a matter to be decoded and analyze within a particular cultural, historical or philosophical context. The cultural context is simultaneously considered as a verbal or non-verbal texts, represented through music, cinematography, visual means, advertisements, pop culture, etc., and interacting with each other.

Considering the notion of intertextuality, Heinrich F. Plett [52, p. 27] stresses that literature in the XXth century is characterized by the dominance of *ré-écriture* over *écriture*, that is the nature of writing has transformed, which led to the production of numerous re-written texts rather than the original scripts. Altogether, Maria Jesus Martinez Alfaro comes to the conclusion that “Even if intertextuality is by no means a time-bound feature, it is obvious that certain cultural periods incline to it more than others and that the XXth century witnessed two such phases. In the modernist era, intertextuality is apparent in every section of culture: literature (Eliot, Joyce), art (Picasso, Ernst), music (Stravinsky, Mahler), photography (Heartfield, Haussmann), etc., even if it is interpreted in different ways [2, p. 271]. Postmodernism demonstrates a heightened inclination toward intertextuality, extending its reach to other mediums such as films (for example, Woody Allen’s “*Play it Again, Sam*”) and architecture (such as Charles Moore’s “*Piazza d’Italia*” in New Orleans).

In 1970s an American critic Harold Bloom described the intertextual relationships between the major writers as *a history of creative misreadings* within a great dialogue between generations, in which the “*sons*” reply the questions asked by the “*fathers*”. Such replicas-answers which revise the tradition can represent a deviation from a trend, selected by the predecessors (*clinamen*), or can provide an antithetical addition to the trend (*tesserae*), or embody a total destruction of the connections with the trend (*kenosis*), or purification (*askesis*), or a fracture with some unpredictable consequences (*demonization*), or a paradoxical return to the once-lost original sense (*apophasis*). All this turns a poetic tradition into an endless chain of the fights between the successors and their predecessors.

Jacques Derrida introduced the term ‘*difference*’ or the discrepancy of sense, which implies that words and other signs in speech never equal their direct meaning and can be interpreted only within the chain of interpretations of the other words surrounding them.

Michel Riffaterre defined intertextuality as “*connections between the prior and the later texts, which are singled out by the reader*”. As a result, there forms an intertextual approach that sees literature as “*deprived of a fixed beginning or ending, as a text which never finishes*”.

The contemporary literary study diversifies certain kinds of intertextuality, such as the author's (worldview approach), external (structural architecture of the text), internal (dealing with the levels of meaning), the reader's (stressing the interpretative potential), investigatory (analytical). The prevailing intertextual techniques represented in the text distinguish a quotative thinking pattern, internal monologue, stylistic individuality, autobiographical prerequisites, a dialogical nature of the word, patchwork type of writing, codification, borrowing, fragmentation, allusion, manipulation with popular / traditional themes and plots, sorts of plagiarism, explicit and hidden quotation, collage, periphrasis, translation, imitation, parody, pun. The peculiarities of intertextual manifestation, that is its direct or indirect nature, dynamism or a fixed character impact the choice of intertextual elements like: quotation (textual

links), stylization and reminiscence (immersion into a particular cultural, historical, or philosophical context), allusion (metatextual connections).

Thus, the phases of development of the intertextual theories can be represented in a table.

Table 7 – *The development stage of intertextuality theory and its representative figures and works (The idea was adopted from “Intertextuality and American literature by Han Xue”. 2019 2nd International Conference on Cultures, Languages and Literatures, and Arts)*

DEVELOPMENT PHASE	REPRESENTATIVE	MASTERPIECE
Creation Phase	Julia Kristeva	Restricted Text, Word, Dialogue and Novel, Revolution in Poetry Language
	Mikhail Bakhtin	Dostoevsky's Poetics
	Roland Barthes	The Pleasure of Text, Theory of Text
Poetic Misunderstanding Phase	Harold Bloom	Deconstruction and Criticism, Anxiety of Influence, A Map of Misreading
Adjustment and Correction Phase	Gérard Genette	Introduction to Generalized Text, Parchment, Secondary Literature
	Jacques Derrida	Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences
	Paul de Man	Allegories of Reading, Blindness and Insight, The Rhetoric of Romanticism
Post-Modernity Phase	John Simmons Barth	The Literature of Exhaustion, Lost in the Funhouse: Fiction for Print, Tape, Live Voice

Fitzsimmons singles out three types of **INTERTEXTUAL CONNECTIONS**: obligatory, optional and accidental [26]. The type choice is linked to the writer's intention and the semantic load of the reference. A) *Obligatory intertextuality* deals with the intentional reference to a particular text or texts (like the allusions to the

Christian Bible in the poetry of Romanticism, the usage of as ‘*thee*’, ‘*thou*’ and ‘*thy*’). The absence of particular knowledge allowing to interpret the texts referred, results in the inability of the reader to comprehend the text fully [26]. Obligatory intertextuality dwells on the ability to spot and interpret the source of the prior hypotext, before building understanding the hypertext [36].

B) *Optional intertextuality* refers to a smaller impact of the texts-sources on the full comprehension of the hypertext. The detection and comprehension of the text-source creates minor shifts in the text interpretation (Fitzsimmons, 2013). Optional Intertextuality is linked to the intention of the author to have a dialogue with the original writers or pay tribute to them.

C) *Accidental intertextuality* appeals to the reader’s expertise and deals with the situation when cultural experience and wide scope of knowledge of the reader leads to detection of the intertextual links where they are not intended, take place subconsciously and have nothing to do with the writer’s message.

Some examples of intertextuality in the English-language literature include:

- *East of Eden* (1952) by John Steinbeck: provides a variant of *Genesis* with a removed location – the Salinas Valley of Northern California.
- *Ulysses* (1922) by James Joyce: directly sends the reader towards Homer’s *Odyssey*, with a transferred Dublin-based locativity.
- *The Dead Fathers Club* (2006) by Matt Haig: the re-writing of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, with a shifted setting – from Denmark to modern England.
- *A Thousand Acres* (1991) by Jane Smiley: a manipulation with Shakespearean plot of *King Lear*, with an altered setting, which is rural Iowa.
- *Perelandra* (1943) by C.S. Lewis: another literary play with the story of *Genesis*, with a parallel reference to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, however, set on the planet of Venus.
- *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) by Jean Rhys: a creative retelling of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, when the story of the “mad women in the attic” is shared from her perspective.
- *The Legend of Bagger Vance* (1996) by Steven Pressfield: an alternative narration of the *Bhagavad Gita*, taking place in 1931 during an epic golf game.
- *Tortilla Flat* (1935) by John Steinbeck: a reference to the *Arthurian legends*, set in Monterey, CA in the interwar period.

• *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931) by Eugene O'Neill: a re-writing of Aeschylus' *The Oresteia*, taking place in the post-American Civil War South.

Gerard Genette in his book "*Palimpsestes, La littérature au second degré*" (1982) suggested **A FIVE-MEMBER CLASSIFICATION** of **THE INTERTEXTUAL TYPES** (text interaction):

- **intertextuality** as the co-presence of two and more texts in one text in the form of citation, allusions, etc.;

- **paratextuality** as the relation of the text to its title, epigraph, preface, inserted novella, afterword and other near-textual elements, which comment the text itself;

- **metatextuality** is a text which interprets another text;

- **hypertextuality** represents the relations between the hypotext (the text before, the text-forerunner) and hypertext (a later text) like in a parody or pastiche (e.g. Virgil's "*Aeneid*" and "*Aeneid*" by I. Kotlyarevsky);

- **architextuality** is the relation of the text to the genre code.

The FORMS of the intertextuality include:

a) **Citation = quotation** (German *Zitat*, from Latin *cito* – challenge, proclaim, call) is more or less word-for-word excerpt from the pre-text in a new text, which can represent an utterance by another author or a previous utterance of the current author (self-citation). In literary texts the quotations can come before the text (epigraph), inside the text (the citation of the characters' speech in the author's speech) and between the texts (the alien utterance with the reference to the source (obvious quotation), or without references (a hidden quote) in an altered form (indirect speech, paraphrase, allusion, reminiscence, stylization, travesty, a parody), performing intertextual function (the enrichment of the text semantics by echoing other texts, genre and styles).

b) **Allusion** (from Latin *allusion* – a joke, hint) is a hint towards a well-known or literary fact, a preconceived reference to the original plot or image in world

literature. The author expects that the reader knows the source of the allusion and will be able to codify its meaning, dwelling on the prior knowledge.

c) **Reminiscence** (from Latin *reminiscentia* – memory) refers the reader to a creative text read before. Reminiscence is often considered as the author's subconscious reference to the texts of the other authors. The *forming reminiscence* lies in conscious or subconscious reflection of rhythm, stanza, syntactic schemes, plot and composition, genre or style of some famous work.

d) **Paraphrase** deals with the insertion of somebody else's thoughts in the author's own words. The remake of the well-known works of fiction is also called a paraphrase. Paraphrase can be embodied within the exploitation of some literary image or archetype in a new text.

e) **Inheritance** is a reflection of thematic, compositional or stylistic features of some original text. Can be manifested as stylization, travesty, pastiche, literary mystification. *Stylization* by M. Bakhtin is an artistic depiction of somebody else's style. A stylizer uses an alien language, which differs from his direct style. Stylization is a form of language-stylistic allusion, often reflecting an example of some famous poetic text, aiming to achieve some stylistic expression. *Travesty* is a transmission of characters and plots into the untypical environment in order to achieve some comic effect. A *parody* is a discrepancy of thematic and stylistic plans; it changes the vision focus of the original text: the tragic there turns into comic, and elevated gets trivialized. *Pastiche* (from French *pastiche*: from Italian *pasticcio* – opera, created of excerpts of other operas, potpourri, stylization) in classical writing is viewed as a literary game, having become one of the most popular practices of the postmodernism, that deals with the inheritance of the style of the other artists and epochs, which is simultaneously viewed as parody or self-parody.

The postmodern forms of intertextuality:

- *Contamination* (from Latin *contamination* integration, mixing) embraces such devices as collage (from French – guiling) = a text composed of different fragments

of the other texts, real or imitated documents, as well as allusions and citation; montage (from French *montage* - collecting) = the combination of separate scenes, episodes into one entity, which still preserve their fragmentation; “a stolen object” (a term by P. Van de Gevel) = firstly manifested in the works by the French representatives of the “new novel”, who inserted the texts of posters, adverts, signs of the walls and pavements into their fiction, etc.

The avant-garde was dealing with assemblage = the composition made of a range of occasional things (like stylistic eclecticism, a mixture of the literary language and jargon, genre hybrids, compilation of plots) and bricolage (from French *bricolage* – handicraft practice) = the textual mixture created out of the occasional material by the game-like approach, which dwells on the principle that ideas, images, phrases, genre and stylistic elements, detached from their contexts, get attached to each other, creating not unified meaning of the text, but a symphony of its various compositional elements.

- *Hypertext* is a system of texts, composed according to the dictionary- or encyclopedia-system, when every article refers to some other articles, which can be read in a free sequence.

PALIMPSEST STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT. Various historical layers of the text resemble *palimpsest* (from Ancient Greek *παλίμψηστος* – scratched again), where the old and the new, alien and native interact and therefore require the integral approach. For example, the European literature of the Medieval times inherited the language, form and images from the pagan world (like in “*Paradise Lost*” by Milton the Christian themes appear in pagan garment, while new Christian-heroic ideal get manifested on the background of the old classical-heroic ideal).

According to the neo-rhetoric approach, the system “text – intertext” is comprehended by means of ‘*interpretant*’ or the third text used as their partial component and provides the interpretation of the text into the intertext.

THE HISTORICAL FORMS OF THE INTERTEXTUALITY are diverse.

1) *The Medieval intertextuality* is characterized by somewhat rigid hierarchy with the Biblical ideas as its core, Biblical plots and stylistics, surrounded by the local and adopted pagan myths, the texts of folklore, historical narration.

2) *The Renaissance intertextuality* is marked by Antique reminiscence with the Medieval tradition at its periphery.

3) *The Baroque intertextuality* is featured by the organic combination of both Antique and Medieval intertextual elements.

4) *The intertextual model of the Enlightenment* is tabula rasa, where all the features of the current civilization are eradicated in order to create new commandments for the humanity – both natural and life-saving.

5) *The intertextuality of the Romanticism* casts the common classical conventions and deepens into the vital sources of folklore (legends, fairy-tales, ballads, songs, etc.), mystical twilight of the distant medieval times (a gothic novel) or hot Oriental exotics (both Biblical and Eastern themes and imagery).

6) *Realism and Naturalism* are deprived and represent the actual reality.

7) *Modernism* is featured by the search for novelty and *intertextual dimensions*, constantly refreshing the tradition (neo-romanticism, neo-classicism, neo-baroque, neo-mythologism with its creative attitude to myth) or destroying it completely (futurism or other avant-garde trends).

8) *Postmodern intertextual game* embraces chimera prose and magical realism, double coding, epistemological uncertainty, a range of *sub specie ludi* texts (under the guise of a game).

Intertextual links get more diverse and branched in the XXIst century within the frame of post-postmodernism and meta-modernism as its type. Basically, each literary epoch gets more and more complicated from the point of intertextuality.

Topics for self-study and reports:

1. *Intertextuality: Interpretive Practice and Textual Strategy.*
2. *Theories of intertextuality.*
3. *Intertextuality and literary evolution.*
4. *Socratic dialogue and intertextual relation.*
5. *The Middle Ages and multi-levelled interpretation of text.*
6. *Intertextuality in women's literature.*
7. *Intertextuality in men's literature.*
8. *Intertextuality in newspapers.*
9. *Intertextuality in films and adaptations.*
10. *Intertextuality on computer screens.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Key: Fr. = French; Gr. = Greek; L. = Latin; OED = The Oxford English Dictionary.

If a term is linked to a specific theorist, their name is provided in brackets at the start of the definition. adhesivity (Bakhtin) Refers to the fact that any utterance is directed towards an addressee (listener, potential respondent).

agency term used in literary theory and criticism to retain notions of human participation in the production of meaning without suggesting more absolute notions such as originality, genius or uniqueness.

anagram ‘a transposition of the letters of a word, name, or phrase, whereby a new one is formed’ (OED); Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon* is an anagram for ‘nowhere’. Saussure examined this concept within the framework of classical poetry.

architextuality (Genette) refers to the comprehensive collection of overarching or universal categories, encompassing various types of discourse, modes of expression, and literary genres, from which every individual text arises. If literature is perceived as a system characterized by specific forms and categories like the realist novel or tragedy, then architextuality involves examining literature within the framework of these formal categories.

carnival = According to Bakhtin, the concept of the “carnavalesque” pertains to the societal influence of carnival, which is linked to popular literary and linguistic expressions that challenge the prevailing order and monolithic perspective of society and language endorsed by dominant power structures. The idea of “carnivalization” aligns with Bakhtin’s notion of “dialogism” and opposes the idea of singular meaning and unquestionable authority. Deconstruction, associated with poststructuralism and primarily attributed to Derrida, is a movement that questions established meanings and hierarchies within texts and discourse.

deconstruction can be said to be generally critical of ideas of stable and authoritative meaning. It aims to illustrate how depending on the precarious nature of language undermines prevailing concepts and frameworks from within.

descriptive system (Riffaterre) = The interconnected web of words, phrases, and conventional expressions linked to a central word, to which they are subordinate, implies a series of related words and concepts that the text utilizes to construct its particular overall meaning.

diachrony a diachronic study in linguistics is the study of language over time.

dialectics (Hegel, Marx) Hegelian dialectics is the clash between ‘thesis’ and ‘antithesis’, resolved by their ‘synthesis’. Hegel aimed to show that apparent dichotomies such as science versus art or mind versus body could be reconciled through the emergence of a superior truth. Marx adapted this idea to apply to the struggle between capitalists, who owned the means of production, and the laborers who actually produced wealth.

dialogic, as described by Bakhtin, denotes the concept that every spoken or written expression responds to prior expressions and is invariably directed toward potential interlocutors, rather than existing in isolation. Language is inherently situated within particular social contexts involving specific individuals. Words inherently possess a dialogic nature, representing an ongoing dialogue between various meanings and usages. Bakhtin’s notion of dialogism challenges any claim to definitive and unassailable positions, as each linguistic stance is characterized by a dynamic interplay of dialogic forces rather than presenting a monolithic truth.

différance, a term coined by Derrida, merges the French words for “to defer, postpone, delay” and “to differ, to be different from.” This term serves to underscore Derrida’s argument that writing does not merely imitate or follow speech. The dual meaning encapsulated in the word itself highlights Derrida’s assertion that the distinction between these two meanings does not align with any difference in their spoken forms. Whether spoken or written, the word *différance* inherently evokes both notions of difference and deferral. Thus, it exemplifies how language simultaneously encompasses distinctions between meanings and the postponement of those meanings.

Discourse, the term “discourse” is employed in various disciplines with distinct meanings. In the study of narrative, “narrative” typically refers to the retelling of events without focusing on the person recounting them, as in the phrase “*The King is dead.*” Conversely, “discourse” draws attention to the speaker or writer and the circumstances surrounding their speech or writing, as in “*He told them the sad news that the King was dead.*” In a broader sense, “discourse” encompasses language within its social and ideological frameworks. Culture and society are viewed as comprised of identifiable “discursive practices,” such as those observed in educational, legal, religious, or political settings. “Discourse” underscores the idea that language is always situated within specific social contexts, reflecting particular codes, expectations, ideological influences, and assumptions.

double-voiced discourse, as described by Bakhtin, suggests that language is inherently dual in nature. Every word carries multiple meanings and is influenced by previous utterances and contexts. Language is always directed towards other speakers and is intertwined with prior uses of the same words. Bakhtin's concept of double-voiced discourse is fundamentally intertextual, acknowledging that all expressions encompass the dialogic interplay of conflicting interpretations, definitions, social and ideological influences, and more.

doxa, as per Barthes, refers to “opinion” or “belief.” Barthes employs this suffix to denote anything that embodies commonly accepted opinion or is regarded as unquestionable or natural within a society at a particular moment.

ego, as conceptualized by Freud, is a term that finds its meaning in relation to both the id and the superego. The id represents the unconscious aspect containing an individual's desires, including often suppressed sexual desires. Conversely, the superego represents the conscious mind's moral and ideological framework, striving to regulate desires stemming from the id. Positioned between these conflicting forces, the ego attempts to navigate the tensions arising from the id's insatiable demands, the superego's strict moral standards, and the constraints imposed by the external world of “reality”.

epitext, as defined by Genette, encompasses external elements that aid in the interpretation of a text, such as letters or interviews. Genette distinguishes epitextual features from peritext, which includes all the literal framing elements surrounding a text, such as prefaces, covers, and titles.

facticity, as introduced by Bloom, derives from the term “fact” while also incorporating a play on “fictitious” and possibly “factive” (meaning causative). It denotes the inevitable impact of certain canonical writers. Despite the fictional nature of Shakespeare's plays, their profound influence on every writer thereafter bestows upon them the status of factual or factualness.

Filiation, derived from “filial,” pertains to family connections or relations. It traditionally refers to the idea of authorship and lineage in relation to a text. Poststructuralists like Barthes challenge this notion of “filial myth.”

free indirect discourse involves a narrative technique where the presentation of a character's thoughts and speech fluctuates in terms of pronouns, adverbs, tense, and grammatical mode. This shift occurs as the narrator transitions between directly narrating events and indirectly representing the character's thoughts or speech. For instance, a direct representation like “He thought, ‘I will see her home now, and may then stop at my mother’s’” may transition to an indirect representation such as “He would see her home then, and might afterwards stop at his mother’s.” This technique enables the narrator to blend their own voice with the inner thoughts or speech of a specific character (Abrams, 1993: 169).

genotext Kristeva introduces the concept of the genotext, which pertains to elements within a text that evoke or indicate semiotic forces originating from the early stages of an individual's existence, when impulses and desires are not yet regulated by the ‘Symbolic Order’ – the societal constructs and linguistic divisions. Texts characterized by the genotext tend to defy conventional stylistic and linguistic norms, often associated with avant-garde and experimental writers. In contrast, Kristeva discusses the phenotext, which represents the language used for communication and serves as the subject of traditional linguistic analysis. Texts aiming for clear and straightforward meaning are primarily describable in terms of the phenotext.

gynocriticism, as defined by Cuddon (1992), is a form of literary criticism centered on works authored by women and encompasses all facets of their creation and analysis. It represents a subset of modern feminist literary studies, distinct from feminist critiques of male authors, with a specific emphasis on examining women's roles as writers.

hegemony, as per the OED, describes a dominant force or principle, often seen as the ruling authority or prevailing influence within a particular context. It denotes a form of power that is so pervasive and commanding that it seems to be universally accepted or perceived as inherent and unchallenged.

heteroglossia, heteroglot, derived from “hetero” meaning “other” in Greek, and “glossia” meaning “tongue,” essentially signifies “other-tongued” or “other-voiced.” It's defined by Graham Roberts as the conflict between opposing discourses within the same language, encompassing both official and unofficial narratives. Additionally, at a smaller scale, every utterance contains traces of previous and future utterances. When an utterance is described as “heteroglot,” it indicates the presence of these other utterances within it, including past expressions and anticipated responses. Such an utterance openly acknowledges the dialogic nature of language, contrasting with one that conceals these features and presents itself as monoglot. Just as dialogism contrasts with monologism, heteroglossia contrasts with monoglossia.

hybridization = Bakhtin defines “heteroglossia” as the amalgamation of multiple linguistic consciousnesses within a single specific utterance, often originating from vastly different temporal and social contexts.

hypertextuality, as described by Genette, refers to any connection between a text B (the hypertext) and an earlier text A (the hypotext), where B is built upon A in a manner distinct from mere commentary. Genette's analysis of hypertextuality typically focuses on satire and deliberate forms of such relations.

Hypogram, as defined by Riffaterre, represents the text in its original, pre-transformational form. According to Riffaterre's concept, every text is composed of small units of meaning, and the hypogram comprises these fundamental units upon which the entire text is constructed. These units could range from clichés to quotations from other texts or descriptive systems.

hypotext see **hypertextuality**.

id see **ego**.

ideologeme, a concept by Kristeva, is described by Fredric Jameson as “the smallest intelligible unit” within the conflicting discourses of social classes. Kristeva's use of the term, influenced by her engagement with Bakhtin's ideas, emphasizes how texts not only mirror but also encapsulate elements of society's ideological frameworks and conflicts.

idiolect see **sociolect**.

invariant see **matrix**.

Jouissance, a term deriving from French meaning “bliss,” is frequently associated with sexual climax. In poststructuralist theory, particularly in Barthes's work “*The Pleasure of the Text*,” jouissance is distinguished from plaisir (pleasure). Barthes links plaisir with texts he previously termed as lisible (readerly), while jouissance is linked with texts he termed as scriptible (writerly).

langage see **langue**.

langue, as conceptualized by Saussure, denotes language in its synchronic state, representing the shared linguistic system of a speech community. It encompasses the rules governing combinations, definitions, and distinctions within language at any given moment. Parole, on the other hand, pertains to the application of these rules in specific utterances. Thus, parole can be viewed as each individual instance or expression within the framework of langue. Saussure also introduces the term langage. While langue constitutes an abstract system of rules and codes, it does not merely comprise the sum of all parole acts. Even if one were to compile all utterances, it would not fully encapsulate langue. Langage encompasses the collective body of all parole acts and is therefore distinct from the abstract system of langue.

lisible, a term introduced by Barthes, derives from the French word for “legible.” A lisible, or “readerly text,” prompts readers to perceive themselves as passive interpreters of meanings already inherent within the text. This concept is juxtaposed with that of the scriptible text.

matrix, as defined by Riffaterre, denotes a word, phrase, or sentence that serves as the foundation upon which the entire semiotic framework of a text is constructed. While the matrix may not be explicitly expressed in the text, it forms the basis for the text's constants, identifiable patterns, and structures, all of which are variations derived from that matrix. Riffaterre also uses the term “model” to convey this concept of texts being formed through the modification of fundamental elements of meaning.

metafiction refers to literature that reflects on its own nature as fiction, often explicitly commenting on its fictional status. This term typically applies to works characterized by a notable level of self-awareness regarding their identity as fictional creations.

metatextuality as defined by Genette, refers to the connection often referred to as “commentary” between one text and another that it discusses, without necessarily directly quoting or naming it.

mimesis, originating from the Greek word for “imitation,” refers to the concept that art aims to faithfully represent external reality. This traditional notion is called into question by theories of intertextuality, which suggest that artworks, or “texts,” do not directly mirror external reality but instead reference other texts.

model see **matrix**.

modernism refers to a cultural and aesthetic movement typically associated with the early XXth century. It should not be conflated with “modernity,” which commonly denotes concepts related to human and social advancement originating in the eighteenth century. Various movements categorized as Modernist asserted that advancements in technology would emancipate society, or at least art, from the constraints of tradition and adherence to established conventions.

monoglossia; monoglot see **heteroglossia**.

monologic see **dialogic**.

paradigmatic refers to the associative dimension of language. It involves recognizing that each word in a sentence has connections with other words that may not be used but are still potential options, and thus are linked through association.

paradoxa Barthes denotes anything that contradicts prevailing beliefs or what is deemed to be “natural.”

paratextuality (Genette) relates to all the elements which stand on the ‘threshold’ of a text. parody ‘a mocking imitation of the style of a literary work or works, ridiculing the stylistic habits of an author or school by exaggerated mimicry.

parody is associated with burlesque in its use of serious styles for absurd subjects, with satire in its critique of eccentricities, and even with criticism in its examination of style (Baldick, 1990: 161).

parole see **langue**.

pastiche is a literary creation crafted from borrowed elements sourced from different writers or a specific earlier author. While the term can be used disparagingly to imply a lack of originality, it can also neutrally describe works that intentionally and playfully pay homage to other writers through imitation. Pastiche distinguishes itself from parody by using imitation as a form of admiration rather than ridicule and from plagiarism by lacking any deceptive motives (Baldick, 1990: 162).

peritext see **epitext**.

phenotext see **genotext**.

Polyphony = Bakhtin coined the term “polyphony” from the Greek word meaning “many-voicedness.” A polyphonic novel features multiple voices or perspectives engaging with each other on relatively equal footing (Baldick, 1990: 173). This type of novel showcases and revels in the

dialogic essence of society, portraying human interactions dominated by the interplay and exchange of voices and expressions.

polysemy = derived from the Greek roots meaning “much” or “many” and “sign” or “signal,” refers to the quality of having multiple meanings or interpretations. Within poststructuralist theory, polysemy challenges traditional ideas of singular meaning associated with texts and signs.

postmodernism, a term coined since the 1970s, signifies a departure from Modernism and the concept of ‘modernity’. Due to its attempt to encapsulate contemporary trends, Postmodernism remains a topic of ongoing debate. However, certain recurring themes emerge from these discussions. Firstly, it suggests that traditional national boundaries for social and cultural identity have been surpassed by a global landscape where multinational corporations wield more influence than national governments in shaping social and cultural dynamics. Secondly, this globalized system is characterized by the prevalence of ‘empty signifiers’ – representations and symbols devoid of a tangible, lived reality. Many portrayals of Postmodernism depict a cultural milieu transcending national borders, where pastiche and parody of earlier forms and styles dominate. Postmodern art, some argue, rejects the idea of originality championed by Modernism, opting instead for a deliberately derivative, eclectic, and deeply intertextual approach. This approach seeks to capture a new era marked by the erosion of old certainties regarding historical understanding, social advancement, and even the capacity to faithfully represent the external world.

poststructuralism theorists contested the notion that Saussurean structuralism offered scientific objectivity and methodological consistency. Instead, they asserted that it revealed the inherent instability of language and meaning. Poststructuralists rejected the idea of a scientific examination of texts or cultural sign systems, emphasizing instead that all texts possess multiple meanings.

readably see **lisible**.

revisionary ratios as conceptualized by Bloom, pertain to the diverse methods employed by poets to rework the writings of their predecessors. This term draws parallels with the notion of revisionism in historical and political studies, where it involves the reevaluation and reinterpretation of established narratives of historical events, often with contemporary ideological motivations or to uncover the ideological biases inherent in earlier supposedly impartial accounts.

satire is a literary work that mocks or offers ironic commentary on socially identifiable trends, the style, or the form of another text or author. While similar to parody, satire typically carries a more moralizing purpose.

scriptible see **lisible**.

semianalysis is a term coined by Kristeva to describe her method in semiotics. She defines it as an examination of meaning, its components, and its principles.

semiology see **semiotics**.

semiotic, as described by Kristeva, denotes the uninterrupted flow of pre-linguistic rhythms or impulses that becomes interrupted when a child begins to engage with language within the Symbolic order. The unconscious drives of the semiotic are suppressed and marginalized by patriarchal logic and rationality; however, they retain the potential to disrupt the Symbolic order by defying its rigid classifications, including those related to identity and sexual differences. Kristeva sometimes contrasts language in its “semiotic phase” (representing pre-linguistic subjectivity) with language in its “thetic phase” (representing language use after entry into the Symbolic order).

semiotics, semiology (Saussure, C. S. Pierce) ‘the systematic study of signs, or, more precisely, of the production of meanings from sign-systems, linguistic or non-linguistic’ (Baldick, 1990: 201). The relationship between sign and system is particularly important. Sign-systems can be any recognizable field of human communication. Clothing might signify within the cultural ‘fashion system’, for example. Semiotics and semiology as developed in structuralism and poststructuralism can treat anything emanating from a signifying system as a text to be read.

sign as defined by Saussure, encompasses both linguistic and non-linguistic components of communication. Saussure breaks down the sign into two components: the signifier and the signified.

The signifier represents the tangible aspect, such as the spoken or written word, while the signified corresponds to the conceptual meaning associated with that specific signifier. According to Saussure, signs do not directly denote objects in the external world; rather, their meaning is derived from the relationship between signifiers and the signified, within the synchronic framework of language and its established rules and codes governing association, combination, definition, and distinction.

signifiante as explored by Kristeva, Barthes, and poststructuralists, differs from the notion of “signification” typically associated with the clear communication of meaning. Signifiante pertains to the capacity of a text to convey what conventional and communicative speech cannot articulate. It involves the “production of meaning” that readers engage in when encountering radical forms of language. Unlike signification, which suggests that meaning is established prior to reading, signifiante posits that meaning is only generated during the act of reading itself.

signification see **signifiante**.

signified see **sign**.

signifier see **sign**.

signifyin(g) as conceptualized by Gates, involves practices within African-American culture that subvert or play with conventional modes of signification typically associated with “white” culture. The inclusion of the bracketed “(g)” highlights the distinction between standard written language, linked with the dominant “white” culture, and the spoken dialects prevalent among African-Americans.

sociolect refers to language usage that is characteristic of a particular social group, carrying with it the group's values and status. This social group may be defined by factors such as class, age, or gender, or a combination thereof. It is often contrasted with idiolect, which refers to the unique linguistic characteristics of an individual that distinguish them from others.

speech genre as defined by Bakhtin, refers to a distinct type of linguistic expression linked to particular social contexts.

The concept of the **split subject**, as articulated by Kristeva, suggests the inherent division within the human subject. While psychoanalysis traditionally views this division in terms of the conscious and unconscious realms, Kristeva and similar theorists propose additional divisions, such as the separation between semiotic and symbolic modes of language.

structuralism emerged primarily from Saussure's perspective on semiology, which examines all sign-systems present in culture. This movement analyzed various texts, ranging from literary works to everyday communication, by considering them within the framework of the system that generated them.

subject of enunciation is distinguished in linguistics from the subject of utterance, which refers to the actual person communicating. When the subject refers to itself as “*I*,” it becomes a subject of enunciation. This difference involves the specific act of making a statement in a particular time and context, and the verbal result of that act, which extends beyond the moment and the person responsible for the act. For example, a person (subject of utterance) may write “*I love you*” on a card. Years later, when someone else finds the card, the original person becomes merely a first-person pronoun in a conventional statement (subject of enunciation). This process occurs in any act of writing or repeatable linguistic utterance.

subject of utterance see **subject of enunciation**.

superego see **ego**.

Symbolic Order, the see **semiotic**.

synchrony in linguistics refers to the study of how language operates at a specific moment in time.

syntagmatic refers to the combinatory aspect of language, focusing on the sequential arrangement of words to form sentences and the relationships between those words when they are combined in this manner.

Tel Quel was a theoretical and literary movement established during the 1960s, aligning with prominent poststructuralist thinkers like Kristeva, Derrida, and Barthes. It aimed to conceptualize

and harness the transformative potential of language while honoring writers perceived to have achieved similar goals.

The term **text** derived from the Latin word *texere* meaning “to weave” or “woven,” traditionally referred to the literal words or signs comprising a literary piece, providing it with permanence. In structuralist and poststructuralist theories, however, “text” evolves to denote the meaning generated by the intertextual connections between various texts and their interpretation by a reader. This usage reflects the absence of fixed and enduring meaning, contrasting with the notion of a stable and self-contained meaning associated with the term “work.” **thetic** see **semiotic, the**.

trace = In Derrida’s view, every sign contains a residue of other signs that differ from it, suggesting that no sign is self-contained. Instead, each sign points to another through this residual trace, leading to an endless chain of signification.

The **transcendental signified**, as posited by Derrida, refers to a sign that serves as a central point within a specific linguistic system. This sign is believed to bring about stability, presence, and a singular, clear meaning, as its significance is not contingent upon any other sign. Examples of such signs include “God,” “Justice,” or “Truth.” These “transcendental signs” are crucial for maintaining coherence within traditional discursive systems like religion, law, and philosophy. However, Derrida argues that no sign can truly occupy this position because every sign’s meaning is interconnected with that of others. He underscores this point as a fundamental aspect of his deconstruction of conventional Western intellectual domains.

transposition, as conceptualized by Kristeva, serves to emphasize the departure from traditional notions of “influence” in intertextual processes. Rather than a linear transmission of ideas and styles from one author to another, Kristeva contends that intertextuality, which she terms transposition, involves the integration of one “sign system” into another and the semiotic shifts that accompany this process.

transtextuality, coined by Genette, refers to the textual transcendence of a text, encompassing all aspects that establish its relationship, whether explicit or hidden, with other texts. Genette’s concept of transtextuality is his specific interpretation of what other critics commonly refer to as intertextuality. He simplifies intertextuality to denote “a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts,” emphasizing the actual presence of one text within another.

A **trope** is a linguistic device where language is employed in a non-literal manner.

ungrammaticality, as described by Riffaterre, pertains to elements within a text that indicate a meaning or structural pattern lying beyond or beneath the surface level of straightforward reference or imitation. For instance, a poem might feature a title that appears unrelated to its content. However, this apparent lack of grammatical coherence could be resolved if the reader transitions from a literal interpretation to a more abstract level of analysis.

work see **text**.

writerly see **lisible**.

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PACE 3

MODELS OF TRAUMA AND THE PECULIARITIES OF THEIR REFLECTION IN THE XX-XXI-CENTURY ART AND LITERATURE

Key terms: *The transmission of mood, collective and national trauma, collective identity, narrative traumatic memory, characteristics of traumatized voice, intertextuality, fragmented voice, Nazi genocide, post-holocaust Germany / Berlin, Holocaust-related texts, negative experience, mystery, dream-like quality, awakening from a dream, 'the banality of evil', colonial trauma*

1. *What is trauma? The history of investigation.*
2. *The variety of emblematic representation of trauma in art.*
3. *Trauma and the power of place.*
4. *Holocaust and war trauma. Trauma by the witnesses of the local military conflicts.*
5. *Trauma and gender issues. Trauma and environmentalism.*
6. *Colonialism. Post-colonialism. Racism. The production of the traumatized reality in the text.*

Postmodern literature appeared as a reaction to the traumatic effects of the WWII and resulted in a bulk of 'trauma text', widely exploiting intertextual techniques, language manipulation practices, repetition, and fragmentation, allowing to reflect the deepness of the received stress. Traumatic theory goes hand in hand with postcolonial studies, as well as the range of other traumatic events including war, famine, incarceration, sexual violence over women or assault. The field of trauma studies within literary criticism garnered notable recognition in 1996 with the release of Cathy Caruth's "*Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*" and Kali Tal's "*Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma*." Additionally, the examination of traumatic experiences in literature was revisited in an essay collection titled "*Explorations in Memory*," edited by Cathy Caruth in 1995. The impetus behind the

advancement of research into trauma within the humanities stemmed largely from the firsthand accounts provided by Holocaust survivors and war veterans.

The theory of trauma gestated on the verge of 1990s-2000s represented by Geoffrey Hartman, Cathy Caruth and Shoshana Felman. In his article “*On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies*” of 1995 Geoffrey Hartman distinguishes two basic elements: 1) an event of a traumatic kind, registered rather than experienced; 2) an interrupted psyche, dissociation, psychological split stemming from a traumatic event. The literature of Modernism and Post-modernism suggested the reader a narrative style, which has given the author the maximum of freedom of penetration into the inner world of a character.

The 2000s are marked by a range of publications developing trauma theory and its tools by Kai Erickson, Arthur Neal, Roger Luckhurst, Jeffrey C. Alexander, Lisa Henriksen. The theory is applied to the postcolonial and gender studies, disabilities, migration, etc. The literary text serves as the major source for trauma studies, its manifestation, ways of depiction, symbolic language, flight devices, silencing.

Trauma can manifest as either individual or societal, collective experiences. According to Leigh Gilmore [4, p. 6], trauma is characterized as a transformative encounter with violence, injury, or harm, fundamentally altering one’s sense of self.



“*Roots*” (1943), a painting by **Frida Kahlo**, in which she depicts her damaged torso that opens up like a window and gives birth to a vine. Frida’s blood circulates the vine and reach beyond the leaves’ veins and feed the parched earth. She is dreaming to be a tree of life with her elbow supporting her head on a pillow. Also, with her Catholic religious’ background it’s possible she is trying to mimic Christ’s sacrifice by having her blood flowing to the grapevine. This implication of a sacrificial victim is also reflected in a few of her other paintings.

To sum it up, the notion ‘trauma’ is used to feature the state of mind that is shaped by a certain type of injury.

The term ‘trauma’ originates from Greek and signifies “penetration” or “wounding.” It denotes a state where the previous balance of life is irreversibly disrupted. In cases where death is avoided, a compromised equilibrium is typically restored. This can be likened to a bone breaking under pressure, mending afterwards but retaining a lasting vulnerability, or a wound healing but leaving behind a scar and heightened sensitivity.

Psychological trauma within the contemporary Humanities is studied through the prism of the investigations suggested by Sigmund Freud, since it deals both with the problem of memory and the issue of a bodily nature of a human being. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was the first one to seriously explore the theory of the unconscious human motivation. It was him who linked hysteria to sexual and other traumas which had been split from consciousness. Prior to the Age of Enlightenment, the traumatic events were viewed as punishments imposed by God for sins. Hysterical symptoms had been qualified as possessions by the devil. Many sexually abused females were burnt as witches, or were exorcised of the devil who planted evil sexual thoughts in their heads.

At the end of the XIXth century, the foundations of modern traumatology and the emergence of psychoanalysis unfolded concurrently. Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893) aimed to transition hysteria from the realm of myth and religion to that of science. He viewed this endeavor as his contribution to the ongoing conflict between rationality and religion. According to Charcot, women believed to be possessed were not victims of divine punishment or demonic possession; rather, they suffered from the consequences of distinctly human causes. Through hypnosis, Charcot uncovered and brought to consciousness the previously unconscious or unaware early sexual traumas experienced by his hysterical patients, ultimately alleviating their symptoms of hysteria. Traumatic hysteria supplanted notions of sin and possession.

Pierre Marie Felix Janet (1859-1947) was the one who extended the hypnotic techniques of accessing the dissociated knowledge within the mind. Later, through his

clinical experience, Sigmund Freud determined factors of hysteria (like premature sexual experience in the earliest years of childhood), which were stated in the work *“The Etiology of Hysteria”* (1896). At the time of trauma Freud saw the mind splitting into two as primary defense. He called this *“the splitting of consciousness”*. He postulated that at the time of trauma the mind splits, in a state of altered consciousness called a hypnoid or dissociated state, into everyday conscious, and ‘unreal’, ‘repressed’ or ‘unconscious’ sectors. Having repressed his own trauma, Consequently, Freud reverted to a parallel version of region’s view of the original sin and sexuality. The child exhibited inherent perversity and harbored the death instinct. When Albert Einstein asked Sigmund Freud, “Why War?” appealing to the First World War, Freud was irritated and defined human beings as ‘basically aggressive and sadistic’.

Philosophically, however, traumatology sees humans basically normal, striving for maximum fulfilment (or as Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) said, maximizing their potentials). This continues unless trauma derails this progression, and causes suffering and conflicts. Traumatology recognizes a variety of traumatic situations – wars, genocide, torture, natural disasters, assault, rape, illness and dying, colonialism, etc.

The contemporary ‘reading’ of the term ‘trauma’ has absorbed both physical and mental semiotic layers, appealing not only to personal, but also to a collective type of trauma. Therefore, the collective type of trauma exists within the dimension of collective memory. Altogether, the cultural trauma and collective trauma embrace the sorts of societal wounds linked to a particular historical cut. Kai T. Erickson defines the paths of collective trauma as a *“strike to the fundamental fabric of social existence that harms the connections uniting people and undermines the prevailing sense of community”* [2, p. 233]. However, unlike the personal trauma, the collective forms are deprived of the usual surprise elements and, as a result, ‘the blow’ can be more expected than not. The prolonged effect of a collective trauma provides a slow or delayed effect on the human mind, leading, to a certain sense of division of national/social unity, when a collective “we” stops its existence. A collective trauma damages, distorts or erases values and might alter the worldview of victim society. The

traumatized memory trades guilt, shame or disgust or any other powerful negative effect. The damage of a cultural trauma towards the national identity is vast, aggressive and oppressive for the culture elements. The borderline conditions of the characters going through a cultural or an individual trauma results in the identity loss and interferes with the linguistic accuracy which finds its implementation in literature in the fragmentation techniques, or the stream-of-consciousness.

There are places in this world that are defined by some particular traumatic events. The mere mention of their names is enough to bring back memories, images and emotions that seem to reduce the distance of location and time. For the West there is Saddleworth Moor, Soham, Dunblane, Lockerbie, Auschwitz, Katyn, Deeley Plaza, Sarejavo, Guernica and countless others. Different kinds of trauma are distinguished within the other cultures and include Sharpville, Bhopal, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Nankin, Sudan, Rwanda, and numerous others. The fact is that some events make a mark that endures: sometimes physically (like at Hiroshima where the shadow of the blast has left its very evident historical trace), but more commonly psychologically. Some traumas embed themselves not only in the place, but also in the minds of those who see, be it up-close or from a distance.

According to Geertz (1973), every culture exists within a particular network of symbols written in a cultural context, created withing the process of social interaction. The cultural code gets preserved within beliefs, attitudes, values, rituals, social institutions. Drawing and painting, and later – photography, become a symbolic record of touch, which turns into an act of remembrance of historical, physical and psychical layers of the trauma itself. The archaeology of the world painting is digging away at the surface in order to unearth the subject beneath, somewhat like sculpting from stone to find – as Michaelangelo suggested – the figure within. The XXth century produced a number of literary, musical texts or texts created in oil, which became the meaningful signs, defining their era, wounded in different ways.

A flood of artistic products depicting traumatic experience is strongly linked to the consequences of the Second World War. Fascism, Nazism and Holocaust gave the

source to one of the most powerful responses in cultural memory of trauma. “*The Trauma Question*” (2008) Roger Luckhurst concludes: “*For Adorno, all Western culture is at once contaminated by and complicit with Auschwitz, yet the denial of culture is equally barbaric. If silence is no option either, Adorno sets art and cultural criticism the severe, and paradoxical, imperative of finding ways of representing the unrepresentable*” [10, p. 48]. Pablo Picasso pre-felt the barbarism of fascism and Nazism much earlier than his contemporaries. His “*Guernica*” embodies the beginning of the era of chaos and violence, in which the human and the bestial got mixed.



“*Guernica*” (1937) by **Pablo Picasso**, created as a response to the 26 April 1937 bombing of Guernica, a town in the Basque Country in northern Spain by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Displays a powerful anti-war message.



On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 a.m., the crew of the B-29 bomber *Enola Gay* dropped the first wartime atomic bomb over Hiroshima, Japan. The bomb, code-named "*Little Boy*", detonated with an estimated 15,000 tons of TNT, destroying five square miles of the city and directly killing some 70,000 people. By then end of 1945, injuries and radiation sickness had raised the death toll to more than 100,000.

In subsequent years, cancer and long-term radiation effects steadily drove the number higher. Three days after the destruction of Hiroshima, another American bomber dropped its payload over Nagasaki, some 185 miles southwest of Hiroshima, at 11:02 a.m.

Considering the multiple models of trauma and memory presented in trauma text, the attention is drawn to the role of place, which functions to portray trauma's effects through metaphoric and material means. Description of the geographic place of traumatic experience and remembrance situate the individual in relation to a larger cultural context that contains social values that influence the recollection of the event and the recognition of self. It is the place that nourishes trauma, feeds it, turning into some unbearable pain. Historic sites, museums and memorials bear the narrative of both communal and individual traumas. Henri Lefebvre introduces the concept of 'real space'... as the space of social practice. Places of trauma, as arenas for social engagement, are physical settings that not only embody actual occurrences but also carry symbolic significance. 'Place Identity' is a concept that describes the experience of emotionally-imbued meaning and cognitions attached to places in a physical setting. Social, physical and cultural environment benefit to construction of self within personal and collective history. Thus, the trauma of Holocaust and concentration camps have produced a number of place-linked plots.



“Human Laundry”, Belsen: April 1945, by **Doris Clare Zinkeisen**, 1945 (Imperial War Museum). Is arguably the most powerful work produced by any of the artists who were present. Zinkeisen finds an effective motif in the contrast between the well-fed, rounded bodies of the German medical staff and the emaciated bodies of their patients. The camp inmates needed to be washed and de-loused to

prevent the spread of typhus before they could be admitted to the makeshift Red Cross hospital nearby. On 15 April 1945 British soldiers entered Bergen-Belsen concentration camp to find a scene of absolute horror. Ten thousand corpses lay unburied, and around 60,000 starving and sick people were packed into the camp’s barracks without food or water. Doris Zinkeisen arrived soon afterwards.

“Holocaust Crowd Scene II”, 2011, by **Peter Howson** (b.1958).

Graphically depicts the horror and brutality of the Nazi concentration camps with the crowd of Jewish prisoners, stripped of their clothing and dressed in striped camp uniforms, depicted in attitudes of grief, suffering and lamentation. They are flanked by two thuggish Nazi guards wearing swastika armbands, one making a Nazi salute and the other pointing inward to focus attention on a prisoner prominently displaying the yellow badge with the star of David that Jews were forced to wear in Nazi-occupied Europe, used here symbolically to indicate martyrdom. Both the structure and composition of the painting draw on classical themes and Christian imagery, with naked child held aloft recalling Rubens *“Massacre of the Innocents”* and the draped dead body to the lower left of the composition with a mourning figure draped over it suggesting the dead Christ or pieta.



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Along with many other Holocaust artist, numerous painters represent a particular place along with particular traumas. Traumatic even, however, can be self-directed. A variety of personal traumatic experience is brightly represented in the paintings by Frida Kahlo. For her traumatic place is her own body, which captures her free spirit, depriving of her dreams like childbirth. Frida's paintings tell her own traumatic story – her often bedridden status, achieved as a result of a traffic accident, her miscarriage, her divorce, etc.



“The Broken Column” (1944) by Frida Kahlo. Pain and suffering are constant topics in Frida’s painting. In *“The Broken Column”*, the artist expressed her anguish and suffering in the most straightforward and horrifying way. The nails are stuck into her face and whole body. A split in her torso looks like an earthquake fissure. In the background is the earth with dark ravines. In the beginning she paints herself nude but later covered her lower part with something that looks like a hospital sheet. A broken column is put in place of her spine. The column appears to be on the verge of collapsing into rubble. Penetrating from loins to chin, the column looks phallic, and the sexual connotation is all the more obvious because of the beauty of Frida’s breasts and torso.



“Henry Ford Hospital” (1932) by **Frida Kahlo**. The painting is a reflection of what Frida felt when she was having a miscarriage at Henry Ford Hospital. There are six objects flying around her. A male fetus which is the son of her and Diego she has longed to have. The fetus is based on a medical illustration. And orchid looks like a uterus. The stomach she holds against the red ribbons and they look like umbilical cords. The snail is the symbol of the slowness of the operation.

“The Two Fridas” (1939) by **Frida Kahlo**. The painting was completed shortly after her divorce with Diego Rivera. This portrait shows Frida’s two different personalities. One is the traditional Frida in Tehuana costume, with a broken heart, sitting next to an independent, modern dressed Frida. In Frida’s diary, she wrote about this painting and said it is originated from her memory of an imaginary childhood friend. Later she admitted it expressed her desperation and loneliness with the separation from Diego.



Thus, the types of traumatic experiences mirrored in literature and art numerous: colonialism and decolonized reality, great wars, Nazi genocide and Holocaust in particular, gender oppression, pressure in the family, rape, the variety of personal problems. Basically, the era of Modernism and Post-modernism is a response to the traumas outlined. However, realism is able to pinpoint the significance of trauma by its own means. The boundaries of the traditional home in the XXth century are interrupted by ‘the banality of evil’. Michael Rothberg, in his analysis of the interdisciplinary contemplation of trauma and society’s ability to confront the unimaginable, describes the contemporary perspective on the Nazi genocide as being caught between Jewish specificity and universalism. It navigates the tensions between conventional and exceptional approaches to methodology and representation, as well as the balance between highlighting the extreme and commonplace aspects of the events. While not exclusively associated with any single field of study, proponents on either side of the realist/antirealist spectrum generally find support within particular coalitions: historians and social scientists often advocate for realism, while those in more speculative and theoretical domains such as philosophy, religion, literary theory, and certain strands of psychoanalysis tend to align with anti-realism. Perhaps the frequently intoned “impossibility” of comprehending the Holocaust arises in part from the preservation of traditional disciplinary boundaries and structures of knowledge. Challenging those structures won't necessarily lead to achieving a mythical “complete” comprehension. However, it could present new opportunities for investigating the interconnection between the psychological and the social, the discourse and the material, and the extraordinary and the mundane [14, p. 6]. These all presupposes some interdisciplinary methodology when teaching trauma in literature.

The Nazi genocide is a combination of ordinary and extreme elements = *the trauma of “Holocaust”*

Michael Rothberg argues that the amalgamation of extreme and ordinary elements in defining traumatic experiences, along with the narratives articulated through the structured framework of traumatic locations, challenges conventional assertions of comprehensive understanding. However, scrutinizing its composition can also foster novel modes of comprehension that transcend both realist and antirealist perspectives and extend beyond conventional disciplinary boundaries [14, p. 6–7].

If the history is viewed as an object of construction, the traumatic reality in literature gets embodied through the variety of means – ‘*stream-of-consciousness*’ technique, fragmentation, non-linear narration, manipulation with time, complex spatial architecture of the story, etc. The unbearable experience of Holocaust, documents the undocumentable experience through different categories of authors – the survivor; the bystander, who acts as a bearer witness of the impossible truth; and the latecomer or someone of the “postmemory” generation, who inherits the detritus of the twentieth century.

The question of genre after Auschwitz has led to a number of textual experiments. For Adorno, however, “it is barbaric” to write poetry in the post-Auschwitz world, a thought, which he expresses in his late 1940s essay “*Culture in the Wake of Catastrophe*” (1949). Rothberg thinks that “the “after Auschwitz” epoch is that post-Holocaust history has a traumatic structure – it is repetitive, discontinuous, and characterized by obsessive returns to the past and the troubling of simple chronology” [14, p. 19]. He stresses that: “*In revealing the inseparability of space and time in its melding of temporality and place, the phrase “after Auschwitz” becomes what Mikhail Bakhtin terms a “chronotope” – a form of literary expression in which the spatial and temporal axes are intertwined. The articulation of this chronotope by Adorno and Blanchot marks the invasion of modernism by trauma and illustrates how progressive history’s fundamental chronological articulation of “before and after” runs aground at the site of murder*” [14, p. 21].

In the same way the topic of a great globally destructive war converted into a range of aesthetic practices that made up modernism comprise a variety of responses

to self-understanding of modernity in progress. “Working thought” of the implications of war – at least on social level – corresponded to the accumulation of knowledge about that violent and destructive experience of the humanity. Continental war literature as a part of trauma literature is a diverse and multidimensional phenomenon with both ancient and developed roots. The earliest work in the whole Western literary tradition focused on the battlefield was *“The Iliad”*, written in the mid-8th century BCE and predominantly depicting the final weeks of the Trojan War and the Greek besiegement of the city of Troy. However, up to the XXth century, the topic of war in literature tends to manifest as a kind of a local event, rather than a common threat. The global perception of the war appears with the outbreak of the WWI and the WWII, when the world gets connected in front of the total enemy. As a result, the XXth century is marked by a number of texts, representing a national version of one and the same struggle. At the same time, the war literature breaks the continental frames and expands overseas. The common topic, clear and familiar to everyone makes it written, read and understood worldwide. The intertextual poem by T.S. Eliot *“The Waste Land”* (1922), which started the-lost-generation-literature, the fantasy novel by J.R.R. Tolkien *“The Lord of the Rings”* (1954), depicting the total fight against the world’s evil, a 1969 semi-autobiographic “science fiction-infused anti-war novel” by Kurt Vonnegut *“Slaughterhouse-Five”* of the Allied firebombing of Dresden, or a 1945 novel by Erich Maria Remarque about stateless refugees in Paris *“Arch of Triumph”* – all of them are the fragments of one and the same story of survival and suffering of the common man in the milestones of history. Thus, J.R.R. Tolkien sees fascism as a world evil, which he embodied in the frame of fantasy genre; Brecht trivializes fascism, making it appear “mere hazard, like an accident or crime,” so that its “true horror...is conjured away”; Ernest Hemmingway, depicting the First World War turns his character into an escapist. “Fight or flight” behavior is probably a choice in the face of the unthinkable. A character in a short story *“Linber”* (2016) by a contemporary Jewish author Galit Dahan Carlisah, translated into English in the USA, creates a parallel reality “Linber” as opposed to Berlin, in which she is able to love a German guy, trying not to think

about the past of her family and not to notice the *stolpersteine* beneath her feet, the stumbling stones that line the streets of Berlin, and fails.

The war literature of the XXIst century despite its somewhat local focus (Afghani, Syrian, etc.) can never be local again due to the process of globalization, the Internet technologies and the scale of the imminent international involvement. Ukrainian literature is almost never a battlefield literature, continues to be focused on the consequences or the prerequisites of the war rather than its development. From February 24th, 2022, Serhiy Zhadan embarks on an ongoing online diary documenting the perpetual military conflict between two neighboring countries that were formerly part of the USSR. The theme of conflict between neighboring entities, whether it involves ordinary individuals sharing land between their homes or nations sharing borders, has been recurrent in Ukrainian literature. This historical backdrop includes various instances such as Kozak Ukraine's interactions with Sultan Turkey, the conflicts between the Crimean Khanate and Kozak Ukraine, Bohdan Khmelnytsky's Ukraine and the Rzeczpospolita, Iwan Mazepa's Ukraine and the Russian Empire under Peter I, as well as Stepan Bandera's Galicia and its relationship with Poland, and the West Ukrainian People's Republic under Stepan Bandera and its interactions with the USSR. Serhiy Zhadan's online diary is a catalogued reality of the city of Kharkiv during the turbulent days of the ongoing military conflict, set out both in poetry and prose. The war as a text in the online diary by Serhiy Zhadan is a multidimensional phenomenon, expressed through a string of subtopics and working in concert: the city itself, its streets and houses, the citizens and their pets, the constant national symbol of the flag, the sky as an independent living organism, the seasons and weather, the symbolism of a range of Kharkiv-based details. Sound symbolism and calendar symbolism play the dominant role in depiction. Nature, weather, the time of the day, echo the events, accompany them or serve as a contrast to the unwanted alien to the city reality. The chief characteristics of the city in war are emptiness, slowness, silence. The city is personified and lives its own independent life, disturbed by the war. The

text of the diary is riddled with the flashbacks of the peaceful life, which creates dissonance.

The Ukrainian war impacted the today's American literature, making memoirist and poet Christopher Merrill create his odyssey across Ukraine in the hour of war called "*On the Road to Lviv*" (2023), prismatic and polysemous.

The trauma of being a woman in Afghanistan in the times of war was cultivated by XXIst-century Afghani-American writer Khaled Hosseini in his novel "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" (2007): "*It's our lot in life, Mariam. Women like us. We endure. It's all we have*", says the protagonist's mother.

The trauma of the Vietnam war and the subsequent migration was developed by an American writer Viet Thanh Nguyen in his novel "*The Sympathizer*" (2015). The multilayer migration caused by war is a two-way trauma in the contemporary world effecting those deprived of their homeland as a result of military conflict or political regime.

The veterans of the local conflicts bear their own story to share with the world. The modes of telling of such stories might vary, including *ideological-cultural* narrative strategy, which dwells on the opposition of 'native-alien', 'an honest warrior – a bandit', 'a good guy – a terrorist'; *an ironic narrative strategy*, acknowledging the conventionality of the rules and multiple social problems, and suggesting, however, a theatrical obedience to the rules; and *an existential* one, proving the meaningfulness of the blood spilt, giving some large experience and a new understanding of reality.

Since trauma is a multifaced phenomenon, it can be sourced from the environmental distortion, like in "*The Ecopoetic Anthology*" (2013), edited by Ann Fisher-Wirth, Laura-Gray Street and Robert Hass, depicting the natural world in its beauty and degradation. Literary trauma theory measures "trauma texts" through the stress scale expressed by means of intertextuality, repetition, fragmentation, and language manipulation.

In the USA the Afro-Americans generated their own literary tradition linked to the comprehension of their own history and the experience of racism and therefore creating another line of post-traumatic writings.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. 'Trauma theory' and psychoanalysis.
 2. Types of representation of trauma in narrative.
 3. Narrating gender trauma in twentieth-century English literature.
 4. Ill-effects of a great war as experienced by soldiers through the range of narratives by men and women writers in the USA.
 5. Military trauma sourced from the local conflicts and its representation in contemporary American literature.
 6. Eco-poetry and environmental traumatology.
 7. Racism, colonialism and post-colonialism within trauma studies.
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GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Cultural trauma is a connected notion that arises when members of a community perceive themselves as having endured a catastrophic incident that profoundly affects their collective psyche, leaving enduring imprints on their group consciousness. Such experiences permanently alter their memories and fundamentally redefine their future identity.

On the other hand, **individual trauma** pertains to an occurrence affecting only one person. It could be a solitary event like a mugging, sexual assault, physical assault, or work-related injury, or it could involve a series of repeated or prolonged incidents, such as battling a life-threatening illness or enduring multiple sexual assaults.

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PACE 4

“BROKEN MIRRORS”: COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL WRITINGS. THE LITERATURE OF IMMIGRATION

Key terms: *multicultural and transcultural selves, cultural roots, whiteness, ‘savage’ mind, between the worlds, birth language, code switching, a by-product of two spaces, splinter binarism, ‘patchwork identity’*

1. *What is colonial? The historical milestones of colonialism. Colonial literature.*
2. *Postcolonial thought. The issues of post-colonial culture. The features of postcolonial writings.*
3. *New Empires and neocolonialism.*
4. *The multifaceted migrant literature. The discrepancy of what one is and what one is ought to be.*

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the term ‘colonialism’ originates from the Latin word ‘colonia,’ which translates to ‘a country or territory settled by migrants from another country and controlled by it,’ akin to the English word ‘colony’. Colonialism entails the conquest and control of lands and resources belonging to other peoples, viewing the targeted territories as both economic and human resources that serve the interests of the Empire.

The process of colonization on the European continent dates back to the Romans who settled in other lands but still retained their citizenship. European expansion is influenced by the idea of the monarchical *Imperium Romanum* established by Caesar Augustus. At its peak in the IInd century AD, the Roman Empire spanned from Armenia to the Atlantic, considering the British Isles as one of its colonies. In the context of colonization, language serves as the primary tool for redefining the space under the Empire’s control. The Roman linguistic influence led to the incorporation of numerous Latin words into the English language: Ecclesiastical: *abbadissa* > *abudesse*

'abbess'; *altar* > *alter* 'altar'; *apostolus* > *apostol* 'apostle'; *culpa* > *cylpe* 'fault'; *missa* > *mæsse* 'Mass'; *nonnus* > *nonne* 'monk'; *offerre* > *offrian* 'sacrifice'; *praedicare* > *predician* 'preach'; *scola* > *scol* 'school'; *versus* > *fers* 'verse', etc.; General: *calendae* > *calend* 'month'; *cavellum* > *caul* 'basket'; *epistula* > *epistol* 'letter'; *fenestra* > *fenester* 'window'; *lilium* > *lilie* 'lily'; *organum* > *orgel* 'organ'; *picus* > *pic* 'pike'; *planta* > *plant* 'plant'; *rosa* > *rose* 'rose'; *studere* > *studdian* 'take care of', etc. [10, p. 24].

Before the Age of Exploration colonialism was represented by various powers: approximately 550-330 BC – Persian Empire; 11th-13th centuries – 8 waves of Crusades (Europe); 11th-13th centuries – the wealth of the Inca Empire (South America); 13th century – Genghis Khan and the Mongols conquer the Middle East and China; 14th-16th centuries – the spread of the Aztec Empire in the valley of Mexico, subjecting the others; 15th century – the control of the Vijaynagar Empire, and the Ottoman Empire, which began as a minor Islamic principality in what is now western Turkey, extended itself over most of Asia Minor and the Balkans; the beginning of the 18th century – the extension of the Chinese Empire from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. The Anglophone dominance starts in the 5th century on the territory of the British Isles, spreading first to Celtic lands, and with the formation of the British By 1815 the Empire extends globally generating the anglocentrism in various parts of the world. The Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901) becomes the emblem of great colonial infringements, establishing the British Empire as the world's dominant force, "a pacemaker of European industrialization and expansion". Types of Anglophone colonies encompass: penal colonies, insular colonies, 'spice islands' of Asia and Columbus, black regions, yellow lands, slave plantations.

According to Boehmer, Britain became the hive of nations, and cast her swarms all over the world [5, p. 39].

The British expansion into new territories coincided with the continental powers of Europe expanding in response to the dominant influences of France, Spain, Portugal, and Denmark. Consequently, the colonial expansion following the Renaissance in

Europe introduced novel colonial methodologies, reshaping the global landscape and resulting in the establishment of distant empires. This form of colonialism brought about intricate economic integration between the colonizers and the colonized regions, leading to a substantial influx of wealth and labor towards the centers of power. Meanwhile, manufactured goods circulated back to the metropolitan markets for local consumption. As a result, African slaves were transported to the Americas, where they worked on West Indian plantations producing sugar, cultivating tea and coffee beans for European consumption. Additionally, raw cotton brought from India was processed into ready-made clothes, disrupting local manufacturing practices.

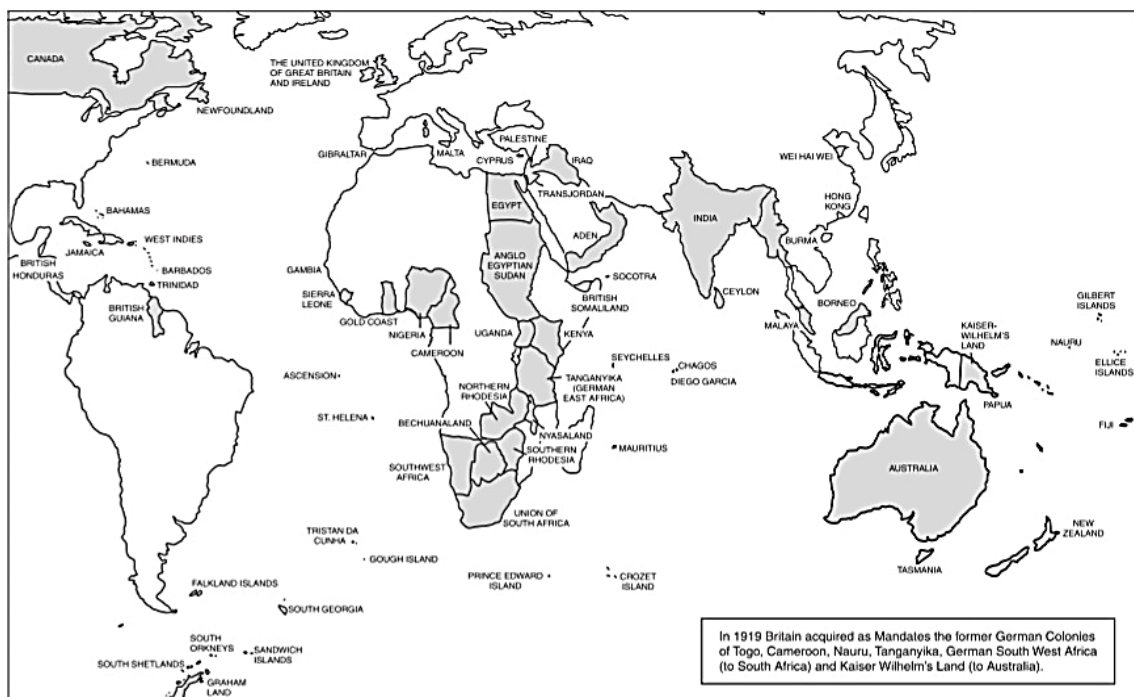


Figure 1 – *Britain's Empire in 1920*. Adopted from “*Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*” by Elleke Boehmer

European colonialism has divided the world history into several historical blocks:

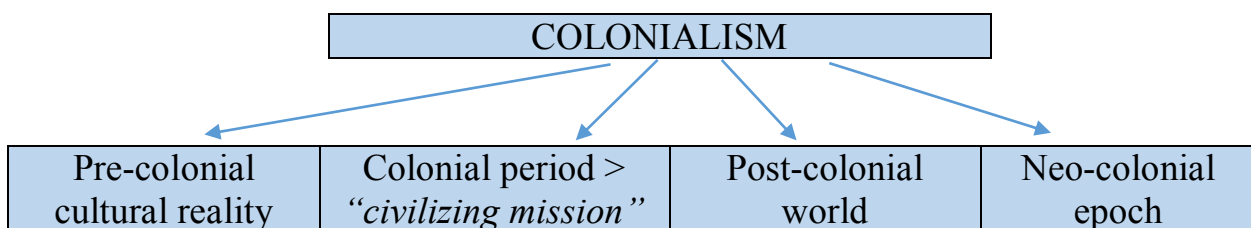


Figure 2 – *Historical blocks of colonialism*

Colonialism reshaped existing structures of human knowledge and promoted, according to Hobson, the ‘expansion of nationality’ [14, p. 6]. At its height (the Victorian Era) the British Empire generated a thesis: “*the One Race and One Flag*”. Colonialism involved the spread of Western-dominated systems to new territories. E. Boehmer emphasizes the British imperial perspective on its history, suggesting it was marked by narratives of pioneering achievements, superiority, and definitive beginnings. Whenever the British established landmarks such as crosses, cities, or colonies, they asserted the inception of a new historical narrative while marginalizing or even disregarding the significance of other histories. This worldview required significant cultural and discursive reinforcement to maintain imperial ideals. According to Boehmer, domestic realism novels contributed to perpetuating this imperial vision. Writers of this era, whether knowingly or unwittingly, were part of an imperial society and thus engaged in its biases and controversies [5, p. 24].

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin see the language and an educational system as a tool of colonization: “*One of the main features of imperial oppression is control over language. The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all ‘variants’ as impurities*” [4, p. 7]. Language dominance finds its reflection in the *new toponymy*. Colonial maps transferred the old names to the new background – toponyms like *New York, Windsor, Perth, East London, Margate*, or numerous *Newcastles* spread globally. Establishing new places with names reminiscent of those left behind partly recreated the symbolic experience of the old world. At the same time, this practice of naming represented the expansion of European influence into colonized regions. Thus, adding the descriptor “new” to familiar names reflected the changing nature of these new environments. The act of naming also established a temporal framework for the colonies: although distinct from Europe, they were depicted as adjacent to and subordinate to it. Boehmer argues that the onset of European migration and colonization prompted a deep-seated desire to construct new narratives from existing stories. The colonization process involved risks and experimentation, encompassing both physical lives and textual

representation, as well as financial resources primarily focused on interpreting unfamiliar territories, which were essentially abstract entities. Travelers and colonizers relied on deploying and spreading readily available descriptions and authoritative symbols to navigate these uncharted spaces. They applied familiar metaphors, already imbued with meaning, to unfamiliar and improbable contexts. Rendering these unfamiliar spaces intelligible was achieved through the use of commonplace names and reliable textual conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic [5, p. 14-15].

Colonialism introduced a novel form of societal stratification distinct from the traditional hierarchical structure of “peasant-merchant-nobility.” Instead, it categorized individuals based on a new criterion: their racial identity as either *white* or *non-white* (black/Negro, red/Native American, yellow/Orient). In his works Rudyard Kipling provides a telling example of the country of ever-changing colour. On the other hand, George Orwell, incorporates the notion of “otherness”. *“And it was the moment, as I stood there with the rifle in my hands, that I first grasped the hollowness, the futility of the white man’s domination in the East. Here was I, the white man, with his gun, standing in front of the unarmed native crowd – seemingly the leading actor of the piece; but in reality, I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind. I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys”*, writes George Orwell in his essay *Shooting an Elephant*, where “the yellow faces” represent the concept of “otherness”, “savageness”, “primitivism”.

Basically, the colonial discourse has developed a range of binary notions:

<p>colonizer : colonized empire : metropolis = center – margin (periphery) civilized : primitive advanced : retarded good : evil beautiful : ugly human : bestial <u>later on [after the Age of Exploration]:</u> white : black / colour / non-white</p>
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In the colonial context, inhabitants of colonized lands were often portrayed as belonging to inferior, subhuman categories, depicted as helpless, passive, and in need of “improvement.” They were labeled with terms such as possessing a “savage mentality,” “primitive thought,” or being associated with a degraded “heart of darkness.” Conversely, the European modernity of the era was linked with concepts like “order,” “progress,” “culture,” and “civilization.” Europe was depicted as a paragon of humanity, culture, and historical advancement. Ania Loomba suggests that the notion of civilization versus barbarism is constructed by creating an irreconcilable dichotomy between “black” and “white,” as well as between self and other. Justifications for imperialism often revolve around the perceived “need” to “civilize” the indigenous populations [15, p. 53].

Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, in his exploration of the colonization of Africa, describes “colonialism” as the severe crises disproportionately faced by African peoples during their tragic interaction with the European world. This era, spanning from the fifteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century, is marked by the horrors and brutality of the transatlantic slave trade, the extensive imperial control over African lands, the imposition of foreign governance on its populations, and the enduring ideologies and actions promoting European cultural dominance (ethnocentrism) and racial superiority (racism) [8; p. 4]. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze emphasizes that Africans were labeled as a “subhuman race,” with ideas about the “savage” and “inferior” traits of “the African” and the “African mind” widely disseminated and firmly ingrained in the discourses of French, British, and German Enlightenment intellectuals [8, p. 6]. Racist ideologies have categorized various ethnic groups as inherently or biologically predisposed to specific roles. Aimé Césaire refers to Ernest Renan's viewpoint on this issue, in which Renan posits that nature has assigned certain races to particular duties. Renan contends that the Chinese race possesses natural aptitude for manual labor but lacks a sense of honor, rendering them suitable for tasks requiring manual dexterity. He proposes fair governance and reciprocal benefits as a means to satisfy them. Renan also suggests that the Negro race

is most suited for agricultural labor, while the European race is portrayed as inherently suited for roles of leadership and military service. Renan argues that allocating tasks based on each race's inherent characteristics would promote social harmony and productivity [7, p. 16]. Furthermore, women experience a dual imposition of colonization, enduring oppression both as subjects of colonial rule and through gender-based discrimination. Female slaves, in particular, played a crucial role in upholding the plantation economy.

The initial word taught by Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* to Friday is “Master,” signifying a hierarchical relationship. Consequently, within colonial populations, there exists a dynamic akin to that of master and slave. Much like *Crusoe*, the British Empire, at its zenith, depended on mobilizing symbols – such as depictions of wealth, vast landscapes, national pride, and the construction of modern cities where chaos once reigned. In its endeavor to comprehend foreign territories and validate its presence, colonial authority relied on imaginative narratives, often termed energizing myths. These myths, including portrayals of the New World and the concept of an Empire where “the sun would never set,” served to endorse and justify colonial expansion.

European colonialism is characterized by a tendency to convert former colonies into empires, effectively transforming the colonized space into a reflection of the colonizer itself. Consequently, under Anglo-Saxon dominance, the British Isles, once colonized by Rome and still bearing remnants of that colonization (such as Hadrian's Wall and the presence of elements like “-*castra*” in place names such as Lancaster, Manchester, and Gloucester), evolved into the British Empire with its own capacity for colonization. Britain, with its cyclical and often self-contained nature, replicated its model in regions like the West Indies, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, North America, and the Caribbean. By aligning moral ideals with economic interests, the British Empire, especially during the Victorian era, combined duty with self-interest and Christianity with profit. “*White*” culture was perceived as the guarantor of happiness, prosperity, and salvation against the perceived barbarity and darkness of

indigenous tribes. Colonization gets mixed with *biocolonization*, racism coexists with speciesism.

Conversely, North America, once a British colony, evolves into the New American Empire with its own imperial ambitions, demonstrated by its invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq driven by neo-colonial motivations. Hardt and Negri do not explicitly label the United States as this emerging power. However, they contend that ‘Empire’ emerges through the worldwide extension of the internal US constitutional project – a project aimed at integrating and assimilating minorities into the mainstream rather than simply ostracizing or excluding them [13].

With the end of the WWII the “Age of Europe” faces its decline. The second half of the XX-th century is marked by a retreat from militant European nationalism, fight against a racist ideology, which undermined the surviving rationales of empire. Occupation of Africa weakens and in the early 1960s most African countries attain constitutional decolonization [8, p. 5]. Many former colonies gain independence, but continue to exist as a part of the Commonwealth. Western impact remains rather strong. The term ‘postcolonial’ comes into being.

“In choosing the term ‘postcolonial’, we are deliberately not distinguishing between the colonial and post-independence eras. On the contrary, ‘postcolonial’ <...> is intended to stress continuity – the persistence in the present <...> of colonialism both old and new”, say Brydon and Tiffin in their work “*Decolonizing Fictions*”. [6, p. 8]. Despite the constitutional independence the post-colonial spaces continue to retain ‘western culture’ code. The former ‘culture capitals’ after colonial occupation still exist in ‘hegemonic situation’, drawing waves of migration of the former subjects to Britain, France and Spain, gradually changing the colour of the original population. Colonialism has altered the concept of space, which gets characterized by hybridity, bringing and cultivating the idea of tolerance as a ground for peaceful coexistence, and ‘transculturation’ [17].

The literature of the post-colonial era holds a bulk of mutual features:

- it is often written in the language of the former colonizer with incorporation of native realia;
- it focuses on ‘cultural identity’ in the situation of the pre-dominance of Western civilization and exploitation of civilization;
- encompasses the post-colonial search for definition and self-estimation;
- post-colonial writings give a particular insight into the dialectical nature of subjectivity;
- it dwells on the problems of post-colonial societies such as ‘the continuity of colonial boundaries served to indigenize colonized space rather than to rectify it’. The post-independence phase holds some stubborn traces of a colonial past;
- it has a claim to ‘truth-telling’: indigenous peoples tend to screen out their agency, diversity, resistance, thinking, voices;
- it portrays the violence of the new world.

Colonialism spawned various concepts such as the ‘ritual of power,’ ‘constant surveillance,’ ‘non-European,’ ‘recordless space,’ sub-human wild-men (savages), Euro-centrism, the concept of ‘blackness’ as an ethnic identifier, the term ‘peoples of color,’ and the ‘boundaries of the state.’ According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, the notion of the border holds significant importance in post-colonial studies, reflecting concerns about the constructed divisions between peoples, nations, and individuals. This concept of the border was implicit in the expansion of European cultures during the colonial period. The regions reached by the aggressive diasporic movement of European settlers were often designated as the frontier, while the settled areas adjacent to these regions were sometimes referred to as the borderlands [3, p. 25].

If the while-colonial writings were created by the white authors, depicting the perceptions of a European person on an alien space (e.g. George Orwell’s novel *Burmese Days* (1934), the opening of the confessional Part Two in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), essays such as *A Hanging* (1931) and *Shooting an Elephant* (1936), Summerset Maugham’s *On a Chinese Screen* (1922)), the post-independence narrative is often written by non-whites and has the capacity to establish new metaphors of

nationhood. The postcolonial endeavor aims to assert authority over historical narratives and shape them accordingly. In colonialist fiction, often seen in travel writings, the depicted worlds may appear conspicuously devoid of indigenous characters, whereas postcolonial fiction places native characters at the forefront, endowing them with identities and names. They are no longer mere "coolies" or slaves, relegated to the backdrop of a European narrative on non-European soil.

Colonization disrupted and disconnected populations from their historical, spatial, geographical, and linguistic contexts, creating a significant gap between pre-colonial and post-colonial societies. Similar to how the Roman Empire left roads in the British Isles, Western civilization, particularly Anglophone civilization, left linguistic, cultural, and technological imprints in the "recordless" spaces of Africa, the Caribbean (encompassing all island nations in the region, as well as mainland Guyana and Belize), the West Indies (encompassing nations once part of the British Empire, such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua, Dominica, Guyana, and sometimes Belize), the East Indies, and Latin America and Tex-Mex America, irreversibly transforming them.

Contemporary postcolonial writers often aim to capture the essence of postcolonial reality by employing updated myths, narrative poetry, literary epics, or transcribed oral tales. This approach enables them to portray themselves as active participants in their own history. Concepts such as the "native mind," "native personality," ethno-psychiatry/ethno-psychology, colonial experiences, and post-independence practices form the foundation of postcolonial discourse.

The decolonized geography of the XXIst century doesn't remain static being influenced by a new form of Empire – the global one. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri posit that unlike European imperialism, the Empire does not establish a centralized power base and does not depend on fixed boundaries or barriers. Instead, it functions as a decentralized and deterritorializing system of governance that gradually encompasses the entire global domain within its open and expanding frontiers. The Empire administers hybrid identities, adaptable hierarchies, and diverse interactions

through flexible networks of authority. The once distinct national identities on the imperial map of the world have now merged and intermingled into a global rainbow under the Empire's influence [13]. The Coronavirus pandemic has revealed the legal mechanisms operated by the Global Empire. However, the maintaining global system got challenged on February 24, 2023 by new super-powers of the neo-colonial potential.

Colonization practices facilitated the intermingling of white and non-white cultures, brought about by bidirectional migration and resulting in what is known as 'code-switching.' Interactions between cultures and diverse migration patterns give rise to individuals of mixed heritage, originating from two distinct spaces and possessing hybrid backgrounds (such as African and American, Caribbean and American, Indian and American, Latin and American, etc.).

Salman Rushdie provides a metaphor 'broken mirrors' representing the diverse and varied challenges faced by migrants [18, p. 10]. The author emphasizes that the writers of "broken mirrors" find themselves positioned between two mirrors – one reflecting their homeland and the other the United States. Reflecting on their indigenous land evokes feelings of loss, and "looking back" may entail the risk of undergoing a transformation akin to being turned into pillars of salt [18, p. 10]. Hybrid identities navigating between different cultural spheres confront a significant challenge regarding their sense of self and societal expectations, both in relation to their native background and the norms of the new environment. The concept of adaptation thus becomes paramount in this context. *"This process of constantly shifting or adapting identities stems from the realization that non-European, non-Anglo female migrants of the latter half of the twentieth century never will completely shake off their roots from their island or peninsular homelands or blend into the United States mainland"*, thinks Pauline Newton, investigating the transcultural women of late-twentieth-century U.S. American literature [16, p. 3].

The USA refugees can be subdivided into European (European Jewish, Kosovar, Serbian war refugees, etc.) and non-white land refugees (Jamaican, Trinidad, Tobacco, etc.), who acquire a sort of ‘patchwork identity’. The reasons for immigration include:

- low-income or other harsh conditions on non-European lands;
- search for individual and social security in the USA;
- military conflicts (Vietnamese, Afghani, Yugoslavian, Ukrainian, etc.).
- homeland dictatorships;
- Western expansion into Asia, including Malaysia;

First-generation migrants experience cross-cultural encounters, resulting in a loss of certain ethnic comforts and the emergence of a ‘patchwork identity.’ These hybrid personas are often reflected in cross-cultural or “outsider” writings, such as Native American, African American, Mexican American, Caribbean American, and Asian American literature. However, this cultural hybridity tends to persist across subsequent generations, despite the influence of assimilation policies or attempts at whitewashing by the mainstream culture. These second-, third-, fourth-, or fifth-generation writers continue to maintain their cultural boundaries, reflecting their immediate cultural heritage. *“I have never abandoned the island of my birth or perhaps that obsession called “the island” has never left me”*, acknowledges Judith Ortiz Cofer in her essay *“Woman in Front of the Sun”* [9].

The examples of the multicultural products in creative writing include:

- 1) Chinese Americans: Maxine Hong Kingston *“China Men”*, *“The Woman Warrior”*; Gish Jen *“Typical American”*, *“Mona in the Promised Land”*;
- 2) Japanese American: Hisaye Yamamoto *“Seventeen Syllables and other Stories”*;
- 3) Mexican Americans: Esquibel Tywoniak, a co-author of *“Migrant Daughter: Coming of Age as a Mexican American Woman”*; Sandra Cisneros *“Woman Hollering Greek”*, *“Caramelo”*; Julia Alvarez *“How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents”*;
- 4) Puerto Rican American: Esmeralda Santiago *“When I was Puerto Rican”*;

5) Vietnamese Americans: Le Ly Hayslip “*When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*”, *Child of War, Woman of Peace*”; Lan Cao “*Monkey Bridge*”.

6) Afghani American: Khaled Hosseini “*A Thousand Splendid Suns*”, “*The Kite Runner*”, etc.

While for the preceding the prevalent trend was one of ‘whitewashing,’ but in the twenty-first century, there is a notable shift towards ‘coloring’ literature, art, fashion, culture, and society. “*I may never be apple pie*”, writes Suheir Hammad “*A Road Still Becoming*”, but more and more, America is becoming like me, like us” [12, p. 89, 94].

As a result of colonialism, slavery, migration, and globalization, numerous ‘contact zones’ have emerged – social spaces where different cultures intersect, collide, and engage with each other, often within unequal power dynamics of dominance and subordination [2, p. 119]. These spaces of mixed culture can be likened to ‘inner war zones,’ where the hybrid components of identity contend with each other and manifest into a new form of literary DNA characterized by distinct issues, boundaries, and themes.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *The post-slave trade essay ‘The Nigger Question’ (1849) by Thomas Carlyle.*
2. *Lewis Nkosi’s novel “Mating Birds” (1986) as a fine example of the postcolonial perception of the relation between knowledge and control.*
3. *Self-worth or ‘race pride’ and the biases of white colonial history. Colonialism offered by radical schools of thought.*
4. *Gender liberation and the ‘double colonization’. Postcolonial women’s writings. White and non-white feminists. Male-dominated liberation movements.*
5. *‘Settler colonies and missionary. Differential experiences of self-determination under colonial rule: native, settler, creole.*
6. *The colonial system of self-protection: ‘Empire of the Same’. Ex-colonial territories and ‘in-between’ writings.*
7. *Postmodern and the post-colonial. Literature and the nation: revisionist theories.*
8. *‘Trans-societal flows and their reflection in literature. The omnipresence of Coca-Cola culture and the camouflage of the reality.*
9. *Negritude and “Black literature’. Literature ‘of colour’.*
10. *Migration and ‘desperate homesickness’ for the old country, reflected in literature. The possibilities of self-recovery.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Abrogation refers to the official or legal act of canceling, nullifying, or repealing something, typically an established law or rule. It entails the abolition or annulment of an existing regulation, such as the outlawing of slavery.

Alterity originates from the Latin term *alteritas*, denoting ‘the condition of being different or distinct; diversity, otherness.’ Its English derivatives include alternate, alternative, alternation, and alter ego. While the term *alterité* is more frequently used in French, it contrasts with its antonym *identité*, meaning identity (Johnson and Smith 1990: xviii).

Anti-colonialism is the political struggle of colonized people against the specific ideology and practice of colonialism.

Apartheid an Afrikaans term meaning ‘separation’, used in South Africa for the policy initiated by the Nationalist Government after 1948 and usually rendered into English in the phrase ‘policy of separate development’.

Chromatism is belonging to colour or colours. The term is used to refer to the essentialist distinction between people on the basis of colour.

Colonial patronage is a term that refers to the economic and social power that allows cultural institutions and cultural forms to come into existence and to be promoted. It deals with the dominance of certain ethno-centric ideas from European culture at the time of colonization of other cultures.

Creolization is a process of absorption of values of other culture. The cultures undergo creolization as a result of merger of the odd elements, which are simultaneously heterogeneous and inherent to a particular environment. The term creolization was initially applied by linguists to explain how contact languages become creole languages, however, at present, the term is used to describe new cultural expressions brought by contact between societies and relocated people. Creolization gets traditionally applied to the Caribbean, although it is not exclusive to Caribbean and some scholars use it to represent other diasporas.

Decolonization is the demand for a rejection of the influence of the colonial period and arguing for a recuperation of authentic pre-colonial traditions and customs.

Ecological imperialism is the control over place, in which the fauna, flora and the actual physical character of colonized lands changes under the pressure of the practical outworking of the European concern with property: enclosure, agriculture, importation of European plants and weeds; the destruction of indigenous species; possibly even the changing of weather patterns.

Ethno-centrism is the act of assessing other cultures based on the biases and norms of one's own culture. In colonial English discourse, it entails using one's own cultural background as a lens to evaluate other cultures, their practices, behaviors, beliefs, and people, rather than considering the specific standards of the cultures being observed.

Euro-centrism is the European dominance of the world effected through imperial expansion.

‘First Nations’ are indigenous people, such as Native American Indians, who lived in parts of the US and Canada long before the current dominant Anglo-Saxon peoples.

Frontier is the idea of a boundary or a limiting zone to distinguish one space or people from another.

‘Going native’ the term indicates the colonizers’ fear of contamination by absorption into native life and customs (deals with the concept of **civilized** and **savage** races).

Hybridity is a concept related to the cross between two races, plants and culture.

Mimicry refers to the act of imitating someone or something, typically for entertainment or mockery. In evolutionary biology, mimicry involves a developed similarity between an organism and another object, often belonging to a different species. This resemblance often serves to protect a species from predators. Mimicry evolves when a receiver, such as a predator, recognizes the

likeness between the mimic (the imitating organism) and the model (the organism being imitated), leading to changes in behavior that benefit the mimic.

Orientalism refers to the widespread dissemination and study of Eastern languages, histories, philosophies, and cultures. It was a scholarly discipline in Western academia during the 18th and 19th centuries, focusing on the examination of Asian societies' languages, literatures, religions, philosophies, histories, art, and laws, with a particular emphasis on ancient civilizations.

'Otherness' is a separation of anyone from one's self.

'Settler colonialism' refers to a form of colonialism where immigrants from foreign lands establish permanent residence on territory already inhabited by indigenous populations. This process often leads to the displacement or marginalization of existing communities and cultures. Some academics argue that settler colonialism is intrinsically genocidal. Examples of settler colonies include British colonization in Ireland, Anglo-Saxon settlements in cities like Boston and Cape Town, as well as European settlements across entire continents such as North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

Subjectivity is an inferior position of people on the colonized space under a colonizing machine or system.

The 'double colonization' refers to the idea that the colonialism operated differently for men and for women, and women were not only the subject to general discrimination as colonial subjects, but were also exposed to specific gender oppression.

Transculturalisation in the terms of colonialism and post-colonialism refers to the relationships between the colony and the imperial center.

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PACE 5

THE VOICES OF THE OPRESSED: NATIVE AMERICAN WRITTEN LITERATURE

Key terms: *the white settlers, disadvantaged racial / ethnic groups, the ethnocentrism, on the verge of extinction, voice in the margin, otherness, the dark-skinned savage, the genetic pole, pan-Indianism*

1. *Native American literature as a multi-voiced recording of the national tradition and ethnic code, and its social function: why should anyone care?*
2. *The periodization of Native American Literature: stages and features.*
3. *Human beings, plants, animals, “natural forces”, and great mythological others in a complex systems of cooperative and competitive otherness.*
4. *Native American literature in the updated world.*

The word *literature*, derived from the Latin *littera*, served broadly to indicate anything that had been written down and – to achieve a measure of social circulation – copied over. In oral societies without alphabetic letters the worthy literary text undergone sufficient repetition to be remembered and passed along. From the pre-Columbian period until late in the XIXth century, Native American literature was represented merely as an unwritten and anonymous oral tradition. The strong oral tradition and stubborn loyalty to the native ancestral core resulted in profound intertextuality of the works and deep symbolism. Arnold Krupat suggests that even contemporary and intricately crafted Native American works often retain connections to or are influenced by oral traditions, which operate quite differently from the methods of the dominant text-centric culture [8, p. 55].

The Native American culture as a dominant one on the American continent quickly lost its positions under the pressure of the colonizing forces. The assimilation of the Native American territories by the newcomers was somewhat similar to the

assimilation of the Celtic lands by the Romans and then by the Anglo-Saxons on the British Isles, when the prior population was extruded to the less fertile lands, bloodmixed or simply exterminated. However, the craving for cultural self-determination allowed the tribal system to last up to the modernity and preserve ethnic core.

The arrival of the Europeans has not only attempted to alter Native American cultural code, but often ended up in complete termination of the whole tribes, who, as an oral society, were taking their culture and their literature into nothingness. Within history, Native American tribes were “reduced to a racial and ethnic group ‘inferior’ to the ‘more civilized’ newcomers”. Aguirre stresses that “*Because Europeans viewed their own culture as superior, the physical characteristics of Native Americans were taken as evidence of biological inferiority*” [1, p. 14].

Like all the pre-written literatures, Native American oral texts served as a tool for preserving both ethnic code and native history, as well as an instrument of upbringing. The literary texts in the European languages appear with the maintenance of schools. In 1754, Eleazar Wheelock established the Indian Charity-School in Lebanon, Connecticut, aiming to educate Native Americans to serve as missionaries and educators within their communities. Among the earliest written literary works in European languages by Native American authors were produced in the seventeenth century by students attending Harvard's Indian College. Having being composed in Latin and Greek and being limitedly accessible (inside the university only), didn't receive much critical attention. As a result, only two texts by Harvard Indian students have survived.

Very often the old Native American compositions were transcribed and published by the whites. Therefore, “*The Wallamolum,*” an ancient oral historical epic recounting the early movements of the Anglokian people, was preserved within the Delaware or Leni Lanape tribe. It was made public in 1820 by Rafinesque, who obtained it as a present from Dr. Ward in Indiana. The doctor got it from the White

River community of Delawares. Admittedly, the widespread works about the Native Americans were produced by the white writers.

Table 8 – *The ‘White’ American Literature about Native Americans*

LITERARY PERIOD	AUTHORS AND THEIR WORKS	THE NATURE OF THE WORK	THE DETAILS
Literature of the early Republic	- James Fenimore Cooper “The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757” (1826).	- an historical romance novel, the second book of the “Leatherstocking Tales” pentalogy.	- Takes place in 1757, amid the backdrop of the French and Indian War, a conflict occurring in North America as part of the broader Seven Years’ War, during which France and Great Britain vied for dominance over the region.
Literature of the early Republic	- James Fenimore Cooper “The Pathfinder” (1840).	- published 14 years later, is a sequel of the previous novel.	- the adventure of the plot on the water.
Literature of the early Republic	- James Fenimore Cooper “The Deerslayer, or The First Warpath” (1841).	- is a prequel of the first novel.	- refers to the 1740–1745 time scratch and portrays the lifetime of the protagonist of the <i>Leatherstocking tales</i> , Natty Bumppo and is set on Otsego Lake in central, upstate New York
Modernism	Oliver La Farge “Laughing Boy” (1929).	- gives the account of the Navajos, predicting that “ <i>The Indian story had to end in tragedy</i> ”.	- portrays the efforts of the Navajo in Southwestern United States to preserve their culture within the frame of the States. Marked by the Pulitzer Prize in 1930.

Thus, it was Fenimore Cooper, who depicted Indians as noble savages, having ignored the mainstream formula “savage” / “civilized”. He was the one who created novels about “a disappearing people”, a notion that crystallized. However, after the Civil War, portrayals of Indians stepped away from the concept of innocence towards

the image of a violent threat to the progress of modern civilization. By the XXth century, Native Americans, in the same way as African Americans, received a share of criticism and satire for their conservatism and the lack of ability to evolve in the updated reality.

The advent of Native American authored texts goes in hand with the full control over the Indian lands and the further sprawl of the ‘white’ schools aimed to educate Native American children. As a response to colonialism and multilevel oppression native American texts were often aimed at the white public. However, unlike African Americans, Cuban Americans or Latin Americans for a considerable period of time Indians didn’t recognize themselves as the citizens or subjects of the states to whose representatives they were addressing when creating political texts. Even from the point of literary form, the Native American writings differ from those of ethnic minorities: *“unlike many African American writers in this period, such as Charles W. Chesnutt, who sought to insert himself into the American literary canon, incorporation into the broader American culture was not (and still is not) the goal for many Native American writers <...> Womack lays claim to a separate indigenous literary tradition, or more accurately, tribally specific traditions: “our Native literature canon of the Americas” is “separate from their American canon” as his telling subtitle Native American Literary Separatism reiterates”* [7, p. 72].

Early Native American writings or indigenous literature illuminate the intersection between local, internal, traditional, tribal, or “Indian” literary forms, which, during the colonial and post-colonial periods, often intersect with the dominant literary modes of the diverse nation-states in which they emerge. Most Native American literature was transmitted orally. The pre-Anglican period embraces the traditional tales, etiological stories, ritualized songs, myths, storyknife tales, told by females, and other oral literature. For the Native American tradition oral historical epic narrative is endemic. Later, in the XIXth century, the oration (or speeches) gets widespread and being addressed to the white, becomes known to the Europeans.

The word “oration” derives from the Latin word *oratoria*, or the English “*oratory*”, since the time of the Roman republic. Garland defines oratory as follows: “Oratory’s fortunes as human-to-human speech (the word was also applied to prayers) waned under feudalism but waxed under classicism and republicanism in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries in the debate, or myriad of subdebates, over the creation of the modern world. During that period, Europeans introduced the art of oratory to Indigenous peoples, and somewhat unexpectedly, they received eloquent speeches in return. Consequently, speeches delivered by Indigenous leaders from Metacomet’s in 1660 to Chief Joseph’s in 1877 were included in anthologies, primarily American ones, showcasing classic eloquence [9, p. 107].

Native American fiction of the XIXth-XXth centuries, represented by poetry and prose, turns into a nostalgic symbol of an earlier time. It is marked by historicism, the nostalgia for “virgin land” (before the coming of the whites), the mourning over the “widowed land” (the term applied by Francis Jenning), the address to tribal-traditional cultures; it exploits the concept of “home” and the concept of “social justice”, cultivates the sense of human responsibility to nature. The works focus on the topic of traditional nations, are based on “ethnographic-formal” approach by erecting new agendas, reassess anti-colonial nationalism, critical texts redefine Native American literature in general. Arnold Krupart proves that the Native American literature provides “a collective self and a collective society” [8, p. 134]. Along with that, “from the very first period of invasion and settlement until the close of the “frontier”, Americans tended to define their peculiar national distinctiveness” [8, p. 97]. Thus, Native American literature in American English is a translation of the Native voice into Western terms, representation of an Indian point of view, polyphony of the indigenous symbolism and culturalism. Today Native Americans fiction reaches back in a continuous line to its ancient beginnings. For the Native Americans, language is magical. They tend to control their world through various songs, spells, and charms. Originally the oral forms of literature like songs were chanted to make rain and to assure a profuse harvest, charms to cure sickness and ease pain, spells to overcome an

enemy, win a reluctant lover. The codified language system exploited by Native Americans invoked the spirits of the sky, the earth and the winds.

The Native American poetry is featured by a highly developed image-thinking and multi-images, the animal-body-rootedness, the poet acts as a shaman, it contains important intersections (analogies). Susan Rothenberg classifies the XXth-century verses as jazz and rock poetry, surrealism, random poetry, concrete poetry, happenings, dada, “lautgedichte (sound poems)”, projective verse, beat poetry and psychedelic poetry.

The initial wave of noted Native American men-of-letters who entered the canon were represented by Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo), Vine Deloria, Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux), James Welch (Blackfeet/Gros Ventre), Simon J. Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), and N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa), awarded by 1969 Pulitzer Prize in fiction for “*House Made of Dawn*” (1968). According to Bruchac, 1969 marks a visible turn in Native American fiction.

The chart below retraces the development of Native American literature throughout the history of colonization. The table partially cites the works “*Handbook of Native American Literature*” edited by Andrew Wiget and “*African, Native, and Jewish American Literature and the Reshaping of Modernism*” by Alicia Kent.

Table 9 – *Native American Literature, written by Indians*

TIME FRAMES AND THE TYPE OF LITERATURE PREVAILING	AUTHORS AND THEIR WORKS	THE NATURE OF THE WORK	DETAILS AND THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
1	2	3	4
Indian literature before the Anglicanization of the continent	Oral literature. Native genres: a) <i>tradition</i> b) <i>al tales</i> ;	- are not ultimately attributable to any known storyteller, and include stock characters, rather than	- Can vary according to its source / origin (Oral literature of the Alaskan Arctic, of the Subarctic Athapaskans, of the

Continuation of table 9

1	2	3	4
	<p>b) <i>etiological stories</i> – is a more recent genre, may describe events in the lives of known individuals. Can be subdivided into legends (like Raven’s theft of daylight) and stories of people with names, sometimes known to the storyteller;</p> <p>c) other narrative genres: <i>ritualized songs</i> (like <i>dream songs</i> that enter someone's consciousness during a dream), <i>myths</i>, <i>illustrated tales</i>, <i>string figure stories</i>, <i>formulaic rhymes and finger plays for children</i>. Also, <i>storyknife tales</i> (told only by females, commonly girls, and consist of simultaneous narration and illustration with stylized symbols etched in mud or snow).</p>	<p>named persons who are known to have existed.</p> <p>- detail origins of celestial and geographic features, human customs and ceremonies, and animal characteristics; accounts of the legendary exploits of culture heroes; and ancient tales of animals in their human forms and of human/animal transformations.</p> <p>- short narrations of the kind are conveyed orally and can be complicated through the traditional repetition them “verbatim, even with the accompanying inflections of the voice and gestures.” There can be lengthy episodic accounts of wars, tales of revenge, and cycles of the adventures of Raven and of legendary heroes.</p>	<p>Northwest Coast and the Plateau, of the Intermountain Region, of the Southwest, of the Plains Indians, of the Northeastern Algonquians and the Northern Iroquoians, of the Southeast).</p> <p>In Navajo creation myth, First Man (who does not have human form) models the power of future Earth people, and declares the way in which the world is continually created and sustained through thought and speech. Serious narratives symbolically unite the mind and all senses to provide a comprehensive understanding of reality. They give life to mythical figures and establish a connection between human societies and cosmic entities.</p>

Continuation of table 9

1	2	3	4
<p>It is difficult to generalize about when these forms first appeared in the Native oral literatures as a distinct genre; each case must be considered separately.</p> <p>16th-17th centuries</p>	<p><i>Oral Historical Epic Narratives:</i></p> <p>a) “<i>The Wallamolum</i>”, or <i>The Walam Olum</i>, or <i>Red Score</i> (1820 – the year when the chronicle was brought to public light);</p>	<p>- Chronicle mythic and historical past attributed to some North American Indian tribes. Oral delivery is often supported by mnemonic tools like wampum or pictorial representations. Spotlight the origins of the tribe and its migration to and settlement in a given area as a series of events which embrace the period to have taken place long before the arrival of the Europeans. More seldom, a single event is centralized in a narrative.</p> <p>- an old chronicle of proto-Anglokin migrations, survived within the Delaware or Leni Lanape tribe. The content of these verses is organized into five sections. The first tells of the creation of the world and the people and of the primordial harmony that prevailed in the beginning (twenty-four pictographs). The second narrative</p>	<p>- The tendency towards epic storytelling often seems to stem from intertribal interactions, with the final and more refined form of the narrative likely emerging during the process of tribal confederation or even later. Evidence of these epic oral historical narrative dates back to colonial times. References to tribal “genealogies” can be found in writings by figures such as John Lawson, as well as the Moravian missionaries Ziesberger and Loskiel among the Delawares. Cushman mentions the succession of “<i>Suns</i>” as governors of the Natchez, while Charles Beatty discusses the wampum records of the Algonkians. Some oral traditions of Native groups recount the arrival of the whites</p>

Continuation of table 9

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		<p>recounts the deluge myth, a calamity inflicted upon the people by the Great Serpent, from which they are saved by Nanapush, alongside the Turtle and a “daughter of the manito” (depicted through sixteen pictographs). In Western interpretation, the third segment transitions from mythology to the mythologization of history, detailing the onset of the Delaware migration from the legendary Turtle Land to the Snake Land or island, traversing a frozen strait (illustrated through twenty pictographs). The fourth part commences with a portrayal of existence in the “land of the Pines” and proceeds with the account of the migration by listing chiefs and documenting the notable occurrences during each leader’s tenure. Having crossed the Nemassippi</p>	<p>as the fulfillment of ancient prophecies. - Rafinesque published the <i>Wallamolum</i> tradition after receiving it as a gift from Dr. Ward in Indiana, who had obtained it from the White River community of Delawares. This tradition is preserved in two forms: 183 pictographs, originally painted in red on wooden sticks (thus earning the name Red Score), with each pictograph accompanied by a verse in the Delaware language providing the traditional interpretation of the image. <i>Walum Olum</i> of the Delawares is authentic as a record of their pre-Contact history dates back to the earliest Indian/Anglo contacts.</p>

Continuation of table 9

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	b) <i>wi-gi-e</i>	<p>(Mississippi) River, the Lenape defeat the mysterious Talligewi people and occupy their lands (sixty-four pictographs). The fifth and final section tells of coming to “Sassafras Land” (Pennsylvania?) and to the seacoast, and of local wars and the separation of tribes. It concludes with the appearance of white settlers, posing the query: <i>“Friendly people with great possessions: who are they?”</i> (represented by fifty-nine pictographs). In total, the Wallamolum references the titles of ninety-eight chiefs and twenty tribes, with some potentially being recognized as the Cherokees, Hurons, Shawnees, Nanticokes, and various others.</p> <p>- the epic historical narrative from the Plains. The narratives tell the Osage story of their creation, their mythological journey from the sky, and their quest for sacred life-symbols. The epic</p>	<p>- Plains is an area that emerged among the members of the Dhegiha Confederacy, the Osages in particular.</p>

Continuation of table 9

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	<p>c) Caleb Cheeshateaumauk, <i>"Honoratissimi Benefactores"</i> (1663), and Eleazar <i>"In obitum Viri veré Reverendi D. Thomae Thackeri"</i> (1679). Tribal winter counts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The winter counts of Dakotas: <i>Brown Hat</i> or <i>Battiste Good</i>, years 1700-1879, <i>Brule</i>; <i>Lone Dog</i>, years 1800-71, <i>Yanktonai</i>; <i>Red Horse Owner</i>, years 1786-1968, <i>Oglala</i>. - The Kiowa winter counts. 	<p>contains the well-developed system of parallelisms, repetitions, and formulae, and even fixed line endings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some of the earliest Native American texts were written in Latin and Greek by students at Harvard's Indian College - Pictographic calendar histories covering a number of years, each picture marking one event for a single year. Most calendars come from the Dakota bands and present band histories. - The Kiowa winter counts, which were borrowed from the Dakota, are relatively recent, with six known counts in existence. Additionally, there is a single Blackfeet winter count attributed to Bad Head, covering the years 1810-1883. Typically, designated historians were responsible for maintaining winter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 1656, some twenty years after its foundation, Harvard College incorporated the first institution of higher education for the aboriginal population in the English colonies. The aim of the "Indian College" was the education of Indian youths who appeared to be promising proselytes and who could later propagate the gospel as well as European civilization among their tribes.

Continuation of table 9

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		counts. Before painting the events onto buffalo hide, the elders would deliberate on which events should be recorded.	
The 18 th century - Autobiographies	- Samson Occom (Mohegan) " <i>A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian</i> " (1772). Autobiography " <i>A Short Narrative of My Life</i> " (1762).	- " <i>A Short Narrative of My Life</i> " (1762) is regarded as the initial published piece by an Indigenous author, serving as an autobiography. - It comprises approximately ten pages of manuscript material found in the <i>Dartmouth archives</i> .	- within the autobiographies of such type there are strong traditions of Christian autobiographical narrative, confessional narratives, and stories of individual salvation and other faith-promoting experiences.
The 19 th century - Orations.	- An oration: a) <i>Cherokees petition to Congress</i> (1829). b) <i>the oratorical by Chippewas in Washington</i> (1864). c) <i>The speech by William Charlie</i> at a common type of reservation occasion, the Colville reservation. d) <i>etc.</i>	- The speech argues a position on what is good for the community. What was peculiar about Indians engaging in oratory with or against Europeans: Indians were not or did not think that they were citizens or subjects of the states to whose representatives they were orating.	- An oration is a spoken address delivered by a human individual to an audience of other humans.
The 19 th century - Protest writings	- Elias Boudinot " <i>An Address to the Whites</i> " (1826).	- an example of Indian protest writing, in which he declares that speculations and conjectures about the	Most nineteenth-century Indian authors wrote nonfiction prose. They published

Continuation of table 9

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	<p>- William Apes (Pequot) "<i>An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man</i>" (1833); "<i>Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts, Relative to the Mashpee Tribe</i>" (1835); "<i>Eulogy on King Philip</i>" (1836). Autobiography: "<i>A Son of the Forest</i>" (1829).</p> <p>- George Copway (Ojibwa) "<i>Organization of a New Indian Territory, East of</i></p>	<p>practicability of "civilizing the Indians must forever cease." - During the 1830s, he emerged as the most influential Native American writer advocating for protest. Through his writings, he condemns the racial biases of white people towards Native Americans, particularly evident in the newly enacted miscegenation laws of Massachusetts. He also narrates his involvement in the Mashpee community's victorious fight for self-governance and highlights the stark contrast between the harsh treatment inflicted by the Puritans on the indigenous tribes of New England and the Native people's welcoming attitude towards the newcomers.</p> <p>- another powerful protest writer, who lectured in the East and addressed the thirty-first Congress.</p>	<p>protest literature, autobiographies, and ethnohistories in response to the curtailment of Native Americans' rights and attempts to remove Indians from their traditional homelands. Prior to the Civil War, one of the greatest threats to Indians was the implementation of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, under which tribes east of the Mississippi River were removed either to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) or to other lands deemed appropriate. XIXth-century is marked by the Native autobiographies, reflecting Indian life and history. These autobiographies often included forceful commentaries on what whites had done to Indian people.</p>

Continuation of table 9

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	<p><i>the Missouri River</i>" (1850). Autobiography: <i>"The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh"</i> (1847).</p> <p>- Sarah Winnemucca (Paiute) <i>"Life Among the Piutes"</i> (1883).</p>	<p>- chronicles the impact of westward migration on tribal life and the abuses by government agents; discusses of the status of Indian women in Paiute society and her portrayal of her experiences between the white and Indian lines during the Bannock War of 1876.</p>	
<p>19th century – Women's Autobiographies</p>	<p>- Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins <i>"Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims"</i>, published in 1883.</p> <p>- Florence Edenshaw Davidson, a Haida woman, <i>"During My Time"</i>.</p>	<p>- is a personal narrative autobiography and a cultural history of the Northern Paiute tribe from early contact with whites to the 1880s, and a plea for an end to unjust treatment of her people.</p> <p>- presents a conventional portrait of Indian womanhood.</p>	<p>- The image of Indian women in American culture has been largely a product of misinformation, stereotyping, and political convenience, yet Indian women have, over the past century and a half, been frequent and eloquent spokespersons for their tribes and activists for Indian causes. Tribal women have also depicted tribal life</p>

Continuation of table 9

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			for non-tribal readers.
The 19 th century – Histories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Cusick (Tuscarora) <i>“Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations”</i> (1827, the year of publication). - Copway’s <i>“The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation”</i> (1850), subsequently, it was released with the title <i>“Indian Life and Indian History”</i> (1858). - Peter Jones (Kakewaquonaby), <i>“History of the Ojibway Indians”</i> (published posthumously in 1861), and William Whipple Warren, <i>“History of the Ojibway, Based upon Traditions and Oral Statements”</i> (completed in 1852 but not published until 1885). - John Rollin Ridge, three essays on <i>“North</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first historical account by the Indian author. - the first history of the Ojibwas. - the histories, written by Ojibwas. -examined Native American history, customs, and beliefs. 	The alteration of tribal life as a result of historical evolution boosted the desire to commemorate tribe's myths, history, and customs, the portrayal of life on the ancestral lands.

Continuation of table 9

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	<p><i>American Indians”</i> (1862). - Peter Dooyenate Clark (Wyandot), <i>“Origin and Traditional History of the Wyandotts, and Sketches of Other Indian Tribes of North America”</i> (1870); Chief Elias Johnson (Tuscarora), <i>“Legends, Traditions and Laws, of the Iroquois”</i> (1881); and Chief Andrew J. Blackbird (Ottawa), <i>“History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan”</i> (1887).</p>	<p>- the authors of the ethnohistories of their tribes.</p>	
<p>The 19th century – Assimilations.</p>	<p>-The assimilation of Bible stories by Native Americans into their oral repertoires</p>	<p>- they reflected Native imaginative and philosophical responses to the acculturative traumas of Anglo contact and conquest, and obeyed the governing “rules” and conventions of the traditional Indian mythologies (as these myth-systems absorbed the missionaries’ Bible stories). The ways in which Native oral</p>	<p>In the American and Canadian West, Indians were hearing and absorbing biblical stories (as well as French folktales) from French-Canadian trappers and voyageurs before 1800, but the Bible's main literary impact in the West came in the 1830s and 1840s with the</p>

Continuation of table 9

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		<p>traditions absorbed elements from scriptures can be categorized into three main groups: (1) incorporation, where a Bible story was integrated with minimal alterations because it aligned well with a Native narrative; (2) adaptation, involving the transformation of a Bible account to fit into a Native cycle or mythic structure; and (3) mythopoetic refiguration, which involves the imaginative reinterpretation of both biblical and Native traditions, resulting in a new, synthesized narrative.</p>	<p>arrival of Protestant and Catholic missionaries such as Jason Lee, Henry Spalding, Cushing Eells, Father Peter De Smet, and Father F.N. Blanchet. “Preaching” – often across two or even three translations, and often ending in Chinook jargon – most often took the form of telling simplified stories from <i>Scripture</i>, notably the <i>Creation and Fall, the Tower of Babel and Confusion of Tongues, Noah and the Flood, Jonah, Daniel, and the Life of Christ</i>, sometimes supplemented with illustrations and diagrams depicting biblical history according to the Protestant or Catholic viewpoint.</p>
<p>The 19th century – Travel literature.</p>	<p>- George Henry or Maungwudaus (Ojibwa) “<i>An Account of the Chippewa Indians, Who Have Been Travelling Among</i></p>	<p>- describes Maungwudaus’s impressions as the group toured the United States, Great Britain, France and Belgium in 1844 and</p>	<p>- Travel literature focuses on the description of the places while touring.</p>

Continuation of table 9

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	<p><i>the Whites...</i>" (1848).</p> <p>- Copway's "<i>Running Sketches of Men and Places...</i>" (1851).</p>	<p>1845. Especially titillating is Maungwudaus's description of how English women insisted that the Indians kiss not only their cheeks but also their mouths.</p> <p>- the first full-length travel book, which contains some interesting character portraits of members of London society.</p>	
The 19 th century Novels	<p>- John Rollin Ridge, the romance "<i>The Life and Adventures of Joaquim Murieta</i>" (1854).</p> <p>- S. Alice Callahan (Creek), "<i>Wynema: A Child of the Forest</i>" (1891).</p> <p>- Simon Pokagon (Potawatomi) "<i>O-gtmaw-kwe Mit-i-gwa-kî</i>" [Queen of the Woods] (1899).</p>	<p>- the inaugural novel by an Indian author. Though not specifically about Indians, the novel portrays how whites' unjust treatment of a Metizo protagonist causes him to seek revenge against the race that oppresses him.</p> <p>- the only text by an Indian woman in the XIXth century. Reflects the influence of the domestic romance common in women's literature of the period.</p> <p>- was published posthumously. The authorship has been questioned. The novel is a romance that laments the</p>	

Continuation of table 9

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		Potawatomi's loss of their Edenic past and warns about how alcohol can destroy Indians and whites.	
The 19 th century – Poetry.	<p>- Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwa), wife of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. Her poems published in <i>"The Literary Voyager or Muzzeniegun"</i>, a literary magazine started by her husband in 1826.</p> <p>- John Rollin Ridge <i>"Poems"</i> (1868).</p> <p>- E. Pauline Johnson (Mohawk) <i>"The White Wampum"</i> (1895); <i>"Flint and Feather"</i> (1912); <i>"Canadian Born"</i> (1903).</p>	<p>- The few American Indians who wrote poetry in the nineteenth century were strongly influenced by romanticism.</p> <p>- published posthumously, may be the first book-length collection of poetry by a Native American. Not rich in Indian themes, the use of dialect, realistic characterization.</p> <p>- lyrical, sometimes melodramatic poems on Indian subjects.</p>	
The 19 th century – Newspapers.	<p>- the <i>"Cherokee Phoenix"</i>.</p> <p>- the <i>"Cherokee Advocate"</i>,</p>	- in 1826 became the first Native American newspaper in the United States.	After Removal, many Indian newspapers were started in Indian Territory. They included considerable news

Continuation of table 9

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	<p><i>“Indian Chieftain”</i>. - the <i>“Progress”</i>.</p> <p>- the <i>“Tomahawk”</i>.</p> <p>- the <i>“San Diego Union”</i> (Southern California); the <i>“Sacramento Bee”</i>, <i>“California Express”</i> (Marysville), <i>“Marysville National Democrat”</i>, <i>“Trinity National”</i>, <i>“San Francisco Herald”</i>, and <i>“Grass Valley Daily National”</i>; <i>“Little Rock True Democrat”</i> and the Fayetteville weekly <i>“Arkansian”</i>.</p>	<p>- In 1886, the <i>“Progress”</i> was started on the White Earth Ojibwa reservation, with Theodore H. Beaulieu as editor and Augustus H. Beaulieu as publisher.</p> <p>- succeeded the <i>“Progress”</i>.</p> <p>- other newspapers with Indians as authors and editors.</p>	<p>about Indian affairs as well as accounts of national and international news. Many of their children were shipped off to boarding schools in such places as Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and Riverside, California, where they were separated from their families for years, given new Anglo-European names, a forbidden to speak their Native languages or practice their tribal customs and religions. Not until 1924 did Congress grant Native Americans citizenship. In 1934, the Wheeler-Howard Indian Reorganization Act, affirming cultural pluralism, was enacted, putting an end to allotment in severalty. An effort to resolve the “Indian problem” came in 1953 with the passage of</p>

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			House Concurrent Resolution 108, which restricted state intervention in Indian affairs. As part of this policy, tribes such as the Klamath and Menominee lost their reservation status, and the government actively promoted the relocation of Indians to urban areas. However, reservation status was restored in 1973.
The XXth century – Autobiographies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Joseph Mathews (Osage) <i>“Talking to the Moon”</i> (1945). - Mourning Dove <i>“Mourning Dove: A Salishan Autobiography”</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This stylistically advanced work draws significant inspiration from the philosophical autobiographies of Henry David Thoreau and John Muir, alongside Osage traditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unlike western autobiographies, the Indian texts were attempting to construct conceptions of the person in more nearly collective (family, clan, moiety, tribe) than individualistic terms, and, in the second, to employ oral rather than written means to communicate, store, and transmit information. Autobiographies-by-Indians are self-written texts produced by Native

Continuation of table 9

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			<p>people who had accepted Western “civilization” at least to the extent of learning how to write (usually they had accepted “Christianization” as well). Indian autobiographies are compositely produced texts, the result of a collaboration between a Euroamerican editor who fixes the text in writing and a traditional Indian person who is the subject of the text. Typically, one or more mixed-blood persons have been involved as translator, as well.</p>
XXth century – Satires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alexander Posey (Creek), <i>Fus Fixico letter</i>. - Will Rogers (Cherokee). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gained significant popularity in Indian Territory. - satirized national and international politics both in his newspaper columns and book. 	<p>During this period, there was a notable rise in the number of American Indians producing their own renditions of tribal narratives, alongside an increase in studies covering various aspects of American Indian anthropology, ethnohistory,</p>

Continuation of table 9

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20 th century – g Popularizations of tribal stories.	Jesse Cornplanter (Seneca), Charles Eastman (Sioux) (in collaboration with Elaine Eastman) <i>“The Soul of the Indian”</i> (1911), <i>“The Indian Today”</i> (1915), Ella C. Deloria (Sioux), <i>“Speaking of Indians”</i> (1944), Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee) <i>“Indians Are People Too”</i> (1944), E. Pauline Johnson (Mohawk), Mourning Dove (Colville), Edmund Nequatewa (Hopi), Standing Bear (Sioux), and Zitkala Sa [Gertrude Bonnin] (Sioux), William Jones (Fox), and Archie Phinney (Nez Perce).	- the authors explain Native American beliefs, using a Sioux model; examine the problems their people faced and describe their achievements; describe Sioux beliefs and customs and examine how their people adapted these after they moved onto reservations; provide a general introduction to Indian life and culture.	contemporary concerns, and philosophy. This literary genre is rooted in the oral traditions and collections of indigenous literature.
20 th century – Ethnohistories.	D’Arcy McNickle (Cree/Flathead). <i>“They Came Here First”</i> (1949) and <i>“The Indian</i>	- added a longmissing Indian perspective to Native American history.	

Continuation of table 9

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	<p><i>Tribes of the United States</i>" (1962). Equally important are his books "<i>Indians and Other Americans</i>" (1959), written with Harold E. Fey, and "<i>Native American Tribalism</i>" (1962).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Joseph Mathews in "<i>The Osages</i>" (1961). - Thomas Wildcat Alford, published as "<i>Civilization</i>" (1962). - Lois Marie Hunter (Shinnecock) "<i>The Shinnecock Indians</i>" (1950). - John Oskison (Cherokee), essay "<i>Remaining Causes of Indian Discontent</i>" (1907). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a fascinating history of the author's people. - he recounted the history of the Shawnee to Florence Drake. - gives a general history of her tribe. - won a prize for his essay. 	
20 th century – Biographies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charles Eastman in "<i>Indian Heroes and Great Chieftains</i>" (1918). - John Oskison "<i>Tecumseh and His Times</i>" (1938). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short biographical sketches of tribal leaders. - the only full biography of an Indian written by a Native American in this period. 	

Continuation of table 9

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<p>20th century – Novels.</p>	<p>- Mourning Dove (c. 1888 – 1936), a female writer, a novel “<i>Cogewea, The Half-Blood</i>” (1927), “<i>Coyote Stories</i>” (1933), “<i>Tales of the Okanogan</i>” (published in 1976) and D’Arcy McNickle (1904 – 77), a novel “<i>The Surrounded</i>” (1936).</p> <p>- D’Arcy McNickle “<i>Cogewea, the Half Blood</i>” (1927), created together with Lucullus V. McWhorter.</p> <p>- John Oskison (Cherokee) “<i>Brothers Three</i>” (1935); “<i>Wild Harvest</i>” (1925) and “<i>Blackjack Davy</i>” (1926).</p>	<p>- both authors located the events in their novels in northwestern Montana in the early part of the XXth century. The novels were written as a mimetic response to the popular portrayal of Native Americans in mainstream fiction, yet each adapted the form with Native American elements, particularly in their use of Native American oral culture, although for different reasons and purposes.</p> <p>- combines the portrayal of a strong-willed heroine who temporarily rejects her tribal heritage with plot elements from westerns.</p> <p>- A vivid depiction of a family’s struggles during the Great Depression as they strive to maintain ownership of an Oklahoma farm established by their father and their mother, who is of quarter-Cherokee descent.</p>	<p>- During this era, Native American writers focused on conserving tradition rather than rejecting it.</p> <p>- During this time, numerous Indian communities, initially divided by the U.S.-Canadian border in 1855, were further fragmented into various tribal nations. These groups now reside scattered across multiple reservations in the northwestern United States (Swanton; Hill).</p>

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		<p>“<i>Wild Harvest</i>” (1925) and “<i>Blackjack Davy</i>” (1926) are “southwesterns” set in Indian Territory before statehood and deal with the surge of white settlers onto Cherokee land. Two novels describe tribal life.</p>	
20 th century – Drama.	<p>- (Rolla) Lynn Riggs (Cherokee) “<i>Borned in Texas</i>”, produced as “<i>Roadside</i>” (1930), and “<i>Green Grow the Lilacs</i>” (1931), the basis for “<i>Oklahoma!</i>” (1943); “<i>The Cherokee Night</i>” (1936).</p>	<p>- the only major Native American dramatist of the period, who had several plays produced on Broadway. “<i>The Cherokee Night</i>” – his only play with an Indian theme, which focuses on the sense of loss felt in the period by Cherokee mixed-bloods alienated from their Cherokee heritage.</p>	
20 th century – Poetry.	<p>- Alexander Lawrence Posey “<i>The Poems of Alexander Lawrence Posey</i>” (1910).</p> <p>- Lynn Riggs “<i>The Iron Dish</i>” (1930).</p>	<p>- comprising writings from the author's early years, the book was released after his death. It showcases Posey's admiration for English pre-Romantic and Romantic poets.</p> <p>- It features eloquent depictions of nature and insightful observations.</p>	

Continuation of table 9

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	<p>- Maurice Kenny (Mohawk), two chapbooks <i>Dead Letters Sent</i> (1958) and <i>With Love to Lesbia</i> (1959).</p>	<p>- A highly productive writer, the majority of his publications came after the 1970s.</p>	
<p>20th century – Newspapers.</p>	<p>– <i>“Indian Speaking Leaf”</i> (1937, New Jersey), <i>“Standing Rock Eyapaha”</i> (1943, Fort Yates, North Dakota), and <i>“Adhhoniigii: Navajo Language Monthly”</i> (1943, Windowrock, Arizona).</p>		
<p>1967 – present A Native American Renaissance.</p>	<p>- N. Scott Momaday <i>“House Made of Dawn”</i> (1968).</p> <p>- Other authors embrace: Duane Niatum (Klallam) <i>“Ascending Red Cedar Moon”</i> (1974); Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna descent) <i>“Ceremony”</i> (1977); Gerald Vizenor (Chippewa) <i>Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart</i>” (1978); James Welch (Blackfeet and A’aninin) <i>“Winter in the</i></p>	<p>- exemplifies the transition from oral to written expression and the ability to write in English.</p> <p>- is characterized by the reclamation of heritage through literary expression and the renewed interest in customary tribal artistic expression (e.g. mythology, ceremonialism, ritual, and the oral tradition of narrative transmission).</p>	<p>- Kenneth Lincoln introduced the term “A Native American Renaissance” in his 1983 book "Native American Renaissance" to describe the notable surge in the creation of literary works by Native Americans in the United States. This resurgence, which emerged in the late 1960s, garnered global recognition for Native American literature and elevated numerous Native American authors</p>

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	<p><i>Blood</i>” (1974); Joy Harjo (Muscogee Nation) “<i>The Last Song</i>” (1975); Simon J. Ortiz (Acoma) “<i>From Sand Creek: Rising in this Heat which Is Our America</i>” (1981); Louise Erdrich (Turtle Mountain Band Chippewa) “<i>Love Medicine</i>” (1984); Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo descent) “<i>The Woman Who Owned the Shadows</i>” (1984); Maurice Kenny (self-identified Mohawk descent) “<i>Tekonwatoni/ MollyBrant (1735-1795): Poems of War</i>” (1992); nila northSun (Shoshone) <i>A snake in her mouth: poems 1974-96</i>” (1997).</p>		<p>to prominence. However, despite the flourishing literary scene, critiques of political issues within Native American literary studies remained relatively minor concerns at the time.</p>
<p>20th-century – Trickster literature – as a part of A Native American Renaissance</p>	<p>- Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna) “<i>Storyteller</i>” (1981), “<i>Ceremony</i>” (1977).</p>	<p>- resembling the traditional figures from Boas’s Keresan collections, Silko's coyotes usually wear the sheep’s clothing of the iconoclast. In</p>	<p>Coyote stories serve as a sort of jokebook within Native American culture. The Trickster figure, central to these</p>

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1	2	3	4
	<p>- Simon Ortiz (Acoma) <i>“A Good Journey”</i> (1977) and Gerald Vizenor (Ashininabe)</p>	<p>“Coyote Holds a Full House in His Hands”, the final piece in <i>“Storyteller”</i>, trickster wears a fringed vinyl jacket and “heals” women by massaging their thighs with juniper ash. These features of trickster are comparable with southern white tricksters.</p> <p>- trickster narratives employ enigmatic, incomprehensible, ambiguous, and ambivalent language to encode and decode tribal meanings.</p>	<p>narratives, is a primary source of humor, spanning from ancient tales to contemporary storytelling. Like comedians, Trickster characters help communities confront difficult subjects with levity. Found in nearly all Native American traditions, Trickster embodies a blend of human and animal traits, often shapeshifting between forms. While trickery and transformation define Trickster, there are also divine aspects to his character. Although most commonly portrayed as Coyote, Trickster takes on different forms across regions, such as Raven in the Northwest and Hare in the East.</p>
<p>The 20th century – Essays.</p>	<p><i>“The Chippewa Landscape of Louise Erdrich”</i> (1999); - <i>“The Beet Queen”</i>.</p>	<p>- essay collection.</p> <p>- echoes the sentiments of Pérez Castillo.</p>	

Continuation of table 9

1	2	3	4
The 20 th century – Poetry.	- Sherman Alexie <i>“The Business of Fancydancing”</i> (1992); and a limited edition of <i>“I Would Steal Horses”</i> (1992); two more volumes of poetry, <i>“Old Shirts and New Skins”</i> (1993) and <i>“First Indian on the Moon”</i> (1993); <i>“Seven Mourning Songs for the Cedar Flute I Have Yet to Learn to Play”</i> (1994) and <i>“Water Flowing Home”</i> (1995); <i>“The Summer of Black Widows”</i> (1996); poetry <i>“The Man Who Loves Salmon”</i> (1998).	- collections of poetry.	
20 th century – Narrative fiction.	- Sherman Alexie Subsequently, there was a compilation of brief narratives in <i>The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven</i> (1993). - Sherman Alexie novel <i>“Reservation Blues”</i> (1995),	- received a PEN/Hemingway Award for Best First Book of Fiction, the Great Lakes College Association Best First Book of Fiction Award, and a Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Writers’ Award. - was awarded the Before Columbus Foundation’s American Book Prize.	

Continuation of table 9

1	2	3	4
	novel <i>“Indian Killer”</i> (1996). - Louise Erdrich <i>“The Antelope Wife”</i> (1998).	- uncovers and explores multiple layers of history.	
The 20 th century – Plays.	- <i>“The Star Quilter”</i> (1987). - <i>“Sneaky”</i> (1987). - <i>“The Bodyguards”</i> (1997). - <i>“Rez Politics”</i> (1997). - Sherman Alexie <i>“Smoke Signals: The Screenplay”</i> (1998).		
The 21 st century	- Tony Jensen <i>“From the Hilltop”</i> . - Eddie Chuculate <i>“Cheyenne Madonna”</i> . - Daniel H. Wilson <i>Robopocalypse”</i> . - Linda Le Garde Grover <i>“The Road Back to Sweetgrass”</i> . - Marcie Rendon <i>“Murder on the Red Road”</i> . - Chip Livingston <i>Owls Don’t Have to Mean Death”</i> .	- a set of stories by a Native author. - narrations about Cherokee and Muscogee (Creek) nations experience in Oklahoma. - the novel focuses on the way technology are destroying mankind. - portrays darker aspects of Native history, revealing boarding school of the XIXth-XXth century. - a detective fiction. - focuses on Creek origin, issues of being gay, and on HIV problem.	

Ending of table 9

1	2	3	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rebecca Roanhorse "<i>Trail of Lightning</i>". - Theodore C. Van Alst Jr. "<i>Sacred Smokes</i>". - Margaret Verble "<i>Cherokee America</i>". - Stephen Graham Jones "<i>The Only Good Indians</i>". -Kelli Jo Ford "<i>Crooked Hallelujah</i>". - Sherman Alexie "<i>The Business of Fancydancing: Poetic</i>" (2003); "<i>The Toughest Indian in the World</i>" (2000); "<i>Ten Little Indians</i>" (2003). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first Native American author to win a Hugo award. - set in Chicago, the stories focus on young people growing up with gangs, hanging out in clubs, and having difficult lives. - a Pulitzer finalist, spotlights Cherokee territory before the removal. - a horror novel. - covers three generations of Cherokee women. - screenplay. - collections of short stories. 	

The value of Native American literatures as local instances of universal forms lies in a multivoiced recording of the national tradition and ethnic code. It is a collective biography of the Indian nation. In the XXIst century the writers of the mixed blood produced a new kind of text which focuses on, using the terms of Cook-Lynn, "*the connection between the present 'I' and the past 'They,' and the present pastness of 'We.'*"

If the conventional literary texts of Western culture have predominantly been those reflecting a phallogocentric perspective, as termed by Jacques Derrida, the representations of Native American writings both today and in preceding centuries

often highlight a female viewpoint in their unique manner. Rayna Green's analysis in *“Essay Review: Native American Women”* (1980) examines works centered on Native American women across various fields of study. Among the notable autobiographies authored by women are *“Life among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims”* (1883, 1994) by Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *“American Indian Stories”* (1921, 1985) by Zitkala-Ša, and *“Me and Mine: The Life Story of Helen Sekaquaptewa”* (Hopi) (1969, 1993), as recounted to Louise Udall. The political implications of gender complementarity in Native American literature contribute to the portrayal of resilient female protagonists in the works of authors such as Zitkala-Ša (Yankton Sioux), Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna Pueblo), Louise Erdrich (Ojibwe), and Sherman Alexie (Spokane/Coeur d’Alene). These writers center their narratives around female characters navigating their own paths within the framework of tribal understandings of gender dynamics. Altogether, the works and novels, attempting to create the image of the real Indian female world in the Native American society, have produced harsh, unromanticized truthful version of Native American women’s lives, depicting the so-called *Corn Mother* and *Changing Woman* – the symbolic representations of Indigenous women's experiences, including powwow princesses, grandmothers, female professionals like doctors and lawyers, as well as warrior women and tribal leaders, collectively contribute to a multifaceted portrayal.

Getting to the analysis of depiction of a Native American literature one should notice that the criminalization of Indian women’s sexuality and the oversexualized representations of Indian women by non-Native authors placed limits on Native literary representations of Indian women’s sexuality and agency.

Thus, Native American literary tradition dwells on “diverse zoology of the self” / “bestial” realm (zoo-centrism and orni-centrism), “childlike identification with animals”, “superstitions”, a mystical holism, inner life of the tribes, historical-aesthetic transformation. The literature depicts the tribal-national domestic opposed to the settler-national domestic system, putting nature into the center. *“I am driven by the waves in a high sea”*, writes Frederic Baraga.

The American authorities exerting control over various aspects of Native American life, such as children, culture, land, and imagination, have significantly influenced Native American identity. This interference has resulted in a loss of cultural autonomy, cultural genocide or erasure, clashes between cultures, and the emergence of individuals with mixed heritage. These mixed-blood or half-breed characters often serve as protagonists in literature, embodying themes of cultural conflict that are deeply intertwined with their psychological and social experiences. The Native American community once shared a diasporic language that facilitated communication across different tribal and regional languages. However, this shared language has been largely replaced by English as the primary language of Native American literature. In Arnold Krupat's *"The Turn to the Native,"* the concept of Native American literary postnationalism is explored within the context of contemporary fiction.

The dominant milestones in the development of the Native American literature embrace: the pre-Anglican period / pre-colonization period (before the 16th century); the oration period (17th-18th century); the era of autobiographies (18th-19th centuries); the era of fusion of Native American and Western literary traditions (19th-20th centuries); starting from 1967 "Native American Renaissance" (the creation of a distinctive and new "American" voice); post-1968 Native American literature, it is also surely the case that the tantalizing "difference" of Native American writing; "postmodern" Native American writing (represented by the highly influential 1992 book-length research of the American Indian novel, *"Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel"*, Louis Owens approaches Pérez Castillo within the topic of ethnic essentialism). A particular attention should be brought to "tribal realism".

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Southwest Women's Poetry Exchange.*
2. *The construction of racial difference invoked by whites to justify their violence against the Indians.*
3. *"Mixed blood literary movement".*
4. *"Cosmopolitan" or "postmodern", "mixedblood writing," or the "literature of disengagement".*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

The **axis of communication** locates the work as a transaction between a writer, responsible for the work's creation (*the Genetic pole*), and a reader, responsible for the work's apprehension and realization (*the Affective pole*). The axis of representation locates the work, as a unique configuration of signs, between a particular socially sanctioned, culturally constituted view of the world (*the Mimetic pole*) on the one hand and a set of prior linguistic configurations (*the Intertextual pole*) on the other.

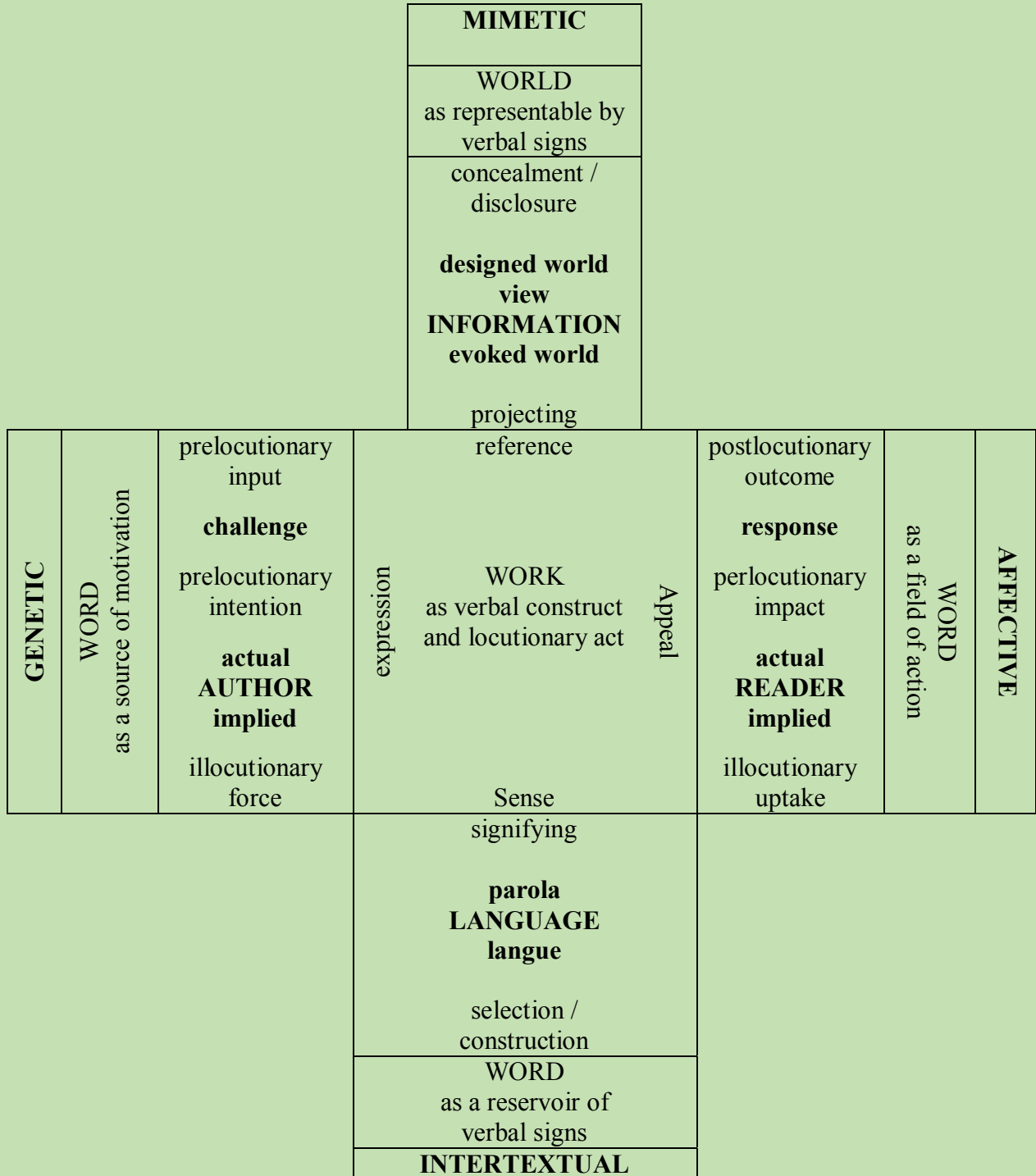


Figure 3 – *The Work as Focus of Forces*. Adopted from “*Handbook of Native American Literature*”, 2012

The term “**cosmopolitan democracy**” encompasses a broad political initiative aimed at establishing global democratic institutions. It seeks to reconcile individual rights with state rights within a cohesive network of “transnational” organizations. These entities are envisioned to promote democracy within nations, between states, and on a global scale.

The **Dawes General Allotment Act** in 1887 granted 160-acre allotments to each tribal male (with some regional differences in its specific rules of allotment), which led to radical dislocation for Indian peoples in the modern era. The policy was designed to foster individual land ownership and assimilate Indians into the mainstream of American society through the inculcation of Euro-American values, including the veneration of private property, individualism, and self-reliance (Dippie). Dawes supporters believed they were saving Indians by “offering” them assimilation. As the Indian Rights Association asserted in 1886, the Dawes Act was a great advance toward the “general policy of gradually making the Indian in all respects as the white man”.

The legislation known as the **Dawes Act** or **Allotment Act** (1887-1934) was named after its proponent, Henry Dawes, who chaired the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and advocated for the assimilation of Native Americans.

The **Wounded Knee Massacre** of 1890, seen as the final military confrontation between Native American peoples and the US Army, symbolized another significant instance of oppression. This massacre, where approximately 300 men, women, and children were killed by the US Army on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, was aimed at suppressing the Ghost Dance religion. This brutal event effectively hindered American Indians from freely practicing their religious beliefs and expressing their cultural identity.

Pratt’s rhetoric of saving Indians was aimed at preparing them for integration into mainstream society. In 1879, Congress initiated Indian education by providing funding for General Richard H. Pratt’s boarding school located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Subsequently, Congress substantially increased allocations for Indian education, leading to the forcible removal of many Native American children from their families to attend off-reservation boarding schools across the nation. The impact of these boarding schools was often detrimental: only approximately one out of every eight students who enrolled at Carlisle completed their education. While some students reverted to traditional ways of life and others adapted successfully to new environments (and were portrayed as success stories in boarding school publications), many experienced severe personal breakdowns, and a significant number died prematurely.

Trickster holds a central position in Native American literature, embodying both popularity and complexity. This figure is an archetype found across mythology, folklore, and religious narratives, described as a “ragged four-legged verb” and an “irreducible polymorphism”. Trickster defies spatial, temporal, and cultural boundaries, representing an ancient and mythic adversary. Within the Native American imagination, Trickster assumes various forms, such as raven, rabbit, or coyote, with the latter being particularly prominent and even crossing over into Anglo imaginations. Trickster embodies both demonic and comic qualities, often serving as an alternative to cultural heroes and displaying traits of mischief and rebellion against societal norms. Regardless of the animal form Trickster takes, it is always understood as fundamentally human, capable of shape-shifting and blurring the lines between human and animal. Trickster figures like *Wadkjunkaga* and coyote are portrayed as integral to the creation of the world and exhibit a range of behaviors, from transforming into animals to engaging in modern activities like riding a bus or using technology (Andrew Wiget, p. 100).

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PACE 6

LATINO VOICES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Key terms: *established cultural traditions and norms, challenges, expands notions of national identity, three/two nations side-by-side, the history of migration, anti-colonialists, ‘restricted’ linguistic relativity rooted in the historical tongue ties, Spanish / Latin outlook, the concepts of the fence and the river, genealogy of the ghetto aesthetic*

1. *The basics of the main periods in Latin American literature and Latino Literature in the USA.*
2. *Types of U.S. Latino literature.*
3. *The branches of Latino Literature in the USA: Mexican-American, Cuban-American, Puerto-Rican American.*
4. *Hybridity in Latino literature.*

The term *Latin American literature* refers to written and oral works created by authors in the Western hemisphere, in the parts of North America, South America, and the Caribbean. Authors from Latin America typically choose to write in languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, English, or their country's indigenous language. Latin American authors currently creating on the territory of the United States fall into the category of Latin American fiction writers.

Latin American Literature in its wide meaning is marked by its own periodization with significant names, marking them.

Table 10 – *The periodization of Latin American Literature*

PERIOD	NATURE AND REPRESENTATIVES	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
1	2	3
Pre-colonial literature (before the 16 th century)	- although oral tradition dominated, the Mayans and Aztecs developed codices, folded books containing a combination of symbols and images, to document	- is marked by the oral traditions of Mesoamerican civilizations, such as the Olmecs, the Aztecs and Mayans.

Continuation of table 10

1	2	3
<p>Colonial literature (started in the 16th century – wrapped up in the 18th century)</p>	<p>various aspects of their cultures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - many works were captured as oral narratives detailing mythological and religious beliefs by European colonizers, often without specific attribution to individual authors. These narratives centered around topics such as agriculture, astronomy, and political history. - first-person accounts and cronicas of early explorers and conquistadores of their experience (e.g. Columbus letters, Bernal Diaz del Castillo’s description of the conquest of the Aztec Empire). - recordings made by priests. - debates about the ethics of colonization and the status of the indigenous people (Bartolome de las Casas’s “<i>Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies</i>”). - accounts of the Spanish conquest (El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Guaman Poma). - produced poetry and philosophical essays (Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz). - first novels (by Jose Joaquin Fernandez de Lizardi’s “<i>El Periquillo Sarniento</i>” (or <i>The Mangy Parrot: The Life and Times of Periquillo Sarniento Written by himself for his Children</i>) (1816). - the “libertadores” (Simon Bolivar, Andres Bello). - natives (Guaman Poma – wrote documents that recorded the way life changed with the first colonial ships coming to his land). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is the beginning of the written tradition in Latin American literature. - literature began to take shape. - deals with the issues of colonization. - written literature is often in the hands of church.

Continuation of table 10

1	2	3
<p>Resistance literature and Modernismo. A period of “foundational fictions” (the 19th century).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a often focused on the rights of the indigenous or the dichotomy “civilization – barbarism” (Esteban Echeverria (influenced by the Persian Romantics); Domingo Sarmiento’s “Facundo” (1845) (Argentine); Alberto Blest Gana’s “Martin Rivas” (1862) (the first acknowledged Chilean novel); Jose Isaac’s “Maria” (1867); Juan Leon Mera’s “Cumanda” (1879) (Equadorian); Euclides da Cunha’s “Os Sertões” (1902) (the Brazilian). - regional classics (José Hernández’s epic poem “Martín Fierro” (1872)). - The texts by Clorinda Matto de Turner, Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Gabriela Mistral, and Juana Manuela Gorriti focused on marginalization. These female authors made female voices audible. - Resistance literature overlapped with the following mainstream trend, Modernismo, which persisted through the XIXth century and well into the XXth century. Modernismo began with the publication of “Azul” by Ruben Dario in 1888, and was a movement largely driven by poetry. José Martí, a Cuban poet, is recognized as the ‘Father of Modernismo’, known for his impactful poetry and prose during his multiple deportations from his homeland. Other notable figures within the movement include Jorge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a rise in literature that fought against the colonizing force and cherished the national culture. - is aimed to define what the identity of a Latin American person looked like, both on an individual and national level. - during the Resistance period, many Creole authors began exploring ideas of independence from Europe and forging national identities through novels, poetry, and essays. - while many of the writers in this period were male, the Resistance period saw an explosion in the number of women contributing to Latin American literature. Like the many male writers who were writing to stand up against powers who invaded their countries, the women were writing against the patriarchal oppression of women in Latin America. - The literary movements of the nineteenth century in Latin America range from Neoclassicism at the beginning of the century to Romanticism in the middle of the century, to Realism and Naturalism in the final third of the century, and finally to the invention of Modernismo, a distinctly

Continuation of table 10

1	2	3
	<p>Luis Borges, Octavio Paz, Rosario Castellanos, and Carlos Drummond de Andrade, who contributed significantly to the literary landscape. Jorge Luis Borges is particularly associated with short narratives that carry philosophical depth. The prevalent genres during this period include realist novels, poetry with anti-establishment themes, and works addressing post-revolutionary concerns.</p>	<p>Latin American literary movement, at the end of the nineteenth century.</p>
<p>The Boom (occurred during the 1960s).</p>	<p>- Gabriel García Márquez “<i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i>” (1967), Carlos Fuentes “<i>The Death of Artemio Cruz</i>” (1962), Julio Cortázar, Augusto Monterroso, and Miguel Ángel Asturias were leading figures in the movement.</p>	<p>- Regarded as one of the most influential movements in Latin American literature, the Boom witnessed a surge of writers venturing beyond conventional boundaries and experimenting with innovative writing styles. A significant portion of the literature produced during this period embraced magical realism, a genre characterized by the blending of fantastical elements with mundane reality.</p> <p>- The Boom emerged in the aftermath of World War II, during which the predominant literary form transitioned from poetry to the novel. This shift brought about a thematic exploration into metaphysical realms, with Boom writers delving into existential and philosophical themes.</p>

Continuation of table 10

1	2	3
		<p>- Literature penned by Boom authors often delved into metaphysical subjects, reflecting a widespread interest in existential inquiries and philosophical explorations.</p>
<p>Contemporary literature: comprises Post-Boom and McOndo, prominent late XXth century and XXIst century writers.</p>	<p>- Antonio Skarmeta and Isabelle Allende forwarded metaphysical ideas, challenged elitism, creating the narratives spotlighting how money-making engulf cultural features.</p> <p>- Roberto Bolaño, novels, novellas, poetry, and short stories, with “The Savage Detectives” being world renowned.</p> <p>- Award-winning Latin American authors of the XXth century embrace: José Emilio Pacheco (Mexico), Juan Gelman (Argentina), Nicanor Parra (Chile), Sergio Pitol (Mexico), Gonzalo Rojas (Chile), Álvaro Mutis (Colombia), Jorge Edwards (Chile), Guillermo Cabrera Infante (Cuba), Mario Vargas Llosa (Perú), Dulce María Loynaz (Cuba), Adolfo Bioy Casares (Argentina), Augusto Roa Bastos (Paraguay), Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), Ernesto Sabato (Argentina), Octavio Paz (Mexico), Juan Carlos Onetti (Uruguay), Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina), Alejo Carpentier (Cuba) and Rafael Cadenas (Venezuela).</p> <p>- Renowned writers of the 21st century include Mario Vargas Llosa, Isabel Allende, Jorge Volpi,</p>	<p>- the post-Boom movement, characterized by Latin American authors distancing themselves from the magical realism genre that had come to dominate the cultural landscape, was short-lived.</p> <p>- writers disengaged from magical realism with the aim of reshaping perceptions of Latin American literature, seeking to steer it away from being solely associated with this mainstream genre.</p> <p>- the inclination towards irony and humor is evident in McOndo literature, which diverges from the magical realism narrative style and instead focuses on the specificity of mass-media language. McOndo literature depicts urban life in Latin America, contrasting with the fictional rural setting of Macondo. Initiated by Chilean writers Alberto Fuguet and Sergio Gómez in the 1990s, the movement aimed to counter the Macondo-ism characterized by tropical jungle settings where the fantastical and the real coexist seamlessly.</p>

Ending of table 10

1	2	3
	Junot Díaz, Giannina Braschi, Elena Poniatowska, Julia Alvarez, Diamela Eltit, and Ricardo Piglia.	<p>- Latin American literature in the 2000s witnessed the emergence of various schools and styles. Literary discourse in the 20th century was centered on pre-, during, and post-Boom periods. Subsequent analyses focused on themes such as the Global South, postcolonial literature, postmodernism, electronic literature, and hysterical realism.</p> <p>- Genre boundaries become less rigid in contemporary literature, with a focus on themes of time and ethnicity rather than adherence to specific genres. While elements of magical realism persist in Latin American texts, there is a notable emphasis on immigration issues, particularly in works set in the USA.</p>

Latino Literature, on the other side, embraces the scope of writings written of the territory of the United States of America by Spanish-speaking migrants or the descendants of the migrants. In general, there are two terms used to refer to people of Spanish descent, *Hispanic* and *Latino*. The term *Hispanic* was first coined by the United States government, specifically the Department of Education and the Census Bureau, in 1970s. The term is a derivation of the Spanish word *hispano*. *Latino*, a term that has acquired more popularity in recent years, is more widely accepted in the academic community. The term is not connected to Spain, but to its colonies in Latin America. Thus, unites the texts by writers of South and Central America, the

Caribbean, and Mexican origin. Unlike Latin American Literature, it is not written in Spanish, but is created in American English with the incorporation of Hispanic realia and Hispanic linguistic features. In such works, mother tongue, the language of the ancestors, function in its fragmented form, getting amputated and boiled in the American melting pot. The American English language as an alien language tends to take over areas of experience occupied by the mother tongue and the native idioms. The native language turns into a set of intrusive sounds, used by the previous generations or the old members of the family.

For a long time, Latino literature, as well as Latino studies in their full scope, remained marginalized. With a growing interest in culture, ethnicity, and gender, Latino studies became a mainstay in many English departments, literary journals, professional societies, and scholarly conferences.

Eduardo del Rio defines *Latino/Latina Literature* as “the work of writers whose ancestry can be traced to Spanish-speaking countries of the Americas”, “the works of Latino literature should have been produced by authors who have lived in the United States for a significant period of time”. He concludes: “Thus, whether or not the writer was born in this country or migrated here, it is crucial that his or her artistic consciousness be affected by the sounds, images, and experiences of life in the United States <...>. Part of this experience involves a sense of duality regarding the English language. For some writers the Spanish language may be a mere memory, for others a periodic contact through familial bonds, and for some a direct confrontation with new and confusing tongue. For all, however, whether born and raised here or newly arrived, linguistic consciousness includes a sense of both languages. <...> the work of Latino and Latina authors should contain characteristics that are unique to the Latino experience” [5, p. 1].

Hispanic cultures in the USA can be represented schematically by the following figure, adopted and recycled from Concannon K., Lomeli F.A., Priewe M. “*Imagined Transnationalism. U.S. Latino / a Literature, Culture and Identity*” [2, p. 32]:

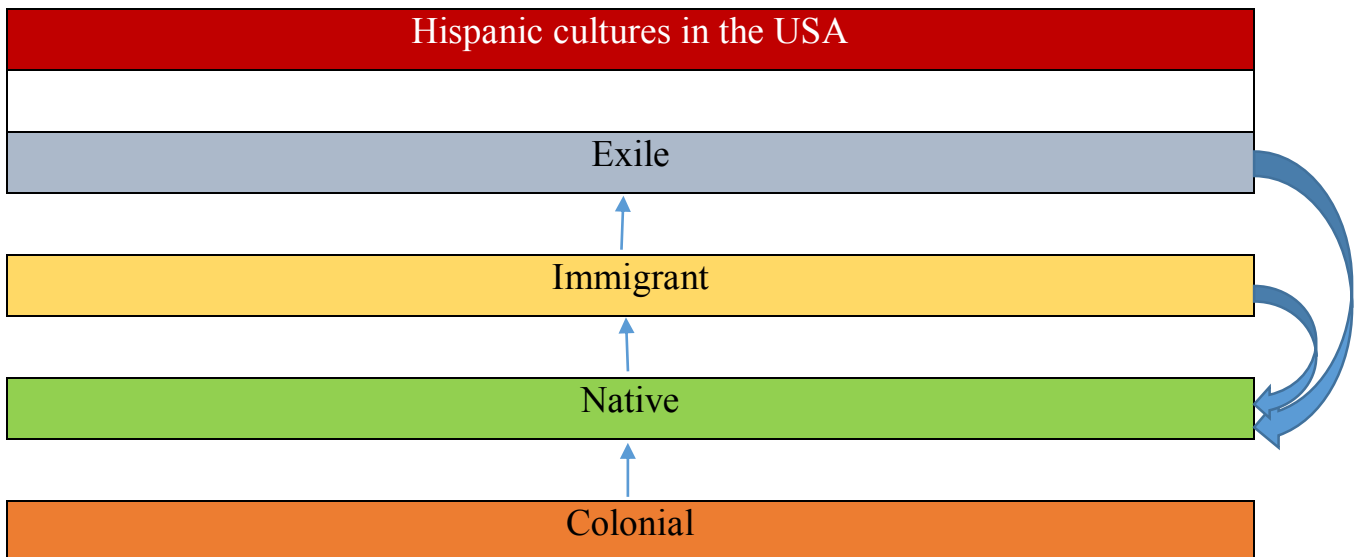


Figure 4 – *Types of U.S. Latino Literature*

According to Nicolas Kanellos, textual characteristics of Hispanic literatures include [9, p. 29-45]:

Table 11 – *The Types of Hispanic Literature*

Nº	NATIVE	IMMIGRANT	EXILE
1	2	3	4
1	Bear sense of place in the USA	Is a bridge from old to new country	Only relates to the homeland
2	Endorses life in the United States as citizens	Embodies dream of return to the homeland	Aspires for return to the homeland when the political situation has changed
3	Protests injustice and effects cultural change in the United States	Exhibits desire to preserve the culture of the homeland while living in the United States	Does not exhibit or support cultural change
4	Struggles for civil and human rights and against racism	Struggles for human rights and labor rights. Protests racism and exploitation.	Protests politics in the homeland, colonialism, dictatorships, etc.
5	Characteristics include elements of popular culture, minority awareness, and representation of the working-class perspective.	Portrays the working-class culture prevalent among the majority in contrast to the bourgeois lifestyle adopted by a minority of immigrants.	Exhibits the culture of the elite.

Continuation of table 11

1	2	3	4
6	Marked by cultural fusion, hybridity, and the emergence of new identities and cultural hubs like Aztlán, Loisaída, and others. This trend heralds a fresh aesthetic approach.	Defined by the idea of cultural homogeneity, with the colony seen as a transient state: enclaves such as Little Mexicos, Little Havanas, and Little San Juans represent this concept.	Characterized by a quest for cultural purity: exile is likened to a state of Babylonian captivity, while the homeland is viewed as a lost paradise, leading to a sense of disillusionment.
7	Depicts conflicts between cultures and emphasizes cultural nationalism.	Portrays a sense of longing and traditionalist patriotism.	Involves the process of constructing a nation with political or revolutionary aims.
8	Character types: novel, hybrid literary figures – <i>pachucos</i> and <i>vendidos</i> .	Character types: the greenhorn, the flapper, the <i>agringado</i> , the <i>pocho</i> , the <i>petit yanqui</i> .	Character types: protagonists, epic and tragic personas, tyrants, insurgents, and anti-insurgents.
9	Themes: existential crisis, cultural belonging, language challenges, intersectionality of race, class, and gender, and communal dynamics.	Themes: urban life, family dynamics, and exploitation in the workforce.	Themes: political oppression, authoritarian rule, and related topics.
10	Bildungsroman, autobiography.	Picaresque tales and narratives of travel or journey.	Novels depicting revolutionary events, grand dramas, and contentious essays and editorials.

Altogether, Latino literature in the USA is not a monolithic entity and can be further subdivided into three large branches: Mexican-American literature, Cuban-American literature, and Puerto Rican-American literature with its specific features.

Table 12 – *Branches of Latino Literature in the USA*

Latino/Latina Literature		
Mexican-American	Cuban-American	Puerto Rican-American
<p>There are several terms used by people of Mexican descent. <i>Chicanos</i>, a term associated with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, is still employed by writers today. There are two schools of thought regarding the origins of the word. The first is that stems from the term the Aztecs used to refer to themselves, <i>Meshicas</i>. After combining this with <i>Mexican</i> and later further distorting it, it eventually evolved into the modern label. The other, perhaps, even more difficult to support, is that it is a combination of the word <i>chico</i> (or small), a word some believe was often used by Europeans, and Mexican. <i>Mexican-American</i> is the perfect term for many people of Mexican origin who do not like the political implications associated with term <i>Chicano</i>. While dual consciousness is not solely a result of linguistic difference, any term such as this certainly underscores its importance.</p>	<p>The two most popular terms used by people of Cuban ancestry are Cuban-American and Cuban exile. The difference in the use of these two terms is mainly generational. Many of the people who arrived in the first two waves of Cuban immigrants in the 1960s continue, even to this day, to consider themselves Cuban. They prefer to be called Cuban exiles as it emphasizes their country of origin as well as the reason they abandoned it. In general, the children of these immigrants, who have been born or raised in the United States prefer the term <i>Cuban American</i>.</p>	<p>Unlike their Mexican and Cuban counterparts, Puerto Rican-Americans rarely refer to themselves as hyphenated Americans. The most commonly used term for people who were either born on the island and emigrated to the United States is Puerto Rican. This perhaps has to do with geographic and cultural conditions. Nevertheless, the term <i>Puerto Rican</i>, when referring to those who were born or raised in the United States, clearly carries with it significant differences that when the term is applied to islanders who continue to live in Puerto Rico. Another popular term is <i>Nuyorican</i>. In general, this applies to people of Puerto Rican heritage who have some connection to New York. Many Puerto Ricans living in other parts of the United States, however, have no such connection.</p>

The racial dimension of these three groups is often explored in the writings of many of the authors of these three groups. While there is a different framework between the racial experiences of black Latinos (both Cuban and Puerto Rican) and Mexican-Americans, their work reflect similar notions of marginalization and a sense of racial difference. Some of the work of Martin Espada and Gloria Anzaldua explores this issue.

Although other literature concerns itself with gender differences, Latino literature often deals with it in a unique way. Because many Latinas have the dual burden of being both Hispanic and female, much Latino literature focuses on exploring the cultural stereotypes associated with this group. *Machismo*, for example, is often examined as a paradigm of Latin identity and behavior. Many Latina writers create characters who both reinforce and shatter these stereotypes. Sandra Cisneros, Cristina Garcia, and Esmeralda Santiago are just three examples of the new generation of Latina writers asserting their literary presence.

Table 13 – *The Characteristics of Hispanic Literature*

Latino experience is marked by the following characteristics				
1	2	3	4	5
A concern for home: focus on a sense of place (sometimes this focus is displayed as a desire to return to a paradisaal ancestral home): a) For Mexican-Americans, Aztlan, the mystical homeland of	A focus on the cultural components such as music, food, religion. Both real and symbolic poetry, stories and plays.	Contain the issues that pertain to identity formation, appropriation, and determination	Every work should at some point concentrate on dual identity as its principal focus: The concept of identity → the sense of “living on the hyphen”. All three groups have a shared past of having been, and some argue to	An interest in historical formulations

Continuation of table 13

1	2	3	4	5
<p>the Aztecs, is the embodiment of this idea). b) For Cuban-Americans a return to pre-revolutionary Cuba is often a source of nostalgic ruminations. c) For Puerto Ricans, their tropical island, <i>Borinquen</i>, the name the native Tainos gave the land, may seem difficult to reach even though it is only a few miles away. Escapists mood around some mythical land, or a nostalgic point in time.</p>			<p>continue to be (as in the case of Puerto Rico), a colonized and oppressed people. Because of this, all three groups have developed a strong nationalistic sense while at the same time feeling the need to be accepted by their adopted home. Often this need comes as a result of being assaulted with images that reinforce the “American ideal”.</p>	
<p>Reflects the lives and concerns of Latin Americans</p>	<p>Spotlights the gender hierarchy within the Hispanic family and woman’s position in the house in particular</p>	<p>Digs into the emotional dimension of the characters, especially the female ones</p>	<p>Spanish language or Latin influence: different accents and slang</p>	

Being perceived as marginal or oppositional for a while, Latino literature gets institutionalized in the 1970s and 1980s with the publication of a string of anthologies: “*Aztlan: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature*” (1972), “*From the Barrio: A Chicano Anthology*” (1973), “*Borinquen: An Anthology of Puerto Rican Literature*” (1974), or “*Inventing a Word: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Puerto Rican Poetry*” (1980). In the 1990s, collections aiming to represent a comprehensive Latino/a literature emerged, offering their interpretation of the literary canon through volumes such as “*Masterpieces of Latino Literature*” (1994), “*Latina: Women’s Voices from the Borderlands*” (1995), “*The Latino Reader: An American Literary Tradition from 1542 to the Present*” (1997), “*Hispanic American Literature: An Anthology*” (1997), “*The Prentice Hall Anthology of Latino Literature*” (2001), “*Herencia: The Anthology of Hispanic Literature of the United States*” (2001), and “*Latino Boom: An Anthology of U.S. Latino Literature*” (2005). This diversity of collections culminates with the forthcoming release of what appears to be an effort to establish, define, and institutionalize the prominence of the field: the “*Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*”.

According to the research by Raphael Dalleo and Elena Machado, represented in the work “*The Latina / A Canon and the Emergence of Post-sixties Literature*” (2007), “Within this context of canon formation a commonsense periodization has emerged for Latino/a literature, roughly dividing the contemporary literary scene into a Civil Rights generation and what we refer to in our title as the “post-Sixties” writers that have followed. A recent edition of the “*Norton Anthology*,” available for review, categorizes its final two sections as “*Upheaval: 1946–1974*” and “*Into the Mainstream: 1975–2002*,” contrasting these periods along two axes: politics and the market [3, p. 2]. While early literature, often referred to as the “sleeping giant,” tends to embody an anti-colonial sentiment, post-sixties Latino literature is characterized by a shift away from political engagement. Contemporary writers distance themselves from the Civil Rights movement. Raphael Dalleo and Elena Machado, analyzing critical works by Lisa Sánchez González (“*Boricua Literature*,” 2001) and Juan Flores

(*“From Bomba to Hip-Hop,”* 2000), conclude that Latino/a literature from the 1990s onwards – focusing largely on the works of Esmeralda Santiago, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Cristina Garcia, and Julia Alvarez – fails to fully embrace the anti-colonial ideals of the Civil Rights era [3, p. 45]. The literature of the 1990s and the beginning of the noughties, like *“Spidertown”* (1993) by Abraham Rodriguez or *“Bodega Dreams”* (2000) by Ernesto Quiñonez is created in the genre of ghetto fiction, and levels of Latino community in the USA, and New York in particular.

Latin American literature, being represented by various ethnic groups, has its similarities and differences. Thus, the roots of Mexican-American literature, begin with the arrival of the Spanish explorers in what is now the Southwest United States. *“The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Latino Literature”* (2008) edited by Nicolas Kanellos points out: “Chicanos, or Mexican Americans, are the group of Hispanics having the longest presence in what we know today as the United States of America. The presence of Chicano communities in what is now known as the Southwest and West regions (including Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, California, and parts of Utah and Nevada) can be traced back to the colonial era of Spanish rule. Following Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, these territories became part of Mexico. However, after Texas seceded in 1836 and the war between Mexico and the United States concluded in 1848, these lands and their inhabitants were incorporated into the United States through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Consequently, the Chicano population has always been a population annexed through conquest. Since 1910, Mexican American communities have grown due to immigrants who migrated to the United States following the Mexican Revolution to provide cheap labor for the country's agricultural and industrial needs. Culturally, areas of Mexican American settlement have been characterized by vibrant and ongoing artistic expressions, including theater, oral traditions, and journalism, dating back to Spanish colonization to the present day [9, p. 6-7]. The Chicano community, using a language distinct from the dominant society, produced texts that were often marginalized from the country's literary canon for an extended period.

MEXICAN: The first works of the formative years had a tendency to provide a detailed account of the life in the areas outlined above. Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America* (1542), provides an insight into the lives of the Indian tribes of the area, as well as descriptions of the local flora and fauna. Gaspar Perez de Villagra's *Historia de la Nuevo Mexico* (History of New Mexico) (1610) is the first record of poetry written in the area. In addition to the account of a long expedition through Mexico, this epic poem also includes a brief account of the first play ever written and performed in the Southwest. A young soldier named Farfan wrote a dramatic work thanking God for protecting the expedition in their travels, which the men performed on the banks of the Rio Grande River. In addition to these genres, others, based on oral traditions, were incorporated and/or created to add to the literary corpus. These include the ballad (or *romance*), couplets (*coplas*), and legends (*cuentos*).

During the nineteenth century individual works based on these traditions began to make their appearance. Among these are Lorenzo de Zavala's *Viaje a los Estados- Unidos de Norte America* (Journey to the United States of North America) (1834), and the anonymous historical drama *Los Tejanos* (The Texans) (1846). The century also saw a tremendous number of poems and short stories being published in periodicals across the country. Many of these have recently been recovered by the work of scholars working with the *Recovering the Hispanic Literary Heritage* project initiated by Nicolas Kanellos. Longer published works of the period include *The Squatter and the Don: Descriptive of Contemporary Occurences in California* (1885), now considered by many as the first Mexican-American novel, usurping Jose Antonio Villareal's *Pocho* from that spot. Regardless of its historical status, it is significant because it is one of the first pieces of extant literature by women of the period. Like the rest of world literature, Mexican American writings have faced gender gaps with more male writers recorded than women. *Machismo* defined as "taking pride in one's own masculinity", "an exaggerated masculinity", is found to be deeply rooted in Mexican family

dynamics and culture. The XIXth century literature also responded by rejecting the label “*brown*” as opposed to “*white*”.

In the first half of the twentieth century, despite the spread of the English language, many writers continued to write in Spanish. Among these is Daniel Venegas, whose *Don Chipote o cuando los pericos mamen* (Don Chipote or when the parrots suckle) (1928) is a satiric work which criticizes the United States’ exploitation of Mexican workers. Toward the end of the 1940s the Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles signaled a shift in much of the writings of Mexican-Americans. The double standard of the U.S. government’s contradictory treatment of Mexicans who served in World War II and the brutal treatment of those in the streets possibly prompted such works as Josefina Niggli’s *Mexican Village* (1945), which traces the life of a young man of mixed heritage who travels to Mexico in search of his roots. Literature of this period is called *Border literature*, since travelling across the border becomes an important topic within the migration reality for the Mexican people struggling for the place in the USA.

A bright example of Mexican American dramaturgy of 1930s-1970s are the works by Josefina Niggli (folk plays “*Tooth or Shave*”, “*The Red Velvet Goat*”, “*Sunday Costs Five Pesos*”; historical plays “*The Cry of Dolores, Soldadera, Azteca*”, and “*The Fair God*”; other “*The Singing Valley*”, “*Mexican Folk Plays*”, “*The Red Velvet Goat*”, “*Lightning from the East*”, etc.).

The later part of the twentieth century saw an explosion of works in various genres by Mexico-Americans. In drama, the establishment by Luis Valdez of the *Teatro Campesino* which sought to highlight the plight of farm workers gave rise to informal skits, or *actos*. Later, more sophisticated works include *Zoot Suit* (1977). Other notable playwrights include Estella Portillo Tramble, Carlos Morton, Cherrie Moraga, and Denise Chavez. In fiction, beginning with Villareal’s *Pocho* (1959), the corpus of Mexican American literature has rapidly increased. Some notable authors and texts include Rudolfo’s Anaya’s *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972), Rolando Hinojosa’s *Estampas del valle y otras obras* (Sketches of the Valley and Other Works) (1972), and most recently Sandra Cisneros’ *The House on Mango Street* (1991) and Ana

Castillo's *So Far From God* (1994). In poetry the production by authors of Mexican descent has been both prolific and varied during the period. Some notable poets of the period are Alurista, Gary Soto, Pat Mora, and Lorna De Cervantes. From Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' battlecry in "*I Am Joaquín*" through Ana Castillo's commentary on the gender inequality in "*Women Are Not Roses*", Mexican-American Poetry demonstrates its diversity and wide range of subject matter.

A great part of Chicano literature of the 1960s is self-referential. It has established its own vocabulary and its own values. However, it was also influenced by the civil rights movement in the USA, the anti-war movement in opposition to the war in Vietnam, and struggles in Latin America (Cuba and elsewhere).

In 1977 when Gómez-Quiñones wrote his essay "*On Culture*" Chicano literature found itself in a period of reflexive maturity and self-questioning in which the mainstream poetic tendencies took a back seat for the new forms of understanding and creativity.

The theatrical manifesto of Chicano plays is a synthesis of the dominant aesthetics of the moment. An important docudrama "*Guadalupe*" (1974), performed by El Teatro de la Esperanza, bears a notable influence of Brechtian techniques and encompasses political and economic realities. Chicano theatre of that period is a musical theatre, which discusses on stage the issues of discrimination, racism, economic subordination, identity, and other key contemporary themes, such as police violence or drug usage.

In the 1980s there appears feminization of previous thematics. Feminine narratives portray an imprisoned, beaten, and silenced women to whom the writer wishes to lend her voice (for example, "*The House on Mango Street*" (1984) by Sandra Cisneros). Ana Castillo explores in her novels the relationships between the sexes as well as the community bonds and emotional ties that can develop between women ("*The Mixquiahuala Letters*" (1986)). The concept of the crossroads gets emerged in "*Borderlands/La frontera*" (1987) by Gloria Anzaldúa and "*Loving in the War Years: Lo que nunca pasó por sus labios* [What Never Passed Her Lips]" (1983) by Cherríe

Moraga. Her hybrid identity is manifested through language (combination of Spanish and English), which is reinforced by sexual connotations and the combination of genres: essay, poetry and short stories. *“The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Latin Literature”* acknowledges that for Chicana lesbians, survival hinges on challenging definitions and traditions, and transcending boundaries. They contend with a literary history shaped by men, limited participation in patriarchal societies, and the suppression of their sexuality by traditional norms” [9, p. 22-23].

In the 1980s, there was a trend towards historical novels or novels set in historical contexts, exemplified by works such as Rolando Hinojosa's ambitious novelistic saga *“Klail City Death Trip”* series, which began publication in the 1970s. Alejandro Morales also shifted away from novels focused on social documentation, as seen in his historical novel *“The Brick People”* (1988). Chicano history and culture were explored through a series of novels set within historical frameworks, including Nash Candelaria's *“Not by the Sword”* (1982) and *“Inheritance of Strangers”* (1985).

In *“The Hungry Woman: A Mexican Medea”* (1995), a play by Cherríe Moraga, traditional notions of the nation-state are challenged as Moraga envisions a future where Latinos, Hispanics, and Native Americans have carved out a separate nation.

The issues of femicide flourishing in a significant border city of Mexico Ciudad Juarez, found its representation in a range of texts, including *“If I Die in Juarez”* (2008) by Stella Pope Duarte.

In the XXIst century, literature has seen the emergence of chick lit, targeting middle-class young women, exemplified by Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez's *“The Dirty Girls Social Club”* (2003) and Pam Munoz Ryan's *“Esperanza Rising”* (2000), which was adapted into a play by the Minneapolis Children's Theatre. Angela Morales explores the complexities of straddling two worlds in her essay *“The Girls in My Town”* (2013) and *“Bloodyfeathers, R.I.P.”* (2015). Julia Alvarez's works such as *“How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent”* (1991), *“In the Time of the Butterflies: A Novel”* (1994), and *“In the Name of Salome: A Novel”* (2000) embody Latino culture. Benigno Trigo

suggests that women writers of this period are focused on reclaiming their identities through writing rather than motherhood [14, p. 4].

CUBAN: Dislocated narratives in Caribbean literature is represented by Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Dominican fiction. Cuban literary input falls into several generations: neoclassical (circa 1800 – 1825), romantic (1825 – 1850), realist–naturalist (1850 – 1880), impressionist (1880 – 1910), avant-garde (1910 – 1940), existentialist (1940 – 1960), revolutionary (1960 – 1985), and postmodern (1985 – present).

Gustavo Perez Firmat outlines migration literature through three main categories: immigrant literature, exile literature, and ethnic literature. Immigrant literature involves those who move to a new country with the intention of settling there permanently, without plans to return to their country of origin. Perez Firmat distinguishes immigrants as individuals who have concluded that their homeland is no longer suitable as their home, shaping their literature to be prospective. In this literature, there is a transition away from the language of origin towards the language of the destination country. The immigrant's writing reflects this linguistic shift, indicating a symbolic rebirth in their new environment [7, p. 2]. Altogether Gustavo Perez Firmat suggests that for immigrants, their destination becomes their destiny: *ser* is *estar*. For the exile, the destination isn't a destiny but rather a mishap in geography from which they haven't fully moved on. Unlike immigrants who establish their lives in a new place, exiles inhabit one location while emotionally residing in another. Consequently, exile literature is often penned in the “mother tongue” as using a second language signifies a painful disconnection from one's culture. Exile writers continually explore themes of alienation and longing for a return to their homeland in their retrospective writings [7, p. 4]. The third category, based on ethnicity, is characterized as follows: Unlike immigrant and exile literature, ethnic literature does not focus on looking forward or backward. Ethnic writers are not concerned with assimilation or returning; rather, their work delves into what it means to reject both of these choices. In essence, while immigrant literature is marked by its differences from the culture of

origin and exile literature by its differences from the culture of destination, ethnic literature is distinguished by its differences from both the culture of origin and the culture of destination [7, p. 4].

Canonical Cuban American authors include a diverse array of writers such as Reinaldo Arenas, Rafael Campo, Nilo Cruz, Daína Chaviano, Carlos Eire, Roberto G. Fernández, Gustavo Pérez Firmat, Cristina García, Carolina García-Aguilera, Oscar Hijuelos, Melinda Lopez, Eduardo Machado, Orlando Ricardo Menes, José Martí, Achy Obejas, Ricardo Pau-Llosa, and Virgil Suárez. Cuban American literature predominantly revolves around themes of Cuban immigration to the United States and the experience of Cuban exile. A prevalent motif in this literature is nostalgia for the homeland, alongside feelings of loneliness and isolation among migrant writers adjusting to life in a foreign land. Many of these writers left Cuba in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, seeking economic opportunities and a better life abroad. The brightest examples of Cuban-American legacy of the end of the XXth century embrace: Ricardo Pau-Llosa with her books of verse *Sorting Metaphors* (1983), *Bread of the Imagined* (1991), *Vereda Tropical* (“Tropical Path”) (1998); Dolores Prida with her play *Sewing and Singing* (1981) and musical *Beautiful Señoritas* (1980); Himilce Novas with her novel *Mangos, Bananas, and Coconuts: A Cuban Love Story* (1996), non-fiction *Everything You Need to Know about Latino History* (1994), *The Hispanic 100: A Ranking of Latino Men and Women Who Have Most Influenced American Thought and Culture* (1995), and *Remembering Selena: A Tribute in Pictures and Words* (1995).

The beginning of the *Special Period* or *the Special Period in the Time of Peace* (*Período especial en tiempos de paz*) is attributed to economic crisis in Cuba that started off in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the COMECON (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). Economical nightmare lasting up to the noughties, led to the situation when the Cuban authors had to shift their works to new thematic taste of literature desired in the foreign markets. Writings of the period highlight *jineterismo* culture, defined by hustling, prostitution, cigars, rum

and other informal business ventures or marked by the political economy of the legalized dollar in post-Soviet Cuba. In 2008 Esther Whitfield published a study *“Cuban Currency: The Dollar and ‘Special Period’ Fiction”* in which she suggested the analysis of the quintessential novel of the special period (1990-2004), such as the work by Pedro Juan Gutierrez *“El rey de la Habana”* (1999), plays on the topic by Zoe Valdes’ *“La nada cotidiana”* (1995) and *“Te di la vida entera”* (1996), or stories by Ronaldo Menendez and Anna Lidia Vega Seroga that sexualize and conceptualize money. However, the Special period is not exactly characterized by the links with the USA, as the more shocking and controversial kind of literature was published outside of Cuba or North America, but by Spanish publishers in Madrid and Barcelona.

PUERTO RICAN: American literature has been deeply influenced by the history of colonization of Puerto Rico and the subsequent migration in the XXth century. Critical approach points out a split between two shores: Puerto Rican literature produced by the island authors and the legacy of the descendants of multiple migratory waves, born in the USA.

Within the colonial chains imposed by Spain the development of Puerto Rican was impeded until the second half of the XIXth century, being debuted by works like *“El jibaro”* (1849) by Manuel Alonso. Distinct local culture is represented in poetry of Jose Gautier Benitez (1851-1880). Anti-assimilationist motives characterize the heritage of Jose de Diego (1866-1959) and Luis Llorens Torres (1878-1944).

In the XXth century, the generation of the 1940s, represented by figures such as José Luis González, Pedro Juan Soto, René Marqués, and Emilio Díaz Valcárcel, grappled with issues of cultural and national identity, as well as migration. A subsequent generation of novelists and short story writers emerged in the 1960s and 70s, including Luis Rafael Sánchez, Rosario Ferré, Ana Lydia Vega, Manuel Ramos Otero, Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá, and Magali Garcia Ramis, who drew inspiration from the magical-realist tradition found in Latin American literature. Victor Hernández Cruz stands out as one of the most renowned Puerto Rican poets, known for his exploration of bicultural identity. His poetry delves into the contrasts between Puerto Rican and

American cultures, often playing with Spanish and English languages while experimenting with words, images, symbols, and sound. Miguel Piñero gained acclaim among Puerto Rican playwrights with his work “*Short Eyes*,” which won the New York Drama Critics Award for Best American Play in 1974. During the 1980s and 90s, Puerto Rican theater focused on the daily realities of racism, crime, poverty, and drug abuse.

The evolution of a Puerto Rican identity within the United States is examined through the works of authors like Edward Rivera (“*Family Installments*,” 1983), Ed Vega (“*Mendoza's Dreams*,” 1987), Judith Ortiz Cofer (“*The Line of the Sun*,” 1989), Esmeralda Santiago (“*When I was Puerto Rican*,” 1993), Abraham Rodríguez Jr. (“*Tales of the South Bronx: The Boy without a Flag*,” 1992), and Ernesto Quiñonez (“*Bodega Dreams*,” 2000). These authors draw from a literary tradition spanning centuries to capture the essence of the locales that have shaped their characters' identities. In contemporary literature, there's a shift towards exploring new genres and themes, such as Lantix speculative fiction, horror, fantasy, and noir. This trend is evident in the works of authors like Pedro Cabiya, who explores these genres in short stories, novels, and comics. Additionally, there's experimentation in storytelling styles, exemplified by Bruno Soreno, as well as in the short stories of Jose Liboy and Luis Negron. Negron's “*Mundo Cruel*” was honored with a Lambda Literary Award for Gay Fiction in 2014.

‘Emerging voices on the island’ embrace Alberto Martínez Márquez, Ana María Fuster Lavín, Rafael Acevedo, Moisés Agosto, Yolanda Arroyo Pizarro, Janette Becerra, Ricardo A. Domínguez, Zoé Jiménez Corretjer, Juan López Bauzá, Luis Negrón, Maribel Ortiz, Max Resto, and José E. Santos. Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, Ángel Lozada, Benito Pastoriza Iyodo, and Alfredo Villanueva Collado produce their literary works in Spanish while residing in the mainland United States. On the other hand, authors like Erika Lopez, Ivelisse Rodriguez, Lilliam Rivera, Quiara Alegría Hudes, Jaquira Díaz, Ernesto Quiñonez, and Richie Narvaez write and publish their

texts in English, reflecting the bilingual and diverse nature of Puerto Rican literature in the United States.

As well as other Latin-American literature, **DOMINICAN-AMERICAN** literature has its roots in Spanish writing of the colonial period started by the journey of Christopher Columbus in 1490s and the colonization of the island in the 16th century. The colonial period is marked by the creativity of a Spanish clergyman, writer, historian and a social reformer Bartolome de las Casas (*“A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies”* (1542, published in 1552)). Predominantly, Dominican letters were published by church or imperial authorities with the settlement of Hispaniola in the 16th-17th centuries. During the wars of independence of 1844 and 1865 the scope of writings questions the issues of national identity and multiethnic influence of the island (African, Taino, and Spanish). By the 1920s a number of Dominican writers had taken up residence in New York. Among them Jose M. Bernard with his volume of verse *“Renuevos”* [Renewals] (1907); Fabio Fiallo with his short stories *“Cuentos fragiles”* [Fragile stories] (1908); and Manuel Florentino Cestero with his collection of poetry *“El canto del cisne”* [The song of the swan] (1915) and the novel *“El amore n Nueva York”* [Love in New York] (1920).

Contemporary Dominican-American literature shows similarity with Cuban-American, Puerto-Rican and African-American writers. They were the mid-20th-century writers, such as Pedro Henriquez Urena and his sister Camila Henriquez Urena, as well as Francisco J. Peynado, *who gave shape to the Dominican literature written in the USA*.

The influx of migration, propelled by the three-decade rule of Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961) and the subsequent U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 followed by its occupation, gave rise to Dominican communities in urban centers like Miami and New York. Notable literary works from this era include Andres Requena’s novel *“Cementerio sin cruces”* [Cemetery without Crosses] (1951) and Angel Rafael Lamarche’s collection of short fiction *“Los cuentos que Nueva York no sabe”* [The

Stories That New York Doesn't Know] (1949). These works delve into themes of politics, immigration, assimilation, and poverty.

Further waves of Dominican exodus occurred during the political leadership of Joaquin Balaguer from 1960 to 1962, from 1966 to 1978, and from 1986 to 1996, contributing to the expansion of Dominican communities in the USA. In the 1980s and 1990s, Dominican-American literature gained prominence within Hispanic communities. Notable literary figures from this period include Guillermo Francisco Gutierrez, who explored themes of identity loss and the role of Hispanic women in U.S. culture in his work *“Condado con candado”* [Country under Lock] (1986). Other influential writers include Alan Cambeira, Leandro Morales, Alexis Gomez Rosa, Carlos Rodriguez, Juan Rivero, Miriam Ventura, Tomas Modesto Galan, Teonilda Madera, and Rhina Espaillat. Writers such as Rolling, Sherezada *“chiqui”* Vicioso, and Miguel A. Vazquez tackled racial issues and prejudices toward Hispanic Caribbean culture in their works. Vicioso's poetry collection *“Perspectives”* reflects a tone of loneliness and tragedy stemming from the inability to return to a Dominican past, influenced by the legacy of Julia Alvarez. Alvarez, known as an American New Formalist poet, explored themes of exile, childhood memories, national history, and the negotiation between Dominican heritage and American life in her poetry collections *“Homecoming”* (1984), *“The Other Side / El otro lado”* (1995), and *“Homecoming: New and Collected Poems”* (1996). Her fiction, including *“How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents”* (1991), *“In the Times of the Butterflies”* (1994), *“Yo!”* (1996), *“In the Name of Salomé”* (2000), *“Saving the World: A Novel”* (2006), and *“Afterlife: A Novel”* (2000), also delves into these themes while addressing issues of female solitude, sexual desire, and the passage of time.

In the XXst century, the thematic threads established by Julia Alvarez are continued by Loida Maritza Perez in her work *“Geographies of Home”* (1999), by Angie Cruz in *“Soledad”* (2001), and by Nelly Rosario in *“Song of the Water Saints”* (2002).

Hybridity: The integration of African culture into the national identities of Spanish American culture resulted in the direct transfer of knowledge, history, religion, folk songs, folk tales, and personal experiences. This led to a significant influence of oral traditions on written culture. A notable precursor to this manifestation in the 20th century was Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, a self-made bibliographer of the African Diaspora, who transitioned from involvement in Puerto Rican independence movements with José Martí to contributing to the Harlem Renaissance. Following the post-war period, waves of economic migration brought many Afro-Cubans, Afro-Puerto Ricans, and Afro-Dominicans to the United States. This experience spurred the emergence of independent periodicals like *Gráfico* (1927, *Graphic*) and community histories such as *Memorias de Bernardo Vega* (1979, *Memories of Bernardo Vega*). Afro-Latino writers include Jesús Colón, author of “*A Puerto Rican in New York & Other Sketches*” (1961), Joaquín Colón López, and Afro-Cuban playwright Alberto O’Farrill. In 2000, Evelio Grillo documented his memoir in “*Black Cuban, Black American*”.

Thus, Latin American literature in its diversity holds the core of cultural duality, is characterized by certain cultural dialogism, plays with bilingualism, opposition of space and scenery, questions political structure of their country-source, addresses colonial issues and migration, as well as the challenges of coexistence of the aliens of color with the basic community on the new ground. Often such literature spotlights marginal layers of society and the problems inside ghetto communities. The works might be of lyrical nature, holding nostalgia for the lost land and disrupted past.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. “*The Rebel*” (*La rebelde*) (1994) by Leonor Villegas de Magnón’s as a semi-mythic biography of herself.
2. Chicana literature from the 1960s and on. Early Chicanas.
3. The history of the “border crossers,” “migrant workers,” “braceros,” and “wetbacks”.
4. Josephina Niggli’s the semiepic novel “*Mexican Village*”.
5. Latin American female journals.
6. Motherhood in Latin American literature.
7. A highly sexualized female body in Latin American fiction.
8. Chicano men in Mexican American writings.

9. Cuban queer literature.
10. The ghost of the naked man in the Caribbean literary context.
11. The spiritual savage: a Mexican character in the fictional text.

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

The term **Chicano** previously associated with newly arrived Mexican immigrants, evolved to represent with pride the Mexican heritage of individuals and communities already established or born in the United States.

Mestizaje refers to the natural cultural fusion, such as Afro-Hispanic blending.

Jineterismo refers to a spectrum of illicit or semi-legal economic endeavors associated with tourism in Cuba. This encompasses various activities like prostitution, acting as a pimp, engaging in hustling such as selling black-market or counterfeit items, offering private taxi services, and serving as informal tourist guides.

New Formalism is a movement in American poetry emerging in the late 20th and early XXIst centuries. It advocates for a revival of metrical, rhymed verse, and narrative poetry, arguing that these elements are essential for American poetry to rival novels and regain its past popularity among the American audience.

Santeria a syncretic religion of Catholicism and the Yoruba religion.

Speculative fiction is a broad genre covering various types of fiction that intentionally diverge from realism or the strict imitation of everyday reality. It encompasses imaginative realms such as the supernatural, futuristic settings, and other highly creative elements. This inclusive genre includes, among others, science fiction, fantasy, horror, superhero stories, alternate history, utopian and dystopian tales, and supernatural fiction, often blending elements from multiple genres, like science fantasy.

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PACE 7

***BLACK STUDIES AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS: ON AFRICAN
AMERICAN LITERATURE, ITS BACKGROUND AND THE PRESENT-DAY
PERSPECTIVE***

Key terms: *beyond the race, the signs of identity, the domain of difference: race / class / gender, the kinetic orality, black literature, black intellectuals, the negative stigma of blackness as a symptom of self-hatred, discourses of resistance.*

1. *What is the race?*
2. *African American literature within historical paradigms.*
3. *The common features of negritude literature.*
4. *Post-oppression and 'post-racial' fiction.*

Skin colour, hair texture, eye shape as biological features and racial distinctions at some point of human history get particular sociopolitical definition, when blacks were easily identified as slaves, whites were associated with freedom, “slanted” eyelids were directed towards the Chinese “coolies” (cheap work force), and reds faced violence, oppression and extermination as Native Americans.

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* of Current English by A.S. Hornby, race is described as “*any of several subdivisions of mankind sharing certain physical characteristics, especially skin color, hair color and type, and facial features: the Caucasian / Mongolian / Negroid, etc.*” [10]. Another definition of race is “*a group of people sharing a common culture, history, and language.*” The concept of race as a political construct finds its origins in Biblical interpretations: “*Debates arose regarding the creation itself, with theories of polygenesis questioning whether God had created only one species of humanity ('monogenesis'). Europeans pondered whether the indigenous peoples of the Americas were indeed human beings with souls capable of redemption*” [2, p. 4]. This worldview perpetuated a distinction between

Europeans, considered “*children of God*” and fully human, and others. Such beliefs served to justify inequalities such as freedom for some and enslavement for others, and unequal access to land and property. Therefore, the concept of race does not consistently align between its biological and political interpretations across historical contexts. While the biological definition, as provided by Hornby, suggests the equality of all human beings and views their biological differences simply as variations, the political rights afforded to individuals of certain races in specific territories and time periods may vary. Studies examining cultural and racial dynamics often identify the existence of hierarchies among cultural groups, with some considered “*higher*” or “*lower*” than others. Max Weber’s work highlights biological characteristics as a factor in racial conflicts, alongside the belief that certain social and political conditions can exacerbate racial disparities. A. Aguirre and D.V. Baker regard race as a sociohistorical construct, emphasizing that racial categories and their meanings are shaped by specific social relations and historical contexts [2, p. 5].

The process of racialization within American society traces back to the 1600s, marked by the forced migration of thousands of African slaves to the continent for sale. Moira Ferguson, in her book “*The Literature of Slavery and Abolition*,” provides a historical overview of black slavery in the USA. By the 1780s, many northern states had passed laws to abolish slavery, with the Northwest Territory ordinance of 1787 prohibiting slavery. The Declaration of Independence also raised questions about the legitimacy of slavery, and its profitability was declining for many northerners. Discontent among slaves led to events like the Gabriel Plot in 1800, where Gabriel Prosser led over a thousand slaves in a march on Richmond, Virginia, resulting in the execution of thirty-five participants. In 1822, Denmark Vesey, a free black man, organized a slave rebellion among urban artisans, but the plot was betrayed, leading to the arrest of nearly 150 slaves and the execution of forty. Throughout the 1830s, northern antislavery societies campaigned for the emancipation of slaves, with many freed slaves joining the movement. However, slavery continued to expand in the South, with the population growing from 650,000 in 1790 to 3.2 million in 1850. The divide

between the North and South over the issue of slavery became increasingly pronounced, leading to the secession of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and South Carolina from the Union in February 1861 to form the Confederate States of America. The formal declaration of the emancipation of Black millions in the United States came in 1863.

According to Adalberto Aguirre, Jr. and David V. Baker, in North America, the delineation between black and white races has historically been sharply defined and rigorously upheld. Whiteness is perceived as a pristine category, with any racial mixing leading to classification as “*non-white*.” Despite the enduring dominance of white culture in the United States and efforts by individuals of mixed heritage to pass as white, the demographic makeup of the country is gradually evolving. In the 1980s, a former professor at Tulane University demonstrated that a significant portion of the white American population had approximately one-twentieth Negro ancestry. The dynamic interactions occurring in the contact zone have profoundly influenced various aspects of culture, leading to hybridization. However, the history of African literature in the US primarily focuses on the preservation and celebration of African traditions and history. Since the 1970s, there has been a process of canonization of Black American literature.

According to “*The Prentice Hall Anthology of African American Literature*” of 1999, African American literary works in the United States can be categorized into eight significant milestones: 1) the Colonial Period (1746-1800); 2) The Antebellum (1800-1865); 3) the Reconstruction Period (1865-1900); 4) the Harlem Renaissance (1900-1940); 5) the Protest Movement (1940-1959); 6) Black Aesthetics Movement (1970-present); 8) African American Literary Criticism. Based on the information provided by the Anthology, a table has been developed to delineate the characteristics and nature of the literary works from each of these periods.

Table 14 – *The history of black writings in the USA*

DATE	PERIOD	AUTHORS AND THEIR WORKS	THE TOPIC RAISED	THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND THE GENERAL ISSUES OF THE PERIOD
1	2	3	4	5
1746-1800	the Colonial Period (early African American Writers)	<p>- Olaudah Equiano <i>“The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Alaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself.”</i></p> <p>- Phillis Wheatley <i>“For his Excellency General Washington”</i>; <i>“On being Brought from Africa to America”</i>; <i>“To S.M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works”</i>; <i>“Letter to Samson Occom”</i>.</p> <p>- Lucy Terry Prince, poem <i>“Bars Fight,</i></p>	<p>- Captures the tumultuous and frightening nature of his transport from Africa to the New World: <i>“In this situation I expected every hour to share the fate of my companions, brought upon deck at the point of death, and I began to hope that death would soon put an end to my miseries”</i> [p.17].</p> <p>- Identifies the tension between the American colonists desiring freedom from British rule.</p> <p>- chronicles an Indian attack against white colonies.</p>	<p>- The Africans were seized, captured, and transported to the New World.</p> <p>- Americans as the colonists fought the British in a quest for self-rule and self-determination.</p> <p>-For African American writers of the period, the war often served as a context for their works.</p> <p>- The writers commented on slavery in the US, responded to issues of freedom and democracy while overtly or covertly critiquing the status of African Americans in colonial society.</p> <p>- Much of early African American literature consists of poetry and slave narratives, sometimes letters.</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p><i>August 28, 1746.</i>"</p> <p>-George Moses Horton <i>"On Liberty and Slavery"</i>.</p> <p>-Jupiter Hammon <i>"On Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ with Penitential Cries."</i></p> <p>-Benjamin Banneker <i>"Letter to Thomas Jefferson"</i></p>	<p>- Signals a heartfelt plea for abolition of slavery.</p> <p>- Chronicles the poet's acceptance of Christianity as the means for ultimate freedom and salvation in heaven.</p> <p>- Arguing for racial equality, articulates the idea of freedom for all Americans.</p>	
1800-1865	the Antebellum Period	<p>- Harriet Jacobs <i>"Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, written by Herself"</i>, in which she said: <i>"Slavery is terrible for men; but it is far more terrible for women"</i> The work was written under pseudonym Linda Brent.</p> <p>-Harriet Wilson <i>"Our Nig; or Sketches from the Life of a Free Black, in a Two-Story White House, North:</i></p>	<p>- Critiques the triple jeopardy of race, class, and gender.</p> <p>- Focuses on the life of a servant of mixed racial background. Calls attention to the fact that discrimination in America did not</p>	<p>- The Underground Railroad played an important role in Antebellum America as a route to freedom. Its existence was vital to the abolitionist movements. Individuals sympathetic to the antislavery cause, black and white, provided safe haven for thousands of black slaves escaping to the North.</p> <p>- The Writers' stories and narratives served as records of their bondage, fight, and freedom. Their success demonstrated</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p><i>Showing That Slavery's Shadows Fall Even There</i>".</p> <p>-Frances E.W. Harper, novel "<i>Iola-Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted</i>" (1892).</p> <p>- Frederick Douglass "<i>The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself</i>"; "<i>Follow the Drinkin' Gourd</i>"; "<i>Swing Low, Sweet Chariot</i>".</p> <p>- William Wells Brown, a novel "<i>Clotel; or, The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States</i>" (1853); a play "<i>The Escape; or, a Leap for Freedom</i>" (1858).</p> <p>- The abolitionist publication "<i>The Liberator</i>" thrived during that era.</p>	<p>occur exclusively in the South.</p> <p>- Concentrates on the role of black women in Antebellum society.</p> <p>- Represents slaves' desire for freedom.</p> <p>- Deal with freedom issues.</p> <p>- Served as forums for escaped slaves to feel their stories or featuring the stories of those involved in the antislavery movement.</p>	<p>the strength, ingenuity, and resistance of black and white Americans in the 19th century.</p> <p>- The quest for freedom and the fight to abolish slavery define literature of the period.</p> <p>- For African American writers of the time, literacy equaled freedom, and they used writing as an instrument to aid the growing sentiment against slavery in the North and South. Many creative works of the period consist of abolitionist poems and slave narratives testifying to the brutality, evil, and injustice of slavery. The literature reflects the pressing social, political, and economic ramifications of slavery for Americans of all races.</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
1865-1900	the Reconstruction Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anna Julia Cooper “<i>A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South</i>” (1892). - Elizabeth Keckly “<i>Behind the Scenes; or Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House</i>”. - Victoria Earle Matthews “<i>The Awakening of the Afro-American Woman</i>”. - Charles Chestnutt, tales “<i>The Goopered Grapivine</i>”; “<i>Po’ Sandy</i>”. - Paul Laurence Dunbar, poetry “<i>When Malindy Sings</i>”; “<i>Swing Low, Sweet Chariot</i>”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extols the virtues of education by African Americans, particularly women, as a means of attaining fulfilment. - Is an expose of the Lincoln household. - Promotes moral-spiritual uplifts. Her speech illustrates the role black women played during Reconstruction. - Presents oral story-telling, through the character uncle Julius, who spins tales about Antebellum days and harsh realities of slavery. - Dunbar comments on the plight of 19th-century African Americans desirous equality at a time when they were treated as second-class citizens. The author uses the symbol of the caged bird 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature reflects the fact that despite the abolition of slavery, the United States was far from being a place of freedom, equality, and justice for everyone. In their writings they represented the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of blacks. The central debate surrounded the question of social, economic, and political enfranchisement. - Literature of the period served as a means of transformation of lives of African Americans in a society in which “separate but equal” politics held away. - Literature of the period also fostered an appreciation of black “folk” culture.

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black female writers: Anna Julia Cooper, Pauline Hopkins, Ida B. Wells Barnett. - Periodicals: <i>"The Coloured American Magazine"</i>. 	<p>warbling a song: <i>It's not a carol of joy or glee, // But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core, // But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings – // I know why the caged bird sings"</i> [pp. 18-21].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addresses the aspects of slavery and gender. - Voices the concerns of African Americans in relation to pressing issues of the period, such as equal rights for all Americans under the law, Pan-Africanism, and black art and culture. 	
1900-1940	the Harlem Renaissance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journals <i>"The Crisis"</i> and <i>"The Opportunities"</i>. - Jessie Redmon Fauset, a poet, short story writer, and novelist, was literary editor of <i>"The Crises"</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Illustrates the marriage of politics and art during the Harlem Renaissance. - Together with Dorothy West and Claude McKay embrace the idea of the New Negro. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite the abolition of slavery in the US, African Americans continued to face discrimination in the early twentieth century. - Artists associated with the Harlem Renaissance emphasized the ongoing struggle for

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>from 1919 to 1926, publishing her own works (like “<i>Plum Bun: A Novel Without a Moral</i>” (1929), stories “<i>The Sleeper Wakes</i>”, “<i>Comedy: American Style</i>”) and those of her peers, such as Langston Hughes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zora Neale Hurston “<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>”. - James Weldon Johnson, authored novel “<i>The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored</i>” (1912). - Wallace Thurman “<i>The Blacker the Berry</i>” (1929). - Dramatists: Angelina Weld Grimke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portrays black migration through life and travel. Explored how interracial color prejudice, sexism, and class discrimination affected the life of a black woman. - Deals with interracial and intra-racial color consciousness. - Presents the critique of racism. 	<p>freedom, underscoring the need for further progress towards achieving full emancipation and equal rights for blacks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The origins of the movement are subject to debate, with some attributing it to World War I and the return of black troops to the US, who demanded equal rights after facing inequality despite their service in Europe. Others point to the publication of the anthology “<i>The New Negro</i>” in 1925, which celebrated African American culture and creativity. - Many critics agree that the Harlem Renaissance came to an end with the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression of the 1930s. - The heightened international tensions between 1900 and 1940 drew increased attention to human rights issues. - Organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>“<i>Rachel</i>” (1916); Marita Bonner “<i>The Purple Flower</i>” (1928); Ntozake Shange “<i>For Coloured Girls Who Have Considered Suiside Where the Rainbow is Enuf</i>” (1975); August Wilson “<i>The Piano Lesson</i>” (1990).</p>		<p>advocated for civil rights, aiming to eliminate Jim Crow laws and curb violence against African Americans. They were supported by influential journals such as “<i>The Crisis</i>” (published by the NAACP) and “<i>The Opportunity</i>” (published by the Urban League). - Some writers of the Harlem Renaissance era defy easy categorization due to the diverse styles and themes present in their works.</p>
1940-1959	the Protest Movement	<p>- African American Press of the time was represented by “<i>Atlanta Daily World</i>”, the Norfolk “<i>Journal and Guide</i>”, the “<i>Pittsburg Courier</i>”, the “<i>Chicago Defender</i>”, the “<i>Baltimore Afro-American</i>”. - <i>Negro Digest</i>”, “<i>Ebony</i>”, and “<i>Jet</i>”, started by John H. Johnson in Chicago.</p>	<p>- The articles played a significant role in putting an end to racial discrimination in the armed forces. - Contributed to fostering a sense of racial pride among African Americans. Portrayed</p>	<p>- The primary objective was to eradicate racism, an enduring institution that has manifested in various forms and degrees throughout different historical epochs. - Philip Randolph played a pivotal role in advocating for equal treatment in the military. He issued a threat to President Roosevelt, indicating a planned march on Washington if the demands of African Americans were not</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>- W.E.B. Du Bois <i>“The Souls of Black Folk”</i>.</p> <p>- Margaret Walker, poem <i>“For My People”</i> (1942).</p> <p>- Anna Petry, novel <i>“The Street”</i>.</p> <p>\</p>	<p>favorable depictions of black Americans in various publications.</p> <p>- Brought attention to the complexities of African Americans’ experiences in the United States, exploring their dual identity: <i>“an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body”</i>.</p> <p>- Sheds light on the harsh truths of racial oppression against black individuals and strengthens the feeling of hope that has driven the quest for freedom; elucidates the challenges African Americans have faced and provides admiration and support.</p> <p>- Explores the challenges faced by African American women in urban environments – a</p>	<p>addressed. In response to the protests, Roosevelt issued an Executive Order to abolish discrimination against African Americans in the military.</p> <p>- Literature reflected the racial issues of the era, intimately connected to significant events, movements, and figures. In 1940, Marcus Garvey, the leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, champion of the Back to Africa campaign, and proponent of racial segregation, passed away. Following his death, the momentum of his movement started to wane.</p> <p>- Protest literature demonstrates that equality is frequently contingent upon variables such as race, gender, and ethnicity.</p> <p>- In 1955, Rosa Parks, an officer of the NAACP, declined to surrender her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery,</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>- Ralph Ellison <i>“Invisible Man”</i> (1952).</p> <p>- James Baldwin <i>“Go Tell it on the Mountain”</i>.</p> <p>- Poetry: Gwendolyn Brooks, volume of poetry <i>“Annie Allen”</i> (1949), a novel <i>“Maud Martha”</i> (1953).</p> <p>- Robert Hayden’s poem <i>“The Ballad of Nat Turner”</i>.</p>	<p>subject that had not been extensively addressed by black writers before.</p> <p>- Explores the concept of African American male identity; offers a detailed analysis of the oppression, humiliation, and betrayal endured by numerous black men during that era.</p> <p>- Examines the impact of religion on a young boy and delves into the complexities surrounding the relationship between a son and his stepfather.</p> <p>- Brooks was the first African American author to win a Pulitzer Prize. Both Brooks and Hayden focused on the lives of African Americans living in urban settings, examining their moral, racial, and economic struggles. Brooks shed light on the distinct</p>	<p>Alabama. Her act of protest sparked a response from other African Americans, who reacted to the prevailing racism by boycotting the bus company and founding the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). Martin Luther King, Jr., was elected as the president of MIA, and in 1959, he established the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>- Playwright Lorraine Hansberry penned “<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>” in 1959.</p> <p>- The oral tradition, often intertwined with blues music, is exemplified by Arthur “<i>Big Boy</i>” Crudup, a blues singer from the Mississippi Delta, particularly known for his song “<i>That's All Right, Mama.</i>”</p>	<p>experiences of black women, portraying them as mothers, partners, and confidants influenced by unjust surroundings, leading to poverty and despair. She spoke out against racism and sexism, while Hayden offered readers a deep exploration of African American history.</p> <p>- This play signifies the Broadway debut of a black female playwright. It draws heavily from personal experiences and depicts the struggles encountered by an African American family.</p> <p>- Expressed the despair experienced by black individuals who perceived limited possibilities for realizing the American Dream.</p>	

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
1960-1969	Black Aesthetic Movement	<p>- Imamu Amiri Baraka, previously known as LeRoi Jones, authored the play “<i>Dutchman</i>” in 1964</p>	<p>- Through his poetry, dramas, and essays, he articulates his political opposition to imperialism and colonialism, serving as a platform for the expression of black aesthetics, culture, and politics. His ideological journey evolves from black nationalism to Marxism, placing greater emphasis on economic issues rather than solely on race. In one of his plays, he explores a racial encounter between a black man and a white woman, highlighting the dominance of the white woman over the black man, likely influenced by his personal experiences, including his marriage to and subsequent divorce from a white woman, as he sought a deeper connection with his black heritage. Consequently, he</p>	<p>- Language held greater significance within the movement than physical strength.</p> <p>- The civil rights movement, black nationalist movement, and women's movement were prominent social phenomena during this period.</p> <p>- During this period, African Americans were asserting themselves politically, while black artists conveyed their messages through a variety of genres to advocate for change and reshape society.</p> <p>- Imamu Amiri Baraka, formerly known as LeRoi Jones, was instrumental in the inception of the black arts movement and black nationalism. Acknowledging the exclusion of African American literature from white aesthetics, Baraka played a significant role in shaping and articulating black aesthetics.</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>- Martin Luther King, Jr, speeches <i>Letters from Birmingham Jail</i>; “<i>I Have a Dream</i>”.</p> <p>- Malcom X, multiple speeches.</p> <p>- Poetry: Nikki Giovanni, two volumes “<i>Black Feeling, Black Talk</i>” (1967) and “<i>Black Judgement</i>” (1968).</p> <p>- Sonia Sanchez, poetry.</p>	<p>revises his views on female submissiveness, advocating for the liberation of enslaved women.</p> <p>- He was a skilled rhetorician, adept at employing metaphor, chiasmus, anaphora, isocolon, and various other techniques to underscore the message.</p> <p>- His motto “<i>Violence is Necessary</i>” reflects the belief that the non-violent approach left African Americans with minimal power.</p> <p>- She is deeply engaged in political discourse, tackling topics concerning race, gender, poverty, and substance abuse.</p> <p>- Her poetry celebrates the distinct culture of African Americans. Sanchez uses black vernacular and incorporates African forms into</p>	<p>- In 1962, federal troops were deployed to safeguard James Meredith, who became the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi.</p> <p>- In 1968, the year Martin Luther King was assassinated, violent protests erupted in urban ghettos. Race riots at several black colleges resulted in the deaths of black students.</p> <p>- The women's movement did not address the numerous racial incidents but concentrated on male dominance within the societal system. The prevailing theme of the 1960s was black power, specifically black male power, symbolized by a clenched fist.</p> <p>- 1967 – the foundation of Third World Press by Haki R. Madhubuti – to publish the works of black writers.</p> <p>- African American artists combined politics and art and</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>- Alice Childress, the Obie Award play <i>“Trouble in Mind”</i> (1955); drama <i>“Wine in the Wilderness”</i> (1969); children’s book, banned in some schools, <i>“Ain’t Nothin’ But a Sandwich”</i> (1973).</p> <p>- Eldridge Cleaver, collection of essays <i>Soul on Ice</i>”.</p> <p>- Haki R. Madhubuti, poetry <i>“Think Black”</i> (1967); <i>“Don’t Cry, Scream”</i> (1969).</p> <p>- Oral tradition: a song <i>“We Shall Overcome”</i> (1960s).</p>	<p>her work, putting black aesthetic theory into practice.</p> <p>- Uses drama to present her political views on race relations. Her works deal with themes such as segregation, white-black relationships, and lynching.</p> <p>- He wrote most of his book being in prison; in the flesh of his writings he was straightforward and blatant and fought vigorously against racial injustice.</p> <p>- Works illustrate the marriage of art and politics, exemplifying his serious commitment to an exclusively black art form that addresses black issues.</p> <p>- It is regarded as a symbol or anthem of the civil rights movement on a national scale.</p>	<p>tended to show pride in art forms and traditions specific to the culture: jazz, rhythm and blues, and black English vernacular.</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
1970 – present	Neorealism Movement	<p>- Audre Lorde, books of poetry “<i>The Black Unicorn</i>” (1978); “<i>Cancer Journals</i>” (1980).</p> <p>- Rita Dove, the first black poet laureate of a Pulitzer Prize for “<i>Thomas and Beulah</i>” (1986).</p> <p>- Maya Angelou, autobiography “<i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i>” (1970), a poem “<i>On the Pulse of Mourning</i>” (1993). Directed “<i>Down in the Delta</i>” (1999), a film about African American family life.</p> <p>- Alice Walker “<i>The Color Purple</i>”; “<i>In search of Our</i></p>	<p>- Expresses the politics of race, gender, and sexual orientation in profound ways. Used her poetry to counter racism and promote feminism and gay rights. Discussed lesbian relationships and breast cancer, which she suffered herself.</p> <p>- A book of verse in narrative form. Touches the issues of a mother-daughter relationships.</p> <p>- Made a history as the first woman and the first African American to deliver a poem on the President’s inauguration (President Clinton’s).</p> <p>- Has been criticized by African American men for what they perceive as</p>	<p>- Has elements in common with the European realism movement established in the XIXth century as a response to or a reaction against the idealization of the Romantic period.</p> <p>- Literature of the period tended toward a realistic depiction of life. The works are closely based on the truth the authors experienced.</p> <p>- During the period, American society changed in some ways and stayed the same in others. The protest aspect of African American literature has remained constant; however, the form of expressing the protest has moved from covert to more overt rhetorical strategies. Earlier writers tended to conceal some information, avoided to state it directly, trying to convince by using example, metaphor, and other stylistic devices.</p> <p>- More African Americans and</p>

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p><i>Mother's Garden</i>".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Female rap artists Queen Latifah, Salt'n'Pepa, and MC Lyte. - Octavia Butler, a novel "<i>Kindred</i>". - Michelle Cliff "<i>Abeng</i>". - Yusef Komunyakaa, poetry. 	<p>negative portrayals of black men.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elevated the status of women. - Represents the newest type of realism. - presents a story focused on female concerns. Adds diversity to the group of writers because of her Jamaican ancestry. - Writes about his Vietnam War experience. 	<p>women have been allowed into the canon of great literature, but the barriers of race, gender, class, and sexual preference still stand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - African American literature has become an important part of most university curriculums. Multiculturalism in education. - To address the needs of African American students, the Oakland, California, school district adopted a resolution to train teachers in the characteristics of black English (also called Ebonics or black English vernacular). - The literary academy has made room for scholars of African American literature. - African American writers realized that the critical theory that was available was not sufficient for application to African American literature. - "There is nothing new under the sun"

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
				partly applies to African American literature. African American writers still use their work to present personal and political material. African American women writers have more of a presence, and African American literary criticism is a necessary element of black literature that is growing in importance and quantity.
Before 1988 – embryonic / serious 1988 – present	African American Literary Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addison Gayle, Jr., essays “<i>The Black Aesthetics</i>” (1971) - Henry Louis Gates, Jr., book “<i>The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African American Literary Criticism</i>” (1988). - Alice Walker “<i>In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens</i>” printed in <i>Ms. Magazine</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offers the fundamental theoretical perspective on the approaches used by black writers. - Made a significant contribution to the analysis and assessment of African American literature by presenting a theory rooted in African American culture, especially in terms of language usage. - Outline the advancement of African American literature from the colonial era 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During each literary period of African American writing, there have been both theorists and critics, originating from within and outside the race.

Continuation of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		<p>(1974), Hazel Carby <i>“Reconstructing Womanboard”</i> (1987).</p> <p>- Zora Neale Hurston <i>“What White Publishers Won’t Print”</i>.</p> <p>- W.E.B. Du Bois <i>“The Souls of Black Folk”</i>, Alain Locke <i>“The New Negro: An Interpretation”</i> (1925), and James Weldon Johnson.</p> <p>- Langston Hughes <i>“The Negro Artist and the Racial Movement”</i>, published in the <i>Nation</i> (1926).</p> <p>- Benjamin Brawly <i>“The Negro in American Fiction”</i>.</p>	<p>through the twentieth century. Carby follows the evolution of African American women's writing from the tradition of slave narratives to the literature of the Harlem Renaissance.</p> <p>- Explores an aesthetic unique to African American literature by examining the role of the African American artist.</p> <p>- Affected the theoretical foundations of black literature.</p> <p>- Explores significant aspects of being an African artist.</p> <p>- Depicts African Americans in novels and short stories.</p>	

Ending of table 14

1	2	3	4	5
		- Richard Wright “ <i>Blueprint for Negro Writing</i> ”.	- Specifies the function of African American literature as a means for promoting racial advancement.	

Thus, the history of African American literature projected the colonial modernity through the paradigm *the colonizer – the colonized*, generating the symbols of submission like a chain or a cage: “*and am I was born for this, // To wear this slavish chain?*” [11]; “*I know what the caged bird feels, alas!*” [5]. African people who had been transported, enslaved or otherwise made diasporic by *colonialism* and by *slavery* through literature and art acquired their own voice, sounding louder and louder and reshaping the textual and social realities. The embodiment of color-based social hierarchy takes place through a range of images, adopted either from the surrounding environment (literally, I am singing about what I see around) or from the western literary tradition.

European powers attempting to mark out their territorial zones of impact through various religious missions, cultivated the ideologies of Christian conversion both in the colonies and among the enslaved. All that brought the biblical images and Bible-associated metaphors into African American poetry and prose: “*Salvation comes by Christ alone, // The only Son of God; // Redemption now to every one, // That loves his holy Word*”; “*Lord, turn our dark benighted Souls*” [9]; “*Then God himself stepped down - // And the sun was on his right hand*” [13]. The new Christian ideas “challenged the *doxa* of many African societies, including the institutions of marriage and the definition of the family, and, in the process, provoked a serious of social crises” [7, p. 390]. Simon Gikandi believes that “the colonial schools set up by missionaries” had “the most profound effect on the shaping of African society and literary culture”, which he links to the fact that from the very beginning “there was a very close relationship between Christian conversion, literacy, and modern identity” [7, p. 390]. Basically,

“Literacy gave the elite access to the scientific and social thought of the western world, equipped them to enter into dialogue with the colonial powers over the destiny of Africa, and familiarized them with the social fashions of Europe which made their life style an example to be emulated by their less fortunate countrymen” [1, p. 496].

Within the context of purely black literary tradition, deprived of the western rudiment, Africa was itself and enormous platform for oral literature, based on legends and mysticism, articulating native aesthetics, and cultivating histories of the past. Literature was thought of as a tool for filling memory blanks, the mirror of the past, making it comprehensible and accessible. If the initial African folklore had a particular shape, which differed greatly from the western form, the works of African American authors of various epochs could be written in a manner resembling the old Anglo-Saxon epic, like “*Beowulf*”, or even ancient Greek accounts: “*O black and unknown bards of long ago, // How came your lips to touch the sacred fire? // How, in your darkness, did you come to know// The power and beauty of the minstrel’s lyre?*” [12]. In the terms of orality, Liz Gunner distinguishes *praise poetry* as the most widespread forms of oral poetry, which could be as well linked to public performance (*the kinetic orality*) [6, p. 4]. Praise poetry, being of “rich poetic language”, according to Gunner, carried “public social values and ideologies”, “absorbed” and “reflected changes within the society”, provided “a sense of the past in present”. (Gunner, 2008; 45). This retrospective nature of African literature has travelled into African American writings: “*My grandmothers are full of memories, // Smelling of soap and onions and wet clay*” [15, p. 475]. Throughout its history African American literature has always attempted to explain the present with the help of the past. Colonialism and slavery find their representation by the negritude poets and essayists through the milestones of history attempting to bring their pain to the attention of the white, which leads to another characteristic feature of the black writings: *it seeks for the transracial audience*.

Negritude literature frequently serves as a platform for lamentation, highlighting the hardships experienced by black individuals: “*For my people walking blindly spreading joy, losing time // being lazy, sleeping when hungry, shouting when //*

burdened, drinking when hopeless” [15]. Curiously, African American literature consistently delineates an invisible divide based on color, striving to illustrate that issues affecting black and white individuals do not align. For example, Paul Laurence Dunbar in his poem *“The Colored Soldiers”* (1896), stresses that the war he participates in is not the war of the blacks, but the whites: *“These battles are the white man’s”* [4]. At the same time, it appeals to the leaders of the white people: *“Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State. // Sir/ - <...> one universal Father hath given Being to us all, and that he hath also without partiality afforded us all the same sensations, and endued us all with the same faculties, and that however variable we may be in society and religion, however diversified in situation of color, we are all the same family”* in *“Letter to Thomas Jefferson”* (1791) by Benjamin Banneker; *“dream’s about Lincoln(s)”* in *“Black Bourgeoisie”* (1969) by Amiri Baraka.

However, social stratification cannot be defined as purely transracial feature of the USA social toponymy. The black community itself gets split into *negro / black intellectuals* as self-imposed marginal groups – the way they are defined by Cornel West in his *“The Dilemma of the Black Intellectual”* (1993), and the other two – insouciant and insolent black representatives. “According to study by the American Civil Liberties Union titled *“Race and Ethnicity in America”*, in 2006, the U.S. penal population was 41 percent Black and 19 percent Latino”, states Huston A. Baker, Jr. in *The Point of Enslavement: Modernism, Diaspora, and Toni Morrison’s Love*”, “In 2004, 21 percent of Black men in their 20s who did not attend college were in jail or prison” [3, p. 22]. Basically, literacy assures a peripheral status, putting an intellectual in position in-between the black communities and the white ones.

‘Commonwealth literature’ was intensively criticized by the black writers of the XXth century as hegemonic, which boosted the process of rethinking such concepts at ‘the colonizer’ and ‘colonized’, race and postcolonialism by the writers located on the formerly colonized countries.

Contemporary black writings can be divided into: African American and Afro-Caribbean. Present-day African American texts in comparison with the earlier forms

are much more diverse from the point of genre. They are often focused on the issues of the contemporary world and the problems of people of colour today. All together many works still remain to be retrospective, holding the traditional for black literature images, like birds, and dwelling on colour symbolism (Ayanna Lloyd Banwo *When We Were Birds*”, Charmaine Wilkerson “*Black Cake*”). Historical burden endemic to the black literature is intrinsic to the present-day bestsellers, like in Robert Jones’s, Jr. “*The Prophets*” picturing two young enslaved men on a Deep South plantation. If the embryonic African American works were predominantly generated by the male authors, in the XXIst century female texts prevail. They put a black woman of various age into the center of narration (Leila Mottley “*Nightcrawling*”, Terry McMillan “*How Stella Got Her Groove Back*”). The concept ‘in-between’ remains powerful. In the novel “*The Vanishing Half*” by Brit Bennet the author tells about twin sisters, who choose to live in two different worlds, one black and one white. The issue of the inherited trauma and racial clashes is still raised (LaToya Watkins “*Perish*”, Danielle Evans “*The Office of Historical Corrections*”, Amanda Gorman “*Call Us What We Carry*”, Z.Z. Packer “*Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*”), which signals that the old trauma remains beyond repair.

Thus, the post-Civil Rights era and Black Power reinforced the already raised issues in literature. The African American poetry remains to be of somewhat descriptive nature, reflecting the experience of the lyrical character within the contemporary environment. The African American writers draw their inspiration out of the ordinary things around them. African American prose focuses on the issues both inside the black society (like the oppression of women by men, an intellectual and urban low-income neighborhood), and outside of it (genetic memory, ‘blood of parents’ and racial matters, reinforced political issues, African ethnicity and the process of whitening). Post-oppression fictions are not devoid of history. “Blackness, when framed in the terms of authenticity, creates a fiction around racial identity and experience and elides how race, in fact, operates” [14, p. 236]. The oral rendition of literary texts is multi-sensory, incorporating visual imagery, auditory elements, and

physical movements. The advent of computerization and technology in society has provided tools for communication, self-expression, and creative endeavors.

Within the scope of African American writings an important space is occupied by African American feminist thought, represented by nonfictional narrative and literary criticism. Black women have documented the urgent issues of their epochs, reaching out the creative expression of African American women and capturing the emancipatory vision, as well as depicting the complex nature of black womanhood. Among such there are Mary Helen Washington's *"Black Women Image Makers: Their Fiction Becomes Our Orality"*, June Jordan's *"On Richard's Wright and Zora Neale Huston: Notes Towards a Balancing of Love and Hate"*, Barbara Smith's *"Toward a Black Feminist Criticism"*, Deborah McDowell's *"New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism"*, Alice Walker's *"In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens"*, Barbara Christian's *"A Race for Theory"*.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Street literature and "ghetto realistic fiction."*
2. *Portrait of the artist as a young slave: visual artistry as agency in the contemporary narrative of slavery.*
3. *Masculinity and femininity in black American society and negritude literature.*
4. *African religion and its reflection in the texts of African American fiction.*
5. *The myth in Negro literature.*
6. *Variations on the theme: black family, nationhood, lesbianism, and sadomasochistic desire in Marci Blackman's "Po Man's Child".*
7. *The "badman" folk figure in African American culture. Black folk narratives in comics.*
8. *Post-integration blues: black geeks and Afro-diasporic humanism.*
9. *The crisis of authenticity in contemporary African American literature.*
10. *Post-oppression fiction.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

The concept **Black Atlantic**, coined by critic Paul Gilroy (Gilroy, 1993), is associated with highlighting the cultural and historical characteristics that unite people of African descent across both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. This unity stems from the diaspora of black Africans resulting from the Atlantic slave trade, including the infamous Middle Passage and the so-called 'triangular trade' between Africa, the Americas, and Europe, which significantly impacted modern economies.

Black print culture is a central term in an interdisciplinary field that has evolved from traditional book history scholarship to encompass a broad array of printed materials and the social, political, material, and economic processes involved in their creation, distribution, and reception. It refers to the contributions of African Americans to printed texts, encompassing roles such as authors, illustrators, publishers, editors, printers, typesetters, binders, distributors, and readers. Additionally, it examines how print processes have influenced sociopolitical circumstances and cultural movements integral to African American history. Major topics within this field include the history of African American newspapers and periodicals, starting with *Freedom's Journal* in 1827, and the history of African American publishers, which began with the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Book Concern in 1817. Since the late 19th century, African American bibliographers and archivists have been at the forefront of efforts to document and preserve collections of early African American newspapers, books, and printed materials, with institutions like the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and Howard University's Moorland-Spangarn Research Center leading the way. African American literary critics and editors of scholarly editions have also played a vital role in studying African American print culture, particularly during the recovery and reprinting efforts of the 1980s and beyond. Recent scholarship in this field has focused on representations of race in print and the circulation and reception of African American printed texts from the colonial era to the present.

eBlack is a studies group at the University of Illinois, who have been offering comprehensive analyses of black studies for the past forty years.

Hip Hop fiction. Although Hip Hop music has overcome early challenges to its legitimacy as an art form, Hip Hop fiction still remains on the periphery of literary studies and critical analysis. As Maryemma Graham points out in *"Black Is Gold,"* scholars of African American literature often attribute this to the publishing industry's categorization of fiction into "literary" and "genre" fictions, which is then reinforced by the academic community through the privileging of certain texts over others in teaching and research. The essence of a Hip Hop aesthetic lies in its intricate layering of references, meanings, plots, dialogues, and characters, allowing for both seamless reading and nuanced analysis of individual elements. This conception of a Hip Hop literary aesthetic envisions a dynamic interaction between the writer and reader, inviting deep exploration of the text. It suggests a Hip Hop literary aesthetic where one doesn't necessarily have to write about Hip Hop but can instead infuse Hip Hop elements into their writing, delivering the aesthetic integrity that many literary scholars and critics expect from canonical literature.

The post-Civil Rights era in African American history refers to the period in the United States following the enactment of significant federal legislation, including the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*, and the *Fair Housing Act of 1968*. These laws effectively abolished legal segregation, established federal oversight and enforcement of voter registration and electoral practices in regions with a history of discriminatory actions, and prohibited discrimination in housing rentals and purchases.

Street Literature or **Urban Fiction.** Street literature embraces novels often authored by first-time writers, including former or current prisoners, which delve into themes such as street violence, prison experiences, and the drug trade, particularly focusing on the crack epidemic since the 1980s. These books are primarily distributed through self-publishing and street vending, reaching a diverse audience, especially within black working-class communities, and prompting mainstream publishers and bookstores to take notice. With the genre's commercialization, major presses also seek to appeal to audiences beyond urban and black demographics. While precise sales figures are challenging to ascertain, bestseller lists from platforms like the African American Literature Book Club (AAL BC), *Essence Magazine*, and the African American book announcement website, *Books of Soul*, indicate that Street Literature has become one of the most widely consumed subgenres of African American fiction. Street Literature can be seen as continuing the tradition of authors like Donald Goines or Iceberg Slim, whose novels from the late 1960s and 1970s are categorized as "pulp" or "ghetto realistic fiction."

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PACE 8

ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE: FITTING INTO STEREOTYPES?

Key terms: *national belonging, otherness, cultural aliens, white nuclear family vs ethnically mixed home, a cross-cultural child, self-placement, the de-territorialized culture flow, established system of sexism and classism, wholeness*

1. *The maintenance of Asian American literary tradition and problems it raised.*
2. *Afghani-American, Iranian-American and Arab-American bulk of hybrid literature.*
3. *Chinese-American, Japanese-American and Philippine-American texts and their messages.*
4. *The variety of issues in Korean-American and Vietnamese-American literature.*

The Asian American literary tradition encompasses a wide array of branches, including Afghan American, Chinese American, Filipino American, Indian American, Iranian American, Japanese American, Korean American, Vietnamese American, and others. Like other post-colonial literatures, English-speaking Asian literature raises various questions related to identity, such as “*Who am I?*”, “*Where am I?*”, and “*How did I become what I am?*” According to Guiyou Huang’s “*The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature,*” Asian American literature has its roots in the late XIXth century, but it saw substantial expansion and development in the mid-twentieth century, particularly after World War II, as it began to form its unique and distinct identity. The civil rights movements of the 1960s and the women’s liberation movements of the 1970s served as catalysts, leading to the production of works in Asian American literature that garnered attention from mainstream literary critics. This recognition marked the emergence of a unique voice within the expanding canon of American literary writing, now known as Asian American literature [9, p. xvii].

Domestic American Orientalism emerged initially within the segregated confines of Chinatown and various Asian diasporas. According to Rachel C. Lee, Asian American texts grapple with the complex intersections of American identity, gender, and sexuality. These texts, authored by individuals of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino descent, often explore themes such as racial segregation, ethnic identity, cultural preservation, heroic narratives characterized by courage and wisdom, traditional values, sexuality, the exploitation and trafficking of women, encounters with white supremacy, and the construction of Asian American masculinity. Despite the contemporary portrayal of America as a beacon of color-blind democracy and equal opportunity, its historical narrative is marked by episodes of violence, displacement, racial discrimination, and the regulation of sexuality. The dominance of white over brown individuals is reflected in the language used to stigmatize Asian Americans, labeling them as “unassimilable aliens,” “yellow perils,” “coolies,” “modern-day high tech coolies,” or even as a “model minority”.

Asian American literature and its characters are marked by their hybrid body or racial hybridity (the prototypes Chinese immigrant parents who speak broken English, America-born children who speak perfect American English, the oppositional relations between the binaries and their conflicts); deterritorialization; the pursue for white acceptance; and a trauma of ‘*sub-human*’ or ‘*in-human*’ treatment; a concern to represent Asian American body. For a number of decades, Asian American literature functions as a mere “ethnic” or “exotic” literature by reproducing a typical image engraved on Asians, with their cultural, racial, or ethnic differences become “essentialized.”

Having being multicultural long ago, American society developed the term “*multiculturalism*” in the 1970s. The notion that all nonwhite people are by nature physically and intellectually inferior, morally suspect, heathen, licentious, disease-ridden, feral, violent, uncivilized, infantile, and in need of the guidance of white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants had been hovering in the air though all the prior decades and even centuries. The racial segregation of society was that deep that even Irish

Americans were for a long time seen as other nonwhite groups. The notion of America as an exceptional site of color-blind democracy, equal opportunity, and universal citizenship developed gradually [4, p. 24].

The regional communities could be subdivided into Asian Americans with the dominant group of Chinese Americans, African Americans, Latin Americans, and Irish Americans as opposed to the white core. However, in comparison with foreign-born and foreign-born blacks who achieved citizenship, Asian immigrants were categorized as aliens ineligible for citizenship until the mid-twentieth century. ‘Exotic other’, ‘emotional alien’, ‘becoming human’ all these notions entered Asian literature of the XXth century. The chronology of historical events and the stages of development of literary thought is adopted from Sucheng Chan’s chronology in “*Asian Americans: An Interpretative History*” [4] and Bella Adams’ “*Asian American Literature*” [1]:

Table 15 – *Asian American literature in the USA in its diachronic perspective*

DATE	HISTORICAL EVENT	LITERARY EVENT
1	2	3
1500s-1600s	Chinese and Filipinos arrive in New World on Manila galleon ships	
1700s	Filipinos settle in Louisiana; South Asians arrive in the USA; Nationality Act (1790) only permits free whites to become citizens	
1830s	New York is flooded by sailors from China. Hawaii sugar plantations are linked to Chinese masters	
1843	Japanese arrive in the USA	
1848	Gold discovered in California; Chinese labourers begin to arrive	
1852	Over 20,000 Chinese enter California	
1854	<i>People v. Hall</i> issues a verdict forbidding the Chinese testimonies against the whites in court	
1858	California passes law barring Chinese and ‘Mongolians’	
1862	San Francisco-base Chinese federation is formed out of six district associations	
1865	Central Pacific Railroad Company recruits Chinese labourers	

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1868	China and the USA sign Burlingame Treaty affirming friendship and allowing free immigration; Fourteenth Amendment permits birthright citizenship to whites and blacks	
1869	Completion of the first transcontinental railroad	
1870	California passes law against importing Asian women for prostitution; The Naturalization Act excludes Chinese from naturalized citizenship	
1875	Page Law bars entry of Chinese, Japanese and 'Mongolian' prostitutes, felons and contract labourers	
1877	Anti-Chinese violence in Chico, California	
1878	<i>In re Ah Yup</i> refuses naturalization for the Chinese	
1880	The USA and China sign treaty giving the USA the right to limit but not prohibit Chinese immigration; California passes anti-miscegenation law	
1882	Chinese Exclusion Law suspends immigration of laborers for ten years; Chinese community leaders form Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA or Chinese Six Companies) in San Francisco	
1883	CCBA established in New York	
1884	CCBA established in Vancouver; Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 amended to require certificate for re-entry	
1885	San Francisco builds segregated 'Oriental School'; Anti-Chinese violence at Rock Springs, Wyoming	
1886	Chinese driven out of Tacoma, Seattle and other places in American West; Chinese immigration to Hawaii ends; <i>Yick Wo v. Hopkins</i> takes a decision against discrimination on different racial groups	
1887		Yan Phou Lee, <i>When I Was a Boy in China</i>
1888	Scott Act renders 20,000 Chinese re-entry certificates null and void	
1889	<i>Chae Chan Ping v. US</i> upholds constitutionality of Chinese exclusion laws	
1892	Geary Act renews exclusion of Chinese labourers for another ten years and requires Chinese to carry registration certificates; <i>Fong Yue Ting v. US</i> upholds constitutionality of Geary Act	

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1896		Edith Eaton/Sui Sin Far, <i>'The Gamblers'</i>
1898	<i>Wong Kim Ark v. US</i> rules that American-born Chinese cannot be stripped of citizenship; the USA annexes Hawaii and Philippines	
1899		Winnifred Eaton/Onoto Watanna, <i>Miss Numè of Japan</i>
1902	Chinese exclusion gets stretched for the next ten years	
1903	Korean workers arrive in Hawaii; 1,500 Japanese and Mexican sugar beet workers strike in California	
1904	Chinese exclusion made indefinite and applicable to US insular possessions; Punjabi Sikhs enter British Columbia	
1905	Chinese in the USA and Hawaii support boycott of American products in China; Korean emigration ends; Asiatic Exclusion League formed in San Francisco; California forbids marriage between whites and 'Mongolians'	
1906	Anti-Asian riot in Vancouver; San Francisco earthquake destroys municipal records, allowing immigration of Chinese 'paper sons'	
1907	Japan and the USA reach Gentlemen's Agreement preventing Japanese immigration to the USA; South Asians driven out of Bellingham, WA	
1908	Japanese Association of America formed; Canada limits South Asian immigration by excluding immigrants who have not come by continuous journey from India (there is no direct shipping); South Asians driven out of Live Oak, CA	
1909	Korean Nationalist Association formed	Yung Wing, <i>My Life in China and America</i>
1911		Anonymous, <i>Songs of Gold Mountain</i> (and 1915)

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1913	Californian Alien Land Law prohibits Asian immigrants from buying land or leasing it for longer than three years; Sikhs in Washington and Oregon establish Hindustani Association; Korean farm workers driven out of Hemet, CA	
1914	South Asians charter ship to Canada by continuous journey but are denied landing in Vancouver	Tingfang Wu, <i>America through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat</i>
1917	Arizona passes alien land law; Immigration Law defines a barred zone (including India) from which no 'Asiatics' can come	
1920	10,000 Japanese and Filipino plantation workers go on strike; Kwock Jan Fat v. White rules that aliens seeking to immigrate have right to fair hearing	
1921	Japanese farm workers driven out of Turlock, CA; Washington and Louisiana pass alien land laws	
1922	<i>Takao Ozawa v. US</i> declares Japanese ineligible for naturalized citizenship; New Mexico passes alien land law; Cable Act removes citizenship from white women who marry aliens	
1923	<i>US v. Bhagat Singh Thind</i> rules Asian Indians ineligible for naturalization; Idaho, Montana and Oregon pass alien land laws; Canadian Chinese Exclusion Act	
1924	National Origins Act denies entry to all Asians, except Filipinos	
1925		Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto, <i>A Daughter of the Samurai</i>
1928	Filipino farm workers driven out of Yakima Valley, WA	
1930	Anti-Filipino riot in Watsonville, CA; Japanese American Citizens League founded	
1931	Cable Act amended so that women can regain citizenship at a later date	Younghill Kang, <i>The Grass Roof</i>
1933		Jose Garcia Villa, <i>Footnote to Youth</i>
1934	Tydings – McDuffie Act grants eventual Philippine independence and limits Filipino immigration	

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1937		H.T. Tsiang, <i>And China Has Hands</i>
1941	Japanese planes attack Pearl Harbor and the USA enters Second World War	N. V. M. Gonzalez, <i>The Winds of April</i>
1942	Executive Order 9066 designates military areas from which people may be excluded, mainly targeting Japanese; Protests at Poston and Manzanar concentration camps	Carlos Bulosan, <i>Letter from America</i> ; Hisaye Yamamoto, 'Death Rides the Rails to Poston'
1943	Tule Lake concentration camp becomes segregation centre; <i>Hirabayashi v. US</i> upholds constitutionality of detention order; Magnuson Act repeals Chinese exclusion laws, grants naturalization rights and immigration quota to Chinese	Pardee Lowe, <i>Father and Glorious Descendent</i>
1944	Draft reinstated for Nisei; Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team rescues another American battalion in Europe; Detention order revoked and some Japanese Americans permitted to return to West Coast	
1945	Second World War ends in Asia after the USA drops atomic bombs on Japan	
1946	Luce – Celler Act grants naturalization rights and immigration quotas to South Asians and Filipinos; Last concentration camp closed; Philippines gains independence	Mine Okubo, <i>Citizen 13660</i>
1948	Displaced Persons Act grants immigrant status to Chinese stranded in the USA because of Communist Revolution	Yutang Lin, <i>Chinatown Family</i>
1949	The USA breaks ties with newly formed People's Republic of China (PRC) and 5,000 highly educated Chinese in the USA granted refugee status	Toshio Mori, <i>Yokohama, California</i>
1950	Korean War (1950-3)	Jade Snow Wong, <i>Fifth Chinese Daughter</i>
1952	McCarran - Walter Act grants naturalization rights and immigration quota to Japanese	
1953		Monica Sone, <i>Nisei Daughter</i>

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1955	Cold War Confession Program (1955–late 1960s)	Bienvenido N. Santos, <i>You Lovely People</i>
1956	California repeals alien land laws	Diana Chang, <i>Frontiers of Love</i>
1957		C. Y. Lee, <i>Flower Drum Song</i> ; John Okada, <i>No-No Boy</i>
1959	Hawaii becomes 50th state; Vietnam War (1959–75)	Milton Murayama, 'I'll Crack Your Head Kotsun' (part of <i>All I Asking for Is My Body</i> , 1975)
1961		Louis Chu, <i>Eat a Bowl of Tea</i>
1962		Frank Chin, 'Food For All His Dead'
1963		Linda Ty-Casper, <i>The Transparent Sun and Other Stories</i>
1964	Civil Rights Act outlaws racial discrimination	Zulfikar Ghose, <i>The Loss of India</i>
1965	Immigration Law outlaws racial discrimination in immigration; Voting Rights Act outlaws racial discrimination in electoral process	
1966		Wakako Yamauchi, 'And the Soul Shall Dance'
1968	Students strike at San Francisco State College to demand Ethnic Studies programmes	Joy Kogawa, <i>The Splintered Moon</i>

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1970		Michael Ondaatje, <i>The Collected Works of Billy the Kid</i> ; Nicotchka Rosca, <i>Bitter Country and Other Stories</i>
1971		Fusao Lawson Inada, <i>Before the War</i>
1972		Momoko Iko, <i>Gold Watch</i> ; Ved Mehta, <i>Daddyji</i> ; Bharati Mukherjee, <i>The Tiger's Daughter</i>
1973		Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James Houston, <i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> ; Ai (Ogawa), <i>Cruelty</i>
1974	<i>Lau v. Nichols</i> rules that schools with non-English speakers must provide bilingual education	
1975	More than 130, 000 refugees enter the USA from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos	Jessica Hagedorn, <i>Dangerous Music</i> ; Laurence Yep, <i>Dragonwings</i>
1976	Executive Order 9066 rescinded	Meena Alexander, <i>The Bird's Bright Ring</i> ; Maxine Hong Kingston, <i>The Woman Warrior</i> ; Mitsuye Yamada, <i>Camp Notes and Other Stories</i>

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1977		Paul Stephen Lim, <i>Conpersonas</i>
1978	People reach American shores on boats from Vietnam	Janice Mirikitani, <i>Awake in the River</i> ; Bapsi Sidhwa, <i>The Crow Eaters</i>
1979	Resumption of diplomatic relations between PRC and the USA	David Henry Hwang, <i>FOB</i> ; Philip Kan Gotanda, <i>The Avocado Kid</i> ; Shawn Wong, <i>Homebase</i>
1980	Orderly Departure Program enables legal immigration of Vietnamese	Darrell H. Y. Lum, <i>Sun</i> ; Roberta Uno, <i>Asa Ga Kimashita</i>
1981	The conclusions of Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians admit race prejudice, war hysteria and political leadership's failure; Maya Lin authors Vietnam Veteran Memorial, Washington DC	Ruthanne Lum McCunn, <i>Thousand Pieces of Gold</i>
1982	Vincent Chin clubbed to death	Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, <i>Dictee</i> ; Garrett Hongo, <i>Yellow Light</i>
1983	Some Japanese Americans file petitions to overturn convictions for violating wartime detention order	Tran Van Dinh, <i>Blue Dragon, White Tiger</i> ; Cathy Song, <i>Picture Bride</i> ; Wendy Law- Yone, <i>The Cofln Tree</i>

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1986	Immigration Reform and Control Act creates programme to legalize undocumented immigrants resident in USA since 1982 or who had worked in agricultural for a minimum period	Ronyoung Kim, <i>Clay Walls</i> ; Wendy Wilder Larsen and Tran Thi Nga, <i>Shallow Graves</i> ; Li-Young Lee, <i>Rose</i> ; Vikram Seth, <i>Golden Gate</i> ; Merle Woo, <i>Yellow Woman Speaks</i>
1987		Marilyn Chin, <i>Dwarf Bamboo</i> ; David Mura, <i>A Male Grief</i>
1988	Senate supports redress and reparations for Japanese American wartime internment; Homecoming Act allows Vietnamese Amerasians to immigrate to the USA; President Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act for redress and reparations for Japanese American wartime internment	
1989	Entitlement programme pays surviving Japanese American internees \$20,000 each; Vietnam allows political prisoners to immigrate to USA	Kimiko Hahn, <i>Airpocket</i> ; Le Ly Hayslip, <i>When Heaven and Earth Changed Places</i> ; Cynthia Kadohata, <i>The Floating World</i> ; Evelyn Lau, <i>Runaway</i> ; Shirley Lim, <i>Modern Secrets</i> ; Rohinton Mistry, <i>Swimming Lessons and Other Stories</i> ; Nguyen Thi Thu-Lam,

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
		<i>Fallen Leaves</i> ; Sara Suleri, <i>Meatless Days</i> ; Amy Tan, <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> ; John Yau, <i>Radiant Silhouette</i>
1990	Immigration Act raises total quota and reorganizes system of preferences	Sky Lee, <i>Disappearing Moon Café</i>
1991	First Gulf War begins	Gish Jen, <i>Typical American</i> ; Gus Lee, <i>China Boy</i> ; David Wong Louie, <i>Pangs of Love</i>
1992	Korean businesses damaged in Los Angeles uprising following Rodney King verdict	Timothy Liu, <i>Vox Angelica</i> ; Sylvia Watanabe, <i>Talking to the Dead</i>
1993		Amitav Ghosh, <i>In an Antique Land</i> ; Russell Leong, <i>The Country of Dreams and Dust</i> ; Gita Mehta, <i>A River Sutra</i> ; Fae Myenne Ng, <i>Bone</i> ; Lois-Ann Yamanaka, <i>Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre</i>

Continuation of table 15

1	2	3
1994	The state California refuses basic rights and government services to undocumented immigrants	Hiromi Gota, <i>Chorus of Mushrooms</i> ; Ameena Meer, <i>Bombay Talkie</i> ; Anchee Min, <i>Red Azalea</i> ; Nguyen Qui Du'c, <i>Where the Ashes Are</i> ; Shyam Selvadurai, <i>Funny Boy</i> ; Abraham Verghese, <i>My Own Country</i>
1995		Chitra Divankaruni, <i>Arranged Marriage</i> ; Denise Chong, <i>The Concubine's Children</i> ; Chang-rae Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i> ; Wayson Choy, <i>The Jade Peony</i>
1996	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act and Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act adversely affect Asian immigrants; Chinese Money Scandal about China's influence on US politics	Sophal Leng Stagg, <i>Hear Me Now</i>
1997		Lan Cao, <i>Monkey Bridge</i> ; Nora Okja Keller, <i>Comfort Woman</i> ; Catherine Lui, <i>Oriental Girls Desire Romance</i>

Ending of table 15

1	2	3
1998		Association of Asian American Studies revokes literary prize awarded to Lois-Ann Yamanaka's <i>Blu's Hanging</i> because of novel's alleged racism; Mei Ng, <i>Eating Chinese Food Naked</i>
1999		Jhumpa Lahiri, <i>The Interpreter of Maladies</i>
2000		Amitava Kumar, <i>Passport Photos</i> ; Chanrithy Him, <i>When Broken Glass Floats</i> ; Loung Ung, <i>First They Killed My Father</i>
2001	09/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington; the USA Patriot Act adversely affects civil liberties of immigrants from the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia; Human Rights Watch documents increase in anti-Muslim and anti-Arab hate crimes following 09/11	
2003	Second Gulf War begins	
2007	Virginia Tech massacre by Cho Seung-Hui	

Asian American criticism describes the historical development of Asian American literature in terms of 'periods' or 'modes' and 'patterns'. Within the present analysis the focus is made on the branches of Asian American literature, which developed unevenly.

Afghan American literature, perhaps one of the most recent branches of Asian origin literature, emerged in 1979 in response to the foreign invasion of Afghanistan

and subsequent migration of Afghani people to the United States. This literary tradition encompasses contemporary texts created by Americans of Afghan descent. The term “*Afghan*” was coined by Ahmad Shah Durrani and translates to “*people who cause suffering*,” with “*-istan*” meaning “*land*”. As stated in “*The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature*,” the designation “*Afghan American*” emerged in the post-9/11 era. Prior to this, Afghans did not commonly identify themselves as Afghan Americans. It was the post-9/11 circumstances that compelled this community to assert their identity and contribute their perspectives and expertise to the situation in Afghanistan. Afghan American writers focus on current political and community issues, linguistic and ethnic unity, as well as the realities of war and peace. Notable figures in this literary category include Khaled Hosseini, Mir Tamim Ansary, and Farooka Gauhari. However, the level of interest in Afghani issues within literature may vary depending on prevailing political agendas. As noted by Huang, “*With the focus shift to the war in Iraq, Afghan topics have been brushed aside for a while.*” Works such as “*Come Back to Afghanistan: A California Teenager’s Story*” (2006) by Said Hyder Akbar with Susan Burton, “*Torn Between Two Cultures: An Afghan American Woman Speaks Out*” (2004) by Maryam Qudrat Aseel, “*A Bed of Red Flowers: In Search of My Afghanistan*” by Nilofar Pazira (an Afghan Canadian), and “*My War at Home*” (2006) by Masuda Sultan explore themes related to the return to post-Taliban Afghanistan.

Afghan writings can be categorized based on the gender of the authors. Farooka Gauhari, the first Afghan American female writer and a biologist at the University of Nebraska, authored a memoir, “*Searching for Saleem: An Afghan Woman’s Odyssey*” (1986), which was associated with the Soviet era in Afghanistan and her subsequent relocation. Other female authors who have developed their fiction and non-fiction in the United States include Wajma Ahmady, Sahar Muradi, Khaleda Maqsudi, and Zohra Saed.

Asian American literature also embraces the texts created by the authors of hybrid background: a journalist, Mir Tamim Ansary, the son of an Afghan father and

an American mother, created a memoir *“West of Kabul, East of New York”* (2002) and a historical novel set in Afghanistan, *“The Malang of Kabul”*, set in the nineteenth-century Anglo-Afghan Wars. While the first work features the contemporary to the author country, the novel dwells on its past.

Afghani literature of today is characterized by intense intertextuality, shaped by ties with the traditional texts and rich oral heritage. Despite the significant literary legacy established by Afghan American authors, the evolution of first-generation Afghan American texts is evident in the works of contemporary California-based physician Khaled Hosseini, who hails from Afghanistan. Hosseini, born in Kabul to a diplomat and high school teacher, practiced as an internist from 1994 to 2006. His novels, including *“The Kite Runner”* (2002) and *“A Thousand Splendid Suns”* (2007), which explore themes of brotherhood and the experiences of Afghan women amidst war, respectively, achieved notable success, appearing on the New York Times bestseller list for two years. His subsequent novels, *“And the Mountains Echoed”* (2013) and *“Sea Prayer”* (2018), also garnered widespread popularity in the mainstream market.

Iraq and Afghanistan, despite sharing the Persian language, have distinct literary traditions. *“Iranian American literature encompasses works by Americans of Iranian descent, exploring themes such as migration, assimilation, hybridity, and the return to Iran,”* notes Huang [9, p. 438]. While Iran boasts a literary heritage spanning two prior millennia, Iranian American literature emerged in the XXth century. The migration of Iranians to the United States occurred in two major waves: first, in 1950 following the oil boom in Iran, and second, after the 1979 overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty by the Islamic regime under Ayatollah Khomeini. As of the 2000 census, there were approximately 338,000 Iranian Americans, with the largest population residing in Los Angeles, humorously referred to as *“Tehrangeles.”* In the early XXIst century, Iranian migration to the USA became more individualized, influenced by economic, educational, political, gender, and sexual identity factors.

One notable figure in Iranian American literature is Nahid Rachlin (1947-), a feminist writer whose works often explore themes of melancholy and displacement. Her novel *“Foreigner”* (Norton, 1978) tells the story of an Iranian American woman returning to her family in Iran with her American husband, drawing heavily from Rachlin's own experiences. Other works by Rachlin include *“Married to a Stranger”* (E.P. Dutton, 1983), *“Veils: Short Stories”* (City Lights, 1992), *“The Heart’s Desire”* (City Lights, 1995), *“Jumping over Fire”* (City Lights, 2006), as well as her memoir *“Persian Girls”* (Penguin, 2006).

Iranian American literature is an expanding area of interest, with connections to a range of successful authors such as Azar Nafisi (*Reading Lolita in Tehran*, 2003), Tara Bahrapour (*“To See and See Again: A Life in Iran and American”*, 1999), Azadeh Moaveni (*“Lipstick Jihad: A Memoir of Growing up Iranian in America and American in Iran”*, 2005), Gelareh Asayesh (*“Saffron Sky: A Life Between Iran and America”*, 1999), Firoozeh Dumas (*“Funny in Farsi: Growing Up Iranian in America”*, 2004), and Roya Hakakian (*“Journey from the Land of No: A Girlhood Caught in Revolutionary Iran”*, 2004).

The close development of Asian American and Arab American studies allows the inclusion of Arab Americans under a broader definition of Asian American identities. The Arab literature is anti-racist, anti-imperial, transnational, and shaped as such by geographical, historical and political context. Arab American literature distinguishes first generation (the late 1800s-1930s); the 1960s-1970s; and the 1980s-present. Arab American authors of the initial generation on the new land were often of Syrian or Lebanese origin, stigmatized as *al-mahjar* (“immigrants”). “The swelling numbers of Arab immigrants – many of whom did not identify themselves as Arabs but rather by their individual countries or regions, such as “Syrians” – were indicated by the increasing number of Arab-language publications to serve this community” [9, p. 38]. 1892 is associated with the foundation of Arab-language newspaper *Kawkab Amerika*. A literary journal *Syrian World* gave voice to many prominent playwrights, poets and critics of Arab origin. However, the term “the father of Arab American

literature” refers to Ameen Rihani who introduced free verse to Arab poetry in 1905. Contemporary Arab American poetry is predominantly written in free verse (for example, the works by a Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008)). The first English-language novel “*The Book of Khalid*” by a writer of Arab origin was published by Rihani in 1911.

The period from the 1940s to the 1960s was a relatively quiet time in Arab American literature. Notable authors from this era include Etel Adnan, whose work “*Sitt Marie Rose*” (1982) focuses on the Palestinian people during the tumultuous 1980s, and poet Samuel Hazo, who has authored 20 books encompassing poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, including “*The Holy Surprise of Right Now*”, “*The Rest Is Prose*”, “*Stills*”, “*Feather*”, “*As They Sail*”, and “*Spying for God*”.

Writers in the 1980s began exploring the concept of American-Arab identity. In 1982, Gregory Orfalea released a pamphlet titled, sponsored by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) “*Wrapping the Grape Leaves: A Sheaf of Contemporary Arab American Poets*”, which later grew into a full-length anthology.

In the last 30 years a number of Arab American have writers left traces on the American literary canon: Naomi Shihab Nye, a Palestinian American poet, essayist, has authored several important collections of poetry, namely *The Words Under the Words* (1995), *What Have You Lost?* (1999), and *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems from the Middle East* (2002), as well as a novel *Habibi*, published in 1997.

Other important figures are Lawrence Joseph, born in 1948 in Detroit, Michigan, with her poetry collections *Shouting at No One* (1983), *Curriculum Vitae* (1988), *Before Our Eyes* (1993), *Into It* (2005), as well as a non-fiction book *Lawyerland* (1997); Diana Abu-Jaber with her first novel, *Arabian Jazz* (1993), a further novel “*Crescent*” (2004) and a memoir “*The Language of Baklava*”; Fay Afaf Kanafani with his single memoir, “*Nadia, Captive of Hope*”; Elmaz Abinader, a skilled poet and playwright with his work “*Children of the Roojme: A Family’s Journey from Lebanon*” (1991); Edward Said, the renowned literary critic, with his own memoir *Out of Place* (1999); Evelyn Shakir with her documented personal life experience of many Arab

American women “*Bint Arab: Arab and Arab American Women in the United States*” (1997).

Therefore, Arab American literature, like other migrant literature, delves into the migrant experience, amplifies the voices of female characters, and explores themes of identity and issues within the Middle Eastern community. Being an ethnic literature, early Arab-American literary works may not be readily accessible to audiences lacking familiarity with Arab culture.

Asian American or Oriental literature encompasses all individuals of Asian descent, including immigrants, residents, or American-born citizens. Chinese Americans constitute the largest Asian ethnic group in the United States, their population increasing from less than 200,000 before 1945 to over 3 million in the 2000s. While the presence of Chinese immigrants dates back to 1785, the first significant wave arrived around 1850, primarily from Guangdong Province, following the gold discovery in California in 1848. Chinese American literature endeavors to challenge stereotypes associated with the “model minority” label often attributed to Chinese and Japanese Americans. Asian American stereotypes encompass the misrepresentations found in American literature and culture concerning Asian Americans, their communities, lifestyles, and the values typically associated with these diverse ethnic groups [9, p. 52]. The books hold “*the rhetoric of normalcy*”, “*just people*” attitude, the term to denote the *deracialized* “*human*” (i.e., white). Stereotypes associated with individuals of Asian descent, particularly those with yellow skin, often categorize them into male-associated and female-associated roles. While American society traditionally delineated between public and private spheres along gender lines, Chinese societal norms tend to assign even more submissive roles to women. Literature depicting Chinese women frequently explores themes of prostitution, highlighting their dual social marginalization. In contemporary Asian American literature, female characters often grapple with pejorative self-conceptions, feeling like they are “*out of place*”. These characters are frequently depicted as eroticized, traumatized, and victimized individuals, often involved in prostitution or human trafficking within

Chinatown settings, reflecting issues of intra-ethnic violence. Scenes of eroticism are often juxtaposed with acts of brutality. Cultural expectations dictate that “good” women should be submissive in sexual and marital relationships, as well as compliant as domestic servants, regardless of how mistreated they may be by their partners, husbands, or employers.

In Chinese culture, femininity is often associated with sexuality, while masculinity is frequently expressed through acts of violence. A Chinese character’s strength and resolve are often demonstrated through physical confrontations. Consequently, some young Asian Americans may feel compelled to resort to violence as a means of reaffirming their masculinity. This notion of Asian American masculinity is problematic, as it perpetuates patriarchal ideals that equate adequacy with male aggressiveness and physical force. Chin provocatively argues that while African Americans lament their emasculation, white racism towards the Chinese has been so insidious that it never even acknowledged their masculinity to begin with [14, p. 85].

The depiction of Chinatown serves as a symbolic representation of moral degradation and sexual depravity, characterized by behaviors deemed perverse, drug-addicted, pedophilic, and syphilitic. In this portrayal, individuals are dehumanized, depicted as irrational and morally corrupt. Nayan Shah in his book *“Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown”* (2001) argues that likening Chinese immigrants to farm animals, particularly rats and pigs, reinforced existing perceptions of their inhumanity and inferiority to White people. This animalistic comparison places them in a racist framework, as these creatures are associated with waste products and dwell in spaces considered marginal or uncivilized, such as sewers, occasionally venturing into society’s boundaries.

The first English-language book published in America appeared in 1887, when Yan Phou Lee, a Chinese student who graduated from Yale in 1897, published *“When I Was a Boy in China”*. Later Chinese American writers that acknowledged popularity are Yung Wing’s *“My Life in China and America”* (1909); Leong Gor Yun’s *“Chinatown Inside Out”* (1936); Pardee Lowe’s *“Father and Glorious Descendent”*

(1943); Jade Snow Wong's *"Fifth Chinese Daughter"* (1950); Virginia Lee's *"The House that Tai Ming Built"* (1963); Chuang Hua's *"Crossing"* (1968); Betty Lee Sung's *"Mountain Gold"* (1972); Maxine Hong Kingston's *"The Woman Warrior"* (1976), *"China Men"* (1980), and *"Tripmaster Monkey"* (1989); and Amy Tan's *"The Joy Luck Club"* (1989). The first Chinese American Anthologies that brought Asian American texts together embrace *"Asian American Authors"* (1972), edited by Kai-yu Hsu and Helen Palubinskas; David Hsin-fu Wand's *"Asian-American Heritage: An Anthology of Prose and Poetry"* (1974); and the groundbreaking anthology edited by Frank Chin, Jeffery Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Wong, *"Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers"* (1974).

Similar to other migrant literature, Chinese American literature explores the theme of seeking acceptance from the white majority, which often leads to a loss of the characters' identity and experiences various forms of trauma. In Louis Chu's realist novel *"Eat a Bowl of Tea,"* the story portrays the gradual erosion of traditional Chinese values and the emergence of a distinct Chinese American identity. This transition marks the beginning of the shift from being Chinese to being Chinese American, according to Gong.

Chinese American writers from the late XXth century to the first decade of the XXIst century include notable figures such as Shirley Geok-lin Lim, Jean Kwok, Gish Jen, and Sandra Tsing Loh. Shawn Wong's novel *"American Knees,"* published in 1996, was adapted into an independent feature film titled *"Americanese"* in 2009.

The 1990s marked a significant shift in Asian American Studies, influenced by the "canon wars" of the 1980s. According to David Leiwei Li, this shift transitioned "from an emphasis on the local, U.S.-centered formation of a counter-racial identity to a focus on the global links to the Pacific Rim." This change in focus coincided with the diversification of the American literary canon and the emergence of "post-Americanist narratives" that questioned social solidarity and challenged the significance of the nation-state. In the 1990s, questions about ethnic identity were explored in terms of cultural hybridity, racial and ethnic intersections, and sexual identification.

Japanese American literature has its origins in the XIXth century but experienced significant growth in the XXth century. Positioned both within and against the broader canon of American literature, Japanese American literary works from the post-World War II era reflect the experiences of Japanese Americans during the war. The initial large-scale migration of working-class Japanese immigrants was primarily to Hawaii in 1898. However, following the Pearl Harbor bombing, the loyalty of Japanese American citizens was questioned, leading to the incarceration of approximately 120,000 individuals in internment camps across the Southwest, as noted by Huang. Despite the fact that many of those detained were American citizens, and a significant portion were children, they were perceived as a national security threat. Some individuals endured years of incarceration, during which they were deprived of normalcy, leading survivors to seek to express their experiences through literature. This period also saw a movement for Asian American rights emerge in the 1960s and 1970s.

Japanese American literature as a part of the continuum of Asian American literature is published in the USA in the anthologies together with Chinese and Filipino writers: the work by Kai-yu Hsu and Helen Palubinskas titled “*Asian American Authors*”, 1972; David Hsin-Fu Wand’s *Asian-American Heritage: An Anthology of Prose and Poetry*, which came out in 1974; “*Aiiieeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers*” (edited by Frank Chin, et al., 1974).

The *Nisei* writers (= “second generation”) is a term applied to identify ethnically Japanese writers who were born in the new country (often North or South America) to Japanese-born migrants (called *Issei*). The third generation are called *Sansei* since *ichi*, *ni*, *san* are Japanese for “one, two, three”. The *Nisei* writers started publishing their works in the 1930s: *Nisei Daughter* (1953) by Monica Sone; *Yokohama, California* (1949), *The Chauvinist and Other Stories* (1979), *The Woman from Hiroshima* (1980), *Unfinished Message: Selected Works of Toshio Mori* (2000) by Toshio Mori.

The decades from 1945 through 1960 have been labeled by Carolyn Chung Simpson as the era of the Japanese America’s “*absent presence*” in national consciousness, which put into focus the economic challenges of the post-war era:

Hisaye Yamamoto's classic story "*The Legend of Miss Sasagawara*," two stories that were added to the original manuscript of Toshio Mori's "*Yokohama, California*," whose publication was postponed from 1942 to 1949, Monica Sone's autobiography "*Nisei Daughter*" (1953), and John Okada's novel "*No-No Boy*" (1957).

The third phase of internment memory, from the 1960s to 1980s, is known as the era of "*breaking silence*". Literary works that had been published between 1945 and 1960 were rediscovered and reprinted, and many new internment narratives appeared, including Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's coauthored memoir "*Farewell to Manzanar*", Edward Miyakawa's novel "*Tule Lake*" (1979), several novels by Yoshiko Uchida, the foremost writer on internment for young readers, and sansei poet and activist Janice Mirikitani's "*Awake in the River*" (1978) and "*Shedding Silence*" (1987). An important work of the period is "*The End of the Rainbow*" (1964) by Kazuo Miyamoto, a Hawaiian-born Japanese American. Lawson Fusao Inada and Joy Kogawa, whose writings symbolize the literary front of redress movements in the United States and Canada, published their pioneering works, "*Before the War*" (1971) and "*Obasan*" (1981), respectively.

In the current period following redress and the post-9/11 internment memory, authors of acclaimed internment narratives have produced notable works, including Lawson Inada's "*Legends from Camp*" (1992) and "*Drawing the Line*" (1997), as well as Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston's "*The Legend of Firehorse Woman*" (2005). Additionally, some well-known writers have released their first explicit internment narratives, such as Karen Tei Yamashita's "*Tropic of Orange*" (1997), Cynthia Kadohata's "*Weedflower*" (2006), a novel aimed at young adults about Poston, and Perry Miyake's "*XXIst Century Manzanar*" (2002), a blend of realism and science fiction envisioning the return of internment.

The American annexation of the Philippines followed two separate conflicts: the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Filipino-American War (1899-1902). While U.S. colonial rule of the archipelago somewhat waned during the Commonwealth Period of 1935-1946, the Philippines eventually gained independence, leading to

increased migration of approximately 150,000 Filipinos to the United States between 1906 and 1946, with a majority settling in California and Hawaii. Filipino American literature was initially conceptualized as a distinct body of work in the Asian American anthology *"Aiiieeeee!"* (1974). The themes explored in Filipino writings include "invisibility," the paradox of *"double perspective,"* and a focus on the interplay between historical facts and memory, alongside conciliatory or integrative tendencies.

The 1920s are viewed as the golden age of Philippine literature in English = the moment when the first generation of Anglophone writers in Manila began to publish in great quantity. The initial anthology of Filipino poetry in English, *"Filipino Poetry"* (1909 – 1924), was compiled in Manila in 1924 by Rodolfo Dato. Later, Paz Marquez Benitez, whose own *"Dead Stars"* (1925) is considered the first modern Filipino short story in English, edited the earliest anthology of fiction titled *"Filipino Love Stories"* (1927). José Garcia Villa responded to Benitez's anthology by publishing *"Philippine Short Stories: Best 25 Stories of 1928"* (1929). The first collection of Filipino poetry *"Chorus for America: Six Philippine Poets"* (1942) went through the printing press in the United States. The construction of Filipino American Identity, gender-related issues was reflected in collection of literary texts *"Without Names"* (1983) and *"Liwanag: Volume 2"* (1993). Further anthologies aim to gather contemporaneous literature in an effort to document a segment of Filipino writing produced at a specific historical moment. They tend to be built around such categories as gender (*"Babaylan: An Anthology of Filipina and Filipina American Writers"*, 2000; *"Going Home to a Landscape: Writings by Filipinas"*, 2003); genre (*"Fiction by Filipinos in America"*, 1993; *"Contemporary Fiction by Filipinos in America"*, 1997; *"Returning a Borrowed Tongue: An Anthology of Filipino and Filipino American Poetry"*, 1995); and theme (*"Flippin': Filipinos on America"*, 1996; *"Growing Up Filipino: Stories for Young Adults"*, 2003). The early noughties provide a wide range of thematic, political, and cultural initiatives gathered in *"Pinoy Poetics: A Collection of Autobiographical and Critical Essays on Filipino and Filipino-American Poetics"* (2004).

Known works of fiction and poetry distinguish: *“America is in the Heart”* (autobiographical), Carlos Bulosan (1946); *“The Bamboo Dancers”*, N.V.M. Gonzalez (1959); *“Dogeaters”* (the novel was nominated for a National Book Award), Jessica Hagedorn (1990); *“Many Voices”* (poetry), José García Villa (1939); *“The Peninsulars”* (deals with influences of Spanish colonization), Linda Ty-Casper (1964); *“Scent of Apples”* (short story), Bienvenido Santos (1979); *“State of War”* (novel), Ninotchka Rosca (1988); *“Ilustrado”*, Miguel Syjuco (2010); *“When the Rainbow Goddess Wept”*, Cecilia Manguerra Brainard (1999); *“American Son”*, Brian Ascalon Roley (2001); *“Dream Jungle”*, Jessica Hagedorn (2003); *“When the Elephant Dances”*, Tess Uriza Holthe (2002); *“Magdalena”*, Cecilia Manguerra Brainard (2002).

South Asian American literature addresses various issues within Asian American society, including ethnic dynamics, gender challenges, and the complexities of assimilation, focusing on countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. This branch of American literature, authored by individuals of Indian descent, reflects the social movements of the 1960s. Collections of Indian American writings include titles such as *“Our Feet Walk the Sky: Women of the South Asian Diaspora”* (1993), *“A Lotus of Another Color: An Unfolding of the South Asian Gay and Lesbian Experience”* (1993), *“Living in America: Poetry and Fiction by South Asian American Writers”* (1995), *“Contours of the Heart: South Asians Map North America”* (1996), *“Between the Lines: South Asians and Postcoloniality”* (1996), *“A Part, Yet Apart: South Asians in Asian America”* (1998), and *“Bolo! Bolo! A Collection of Writing by Second Generation South Asians Living in North America”* (2000). Many writers depict second-generation Indian Americans grappling with conflicts with their parents over issues such as marriage and dating outside caste expectations. Moreover, these narratives often explore conflicts arising when individuals seek relationships outside the Indian American community, revealing a threefold struggle involving displacement, conflicts within American culture, and issues within the diverse Indian American cultural landscape (Huang, 2009; 426).

Migration-induced cross-culturalism can compound the stress of migration with the anxiety of undocumented status, thus accentuating issues of identity formation. This theme is evident in works such as Bharati Mukherjee's novels "Jasmine" (1989), "Desirable Daughters" (2002), and "The Tree Bride" (2004). Jhumpa Lahiri's debut novel "Interpreter of Maladies" (1999) also explores this contrast between the Indian context and the backdrop of the United States, presenting a collection of nine narratives spanning locations ranging from the East Coast of the US to the streets of Calcutta.

Korean American literature emerged in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950-1953), exploring a range of themes typical of immigrant literature, including alienation, identity, filial piety, self-perception, and cultural clashes. Specific topics addressed include the consequences of the war, experiences of abandonment and rejection, reunions, cultural amnesia, the discovery of Asian ethnicity, and issues faced by those of mixed backgrounds. Anthologies have played a significant role in amplifying the voices of Korean American adoptees, providing readers with insight into their experiences: "*Seeds from a Silent Tree*" (1997), "*Voices from Another Place*" (1999), and "*After the Morning Calm*" (2002).

Korean American literature includes works by Younghill Kang, who authored two novels along with numerous other publications, "*The Grass Roof*" (1931) and the more widely heralded "*East Goes West: The Making of an Oriental Yankee*" (1937, republished by Kaya Press, 1997). Another significant work is the novel "*The Martyred*" (1964) by Richard E. Kim. Kim's fiction is set in Korea and is centered around Korean historical themes – the civil war in Korea in "*The Martyred*"; the 1962 South Korean military coup in "*The Innocent*" (1968); the years of Japanese occupation and Korea's liberation at the end of World War II in his collection of short stories "*Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood*" (1970).

Korean American authors who wrote in Korean gained prominence through their contributions to the journal *Jipyeongseon* (Horizon), which was published from 1973 to 1976. Additionally, *Koreatown Weekly*, the first national Korean American newspaper written in English, was active from 1979 to 1982.

The 1980s embrace Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's texts and her postmodernist masterpiece "*Dictee*"; Peter Hyun's autobiography "*Mansei! The Making of a Korean American*" (1986); the short stories of Gary Pak and Ty Pak and the poetry of Cathy Song; and the novel "*Clay Walls*" (1986) by Ronyoung Kim. Later acclaimed novels combine Chang-rae Lee's novel "*Native Speaker*" (1995), Keller's 1997 novel "*Comfort Woman*", Therese Park's "*A Gift of the Emperor*", Fenkl's "*Memories of My Ghost Brother*" (1996). Marie G. Lee and Sook Nyul Choi are the two premier novelists in the genre of immigration tales, generational and cultural conflicts with first generation parents. Choi's award-winning trilogy of novels, "*The Year of Impossible Goodbyes*" (1991), "*Echoes of the White Giraffe*" (1993), and "*Gathering of Pearls*" (1994), is based on her experience as a child refugee who fled North Korea with her family into the South and eventually found herself at a prestigious private East Coast college in the United States just after the Korean War.

Korean American autobiographies and biographies, such as Hyun's "*Mansei!*", Helie Lee's "*Quiet Odyssey*", Connie Kang's "*Home Was the Land of Morning Calm*" (1995), Helie Lee's "*Still Life with Rice*" (1997), Soo-Young Chin's "*Doing What Had to Be Done: The Life Narrative of Dora Yum Kim*" (1999), and collections of personal testimonials such as "*East to America*" (1996) and "*Korean American Women: From Tradition to Modern Feminism*" (1998) spotlight the presence of Koreans and Korean American communities in the United States.

As the twenty-first century began, numerous novelists who made their debut in the nineties were already advancing into their third, fourth, and even fifth novels, exploring various genres. For instance, Don Lee's "*Yellow*" (2001) and Suki Kim's "*The Interpreter*" (2003) offer a refreshing departure from the conventional narrative of the 'model minority' immigrant experience.

Vietnamese Americans have cultivated a distinct literature branch addressing the challenges of being unable to return to their homeland and adapting to new lives. Viet Thanh Nguyen, in his work "*What is Vietnamese American literature,*" describes how the voices of these individuals are often muted outside their ethnic enclaves and homes,

struggling to be heard in an indifferent America. However, over time, this literature evolves from silence to speech, as subsequent generations, raised or born in America, begin to articulate their experiences. This transition reflects a fundamental aspect of ethnic literature, demonstrating the journey from marginalization to acceptance, albeit sometimes reluctantly, by the broader American society.

Vietnamese American literature emerges from narratives post-1975, exploring the experiences of a post-military country and its people. These narratives include a variety of memoirs, such as those authored by Quang Huynh “*South Wind Changing*” (1994) and “*The Unwanted*” (2001) by Kien Nguyen. “*My Viet: Vietnamese American Literature in English, 1962-Present*”, providing examples of different genre selections. The early XXIst century has seen the revision of the image system and the recycled problematics. Essential Vietnamese American fiction embraces a novel “*Things We lost to the Water*” by Eric Nguyen, featuring the experiences of a family of refugees who settle in New Orleans after the Vietnam War; “*Monkey Bridge*” by Lan Cao; “*The Book of Salt*” by Monique Truong; “*Stealing Buddha’s Dinner*” by Bich Minh Nguyen; “*The Sympathizer*” by Professor Viet Thanh Nguyen, Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Similar to other ethnic literatures, Vietnamese American literature explores its origins, delves into the social dynamics of the homeland, recounts the experiences of war and famine, captures the essence of homeland landscapes and their trials, portrays survival strategies, illustrates the challenges of exile, and examines the complexities of hybrid identities. Physical struggles intertwine with psychological ones as characters grapple with the pressure of being outsiders in a foreign land, unable to conceal their differences due to inherent racial features.

Thus, Asian American literature represents a multilayer bulk of works with a dominant Chinese-American core maintained through mainstream culture. The works predominantly focus on a transition from “Chinatown community” or another diasporic community to an upper-class perspective. The literary heritage often comprises a historical line, both male and female voices, represent a domestic, familial or gendered framework; show the diversification of America, portray a cycle of sexism and

classism, establish a code of sexual conduct. The bulk of works create a certain pan-ethnic Asian American identity having to face with the same set of problems endemic for a migrant in the melting pot of the USA: “nationals” but not “citizens” attitude, near-animal treatment, post-war trauma, double oppression of Asian American women, etc. The relationships between the past and the present can be detached or alienated.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Asian American literature and its branches: the overview.*
2. *The award-winning Oriental authors in the USA today.*
3. *War-associated texts by the authors of hybrid origin.*
4. *The contemporary issues in Asian-American literature.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Chinatowns are ethnic enclaves formed by Chinese immigrants starting in the nineteenth century. These communities in the United States can be categorized into three main types: frontier and rural, urban, and suburban Chinatowns. The first two types emerged mainly during the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, while the third type has arisen due to the influx of relatively affluent and well-educated Chinese immigrants since the 1970s. Initially, Chinatowns were established as a means of self-protection and to create a sense of security in an unfamiliar and often hostile environment. They also served as hubs for mutual assistance in various aspects of life and business in a foreign country. Early Chinatowns were often segregated from white residential areas and other ethnic communities. As discrimination and hostility towards Chinese people gradually decreased, many Chinese individuals, including American-born ones like Nina in Fae Myenne Ng's novel “*Bone*,” or more recent immigrants, have relocated from Chinatowns to suburban regions.

Coolies denotes laborers who were coerced, abducted, or forced into servitude and transported to foreign countries.

Pan-ethnicity is a term coined to describe the political grouping of various ethnicities based on shared cultural backgrounds, encompassing factors such as geographic, linguistic, religious, or racial similarities, whether phenotypic or otherwise. The concept gained prominence during mid-twentieth century anti-colonial and national liberation movements. In the United States, Yen Le Espiritu introduced and popularized the term, particularly in reference to Asian Americans, who constitute a racial category comprising diverse peoples united primarily by their continental origin in Asia.

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PACE 9

IDENTIFYING AND UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL ISSUES IN FICTION

Key terms: *Age, gender, ethnicity, prioritized “Anglo-Saxon” whiteness over all other racial categories*
human rights, class struggle, race and prejudice, military reality, historical injustice, “pressing matters” in the society, environment and global warming, disability and the place of disabled people in a society, ill societal states

1. *Social text, its mechanics and types. The common social issues raised in fiction.*
2. *The prevailing social issues within British and American literary tradition.*
3. *The pressing issues in the contemporary American texts. Their sources.*
4. *Migration, religious clashes, and disability as a type of social displacement.*
5. *The texts by Breece D’J Pancake as a magnifying glass of the small-locus philosophy endemic for the rural America.*

Societal architecture has always been in the literary focus. Beginning with the Ancient period, mythology and folklore has always been an education tool, applied to shape the young mind so that it fitted the standards needed for survival within the frames of the world contemporary to the learner. Fairy-tales, fables, Biblical plots are all characterized by strong moral load. The literature of the later periods, though preserving a unique or universal moral code at its core, has gone beyond the boundaries of pure reflection and in spite of depicting the architectonics of the human life, felt free enough to access and criticize its parameters. All that led to the production of political pamphlets, satires, social novels, and dystopias. It is the achievement of the later literary though when the pattern is not only reproduced, reflected, but criticized. The old world visioned a human being as a part of a bigger social mechanics, where every

detail of the mechanism had to act in order to make the whole organism function “healthily”. The totalitarianism of ‘a certain behavior’ was imposed firstly by church, then by the rules of mundane society within a certain class, and finally by fascism, communism, and now liberalism, teaching to accept the unacceptable, often unnatural, and ill-minded. Literary epochs, reproducing a particular social standard, resemble the societal dynamics. Modernism, post-modernism and their further evolved variations looked at the individual as an independent entity. Although contemporary literature spotlights the “pressing matters” on the local, ethnic or global level, it does it through a character, who is not always a ‘hero’, a ‘perfection to follow’, a bearer of the standard.

Contemporary American literature as a torch illuminates a wide range of matters, which are not necessarily the USA-based. The multiethnic nature of today’s American authors (Latin-American, African-American, Asian-American, Slavic-American), their mixed origin, allows them to look into every corner of the universe and even beyond. The thematic background of the narrative stretches from those affecting urban or countryside American communities, to the global paradigm, allowing to bring to the public such matters as being disabled in an able-bodied world, being a holder of a war-torn soul dislocated to the war-alien society, being a bearer of some particular ethnicity in a new dominant culture, etc.

A SOCIAL ISSUE =
problems, matters and situations directly or indirectly impacting an individual, and are viewed by a considerable part of the members of social community or its majority as serious ones, requiring collective efforts in order to overcome them.

Social ailments spotlighted in literature shape the characters’ features, operate their choice, move the plot. Social matters can be exaggerated, intensified and shifted to an alternative imaginary location, or conveyed through the realistic means of depiction.

Table 16 – *Common social issues represented in English-language fiction*

	POSSIBLE SOCIAL ISSUES RAISED IN LITERATURE	BRIGHT EXAMPLES	AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
1	2	3	4
1	Class conflict	Charles Dickens's " <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> " (1859)	The United Kingdom
2	Colonialism	Joseph Conrad's " <i>Heart of Darkness</i> " (1899)	The United Kingdom
3	Slavery	" <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> " (an American slave, written by himself) (1845); Harriet Beecher Stowe's " <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> " (1852)	The United States of America
4	Race	The poetry of Langston Hughes (1902-1967); Harper Lee's " <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> " (1960)	The United States of America
5	Democracy	The poetry of Walt Whitman (1819-1892)	The United States of America
6	Aging and death	Ernest Hemingway's " <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> " (1952)	The United States of America
7	Sexuality	William Shakespeare's " <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> " (1594-1596)	The United Kingdom
8	War	Ernest Hemingway's " <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> " (1929); Tim O'Brien's " <i>The Things They Carried</i> " (1990) (depicts Vietnam war)	The United States of America
9	Violence	Suzanne Collin's " <i>The Hunger Game Trilogy</i> " (2008, 2009, 2010)	The United States of America
10	Wilderness	Jon Krakauer's " <i>Into the Wild</i> " (1996)	The United States of America
11	Women's issues	Margaret Atwood's " <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> " (1985)	The United States of America
12	Censorship	Ray Bradbury's " <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> " (1953)	The United States of America
13	Coming of Age	Sue Monk Kidd's " <i>The Secret Lives of Bees</i> " (2001)	The United States of America

Continuation of table 16

1	2	3	4
14	Depression	Sylvia Plath's <i>"The Bell Jar"</i> (1963)	The United States of America
15	The Environment	Rachel Carson's <i>"Silent Spring"</i> (1962)	The United States of America
16	Family dysfunction	William Faulkner's <i>"As I Lay Dying"</i> (1930) (a Gothic novel)	The United States of America
17	Gender	Lorraine Hansberry's <i>"A Raisin in the Sun"</i> (1959) (domestic drama)	The United States of America
18	Genocide	Alexander Laban Hinton <i>"Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide"</i> (California, 2002); <i>"The Justice Facade: Trials of Transition in Cambodia"</i> (Oxford, 2018)	The United States of America
19	Disability	Jeffery Deaver's <i>"The Bone Collector"</i> (1997) was written not only as a thriller mystery, but also a statement against mercy killing.	The United States of America
20	How total control by a government can change the way citizens view their world	<i>"The Running Man"</i> by Stephen King, published under the pseudonym Richard Bachman	The United States of America
21	Geopolitics, subhuman issues, Nazi state	Philip K. Dick's <i>"The Man in the High Castle"</i> (1962)	The United States of America
22	Homicide	Randolph Roth's <i>"American Homicide"</i> (2012)	The United States of America

The issues are linked to the theme of the text and can be addressed through the range of means: symbolism, intertextuality, fragmentation, repetition, the artistic detail, etc.

A THEME = a primary, underlying idea of a narrative

Social concerns brought up in the English-speaking society might vary depending on historical prerequisites, the peculiarities of the societal development, its interaction with the global world or indigenous specificity. The global issues will be

the same within multiple literatures (European, Asian, African, English-speaking, etc.). Some problems might overlap within the countries-representatives of the Anglo-Saxon world, i.e. the UK, the USA, New Zealand, Canada, Australia (e.g. the voice of ethnical minorities, displaced as a result of colonialism or migration). Others will be unique for a particular location (e.g. the trauma of the Civil War between the North and the South for the USA).

Taking into account that the American literature initially and to some extent sprouts out of the British literary tradition, the development of social issues within a variety of the literary periods both in the United Kingdom and the United States of America have been retraced.

Table 17 – *The dominant agenda in the British literature over the history of its development*

THE BRITISH	<i>The Old literature (450-1066)</i>	Narrates history, mythology, behavioral code. The rules and regulations of our society can be governed by some mystical forces.
	<i>The Medieval literature (1066-1500)</i>	Prescribes type of behavior suggested by the religious texts. Model of female behavior – Virgin Mary, the embodiment of evil – seductive Eve
	<i>The Renaissance (1500-1600)</i>	Trades secular piety and humanism
	<i>The Neoclassicism and Enlightenment (1600-1785)</i>	Public miseries, criticism of power, movement for extension of civil rights and social justice
	<i>The Romantic period (1785-1832)</i>	The cult of personality (e.g. Napoleon), attitudes to women, the Revolution, nationalism and internationalism
	<i>The Victorian era (1832-1901)</i>	Conditions of England, Industrial Revolution, condition and disposition of working people; the societal conditions people live under mean they can have limited options in the decisions and actions they take; child labour, exhibit anxiety about working-class irreligion, urbanization-associated issues, poverty, corrupt soul of the upper classes, prostitution and diseases, sodomy
	<i>Edwardian Era (1901-1914)</i>	Suffragette movement as a forefront political discussion, a demand for social change, anti-anarchism

Continuation of table 17

LITERATURE	<i>Modernism (1914-1945)</i>	Poverty, global justice, racial shift, private rights, the weakening of the Empire hold in the colonized arias, post-independence issues (for the former colonies), the loss of faith both in government and God unable to protect from the horrors of World Wars = the individual's sense of insecurity, individualism, absurdity and symbolism in depiction as the means of escapism from the unbearable reality, symbolic rebirth / transformation of the characters, criticism of the society between the wars, social disorder and moral laxity; the traps of political orthodoxy and dictatorship
	<i>Post-War Era (1945-2004)</i>	Addresses the shifting social, cultural, and political landscape; the trauma of war – often grapples with psychological, emotional and physical aftermath of war and explores the effects of war on individuals and societies, addressing themes of loss, trauma, guilt, and the search for meaning in a shattered world; contemplates the meaning and purpose of life in a world that appears chaotic and devoid of inherent meaning; the writers from the former colonies addressed issues of cultural identity, decolonization, oppression, and the legacy of colonialism; the Cold War era explores themes of political paranoia, surveillance, and the threat of nuclear war; depicts the political tension in the world; literature starts reflecting the rise of civil rights movement, feminism, LGBTQ+ rights, and other social movements; the authors tackled the issues of racial inequality, gender, and sexuality; the texts explored the complexities of the globalized world, addressing the interconnections and tensions between different cultures, nations, and identities
	<i>English literature of the XXIst century</i>	Ethnic identity, global warming and international conflicts, gender/social issues inside the societies, issues of visibility and recognition, deindustrialization and environmental degradation, features scientific fields, space exploration, features robotic feature, addresses mysticism

Table 18 – The prevailing issues and central topics in the North American literature over its development

1	2	3
THE NORTH	<i>Early (colonial) literature (17th – mid-18th century)</i>	Challenges of adapting to a new land, tensions between the colonists and the native people; exploration of human experience in America; shared experience of the settlers, thereby fostering a sense of identity; contests the political and social power structure; explore themes of religious faith, the divine, and salvation in the context of lives in the New World; explore relationships between God and humanity, emphasizing the responsibilities and duties
	<i>Literature of the early republic (Mid-18th – early 19th century)</i>	Ethical values, emotional experience and spirituality; social construction, political critique and social consciousness; the indigenous narratives and folklore of the American colonies = the distinct blend of cultures; personal narratives of people of colour; the issues of race-based slavery; the address to a peculiar national character; American West philosophy and traditions
	<i>Romanticism and American Renaissance (1830-1860)</i>	-The search for truth in beauty; the depiction of pioneers / settlers and their interaction with the natives; corruption, democracy; the issue of a social outsider who is rejected by society or has rejected social norms; return to nature for spirituality; the Civil War; -National spirit; narrative poems dealing with American history; advocates reforms in church, state and society; abolition movement; the dramatization of the plight of the black slave; antislavery voices; the Civil War

Continuation of table 18

1	2	3
LITERATURE AMERICAN	<i>Realism (1865-1910)</i>	A cultural portrayal or a scenic view of downtown of New York city; concerns about impact of war, politics and the brutal forces of nature; represents the acute struggles of men and women; the American Civil War between the North and South; real people in real situations within challenging events happening in the world around them; class societal problems
	<i>Naturalism (1893-1914)</i>	Racism, sex, prejudice, disease, prostitution, and filth
	<i>Modernism (1910-1945)</i>	World War I – the first war of mass destruction; a youth culture; fragmentation and multi-perspectival cubism as a means of depiction of the distorted reality; the autonomy and individuality in the face of overwhelming social forces; historical heritage; stream-of-consciousness and fragmentation to depict characters' mental process / issues; the absurdity of the WWII and the evils of fascism; race; gender; post-colonial issues; concerns with rape and killing statistics of Hispanic women in Juarez
	<i>Post-modernism (1945-2004)</i>	Post-war reality and its issues; the ideology of a new class; individuality; globalization and multiculturalism; binary oppositions: male vs female, black vs white, east vs west; challenging social dogmas; the Cold War; environmentalism
	<i>Post-postmodernism (the end of the XXth – the XXIst century)</i> <i>Meta-modernism (the end of the XXth – the XXIst century)</i>	Trauma, gender, environmentalism, eco-feminism, cyber-world, neo-colonialism, colour-purple issues, ethnicity in literature. Literature symbolizes the society or the world in all aspects.

Despite the fact that social issues can be manifested in a literary text of every literary period, the cradle of the social novel is still in the XIXth-century Britain. The roots of the social novel in Britain can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution (1733-1913). The social text functions as a tool aimed at tuning the reader for the comprehension of necessity of altering either the way of life or a particular social situation. The social novel (also known as the social problem novel) points out the agendas of social, political and economic nature. Characters in a novel can be featured against the societal background that is a mirror image of the society the author lives in. Frequent themes that are investigated in the social text are wealth and class. The criticism may not always be explicit, or, instead, might be direct dealing with the common troubles the average person faces in society, contemporary to them.

Thus, according to Encyclopedia Britannica, ***Social problem novel***, is “a work of fiction in which a prevailing social agenda, such as gender, race, or class prejudice, is dramatized through its effect on the characters of the novel. The type emerged in Great Britain and the United States in the mid-19th century. An early example is Elizabeth Gaskell’s “*Ruth*” (1853), which portrays a humane alternative to the “fallen woman’s” usual progress to social ostracism and prostitution during the period. If the work is strongly weighted to convert the reader to the author’s stand on a social question, as is the case with Harriet Beecher Stowe’s antislavery novel “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” (1852), it is sometimes called a propaganda novel”.

Encyclopedia Britannica stresses that “usually a social problem novel limits itself to exposure of a problem. A personal solution may be arrived at by the novel’s characters, but the author does not insist that it can be applied universally or that it is the only one. Most social problem novels derive their chief interest from their novelty or timeliness. For example, in 1947 Laura Z. Hobson’s “*Gentleman’s Agreement*”, revealing the unwritten code of anti-Semitism upheld in American middle-class circles, created a stir among a public freshly shocked by the Holocaust”.

Literature mirrors societal virtues and vices, healthy DNA and points out the viral code to be fixed. The function of literature is to rectify the faulty parts. Recoding

or imitating actual reality, literary texts serve as a remedy for societal ailments. Literary texts serve as a computer simulation, creating a model for analysis and marking the problematic chains. Often literary texts are of predictive nature, achieved through the imitation, mentioned above. In his *“Poetics”*, which constitutes the basis, the initial code for literary theory, Aristotle suggests his own concept of literary imitation: *“It is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen... The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose.... The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen... The world of poetry, it is said, presents not facts but fiction: such things have never happened; such things have never lived.... Not real but a higher reality, what ought to be not what is”*. Thus, talented authors, frequently outpacing their own time, are able to suggest humanity the right path, to direct the humankind or at least the people of their immediate country.

Demonstrating social and political issues in fiction the authors use various literary techniques within the mainstream tendencies: realism, surrealism, naturalism, post-structuralism, postmodernism, existentialism, and etc.

The XXth century fiction was rich in dystopian works created as a reaction to social changes. Author expresses concern about cultural and political trends in a form of a warning how the future might develop.

Dystopian novels typically contain the following characteristics:

1. *Totalitarianism*: A central authority exerts complete control over society and individuals, often suppressing personal freedom and individual rights.
2. *Oppression and Control*: The government or ruling class oppresses the population through various means such as surveillance, propaganda, and strict laws.
3. *Utopia gone wrong*: Dystopian novels tend to portray a social entity which in its attempts for perfection acquired corrupt and oppressive character.
4. *Desolation and Suffering*: The characters in dystopian novels often live in a world that is bleak, desolate, and full of suffering, often resulting from the consequences of the oppressive government.

5. *Societal Decline*: Dystopian novels often depict a society in decline, either due to a natural disaster, war, or the consequences of totalitarian rule.

6. *Protagonist rebelling against society*: A common theme in dystopian novels is a protagonist who rebels against the oppressive society, seeking to bring about change or escape to a better place.

7. *Cautionary Tale*: Dystopian novels bear the function of a warning beaconing the destructive consequences of totalitarian forms of governing, possible societal decay, or abuse of unrestricted of power.

American writer Robert Stone asserts, it is a writer's responsibility to address the question, "*How do social and political forces condition individual lives?*" Social criticism is an important feature of a social novel. The types of Political criticism might include feminist criticism, multicultural criticism, Afro-American criticism, postcolonial criticism, Marxist criticism, lesbian, gay and queer criticisms and ecocriticism, sometimes called eco-poetics or bio-poetics.

The essay "*Everybody's Protest Novel*" by Afro-American writer James Baldwin, whose works exposed racism, criticizes the flatness of the protest novels' characters, who more serve as symbols of a social wrong rather than function as complicated individuals, thereby turning literature into propaganda.

Social issues are addressed to not exclusively in a prosaic text, but in poetry as well. Social poetry is the one that performs a social function or contains a share of social commentaries. The term evolved on the basis of translation from "the original Spanish Poesia Social", determining the post-Spanish-civil-war poetry movement in the 1950s and 60s (embracing the texts of such poets as Blas de Otero).

The society of the XXIst century gets more complex bringing up numerous and fairly branched social issues. Literature in the United States of America today is a diversified, evolving substance, featuring a number of issues endemic for the American melting pot. Social texts in the contemporary American fiction address the global world aspects, reveal environmental concerns, communicate ethnic problems within the updated reality of the noughties. Feminism develops into eco-feminism, post- (*"The*

Mommy Myth” (2004) by Susan Douglas) and anti-feminism (an essay in *The Atlantic* “*How Serfdom Saved the Women's Movement*” (2004) by Caitlin Flanagan), post-colonialism into neo-colonialism, mythology into a range of new texts of fantasy genre, the escapism of sci-fi books started to insert characters with traumas in the past, tackling darker themes, dealing with broken systems. American social thrillers of today contain national or international elements, pull the readers into hero’s moral dilemmas, the character’s present racial diversity, contain archetypes. The oldest prototype of the thriller in the Western world is Homer’s “*Odyssey*”, which is abundant of archetypes of a long way, overcoming all obstacles, fighting with villains such as Cyclops and the Sirens and others. Homer’s mythological characters are written in the ancient-time society. The roots of a thriller genre date back to the revenge novel “*The Count of Monte Cristo*” by Alexandre Dumas, an adventure text “*The Thirty-nine Steps*” by Scottish author John Buchan, an espionage novel “*The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*” by John Le Carre and a spy fiction thriller novel “*The Bourne Identity*” by Robert Ludlum. Thrillers are divided into several sub-genres: legal, medical/scientific, political/corporate, crime, espionage and techno thrillers and spotlight the ailments of the society at a particular scratch of history.

Social novels of different literary periods contain the dominant feature of the time, that is realism, futurism, positivism or post-modernism, portraying the types of people that represent the period. The works of historical nature resemble the issues contemporary to the author. American writers of today, like John Grisham, are to some extent social commentators, who address political and social issues of the society through their fiction.

Contemporary social writings in the North America are multiethnic and continues to mine rich veins through poetry, prose and drama. The literary field is rapidly evolving towards hybridity, when an author of a mixed background spotlights the social aspects of his/her immediate community or the abandoned homeland, or migrant destiny on the new land. Afghan-American Khaled Hosseini's novel, “*The Kite Runner*”, narrates of childhood friends in Kabul separated by the dictatorship of the

Taliban, while Azar Nafisi's memoir, *“Reading Lolita in Teheran”*, brings to mind teaching great works of Western literature to young women in Iran. A third novel, Arthur Golden's *“Memoirs of a Geisha”*, narrates a Japanese woman's life during World War II. Thus, American literature at the turn of the XXIst century has become heterogeneous and marked by regionalism, when the “global” or international experience and the U.S. culture is conveyed through foreign perspectives.

Social themes combined with mystery and mixed with religious battle for the global supremacy, initiated both by Vatican and religious organisations, are represented in Dan Brown's novel *“The DaVinci Code”* and Anne Rice's tale *“Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt”*. Major religions including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, or Hinduism find place in both multi-ethnic and mono-ethnic texts of contemporary Americans. Emotional rebirth through a religious practice after a traumatic divorce is represented in a book by Elizabeth Gilbert *“Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman’s Search for Everything Across Italy, India, and Indonesia”* (2006).

Another layer of social acceptance is disability – in-born, acquired, connected with aging or traumatic experience (war, accidents, social violence). Disability can be both manifested in literature and art.



“Christina’s World” by Andrew Wyeth (1948) is one of the best-known American paintings of the mid-XXth century. Depicts Christina Olson suffering from a degenerative muscular disorder which meant that she had not been able to walk since she was a young child.

Disability is linked to stigmatization self-directed by a disabled author (e.g. a British writer Christy Brown names his poetic collection *“Of Snails and Skylarks”*, comparing himself, a victim of cerebral palsy, with a snail), or projected by the society. Here the topic of stigmatization balances on the issues of ethnicity, LGBTQ+ or female status at some period of time, obesity, or any other feature that shifts a person and therefore a character into the realm of outcasts or socially handicapped.

Disabled literature deals with the texts exploring different sorts of disability, as well as the works of literature created by people trapped in the damaged bodies. Despite the fact that some characters produced by the best examples of world literature embody the idea of a beautiful soul in a trap of ugliness (e.g. Quasimodo in *“Notre Dame de Paris”* by Victor Hugo; Joffrey de Peyrac in *“Angelique”* series by Anne Golon), the classical interpretation of deformity has been much more often linked to the evil status, a mark of the Devil (Christian tradition). John Quicke (1985) marks: *“There are, latent to the dominant culture, ideas about handicap and disability from an earlier period which still have considerable force. An example is the notion, which runs through the history of Western civilization and is legitimated by various religious teachings, that disability indicates possession by the devil or by an evil force, or is the outcome of evil doing”* (Quicke, 1985; 3). For example, dwarfism was interpreted as consequences of parents’ mistakes/sins, and mental illness went in hand with a possession by demons. Originally in fairy-tales a beauty tends to hold a delicate soul, be a portrait of kindness and tact (e.g. Cinderella, or the multiple female protagonists in *The Brothers’ Grimm Tales* like *“Lady Snowstorm”*, *“Snow-white”*, *“Mermaid”*, etc.), while the evil spirit goes in a bunch with repulsive appearance (Baba Yaga, Koschei the Immortal, stepmother’s daughters in *“Cinderella”*). If a fictional fairy-tale character happens to be ugly but good-natured, the ugliness is sourced out of the witchcraft and melts by the end of the story defeated by the kind heart (e.g. *“Scarlet Flower”*). Thus, disability itself is viewed as a “mistake of nature”, the embodiment of evil. Monsters and villains are ugly in myth, folk tales, authored literature (Cyclopes, Grendel, one-armed captain), who are physically different from the beautiful “good” people. Twisted bodies

and chronic illnesses were all attributed to witchcraft in both children's and adult literature [26]. Such approach helps to flag the evil, gives it a particular noticeable shape, makes it recognizable. To some extent it echoes the mythological mode of character architecture, where a negative hero is represented in a so-called 'flat' way, deprived of complexity and contradictions endemic for every being. Therefore, the ugliness of the soul gets paralleled by the ugliness of the body. Fiction commonly includes revenge as a motivation for some acts by the disabled character, who tend to assert themselves in powerful ways despite their disabilities (e.g. *"You Don't Know Me Like That"* by Reshonda Tate Billingsley, published in 2007). P. Longmore (1987) suggests that portraying disabled individuals as "monsters" or criminals reflects the belief, to differing extents, that disability diminishes a fundamental aspect of one's humanity. The degree of disability determines how much the person is seen as less than fully human [12, p. 135]. According to Megan A. Conway & Norma Jean Stodden, "such depictions exemplify the "spread effect" of prejudice, assuming that an individual's disability negatively affects other senses, abilities, or personality traits, or that the total person is impaired. Like any identifiable group, whether ethnic, religious, or social, a percentage of individuals with disabilities break the law, are homeless, or abuse various substances" [5].

As the deformity of body is often linked to the deformity of soul, in earlier texts physical handicaps are turned into "the emblems of evil". P. Longmore (1987), being disabled himself, suggests categorizations of disabled representation stereotypical narratives. All of these echoes the following themes, cited in the article by Alijandra Mogilner in her article *"Disabled Literature – Disabled Individuals in American Literature: Reflecting Culture(s)"* (2014) [16]:

disability as an emblem of evil
 the disabled as 'monsters'
 disability as the loss of one's humanity
 disability as total dependency and lack of self-determination
 the disabled as being maladjusted

disability can serve as a form of compensation for another unique talent or ability
 disability leading to courageousness or achievement
 the disabled as sexual menace

Alijandra Mogilner in her article “*Disabled Literature – Disabled Individuals in American Literature: Reflecting Culture(s)*” quotes Carroll (1990), saying that “monsters are horror made visible” and singling out the monstrous attributes like:

Monsters are deformed and ugly.
 A monster’s physical deformities reflect thematic conflict – good vs. evil, for instance, or specific kinds of corruption.
 Monsters may be portrayed as possessed or lacking in completeness, existing as entities distinct from ourselves.
 Monsters are unnatural according to a culture’s conceptual scheme of nature.
 Monsters violate the scheme of nature.
 Monsters challenge a culture’s way of thinking (Mogilner, 2014).

Thus, according to the ideas of Miles Beauchamp & Wendy V. Chung, presented at 2009 Pacific Rim Conference “*Disabled Literature – Disabled Individuals in American Literature: Reflecting Culture(s)*” “the most obvious feature of monster characterizations is their extremism. In literature, physical disabilities are often depicted through facial or cranial disfigurements, as well as significant bodily deformities. Similar to the criminal characterization, these visible attributes symbolize a distortion of personality and a deformity of the soul. The physically or mentally impaired person has consistently been used as the “other”: the person to who other characters react, emphasizing that someone else is good or evil, or as an excuse for the creation of their own inner world. In many contemporary novels, characterization is often based on reaction and disabilities help create the matrix for that reaction” [2].

Disabled antagonists, resentful of their circumstances and harboring animosity towards those unaffected by affliction, frequently aim to seek retribution against the able-bodied. Until recent times, the prevailing societal perception of individuals with disabilities categorized them within a paradigm of being less than human, wicked, or

even monstrous. In the Victorian era, teratology, the examination of physiological developmental abnormalities, was showcased in collections of human curiosities. These exhibits featured deformed skulls or bones from individuals who had experienced disability in their lifetime, as well as peculiar garments worn by conjoined twins at birth.

Even if disabled individuals did not conform to the stereotype of evil, they could still be regarded with fear or dehumanization, as illustrated by a caregiver from the 1970s employed at a mental disability facility, who remarked, *“I’ve always said that what we need here is a vet, not a psychiatrist”*.

One of those who challenges the paradigm “beauty – goodness” / “ugliness – evil” is Oscar Wilde in his *“The Picture of Dorian Gray”*, in which an able-bodied handsome character hides the nasty traits of his nature in his portrait. The contemporary American texts divorce the disabled characters from the mark of the evil (e.g. *“The Bone Collector”* (1997) by Jeffery Deaver). However, for American literature it is endemic to portray the disabled characters out of the European monster paradigm. The characters in *“Uncle Tom’s Cabin”* (a slave Tom) by Harriet Beecher Stowe or *“To Kill a Mockingbird”* (Tom Robinson) by Harper Lee despite their health issues act in a much more moral way than white able-bodied people around.

John Steinbeck in his novella *“Of Mice and Men”* (1937) portrays a disabled person who is not a criminal or a malevolent monster, but may a migrant working on a farm, a tragic victim of fate. The later books portraying a disabled central character are Steven King’s (2001) *Dreamcatcher*, Susanna Kaysen’s (1993) *Girl Interrupted*, and of course, *Forrest Gump*, by Winston Groom (1986).

Political correctness, the raising of social consciousness, racial, social, and sexual correctness, and laws prohibiting most forms of discrimination, sexism, ageism, and segregation led to the reconsideration of the disability topic. Hollywood has reframed the issue of disability creating disabled characters with superpowers. Mental unwellness can be mixed with special senses, blindness with musical talent, blind weaponmaster becomes a great warrior. In his saga *“A Song of Ice and Fire”* by George

Martin, bed-ridden John Starks becomes the Raven, able to see the past and the future, fly in the body of birds and see with their eyes.

Social issues endemic to the American society and the US toponymy like ‘nature – a human being’, ‘temporality – eternity’, ‘urban area – countryside’, ‘bigger outer world – small world here and now’, religion and sin get represented in the short stories by Breece DJ Pancake, whose works get often compared to the ones by Ernest Hemingway. Pancake depicts American social characters in different life situations and through the prism of the small-locus philosophy.

Pancake’s fiction represents several circles of reality: the old times, prior to the mimesis II, the fictional reality or mimesis II, and the inner world of the protagonist, formed by experience, mimesis III. The short fiction, which is supposed to be what Gerard Genett calls analepsis is only theoretically such. The time, which gets presented in its common forms (the present, the past and the future), stays static as nothing changes, life doesn’t change. West Virginia is, relatively speaking, a swamp, absorbing everybody, belonging to its rural static space. The “world outside” exists, however, is never reached physically. *“Trilobites”* (1977) is a story built in circles, where the large circle is the dimension of a big history, having started million years ago and going on, and the smaller one is the current temporality of the locus described. Trilobites serve as a symbol of eternity, of something greater than the actual reality, piercing the layers of time: *“I look at Company Hill again, all sort of worn down and round. A long time ago it was really craggy and stood like an island in the Teas River. It took over a million years to make that smooth little hill, and I've looked all over it for trilobites. I think how it has always been there and always will be, at least for as long as it matters”* [20, p. 21]. According to *the Encyclopedia Britannica*, trilobites are identifiable as extinct fossil arthropods characterized by their unique three-lobed, three-segmented structure. These marine creatures emerged during the early Cambrian Period approximately 542 million years ago, establishing dominance in the oceans during that time. The main character searches for trilobites, seemingly attempting to connect with a broader significance beyond his immediate locality: *“I still can't find*

a trilobite,” I say” [20, p. 22]. The protagonist's personal narrative, along with his emotions and reflections, tend to unfold gradually within the scope of three coffee breaks at the café where Tinker Reilly's younger sister is employed. It is amidst the brewing pots of coffee that his initial, budding interest begins to develop towards the new subject. Ginny, managing to transcend the local confines of Michigan, remains within the constraints of the community's secular boundaries. While the reader perceives the protagonist's primal sexual attraction, it remains imperceptible to the character-narrator, who continues to deny his emotional evolution, clinging instead to the dominance of the confined reality over the boundless, broader scope of existence: *“She goes to the counter end and scoffs down the rest of her sundae. I smile at her, but she's jailbait. Jailbait and black snakes are two things I won't touch with a window pole”* [20, p. 22]. Basically, the coffee rounds symbolize the spiritual degradation, the triumph of baser self over the higher feelings: *“Tinker Reilly's little sister pours my coffee. She has good hips. They are kind of like Ginny's and they slope in nice curves to her legs”*; *“The girl brings Jim's coffee in his cup, and we watch her pump back to the kitchen. Good hips”*; *“Tinker's sister comes up with her coffeepot to make us for a tip. I ask her for an aspirin and see she's got a pimple on her collarbone. I don't remember seeing pictures of China. I watch little sister's hips”* [20, p. 22-23]. At the same time, the *“pictures of China”* make a separate symbol as the postcards themselves. Ginny sends postcards, displayed by the protagonist's friend, stretching the space of the narration to a larger world beyond Michigan and beyond the United States: *“She sends me postcards with alligator wrestlers and flamingos on the front”* [20, p. 21]. And his *“I don't remember seeing pictures of China”* point out the protagonist's concentration on locality, on the *“giggle”* of Tinker Reilly's sister in the café's kitchen. A paradox arises: while the immediate and unassuming setting of Michigan takes precedence, representing something tangible and present, the character-narrator simultaneously yearns for and ultimately attains a grand historical and eternal realm: *“I feel my fear moving away in rings through time for a million years”* [20, p. 37].

The setting itself prompts transformations within the characters. In accordance with Yu. Lotman, the characters' actions are influenced by their surroundings, and the transition of space accelerates their evolution in line with the norms of the new environment [15, p. 264]. Time and space serve as catalysts for change, altering the dynamics of relationships within couples separated by distance. On the final date with Ginny, the elevated feeling of love evolves into pure physical desire: *"I don't wait. She isn't making love, she's getting laid. All right, I think, all right. Get laid"* [20, p. 35]. Simultaneously, the baser emotions are anchored and associated with a specific aspect of the local geography – the girl from the café: *"I pull her pants around her ankles, rut her. I think of Tinker's sister. Ginny isn't here. Tinker's sister is under me"* [20, p. 35]. Another spatial symbol emerges, represented by the snake, which serves as a Biblical emblem of sin and signifies a violation of personal values or principles: *"I open my eyes to the floor, smell that tang of rain-wet wood. Black snakes. It was the only time he had to whip me"* [20, p. 35]. The snake represents a complex and enigmatic figure in both global folklore and religion, often associated with conflict, as noted by Propp [20, p. 216]. Its symbolism serves to sober the protagonist, catalyzing a reversal in his transformation and leading to a spiritual withdrawal from the tainted reality. This shift alters the protagonist's perception of Ginny, as the boundaries between present reality and eternal dimensions blur: *"I look a long time at the hollow shadows hiding her eyes. She is somebody I met a long time ago. I can't remember her name for a minute, then it comes back to me"* ([20, p. 35]. The main character realizes that the degradation of entire generations is attributed to the local environment: *"I picture my father – a young hobo with the Michigan sunset making him squint, the lake behind him. His face is hard from all the days and places he fought to live in, and of a sudden, I know his mistake was coming back here to set that locust-tree post on the knob"* [20, p. 36]. In the story's conclusion, an oncoming train emerges as a symbol of escapism and liberation. The protagonist prepares to depart, indicating his decision not to remain: *"I get up. I'll spend tonight at home. I've got eyes to shut in Michigan – maybe even Germany or China, I don't know yet. I walk, but I'm not scared"* [20, p. 37].

Thus, trilobites serve as a conduit to the genesis of the world, signifying the creation of enduring entities, much like the ancient hills that have witnessed countless years of human civilization. The familiar, specific localities – such as the house, a distinct spot on the street, the café, the car, the tractor, the cane, and the old mountain – are juxtaposed with the timeless, boundless macroscopic elements like the sky, the clouds, and temporal dimensions like “long before” and spatial dimensions “outside” of Michigan. Consequently, the reader encounters what is termed as a “splitting of the space,” where local objects of the two types of locality function as “indexes,” indicating a shift in spatial zones and signaling place, as described by Chertov [4, p. 140-155]. This “splitting” characterizes the emotional state and mindset, as the physical space of everyday life intertwines with the macroscopic realm of eternity.

Seasonality is clearly delineated as time progresses in Breece Pancake's short fiction: “*the black joints of river are frosted by this foggy rain*”; “*the bowling alley is closed for New Year's*” (“*A Room Forever*”) [20, p. 53], “*the passing of an autumn night*” (“*Fox Hunters*”) [20, p. 61], with love and the years counted by summers: “*many summers ago he touched <...>*”; “*the March wind spraying dust into little clouds*” (“*Hollow*”) [20, p. 39]; “*The air is smoky with summertime*” (“*Trilobites*”) [20, p. 21].

In “*Hollow*” (1982), the setting is divided into two distinct spatial layers: the underground mine and the contrasting world above it: “*Buddy was lost in the rhythm of the truck mine's relay; the glitter of coal and sandstone in his cap light, the setting and lifting and pouring*”; “*heard the pulley squeak in the circle of blue above*” [20, p. 39]. The mine is depicted as a confined space, referred to as “*a world of twenty yards*” [20, p. 42], intimately intertwined with the protagonist's life and the surrounding locality. He becomes ensnared in its “*deep tunnels,*” which dictate not only his existence but also shape the lifestyle of those around him [20, p. 39]. The pervasive darkness of the mine is symbolized by various elements: the dust carried by the wind [20, p. 39], the presence of “*sweet tobacco juice*” [20, p. 40], the sight of “*raw dirty faces*” [20, p. 41], airborne “*coal splinters*” [20, p. 41], the looming “*coal*

face” [20, p. 41, and the omnipresent dust swirling in “*up-down streams*” [20, p. 42]. The cold air seems to “*seal the dirt to his skin* [20, p. 42], amplifying the feeling of desolation within the darkness, which ultimately evolves into a sense of emptiness, both physical and emotional. This transformation from a space filled with tangible objects to an empty, hollow one echoes the concept of *atopy* [18, p. 2] or *non-site* [17, p. 136]. In contrast to “*Trilobites*,” where the vehicle symbolizes escapism, here it serves as a tool for revisiting the past, aiming to restore lost elements and people to their original geographical context: ““*Sal’s gone, yes, she is. Yes, she is. Couple of months, an’ we’ll show her, yes we will.*” *He saw himself in Charleston, in the Club, then taking Sally home in his new car*” [20, p. 50].

The protagonist of “*Hollow*” possesses an inverted perception, which agrees with Lotman’s idea that enclosed spaces are associated with darkness, while sunshine and light represent freedom. In Pancake’s narrative, the protagonist aligns himself with darkness and coal dust, inherited from his father, which becomes an integral part of his personal environment. Conversely, sunlight and the concept of “*new shoes*” are linked to somber events such as funerals [20, p. 45], the killing of a deer [20, p. 51], and the presence of violent animals at home [20, p. 52]. Lotman’s theory of “*memories*” as the reconstruction of a semiotic entity by its components [14, p. 18] is reflected in the story’s reliance on retrospection (“*Musta been sixty years ago*” [20, p. 40]) and the protagonist’s desire to maintain the present locality.

The storyline of “*A Room Forever*” (1981) revolves around the equilibrium between the constancy of the universe surrounding the protagonist-narrator and an eight-dollar room on New Year’s, representing the temporal setting constructed by the individual: “*I see the river in patches between buildings, and the black joints of river are frosted by this foggy rain. But on the river it’s always the same. Tomorrow starts another month on the river, then a month on land-only the tales we tell will change, wrap around other times and other names*” [20, p. 53]. Hence, space is intricately intertwined with time, echoing the viewpoint of V.N. Toporov, who posits that “*the center of space is the center of time... every comprehensive depiction of space*

presupposes the definition ‘here – now,’ and not just ‘here’” (as well as the definition of time is not solely focused on “now,” but on “now – here”)” [24, p. 223]. Natural space represents everlastingness, whereas the human-made world is defined by its limited existence. Multiple personal narratives, similar in nature, unfold successively against a backdrop that transcends their individual importance.

The dimensions of the town depicted in the narrative, including its streets, *Delmar*, the bar on First Avenue, the lobby's smoke, and the line of bustling taverns with their inhabitants' hardened fates, narrow down to the protagonist's room “with a kid playing a whore” [20, p. 58]. The girl is perceived as an outsider to the town's environment, a sentiment evident in the particulars of her depiction: “I can tell right off she is not a chippy. Her front is more like a kid who had a home once – jeans, a real raincoat, a plastic scarf on her head. And she is way too young for this town – the law won't put up with fresh chicken in this place” [20, p. 55]. The girl doesn't belong to the place or the profession of a hooker: “You aren't cut out for this” [20, p. 57]. The room, initially intended for New Year celebrations, has the potential to become a significant place capable of altering one's fate, save someone's destiny: “No, it's just I need a place. I got to stop moving around, you know?” [20, p. 57]. This room serves as a microcosm within the broader expanse of the town, which itself exists within the vast eternal landscape. It acts as a unique refuge for two complete strangers, forming a *heterotopia* – a distinctive space within the familiar social spheres known to the protagonist but unfamiliar to the girl [18].

The mirror acts as a representation of connection, holding the story shared exclusively between two individuals. The girl's absence in the mirror at the conclusion of “*A Room Forever*” signifies her escape, a departure that goes unnoticed by others: “I look for her in the mirror but she is gone. I would have seen her going out the front, so I head for the back door to look for her. She is sitting against a building in the rain, passed out cold. When I shake her, I see that she has cut both wrists down to the leaders, but the cold rain has clotted the blood so that only a little ooze out when I move her. I go back inside” [20, p. 59]. Here emerges the symbol of waste carried away

by the river, carrying with it the secrets of the town. Similarly, the rain washes away the girl's blood: *"I walk along the avenue thinking how shit always sinks, and how all these towns dump their shit for the river to push it down to the delta. Then I think about that girl sitting in the alley, sitting in her own slough, and I shake my head. I have not gotten that low"* [20, p. 59-60]. Water acts as a cleansing agent, removing the filth of local civilization. The wasted lives are transformed into water, which is eternal and remains even after the people are gone. According to Pellegrino, rural space embodies a collective entity of village life, while urban space is individual-centered, representing the subjective space of the individual [19]. The setting of *"A Room Forever"* is a town, which introduces some ambiguity in spatial interpretation. On one hand, the story's plot focuses on the intertwining destinies of two individuals at a specific moment. On the other hand, these destinies are emblematic of those shared by others in the same locality. The characters depicted in the story reflect the broader society of the town. Despite the protagonist's recognition of the eternal dimension, something greater than the lives around him, he ultimately returns to his native, imperfect space.

The girl's suicide attempt parallels the townspeople's efforts to escape, however, the means of escape is different – townsfolk choose the buses, whereas the girl chooses a blade. Altogether, there is no true escape, as the town is inherently intertwined with one's identity and will forever remain a part of them: *"I stop in front of the bus station, look in on the waiting people, and think about all the places they are going. But I know they can't run away from it or drink their way out of it or die to get rid of it"* [20, p. 60]. The internal structure of the story delineates hierarchical zones of confined space, overseen by *"the cops and the pimps"* [20, p. 56].

Once more in *"Time and Again"* (1983), a tension arises between the confined setting and the external world, which claims those closest to the protagonist. The flickering light in the kitchen symbolizes the son's hoped-for return: *"I left the kitchen light burning. This is an empty old house since the old lady died. When Mr. Weeks doesn't call, I write everybody I know about my boy. Some of my letters always come back, and the folks who write back say nobody knows where he got off to. I can't help*

but think he might come home at night when I am gone, so I let the kitchen light bum and go on out the door” [20, p. 83]. Conversely, the grunting of the hogs not only represents the stagnant atmosphere of the depicted space and the monotonous routine of the old man's life but also serves as a symbol of the fruitlessness of hope; in the mundane reality depicted, miracles do not occur: *“I pull up beside my house. My hogs run from their shelter in the backyard and grunt at me. I stand by my plow and look at the first rims of light around Sewel Mountain through the snowy limbs of the trees. Cars hiss by on the clean road. The kitchen light still bums, and I know the house is empty. My hogs stare at me, snort beside their trough. They are waiting for me to feed them, and I walk to their pen”* [20, p. 88]. The chill of the morning symbolizes the frozen state of reality that ensued following the death of the wife and the departure of the son. *“Time and again, I try to count and can't”*, says the protagonist [20, p. 88]. This recurrent cycle encapsulates the essence of his stagnant life, which has come to a halt. There is a series of actions that fail to bring about any real progress. The phrase *“I try to count and can't”* reflects the protagonist's emotional state, indicating his inability to focus and come to terms with the current situation, which has been shaped by the loss of his wife.

The story *“The Mark”* (1975) amplifies its Biblical symbolism, particularly in its portrayal of the child conceived in sin with the protagonist's brother, depicted as a creature akin to a beast or a rabbit: *“She felt the spot where the baby should be, closed her eyes, and tried to imagine her blood in the rabbit's veins”* [20, p. 90]. The notion of the beast is reiterated across multiple layers of the narrative – both in relation to her brother and within a tale within the main story: *“She remembered her brother Clinton holding a litter of baby rabbits close to his naked chest while the mowing machine droned behind him in a dead hum. Was that the summer she began to want him?”* [20, p. 90]; *““That baby was born lookin' just like a monkey,” Carlene said, bending herself to talk between Reva and the cage. “Momma swears it's the mark of the beast””* [20, p. 97].

Therefore, Breece D’J Pancake’s stories mirror several Biblical narratives: the creation of the world and original sin (“*Trilobites*”), a tale of a prodigal son (“*Time and Again*”), the archetype of the whore of Babylon or Mary Magdalene (“*A Room Forever*”), and the apocalyptic mark of the beast (“The Mark”). The macrocosm of West Virginia is portrayed as a confined structure, likened to a “glass ball,” which entraps the protagonists, binding them to their environment – a intrinsic part of their being. The spatial coding is inherent in the main characters, influencing their actions and determining their life trajectory.

Time in these narratives is portrayed as static, reflecting the idea that little changes within the depicted setting. The passage of time is marked by the four seasons – summer, autumn, winter, and spring – corresponding to the characters' moods and states of mind.

Spatially, Breece Pancake’s fictional landscape comprises two main layers: the timeless expanse of the natural world and the immediate setting of a town familiar to the characters. The town, encompassing buildings such as hotels, cafes, and houses, functions as a confined structure with seemingly permeable boundaries that the protagonists cannot breach. Despite being surrounded by familiar faces and the town's inhabitants, the protagonists remain passive observers, unable to transcend the perceived limits of their environment. However, they possess an awareness of the world's eternal nature and its boundless expanse, reflecting upon it as thinkers rather than actively engaging with it as agents of change.

The author’s texts are characterized by a rich array of symbolic elements drawn from biblical references and cross-cultural concepts. These symbols include light, representing hope; trilobites, symbolizing the creation of the world and transcending the confines of the town; a room, serving as a metaphor for shelter; the emptiness of the night, paralleling the emptiness of life; a rabbit, symbolizing sin and the mark of the beast; a snake, representing seduction; and trains and buses, serving as symbols of escapism, yet never utilized by the protagonists. Although the characters may perceive a way out, they lack belief in the potential for spiritual transformation through a change

in circumstances. In “*Trilobite*,” the repetition of three rounds of coffee mirrors the three circles of Hell in Dante's “*The Divine Comedy*.” Additionally, the sky often serves as a contrast to the mundane reality of everyday life, connecting the protagonist to the universe and integrating them into its broader scope.

In Pancake’s writings, space takes precedence over time. The spatial setting dictates the course of lives, which seem to repeat in succession, much like those that came before them. Within the portrayed locale, the eternal trilobite hills hold significance, while people merely come and go, replacing each other against the backdrop of the timeless landscape surrounding their town, unable to break free from the perpetual cycle of existence.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Disability in the British literature as a literature-source (e.g. “My Left Foot” by Christy Brown).*
2. *Disability in European literature (e.g. “Notre-Dame de Paris” by Victor Hugo).*
3. *Early National era in American Literature.*
4. *Environmentalism and eco-fiction today.*
5. *Eco-feminism in contemporary American writings.*
6. *Race and Ethnicity in the updated reality of the XXIst century world.*
7. *Alternative reality as a warning in American fiction.*
8. *Sci-fi of the XXIst century and its frontier.*
9. *Fantasy literature as a means of escapism or a platform for depiction of the major social issues of contemporary world.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Proletarian pertains to anything associated with the working class or proletariat.

Social determinism posits that an individual's behavior is shaped by their experiences within the society they inhabit.

The proletarian novel is a more overt advocacy for change compared to the social protest novel. It explores the potential and necessity of revolution, which could result in the overhaul of the existing social and political structure.

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PACE 10

**“WHAT IS A WOMAN?” GENDER ISSUES IN THE HISTORICAL PARADIGM
AND THEIR REFLECTION IN LITERATURE**

Key terms: *Patriarchal imperatives in the Oriental society, world power and control, the racial borderlands, the second sex, leading roles of moral authority, fight against male-dominators, joy and youth as female-associated values, post-feminism, possible identities, the sex-gender differentiation, colour-purple genre*

1. *Gender – culture – literature.*
2. *Feminist theory and its development. The waves of feminism in the Anglo-Saxon society. The kinds of feminism in American literature.*
3. *From women’s studies towards gender studies. The issue of perspectives.*
4. *The voices of the LGBTQ+ community – discarding the masks.*
5. *Male vision in a literary text.*

The term ‘gender’ gained significant traction in Western discourse following its introduction by American psychoanalyst and Doctor of Psychiatry, R. Stoller, in 1968. In 1975, American researcher Ning Koch suggested the term ‘feminology’. By the late 1980s and into the 1990s, alongside feminology and andrology, genderology emerged as a distinct field of study. The integration of the concept of gender into literary criticism was a gradual process, spurred by investigations in linguistics that focused on the distinctions between male and female speech. This differentiation theory, originating from R. Lakoff’s work “*Languages and Woman’s Place*” (1975), and dwells on the theory of two cultures – the male and female ones respectively [11, p. 85].

The literary criticism of the XXIst century is marked by sharpened interest of the researchers towards the gender issues. There comes the awareness that the philosophic category of a ‘*human being*’ is a too abstract entity, unless specified through the range of subcategories: ‘*an adult*’, ‘*a child*’, ‘*a boy*’, ‘*a girl*’, ‘*a man*’, ‘*a woman*’, ‘*an old man*’, ‘*an old woman*’, etc. As a result, the abstract anthropology falls backwards,

giving its way to gender studies, that within the human science sees two distinct starts – ‘*the man*’ and ‘*the woman*’ [12, p. 10].

Gender holds significant importance within literature, serving as a lens through which societal perceptions regarding the roles, constraints, and anticipations placed upon individuals based on their gender are elucidated. Its portrayal in literature serves as a tool for exploring intricate societal matters, advocating for parity, and challenging preconceived notions.

Literature is underpinned by culture. The mode of depiction of a woman in the context of gender history has always been shaped by the dynamics of the development of the society itself and the civilization as such. The beginnings of Western literature lie with Homer: the “*Iliad*” and the “*Odyssey*”. In the first book of the *Odyssey*, Penelope comes downstairs into the great hall where throngs of suitors in pursuit of her hand in marriage lounge while listening to a bard who, “sang of the Achaians’ bitter homecoming from Troy, which Pallas Athene had inflicted upon them.” Penelope, less than appreciative of the song, tearfully asks that he “leave off singing this sad song” which reminds her of her husband Odysseus, still absent nearly ten years after the end of the Trojan war, and sing something “which can charm men’s hearts...” Telemachus, her son admonishes her: Odysseus is not the only one who “lost his homecoming day at Troy” and orders her back into the house, “...and take up your own work, the loom and the distaff, and see to it that your handmaidens ply their work also; but the men must see to discussion, all men, but I most of all. For mine is the power in this household” (*The Odyssey of Homer*, Richmond Lattimore, trans).

Mary Beard, in “*Women & Power: A Manifesto*” says, “There is something faintly ridiculous about this wet-behind-the-ears lad shutting up the savvy, middle-aged Penelope. But it is a nice demonstration that right where the written evidence for Western culture starts, women’s voices are not being heard in the public sphere. More than that, as Homer has it, an integral part of growing up, as a man, is learning to take control of public utterance and to silence the female of the species” [1].

Tracing cultural/religious heritage back to the Greek and Judaeo/Christian traditions, ‘man’ is presumed superior to ‘woman’, preceding her in creation and significance. In Athenian (so-called) democracy – the golden age – women were confined to domestic tasks, forbidden to vote and the vast majority could not participate in any aspect of public life. Ironically, the worship of Goddesses did little to affect the narrow confines of life for Greek women while the occasional appearance of a Queen or powerful mistress of a public figure did not and does not materially affect the status of the majority of women.

Often, the comprehension of femininity was measured through the ‘body-soul’ paradigm or the internal contradictions of the body itself, and was predetermined by some particular religious’ aspects. In the Judaeo/Christian mythologies, God created ‘man’ and subsequently made woman out of his rib, an absurd but apparently persuasive denial of the fundamental role of woman in giving birth to the human race. The idea of “God’s creation Eve from Adam’s rib” (Gen. 2, 21-22) for a long time served as a justification for the unequal status of women compared to men in a Catholic society. Instead, Thomas Aquinas noted that God created a woman from the middle of a man's body, and not from his legs or head, with the purpose of their equality. The cult of the Virgin Mary in the Medieval society somewhat improved the position of the woman as a mother. However, Mary, mother of Jesus (of God), a virgin, is deprived of female sexuality, of her potency. And the ultimate betrayer is Eve, she is the cause of the fall of man from grace, for his perpetual damnation, to her can be attributed all human misery: Eve is responsible for ‘death’.

“You are the devil’s gateway; you are the unsealer of that forbidden tree; you are the first deserter of Divine law. You are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God’s image, ma”, says Tertullian, a Founding Father of the Catholic Church, AD 155-240. As a perpetual punishment for Eve’s ‘crime’, God decrees that “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee” (Genesis 3:16). ‘Eve’, woman as troublemaker,

untrustworthy, manipulative and devious, the devil's gateway is set against the 'docile obedient woman', the pure and virtuous Virgin Mary, a feminine ideal. Or in the Greek tradition Artemis the Virgin huntress or Athena the wise Virgin warrior, she too has her antithesis: Aphrodite, woman as lascivious sexual predator thus relieving men of their responsibility for their own sexual drive. In other words, if a woman behaves properly then he will, if she doesn't, then he can't: a man's control of his sexual drive is the responsibility of woman, laid at her feet whether or not she wants it. To put it bluntly, rape, a crime almost wholly perpetrated by men against women and children, is a woman's fault.

Women are victims of a false belief system that requires them to find identity and meaning in their life.

Meanwhile, in literature that for centuries almost exclusively belonged to men, the woman remains mute, from time to time appearing as "Eve or Mary, a sinner or a penitent, a shrew or a courtesan lady" [11, p. 52]. Geoffrey Chaucer, who played a significant role in formation of English literature at the time of the dominance of Latin and French texts, a woman, regardless of the author's sympathy, is still depicted through the prism male evaluation and her attitude to the man. Thus, gender 'virtue' associated with female decency, manifested in her desire and ability to love, comes to the forefront. Moreover, repeatedly in an ironic form, Chaucer mocks women's defects, which can hardly be called purely female and may well characterize both women and men. Among them is greed, the desire to have fun, tendency to lie: "*Some said that women wanted wealth and treasure, // 'Honour', said some, some 'Jolity and pleasure', // some 'Gorgeous clothes' and others 'Fun in bed', // 'To be oft widowed and remarried', said. // Others again, and some that what most mattered // Was that we should be cosseted and flattered. // That's very near the truth, it seems to me; // A man can win us best with flattery // <...> Freedom to do exactly as we please, // With no one to reprove our faults and lies*" [3, p. 105]. Chaucer's text is written in the first

person, where the author puts on the “mask” of a woman, describing what “women truly desire from life”.

Another perspective comes from the poetic mind of Byron. *‘Man’s love is of man’s life a thing apart, ’Tis woman’s whole existence’*, an insidious cliché that limits and belittles woman’s intelligence and their independence of mind and spirit [2].

These are but a few examples and although such assumptions about the status of woman may not be part of the quotidian, part of everyday sensibilities, nevertheless, whether conscious and examined or unconscious and unexamined, they are part of our cultural baggage: woman as secondary, subservient, woman as servant to man, expected to do his bidding domestically and sexually with implications that she is (or should be) weak, emotional, dependent and most particularly quiet: woman must ‘know her place and stay there’.

The monster mother-in-law is another offensive trope.

*Do you know the punishment for bigamy?
Two mothers-in-law.*

I was at a magic show, when after one particularly amazing trick, someone screamed out,

“Wow, how did you do that?”

“I would tell you,” answered the magician predictably, “but then I’d have to kill you.”

After a moments pause the same voice screamed out, “can you tell my mother-in-law?”

Office executive: “Sir, can I have a day off next week to visit my mother-in-law?”

Boss: “Certainly not!”

Office executive: “Thank you so much sir! I knew you would be understanding.”

The father’s-in-law jokes demean and belittle women in similar fashion.

Misogyny: the oppression and brutalization, throughout history, of half the world’s population by the other half. It’s the world’s oldest prejudice, perhaps it’s most invisible, certainly it’s most accepted as natural and ‘true’. Misogyny is like no other prejudice in that it lies at the heart of intimate relationships in families, between women and men and parents and children, while at the same time operating in the public domain.

A similar to the traditional representation of female images takes place in the English-language literature far beyond the gender history of the Middle Ages or the period of Romanticism. Despite the shifts in the rethinking of the role of the woman in society due to massive feminist movement and the new accents in inter-gender politics of the XXth century, the female images in literature continue to be represented through the prism of male emotions. The American literature of the ‘lost generation’ and ‘American dreams’ subconsciously continues to embody the same patriarchal ideals. Thus, F. Scott Fitzgerald creates a free, modern, cold, mercantile, selfish woman of the New Age of Jazz (Fitzgerald); Ernest Hemingway depicts two types, resembling the old ‘*Mary-Eve*’ paradigm that is the “ideal” female character and “disastrous” women. Ideality is associated with ability of a female protagonist to compassionate, obey, serve, please and bring joy to a man. Disastrous women, however, tend to control the man and in such a way ruin him.

“What is a woman that she should wake and sleep in other people’s lives?” asks Lauris Edmond, who is now recognized as one of the best New Zealand poets of the late twentieth century.

Politics and public office are another sphere where women attract vicious contempt. Prime Minister Helen Clark was abused for being childless and therefore cold and thus unfit for the Prime Ministerial job while current prime Minister Jacinda Aderm has been criticized for having had a baby – how can she concentrate on her job? – and for being unmarried and therefore unfit for the task. These are relatively mild versions of contempt, yet are men ever subjected to this kind of analysis? More vicious was the treatment of Hilary Clinton in the 2016 US election: the image of Trump as Perseus, decapitating Hilary Clinton as Medusa. Yet, it is not as if women are significantly in charge in our public domains. As a gender, women occupy a disproportionately low number of positions of authority in society. Misogyny is clearly ‘out of proportion to any objective or social conflict’. It seems that women are punished, humiliated, blamed... for what? For being women and having the temerity

to speak up, to claim public space. Mary Beard puts it this way, “... *it doesn't much matter what line you take as a woman, if you venture into traditional male territory, the abuse comes anyway. It's not what you say that prompts it, it's simply the fact that you're saying it*” [1].

The term **FEMINISM** originates from the French word “*féminisme*,” and as per the Cambridge online dictionary, it denotes “the belief that women should have equal rights, power, and opportunities as men and be treated similarly, or the actions aimed at achieving this equality.” It encompasses a cultural, political, or economic movement striving for gender equality. However, the terms “feminism” and “feminist” did not gain widespread usage until the 1970s when they began to be more commonly employed in public discourse. While its roots are largely Western, feminism is a global phenomenon, represented by various organizations dedicated to advancing women's rights and interests. Its goal is to emancipate women from subjugation, reshape society to eliminate patriarchy, and establish an inclusive culture that respects and fulfills women's aspirations and objectives.

For much of Western history, women were relegated to the confines of the domestic sphere, with public life being predominantly reserved for men. During medieval Europe, women were deprived of the right to own property, pursue education, or engage in public affairs. In late XIXth-century France, they were mandated to cover their heads in public, while in certain regions of Germany, husbands retained the legal right to sell their wives. Even into the early XXth century, women across Europe and much of the United States were disenfranchised, with several territories and states granting suffrage to women long before the federal government did. Women were also hindered from conducting business independently, necessitating the presence of a male representative, such as a father, brother, husband, legal agent, or son. Married women lacked authority over their children without their husbands' consent. Additionally, women faced significant barriers to education and were largely excluded from many professions. Regrettably, in some regions of the world, such oppressive restrictions on women persist to this day.

The trend of feminist writing and feminist literature was created by female writers and critics during the XXth century. The status of woman was normally decided by men before 1960s. Originally, feminism was a literary trend and then it became socio-political movement. The essential issues in feminism were: ‘*What does female want?*’, ‘*Who is the real feminist?*’ Modern feminism criticism deals with a variety of

female situations: a) the kind of language is used to write about female; b) the psychoanalysis of female value; c) the function of feminism. The leading Anglo-American feminist critic was Showalter mentioned the main interests in traditional critical concepts like characterization, motifs and theme.

Table 19 – *Waves of Feminism on the Global Scale*

WAVES OF FEMINISM	
<i>The pursuit of equality has persisted for over a century, marked by distinct waves in feminist history. Each wave has addressed various aspects of feminist issues with specific objectives in mind.</i>	
1	2
<p>THE FIRST WAVE OF FEMINISM (late XIXth-XXth century). <i>The initial phase of feminism emerged in countries including Britain, the Netherlands, Canada, and the USA.</i></p>	<p>The primary concerns revolve around women’s status and the suffrage movement, focusing on legal matters such as education and working conditions. In 1906, a British newspaper article employed the term “suffrage” to depict women’s fight for voting rights. In 1903, the first women's union was established in Britain</p>
<p>THE SECOND WAVE OF FEMINISM (mid 1960s-mid 1980s). <i>Originating in the United States, the movement evolved into a global phenomenon, manifesting in various regions such as parts of Asia, including Turkey and Israel, as well as other areas across Europe.</i></p>	<p>The primary goals of this wave primarily revolved around women’s liberation concerns, particularly addressing sexual orientation. However, the second wave of women's rights exhibited a broader perspective, encompassing issues such as marital rape and emphasizing specific legal inequalities like workplace discrimination, sexuality, and family matters. The formation of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women followed the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada. This commission scrutinized female conditions during the 1970s and 1980s, significantly impacting literary works. Authors' writings prominently reflected the struggles and rights of women during this period.</p> <p>The second wave of the women’s liberation movement ushered in numerous legal and institutional rights for women across various regions worldwide.</p>

Continuation of table 19

1	2
<p>THE THIRD WAVE OF FEMINISM or POST-FEMINISM <i>(mid 1990s-present)</i> <i>Occurs on a global scale.</i></p>	<p>In 1992, Rebecca Walker introduced the term “third wave feminism” in her essay, although the movement had been brewing since the mid-1980s. It arose from the dissatisfaction with the achievements of the second wave and as a response to the recognition of the diversity among women in terms of ethnicity, nationality, religion, and social background. Third wave feminists advocated for further changes in eradicating stereotypes, altering media representations, and redefining language used to depict women.</p> <p>The focus of the third wave shifted towards a post-structural interpretation of gender and sexuality, with race and class emerging as significant issues within the movement. It represented a culmination of efforts from previous waves, integrating their actions and ideologies.</p> <p><u>Key characteristics of the third wave include:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledging and embracing the multifaceted identities of contemporary women, supporting actions and self-empowerment, and promoting the construction of individual identities free from traditional gender roles. 2. Third wave feminists view themselves as survivors rather than victims within society. They reject traditional norms dictating emotional restraint, allowing women to express themselves authentically without fear of judgment or derogatory labels like “slut.” 3. The movement also celebrated the diversity of women's issues, although it faced criticism for allegedly focusing too narrowly on the experiences of middle-class, white, heterosexual women. <p>As the new millennium began, feminist theory engaged in dialogue with emerging ideas and struggles, incorporating elements glimpsed in earlier decades but gaining visibility in unprecedented ways.</p>
<p><i>The three waves of feminism have played a significant role in placing women at the forefront of their own social and familial experiences. However, in some segments of society and within certain families, there remain questions about how women can break free from the societal constraints that confine them within prescribed circles.</i></p>	

Although a specifically defined feminist movement only began to emerge towards the end of the XIXth century, the struggle for women's position in Anglo-Saxon society had commenced long before then.

Table 20 – *A Timeline of Struggle for Women's Rights in Britain*

DATE	ACHIEVEMENT
1	2
1135-1154	Matilda lays claim to the English throne, but faces competition from another contender named Stephen, leading to a prolonged civil war between the two.
1553	Mary Tudor ascends to the throne of England, marking the first instance of a woman ruling England in her own capacity.
1637	Amye Everard Ball becomes the inaugural woman in England to receive a patent, specifically for her innovation in crafting tinctures from flowers.
1660	Margaret Hughes achieves the distinction of being the inaugural professional actress, marking a significant departure from the previous practice of having boys portray female roles on stage.
17th century	In urban areas, boarding schools exclusively for girls are established, where they receive instruction in writing, music, and needlework.
1693	The inaugural women's magazine, " <i>The Ladies Mercury</i> ," is released.
1792	Mary Wollstonecraft releases " <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> ."
1804	Alicia Meynell is documented as the first female jockey on record.
1811	The inaugural women's golf tournament occurs in Scotland.
1842	Legislation prohibits women and boys under the age of 10 from working underground in mines.
1847	According to a Factory Act, women and children were restricted to working no more than 10 hours a day in textile factories.
1853	In Britain, an " <i>Act for the Better Prevention and Punishment of aggravated assaults upon women and children</i> " is enacted. Under this law, a man who physically abuses his wife can face imprisonment for a maximum of six months, with or without hard labor.
1867	Legislation prohibits women from working longer than 10 hours per day in <i>any</i> factory.
1868	Women gain their initial admission to universities in Britain, but they are granted certificates of proficiency instead of degrees.
1869	John Stuart Mill releases " <i>The Subjection of Women</i> ".
1870	Married women are legally permitted to retain their own earnings.
1878	In Britain, a recent law prohibits women from working over 56 hours per week in any factory. Additionally, another law enables a woman to seek a separation order from a magistrate if her husband exhibits violent behavior.

Continuation of table 20

1	2
1880	In Britain, three women receive degrees from the University of London, marking the first instance of women being granted degrees by a British university.
1882	In Britain, a law permits married women to possess property in their own name.
1884	Women make their debut in tennis at Wimbledon.
1888	Women gain the right to vote in county and borough elections.
1892	Isabella Bird is the inaugural female member of the Royal Geographical Society.
1894	Women are allowed to vote in urban district, rural district and parish councils
1895	Lilian Lindsay achieves the distinction of being the first woman in Britain to attain qualification as a dentist.
1898	Ethel Charles is the first woman in Britain to achieve qualification as an architect.
1899	Hertha Ayrton achieves the milestone of becoming the first female member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers.
1908	Aldeburgh becomes the inaugural town in Britain to appoint a woman as mayor, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.
1913	Emily Dawson is the first woman to serve as a magistrate in Britain.
1914	Britain appoints its first female police officers.
1917	In Britain, the Women's Royal Naval Service is established.
1918	In Britain, women aged over 30 are granted the right to vote provided they fulfill a property qualification.
1919	A recent law grants women access to previously restricted professions. They are now permitted to practice as solicitors, barristers, veterinarians, and chartered accountants. Additionally, they can serve as magistrates and participate as members of juries. The Women's Engineering Society is established. Britain also elects its first female Member of Parliament.
1922	Ivy Williams becomes the first woman to be admitted to the bar of England and Wales.
1923	Ethel Mary Colman becomes the first woman to hold the position of Lord Mayor in Britain, serving in Norwich.
1928	In Britain, all women aged over 21 are granted the right to vote on par with men.
1929	Margaret Bondfield achieves the milestone of becoming the first woman to serve as a cabinet minister in Britain.
1946	Lilian Lindsay makes history by becoming the inaugural female president of the British Dental Association.

Ending of table 20

1	2
1955	Barbara Mandell becomes the first female newsreader on British television.
1956	Rose Heilbron achieves the distinction of becoming the first female judge in Britain.
1958	Hilda Harding makes history by becoming the first woman to hold the position of bank manager in Britain.
1970	Britain enacts an Equal Pay Act.
1972	Rose Heilbron is appointed as the first female judge at the Old Bailey, which is the Central Criminal Court of England and Wales.
1973	In Britain, women are granted permission to join the stock exchange for the first time.
1975	The implementation of “ <i>The Sex Discrimination Act</i> ” renders it unlawful to discriminate against women in matters related to employment, education, and training.
1976	Mary Langdon achieves the milestone of becoming the first woman firefighter in Britain.
1979	Margaret Thatcher becomes the first woman prime minister of Britain.
1983	Mary Donaldson becomes the first woman Lord Mayor of London.
1995	Pauline Clare makes history by becoming the first woman to serve as a chief constable in Britain.

The National American Woman Suffrage Association formed in 1890 as a merger between the American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association. Feminist movements in the United States are delineated by their chronological emergence and classified into distinct ‘waves’. The concept of ‘waves of feminism’ popped up in the late 1960s to distinguish the evolving women’s movement from the earlier movement for women’s rights, which began with the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. The timeline presented below outlines the evolution of the feminist movement in the US across these stages, highlighting key dates and events [5].

Table 21 – *A Timeline of Struggle for Women’s Rights in the USA [18].*

DATE	EVENT
1	2
19 July 1848	The Women’s Rights Convention, often acknowledged as the inception of the First Wave of feminism.

Continuation of table 21

1	2
29 May 1851	Sojourner Truth delivered her renowned speech titled “ <i>Ain’t I a Woman?</i> ”
10 December 1869	Women obtained the right to vote and hold public office when the legislature of the Wyoming Territory enacted America's initial woman suffrage legislation.
15 May 1869	Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton established the National Woman Suffrage Association.
16 October 1916	Margaret Sanger inaugurated the inaugural birth control clinic in the United States.
18 August 1920	The Susan B. Anthony Amendment.
1960s	The onset of the second wave of feminism.
9 May 1960	The FDA approved the first commercially manufactured birth control pill worldwide.
2 July 1964	Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law, which prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex.
1990s	The beginning of the third wave of feminism.
Late XX th century	The “ <i>My Body, My Choice</i> ” movement started.
2010s	The inception of the fourth wave of feminism

The waves of Feminism in the USA are marked by own national leaders and a range of specific demands.

Table 22 – *The Peculiarities of Feminism in the USA*

DATE	WAVE	ACTIVISTS	DEMANNS	ACHIEVEMENTS
1	2	3	4	5
July, 1848-1920	First Wave <i>Place:</i> <i>Seneca Falls, New York</i>	Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott	The movement focused on securing rights for women in America.	The <i>Declaration of Sentiments</i> was signed, affirming women’s equality with men, and around a dozen resolutions advocating for various specific rights, including the right to vote were adopted. While the early women’s rights

Continuation of table 22

1	2	3	4	5
				<p>movement was intertwined with abolitionism, the passage of the <i>15th Amendment</i> in 1870 incensed some women's rights leaders who objected to Black men being granted suffrage before white women. Similarly, the women's suffrage movement largely sidelined or excluded Black feminists like Sojourner Truth and Ida B. Wells. Although the ratification of the <i>19th Amendment</i> in 1920 achieved the primary objective of the first wave of feminism – securing white women the right to vote – Black women and other women of color continued to face barriers until the enactment of the <i>Voting Rights Act of 1965</i>.</p>
<p>1963-1980s <i>Gained strength as a political force in</i></p>	<p>Second Wave <i>Was inspired by the</i></p>	<p>Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug</p>	<p>Advocated for a reassessment of conventional gender norms in society and the cessation of discriminatory</p>	<p>In 1963, Betty Friedan published "<i>The Feminine Mystique</i>," contending that women were constrained by the</p>

Continuation of table 22

1	2	3	4	5
<i>the 1970s.</i>	civil rights movement <i>and protests against the Vietnam War</i>		practices based on sex.	limitations of their roles as wives and mothers. The establishment of the National Women's Political Caucus occurred in 1971. Key milestones of the second wave included the enactment of the <i>Equal Pay Act</i> and significant Supreme Court rulings such as <i>Griswold v. Connecticut</i> (1965) and <i>Roe v. Wade</i> (1973) pertaining to reproductive rights. Despite Congress passing the Equal Rights Amendment in 1972, conservative opposition prevented its ratification by the required number of states. Similar to the suffrage movement, second-wave feminism faced criticism for prioritizing privileged white women, leading some Black women to form their own feminist organizations like the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO). Despite its accomplishments, the

Continuation of table 22

1	2	3	4	5
				momentum of the women's liberation movement waned by 1980, coinciding with Ronald Reagan's conservative ascendancy to the presidency.
1990s-2007	Third Wave	Rebecca Walker, Alice Walker, Anita Hill	In the early 1990s, efforts were directed towards addressing persistent issues such as workplace sexual harassment and the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles. Women were encouraged to embrace their sexuality and assert their individuality.	Third wave feminism aimed for greater inclusivity regarding race and gender, drawing inspiration from scholar and theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of "intersectionality." This idea explores how various forms of oppression, such as those based on race, class, and gender, can intersect and compound each other. Third wave feminists also looked to the theories of gender scholar Judith Butler, advocating for trans rights within this intersectional feminist framework.
2007-present day	Fourth Wave <i>Is relatively difficult to define – as some people argue it's simply a continuation</i>	Tarana Burke	Initiated by Tarana Burke in 2007, the #MeToo movement gained momentum in 2017 following revelations about the sexual misconduct of prominent film	Apart from holding influential men responsible for their behavior, fourth-wave feminists are focusing on the structures that enable such misconduct. They, like earlier

Ending of table 22

1	2	3	4	5
	<i>of the third wave – the emergence of the Internet has certainly led to a new brand of social media-fueled activism</i>		producer Harvey Weinstein.	generations in the feminist movement, are also wrestling with the notion of intersectionality, striving for inclusivity and representation irrespective of sexuality, race, class, and gender.

To sum it up, the feminist movement has consistently challenged a number of enduring societal issues. These include the patriarchal system, where women have faced control, pressure, and suppression both within and outside the family. It also encompasses self-realization, which involves recognizing one's own abilities, strengths, and self-worth. Discussions around sex and gender highlight how social norms and conventions dictate gender roles, while 'sex' refers to biological differences such as chromosomes and reproductive functions. Additionally, the Western thought traditionally associates 'the body' with females and 'the mind' with males. Furthermore, the feminist movement addresses the notion of women within the concept of subjectivity, advocating for women's rights to participate in activities beyond the domestic sphere, pursue education and careers, engage in various relationships, and dress according to the individual preferences.

The feminists of the XXIst century are more diverse. First and second wave feminists were predominantly white, middle-class women from the West, whereas third wave feminists represent a more diverse range of ethnicities, races, religions, and social backgrounds. In September 2014, the United Nations initiated a new initiative called *HeForShe*, with British actress Emma Watson appointed as its Women Global Goodwill Ambassador. The *HeForShe* campaign advocates for gender equality, emphasizing that it is not solely a women's issue but rather a matter of human rights.

Kinds of feminism distinguish: Radical feminism, Socialist feminism, Liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, Black feminism, Lesbian feminism, Bourgeois feminism, Materialist feminism, etc. African and Asian American women highlighted the issue of experiencing dual oppression based on both race and gender. Patriarchal norms within Oriental and African societies persist in maintaining their influence into the new millennium.

The concept of the New Woman pertains to a woman who has developed awareness of her own identity, her role in society, within the family, and in her personal life. Originating within the 1890s in North America and Europe, the term New Woman came to symbolize feminist ideals. It was first coined by Sarah Grand in her article *“The New Aspect of the Woman’s Question”* (1894). The term gained traction with the support of the British-American writer Henry James, who applied it to depict the increasing number of feminists, educated, and career-oriented women in Europe and the United States. The New Woman embodies women who assert control over their personal, social, and economic lives.

In American literature, feminism was bolstered and enhanced by prominent XXth-century writers: Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) with her novels *“Mrs. Dalloway”*, *“Orlando”*, *“To the Lighthouse”* and non-fictional works like *“A Room of One’s own”* (1929) and *“Three Guineas”* (1938); Mary Ellmann (1921-1989) in *“Thinking about Women”* (1968); Margaret Atwood in her novel *“The Handmaid’s Tale”* (1985), which contains criticism regarding religion, society and social roles. However, the theory of feminism widely borrows from French works, represented by a breaking revolutionary book *“The Second Sex”* (1949) by Simone de Beauvoir (1908- 1986); *“Speculum, of the Other Woman”* (1974, translated into English in 1985) by Luce Irigaray (1930-), where she criticizes the phallus, the male-centered point of view in the theory of psychoanalysis and her second book *“The Sex Which is Not One”* (1977), where she tries to present the absence of a female role in western society; *“Women’s Time in New Maladies of the Soul”* (1978), an essay by Julia Kristeva (1941-); *“The Laugh of the Medusa”*, an essay by Helen Cixous (1937-), which presents a model of thinking

and writing about feminist and women's literature, and where she called the term '*La ecriture feminine*' i.e. 'feminine writing'.

According to Andrew Teeuw [19], the feminist movement in the Western world was triggered by several factors:

1. The advancement of contraceptive techniques, which enable women to free themselves from male power.
2. Political radicalization.
3. A range of liberation movements and the breakage with traditional: i.e. church ties, American black ties, student ties, etc.
4. Secularization, decline of religious authority in all fields of secular life.
5. Educational opportunities for women.
6. New Criticism and structuralism in literature.
7. Disillusionment concerning the theory and practice of orthodox Marxist ideology.

The range of feminist liberation movements have led to the deconstruction of the social system within both class and racial paradigm.

Literary feminism classification encompasses the following aspects:

1. Biological dimension, placing the woman as inferior, gentle, weak and low.
2. Experience, presupposing that women are viewed within the limitations caused by menstruation, childbirth, breastfeeding, etc.
3. The weaker mastery of language as opposed to male mastery.
4. Unconscious undermining of male authority combined with revolutionary sexuality, subversiveness, diversity and openness.
5. Economic dimension based on gender, social and economic demands from men.

Sholwater (1988) distinguishes three phases of the tradition in female literary writing, namely:

1. Female writers, such as George Eliot, tend to imitate the aesthetic standards of a male-dominant society with a respectable position for a woman, depicted against the background of their household and community environment.

2. Radical female writers exhibiting ideas through experimentation.

3. Exposed self-awareness of women-writers, who having realized that they are not “*angels of the house*”, seek for emancipation.

Sholwater saw the analysis of literary feminism through a range of certain stages:

1) spotting the differences between the language of male and female writers additionally regulated by the cultural contexts (the aestheticism of the language, mysticism, modernity / old-fashioness, the depiction of negative things; 2) the creation matters viewed through cultural influence.

The behavioral patterns of lady-behaviour adopted from the young age are pre-conditioned by certain “formulae”, when “women are allowed to fuss and complain”, whereas men are associated with rage and less degree of correctness combined with individual seriousness. Within the vocabulary of adjectives, most are considered to favour women’s language are:

Neutral	Women only
Great	Adorable
Terrific	Charming
Cool	Sweet
Neat	Lovely, Devine

It is increasingly common for women to use men’s language in conversations. When using adjectives in conversations, women can choose between neutral language and women’s language. Men do not have this choice – not without consequences because of society and its prejudices. Men who use the so-called female adjectives will either be considered homosexual by society or are seen as making fun of women and women’s language.

At the beginning of the naughties, there was a shift in the attention from women studies towards gender studies. The emphasis shifted towards embracing individuality and acknowledging diversity in terms of gender and identity.

“Gender is not only an integral part of everyone’s personal identity, but a category that structures cultural and critical discourses” [16, p. 12].

The contemporary comprehension of the terms “sex” and “gender” differs from its traditional core viewed through the history within the dimension of social and cultural sciences. According to Haslanger, originally, the sex-gender differentiation in cultural studies aimed to distinguish gender as a sociocultural construct from the “biological” category of sex. This distinction sought to challenge theories, dating back to the Enlightenment, that portrayed sexual difference as an innate disposition, thereby legitimizing the social inequality between men and women as natural. In contrast, gender studies perceive sexual difference as an outcome, rather than an origin, of material conditions, social interaction, and symbolic practices that contribute to differences in the status of men and women. The relationship between the sexes is no longer seen as determined by a natural order; instead, gender relations are viewed as representations of cultural sign systems and are considered the result of discursive practices. Rather than focusing on the differences between the sexes, gender studies analyze the structures and mechanisms that assign value to these differences [7].

At present, sex-gender studies develop in several directions: “woman’s studies”, “man’s studies”, “leg and booty communities” (that is LGBTQ+). The researchers have introduced a range of new terms like “gender asymmetry”, “genderlect” (from ‘gender’ and ‘intellect’), “ethno-gender”, “genderology”, “gendercentrism”, etc.

Within the history of civilizations, marked by the dominance of the patriarchal societies, masculinity is viewed as primary, dominant force, while femininity is seen as secondary, less important and dependent principle. The existence of matriarchal societies, reflected in numerous ancient myths and images of pagan goddesses, get challenged being impacted by climate changes, wars, giving preference to the physical

force, militancy and analytical cold mind. The theoretical footage of the patriarchal societal architecture in the Western-European culture was shaped by Aristotle, who associated cognition and rationality with masculinity, whereas passive femininity was seen as chaotic matter, some lower substance. According to the philosopher, “the man represents a true form of humanity, while the woman embodies the imperfection of mind, inferior creature, a weak, secondary sex”. A similar view is echoed by the topologists of the Medieval times, for whom a woman is just a productivity tool. The split into the archetypes of Virgin Mary and sinful Eve, later transform into Beautiful Lady”, an embodiment of “pure perfection”, and mercantile, ambitious woman. In American literature it gets vividly manifested in the times of Romanticism, when Edgar Allan Poe creates the images of defenseless beautiful Girls-Southerners with distinct names Liligea, Linora, Eulalia, Virginia, and as opposed to them cold, ambitious and heartless ladies of the North. The archetypal motif for Poe is the “death of the beautiful woman”. The collapse of the South under the pressure of the North provokes nostalgia for the gone past, for the lost ideal. The Realism puts the gender issues on a different level. The “approximate”, “conventional” romanticized characters, living in the “second” reality, get substituted by typical images of men and women in typical conditions. There is no word “gender” yet, however, the level of objectivity allows to learn the epoch in details. Ethnic and gender accent puts a focus on the social gender roles of the characters.

Gender issues border with philosophical sphere, may be paralleled with neglecting of genre. Often gender problematics gets intervened with gender-love problematics. Traditionally the author investigates cultural-psychological types and the peculiarities of the deeds of both male and female characters, the motives of the actions, the type of thinking. The literary works may focus on the inner world of female characters, the female images through the eyes of a man or vice versa. The feminist approach in depiction has enabled to discover additional semantic levels even in the old texts. Gender approach has revealed a multiplicity of textual meanings, including natural physicality and psychological manner.

Gender as a complex and volatile thing builds a number of artistic connections: conceptual, situationally changeable, dynamically rearranging. Gender stereotypes embodied in culture, get reflected in the author's text and are manifested in gender types. Masculine text is characterized by the hierarchy and claim one possible truth, while feminine text is pluralistic and demonstrates a number of possible truths. A masculine text is built on semantic oppositions, while feminine is characterized by the construction of the existing cultural senses within the context. The literary texts either reconstruct a gender picture of the world, or represent social, cultural and philosophical phenomena.

A gender-marked text distinguishes a *text-pleasure* (or a satisfying text) and a *text-enjoyment* (which makes the reader reach the point of sadness, causing a feeling of being lost, leading to discomfort when the reading is finished). Both text-pleasure and text-enjoyment are the terms introduced by Roland Barthes in "*The Pleasure of the Text*" in 1973. A text-enjoyment shatters historical, cultural, psychological foundations of the reader, their tastes, values, memories, and causes a crisis in their relationship with the language. Barthes notifies physicality and the poetics of disruption, as well as "unspokenness", "unvoiced issues" in the female text, while Derrida speaks of unconsciousness, plurality and parody and a tendency to quote. Gender picture of the world is marked by the construction of the "I-narrative" within the feminine text, which is characterized by the polycentric gender positioning or its inversion. The gender the lyrical "I" is of "sliding" nature, with the focus both on self and the interaction with the others. The contemporary female writing mainly discards the traditional female roles of a "mother" and "pure perfection"-sample, formed on the bases of Virgin-Mary archetype, as well as a "destructive woman" based on Eve-prototype and suggested by the patriarchal society, giving its way to the "woman-personality" or just "personality".

Meanwhile, the specificity of the chronotope of the female text embraces a particular accent on philosophy, when the image extends growing to the scale of the universal issues, touches the questions of being. On the other hand, the feminine prose

holds a particular interest towards the family chronicles propelled by the desire to revisit the masculine picture of the world, substituting it with the feminine one. Within the dichotomy “big story – small story”, the archetypal chronotope of “parental home” changes its shape, losing its sacral status. In contrast to the male writings, the female figurative paradigm is devoid of “interpretive discourse”, depicting a fundamentally incomplete personality, seeking for further subjectivity in space. “Big history” is not problematized, becoming a form of manifestation of general trends in the world and national history. The dominant tendency is the depiction of a binary, polarized world dwelling on the dichotomy “male/female”, raising the issues of suppression, proving the disharmonious character of national and world history, and violating the chronotope of the family. The “pink” texts can represent some national typology, a family history, class peculiarities within the diversified society.

Gender issues get reinforced by racial issues. The ideal of white female beauty, an archetype of Cinderella, comes into conflict with African American community. Classical Barbie-dolls, blue-eyed and blondie-haired, install some particular beauty standard, unreachable for a girl of colour. Up to some point in history, the original white culture, being in many ways based on the Antique background, used to develop in its more or less pure state. The Age of Exploration, colonization and slavery inserted the people of different civilization, alien roots, into the white world, imposing “white” cultural standards in social, religious, festive (e.g. the celebration of Christmas) and philosophical dimensions. The literature of “colour purple” genre (the term taken from the novel by Alice Walker *“The Color Purple”* (1982)) focuses on the topics of violence, sexism, racism, colourism, religion, LGBT. The XXth-XXIst century black female writers like Lillian Hellman, Sherley Anne Williams, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Octavia Butler, Nikki Giovanni, Yaa Gyasi, Samantha Irby, Anne Moody, Warsan Shire, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor examine modern power struggles, the collapse of society, explore and complicate the questions of manmade borders, home, diaspora, focus on African-American history, racism, sexism, food policies, body shaming,

In the XXIst century the binary “male-female” opposition in literature get challenged by gay writings. The roots of gay literature are as Ancient as human culture. Since European literary tradition develops from the Antiquity, the LGBT themes first occur in Greek myths. Sexual affection between men or divine creatures may result in gender changes. Greek Gods and heroes such as Zeus, Apollo, Poseidon and Heracles reflect the validation of pederasty tradition. The allusions to homosexuality in Christian Anglo-Saxon society get manifested in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*” by Oscar Wilde. The contemporary LGBTQ+ narratives are diverse and appeal to the topics of alienation, societal prejudices, legal discrimination, AIDS, self-loathing, bullying, violence, religious condemnation, denial, suicide, persecution and other obstacles faced by the people belonging to leg and booty community. Among them “*Another Country*” (1962) by James, Baldwin, “*City of Night*” (1963) by John Rechy, “*A Single Man*” (1964) by Christopher Isherwood, “*The Boys on the Rock*” (1984) by John Fox, “*The Beautiful Room is Empty*” (1988) by Edmund white, “*Call Me by Your Name*” (2007) by Andre Aciman, etc.

Contemporary male writings represent rather deep well-rounded female characters. George R.R. Martin, the author of “*A Game of Thrones*” saga (1996-present) has created a gallery of very complex, dynamic female characters, each of which carries a different personality type. His characters, both central and sidekick, are not deprived of traditional roles, at the same time remaining powerful, combining femininity, intelligence, beauty and charisma that enable them achieve their goals (like Margaery Tyrell, Daenerys Targaryen, Cersei Lannister, Arianne Martell). The author also writes female characters who embrace masculinity and warrior traits while avoiding femininity (like Brienne of Tarth, Obara Sand, and Asha Greyjoy). George R.R. Martin breaks the tradition, still viewed in the works by Ernest Hemmingway and Francis Scott Fitzgerald, characterized by the depiction of a woman through the male perspective, his comfort and desires. Even the loving and loved Hemmingway’s women are *convenient* to the men, fulfill his needs. The women by George Martin have their own agenda. They can “play” social role, not losing their own personality.

Thus, the focus of the gender studies in literature extends from purely female issues, centered by the writings of the XXth century, towards the problems of the sexual minorities, weak men and strong women, ecofeminism.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *“The Second Sex” (1949) by Simon De Beauvoir.*
2. *Gender as a social construction. *
3. *Proto-feminist fiction.*
4. *The colour purple genre.*
5. *The manifesto of the contemporary American feminism.*
6. *Black feminism in contemporary American literature.*
7. *Latin feminism in American literature of today.*
8. *The development of gender-focused literature in the USA.*
9. *The features of male writings vs female writings.*
10. *Radical feminism. “The Dialectics of Sex” (1970) by Shulamith Firestone.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Abstinence-based sex education – a sex education curriculum that highlights the advantages of abstinence while also providing information on various sexual behaviors, contraception, and disease prevention.

Abstinence-only sex education - a sex education curriculum promoting abstinence from all sexual activities and excluding information regarding contraception or disease prevention.

Abstinence-only-until-marriage sex education - a sex education curriculum advocating marriage as the sole morally acceptable context for sexual activity; in cases where contraception methods are mentioned, the emphasis is usually on their failure rates.

Affirmative action – set of government or organizational policies and protocols designed to eradicate and forestall discrimination based on gender, race, sexual orientation, creed, or nationality. In educational and employment environments, these policies and protocols are frequently employed to enhance the presence of historically marginalized groups and foster diversity and inclusivity.

Allyship – involves actively leveraging one’s position (power, status, privilege) to advocate for social justice and equity, which also entails consistently upholding personal accountability to the needs of marginalized groups.

Asexual – refers to an individual who lacks sexual attraction to others or exhibits minimal interest or desire for sexual activity. Asexuality may be regarded as a sexual orientation or the absence thereof, depending on personal identification.

Burwell v. Hobby Lobby – In a 2014 Supreme Court case, it was determined that closely-held, for-profit corporations were permitted to discriminate based on gender by opting out of providing health insurance coverage for FDA-approved contraceptives in employee health plans. This decision effectively undermined advances in reproductive healthcare achieved through the Affordable Care Act.

Bisexual – refers to an individual who feels attraction toward more than one gender.

Bodily autonomy – is the concept that individuals possess the authority to make decisions regarding their own lives and futures and should be empowered to exercise this right.

Buffer zone – a buffer zone around a clinic offers legal safeguards against anti-abortion protesters, aiming to enhance clinic safety. The term also encompasses the legislation that defines and establishes these zones.

CPC – crisis pregnancy centers are facilities, often affiliated with religious organizations, that masquerade as full-service reproductive health clinics with the intention of misleading, delaying, and intimidating individuals seeking abortion services.

Campus SaVE Act – the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act is a component of the 2013 VAWA Reauthorization aimed at enhancing Title IX and the Clery Act. It mandates educational institutions to establish prevention programs, clarify their responsibility to inform survivors of their reporting options, and expand the scope of crimes that must be reported.

Clery Act – Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is a federal legislation enacted in 1990 that mandates all federally funded colleges to disclose crime data for incidents transpiring on and around campus. This includes developing proactive prevention education initiatives, publicly documenting all reported incidents in annual crime reports, notifying the campus community of known safety hazards, and affording specific rights to survivors of sexual assault.

Cisgender – is someone whose personal identity and gender align with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisnormativity – refers to the societal notion that cisgender identity is the standard, which is based on the widespread acceptance of the gender binary and assumes that being cisgender is the norm or default state.

Clinic violence – encompasses deliberate acts of violence, harassment, and intimidation directed towards abortion clinics, healthcare providers, and patients. Protestor tactics may include obstruction, intrusion, arson, bombing, stalking, physical assault, gunfire, chemical attacks, murder, racial slurs, deceptive practices aimed at confusing or harassing clinic staff, and attempts to lure patients away from clinics.

Coercion – involves using threatening or intimidating behavior to compel someone to participate in sexual activity.

Comprehensive sex education – sex education curriculum that provides age-appropriate and medically accurate information on various topics, including sexuality, human development, decision-making, consent, abstinence, contraception, bodily autonomy, healthy relationships, and disease prevention. This curriculum also encourages students to explore their own values, goals, and options.

Consent – refers to the clear, enthusiastic, and ongoing expression of mutual desire and agreement between individuals to engage in a sexual activity.

Cultural appropriation – is when individuals from a dominant culture adopt aspects of a non-dominant or marginalized culture in a manner that lacks respect for their significance, fails to acknowledge the original source, and often perpetuates oppressive stereotypes.

ERA – Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a suggested amendment to the U.S. Constitution that seeks to prevent the refusal of equal rights based on gender.

Emotional labor – entails the effort of regulating one's emotions, expressions, and responses as an integral aspect of a job. This term is frequently used to describe the emotional efforts required when interacting with customers in service-oriented professions.

FACE Act – Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act is a legislation passed in 1994 that establishes federal civil and criminal consequences for deliberately using force or threatening force to harm, intimidate, or obstruct access to reproductive health services.

Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF) – established in 1987, the nonprofit organization is at the forefront of employing research and advocacy to champion women's equality, non-violence,

and the eradication of social and economic injustice. FMF serves as the parent organization of Feminist Campus.

Fear-based sex education – sex education curriculum that aims to regulate the sexual conduct of young individuals by prioritizing abstinence and promoting fear, shame, and guilt through negative narratives surrounding sexuality. It often includes misleading information about condoms and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), as well as biased perspectives on gender, sexual orientation, marriage, family dynamics, and pregnancy.

Feminism – feminism is the belief in and pursuit of political, economic, and social equality between genders, typically conveyed through organized efforts, research, education, and activism.

Feminist – is someone who supports or promotes the principles and goals of feminism.

Fetal personhood laws – legislation that defines a fetus as an individual with its own rights, responsibilities, and legal standing. This encompasses statutes like “fetal heartbeat” laws, which prohibit abortion once the heartbeat of the embryo or fetus is detectable, often around six weeks into pregnancy.

Griswold v. Connecticut – the 1965 Supreme Court ruling that affirmed the right of married couples to access contraception, thereby establishing a constitutional right to privacy. This decision laid the groundwork for later Supreme Court judgments that expanded access to contraception to individuals beyond marital relationships.

Gaslighting – is a form of emotional manipulation or abuse that involves the creation of an intricate web of falsehoods aimed at causing someone to doubt their own perception of reality.

Gay – is a term used to describe someone who primarily feels attraction towards individuals of the same gender.

Gender – refers to the societal constructs of masculinity and femininity, encompassing the physical, social, and behavioral traits associated with each.

Gender binary – refers to the social construct that categorizes individuals strictly into two distinct genders, male and female, without much room for variation or flexibility in understanding one's own gender identity. It reinforces strict societal expectations and roles associated with each gender.

Gender gap – refers to the disparity or difference between men and women, particularly in areas such as employment, wages, education, and representation in leadership positions. It reflects the unequal treatment and opportunities experienced by individuals based on their gender.

Gender roles – are the societal expectations and norms regarding the behaviors, attitudes, and responsibilities that are typically associated with individuals based on their gender identity or perceived gender. They dictate what is considered appropriate or expected behavior for men and women within a particular culture or society.

Genderqueer – umbrella term for gender identities falling outside of the gender binary; sometimes used interchangeably with non-binary, genderqueer is more likely to indicate a politically charged understanding of one's identity.

Glass ceiling – is a metaphor used to describe the unseen, often unacknowledged barrier that prevents individuals from marginalized groups from reaching the upper echelons of success or advancement within a hierarchical structure.

Heteronormativity – refers to the societal belief that heterosexuality is the standard or default sexual orientation. It is based on the widespread acceptance of the gender binary and assumes heterosexuality as the norm.

IPV – intimate partner violence, also known as domestic violence, encompasses physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional abuse inflicted by a current or former partner. It includes behaviors such as physical violence, sexual assault, stalking, and psychological aggression.

Internalized misogyny – women's projection of misogyny onto other women/girls, or oneself, via behavior, attitudes, or words. Colloquially, internalized misogyny often presents as being “not like the other girls” or a “pick-me.”

Intersectionality – coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, refers to the framework that highlights how various forms of social inequality and oppression intersect and compound each other, leading to new forms of discrimination and privilege.

Intersex – is an inclusive term that encompasses any variations in genitalia, hormones, internal anatomy, or chromosomes that deviate from the strict biological expectations of the gender binary. It is also used to refer to the diverse community of individuals who have differences in reproductive anatomy or sex traits.

Invisible labor – refers to unpaid, unacknowledged, and often unnoticed work, typically associated with household maintenance and childcare, predominantly performed by women.

Marginalization – refers to the act of assigning a person, group, or concept to a position of powerlessness or insignificance within society, often pushing them to the outskirts or periphery of societal norms and structures.

Mental load – refers to the unseen work that is cognitive rather than physical, involving the mental effort and planning required to manage household responsibilities.

Microaggressions – are subtle, often unintentional, and typically indirect slights or insults directed at marginalized groups, which are commonplace yet often go unnoticed.

Misogyny – the social phenomenon of supporting and perpetuating patriarchy.

Monogamy – a relationship practice in which someone partners with only one other person at a time.

Nonbinary – umbrella term for any and all identities that fall outside of the gender binary.

Pansexual – someone who experiences attraction to others regardless of their sex or gender.

Patriarchy – the social system that privileges men – politically, financially, morally, and socially – so as to establish a society in which power and wealth are predominantly controlled by men.

Pink tax – the gender-based pricing system that charges more for items marketed to women than similar or identical products marketed to men.

Polyamory – is a relationship practice where individuals may form partnerships with multiple people in different configurations.

Privilege – refers to the inherent social or cultural advantages that individuals possess by virtue of their birth (such as white privilege, male privilege, or cis privilege) or by acquiring certain benefits (such as educational or wealth status).

Psychological aggression – the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with intent to emotionally or mentally harm or exert control over another person.

Queer – a reclaimed term sometimes used by members of the LGBTQIA+ community to identify their sexuality or gender, or as an umbrella term to refer to the community as a whole.

Rape culture – complex set of beliefs that create a social environment in which sexual violence and coercion are pervasive and normalized.

Reproductive justice is a framework that recognizes personal bodily autonomy, the freedom to decide whether to have children, and the capability to raise children in secure and supportive environments as fundamental human rights. Originating in 1994, this concept was developed by a coalition of Black women. It focuses on addressing the unique needs of women of color and other marginalized communities that had been overlooked or disregarded by the traditional reproductive rights movement.

Reproductive rights – encompass efforts aimed at securing individual legal rights to reproductive healthcare, with a primary focus on preserving the legality of abortion and enhancing access to contraception.

Second shift – refers to the additional, often unnoticed labor that women are expected to perform at home after completing their formal employment.

Self-care – involves the conscious effort or routine of prioritizing and attending to one's physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or spiritual well-being.

Sex – refers to the socially constructed categories of male, female, and intersex, which are identified based on physical distinctions.

Sexism – the social ideology supporting and upholding patriarchy.

Sexual abuse – any situation in which someone is forced to participate in a degrading sexual activity; this term typically refers to behavior committed on or towards a minor.

Sexual assault – umbrella term for any non-consensual touching or sexual activity, including rape and some forms of sexual harassment; legal definitions of sexual assault vary among states and the federal government.

Sexual harassment – unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual objectification – the act of viewing and/or treating someone solely as an object of sexual desire.

Slut-shaming – the practice of criticizing others – often women and girls – to make them feel bad, guilty, or inferior for their actual, alleged, or perceived sexual behavior.

Stalking – refers to the repeated and unwelcome attention or contact that induces fear or apprehension for someone's safety.

Title IX – Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that bars sex and gender discrimination in educational programs or activities funded by the federal government. It mandates schools to address and prevent sexual violence, including harassment based on gender, and to promote gender equality in school athletics.

Title X – Title X Family Planning Program was created in 1970 under the Public Health Service Act to finance preventive healthcare for millions of low-income individuals. It stands as the sole federal grant initiative specifically designated for comprehensive family planning services.

Transgender – is a broad term encompassing individuals whose personal sense of gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth or with the traditional gender binary. It can also be used as an adjective to describe individuals who identify with this community.

Victim blaming – involves attributing responsibility or fault to victims of crimes for what they have experienced. This often occurs in cases of sexual assault, where survivors may be questioned about their clothing choices or actions, implying that their behavior somehow justified or invited the assault.

Voter disenfranchisement – refers to the practice of limiting or denying the voting rights of individuals or certain groups, thus preventing them from participating in the electoral process.

Wage gap – refers to the disparity in earnings or wages based on factors such as race, gender, or other identity-related characteristics. This discrepancy disproportionately affects marginalized individuals, particularly those who experience intersecting forms of oppression.

Wealth gap – refers to the uneven distribution of assets, which encompass property ownership, business ventures, investments, and financial obligations such as debt. This disparity is often observed along lines of racial and gender inequality.

(Adopted from Feminist Glossary. E-source: URL: <https://feministcampus.org/resources/feminist-glossary/>)

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PACE 11

CONTEMPORARY ECOFICTION AND ITS SOURCES. ECOFEMINISM

Key terms: *Environmental crisis, human awakening, the power of eco-poetry, nature poetry, nature-oriented fiction, nature-oriented novel, the other-than-human world, environmentalism, environmental justice, evolutionary biology, ‘tree-hugging’ images; versions of ‘deep ecology’, first-wave ecocriticism; environmental justice, ‘environmental racism’, bearers of toxification, ecotheory, violence, impact, climate change, trace, catastrophe without event, anthropogenic climate change, planetary ecosystems, ecological reality, the concept of ‘ecophobia, ecogothic, human-animal divide, planetary interconnectedness*

1. *Rethinking of capability of words within the nature-oriented fiction as a response to the challenges of the environmental crisis.*
2. *The sources of the environmentalism in fiction.*
3. *‘Green’ poetry as a most productive genre of the contemporary ecological literature.*
4. *Ecological manifestation in the English language.*
5. *Ecofeminism as a field of feminism.*

The relationship between people and the environment has long been documented through a range of literary works. In the introduction to *Natural Discourse: Toward Ecocomposition*, Edward White refers to biblical accounts like Adam and Eve’s experience in the Garden of Eden and Odysseus’ perilous voyage across the Mediterranean Sea in Homer’s *“Odyssey”* as ancient literary instances where human encounters with nature are depicted. *“Green”* issues have been studied from multiple points of view by sociologists, philosophers, linguists and literary critics. The researches of the XXIst century focus on ecosophy (or ecological philosophy), Judo-Christian attitude to nature and *“the unity of man and nature in the context of various spiritual traditions, such as Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, the religions of the aborigines of America, Africa and Australia”*. The concepts of *“deep ecology”*,

feminism and wild nature in the nuclear age were retraced in a similar work by Bill Devall and George Sessions *Deep Ecology* (1985, 2005) [7]. Neological representations of the concept of ECOLOGY and its structural-semantic peculiarities in English media discourse were analyzed by M. A. Chepurnaya in 2020. The aspects of environmental education were investigated by A. Guslyakova, N. Valeeva and O. Vatkova in 2020. Linguistic representation of the concept ENVIRONMENT in the English language was studied by N.V. Kuznetsova and A.N. Liebidieva in 2012. The issues of eco-ethical poetry were highlighted by Harriet Tarlo (Sheffield Hallam University) in his article *Recycles: the Eco-Ethical Poetics of Found Text in Contemporary Poetry* (*Journal of Ecocriticism*, 1(2) July, 2009) [20].

Ecocriticism, often known as “Green Studies,” emerged as a relatively recent addition to literary theory, mainly in the mid to late XXth century. However, a notable surge in environmental writing can be traced back to the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries in American culture. Thomas *Jefferson’s “Notes on the State of Virginia”* (1785) stands out as a seminal work reflecting the value colonial America attributed to the natural environment. Jefferson, in describing “*The Natural bridge,*” emphasizes its sublime nature, suggesting that people perceived the landscape’s beauty as profoundly inspiring and uplifting.

By the 1820s and 1830s, influenced by British Romantics like Wordsworth and Coleridge, American transcendentalists such as Thoreau began writing intimately about nature and its potential to foster spiritual and intellectual growth within society. Prior to the formal emergence of ecocriticism as a theoretical study in literature, numerous naturalists, environmental thinkers, advocates, writers, and essayists made significant contributions, including John Muir, John Burroughs, Alexander von Humboldt, Theodore Roosevelt, and Gifford Pinchot, among others [6].

Although Charles Darwin’s “*Origin of Species*” (1859) positioned humanity within the natural world, the roots of “nature poetry” trace back to pastoral and later romantic traditions found in both Eastern and Western literary traditions. Pastoral literature, characterized by the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as depicting a shepherd society free from the complexities and corruption of urban life, lays the groundwork for this genre. In contrast, eco-poetry highlights the interplay between nature and culture, language, and perception.

“Ecofiction’s roots are as ancient as pictograms, petroglyphs, and creation myths. Nature forms the very core of Native American, Australian Aboriginal, pagan, Celtic, Taoist, and many other cosmologies and their associated oral and written literature. These legends and the values they represent are echoed in contemporary ecofiction by indigenous and white authors alike. They can be found in classical literature such as Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Latin pastoralism. Animal legends, human-animal metamorphoses, and pastoralism are common to many oral traditions and much written folklore.

Medieval European literature is rich in naturalistic content and tone, as evidenced by Arthurian lore, the *Chanson de Roland*, *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the works of St. Francis of Assisi, and others. The “green Shakespeare” includes at least *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *A Winter’s Tale*, and *As You Like It*. Contemporary green adaptations of Shakespeare include Gloria Naylor’s *Mama Day* (1988), Jane Smiley’s *A Thousand Acres* (1991), and Jonis Agee’s *Strange Angels* (1993).

The focus on nature in Romanticism, traditional pastoralism, and transcendentalism influenced ecofiction, but critics tend to disagree about whether the fiction associated with these movements is truly ecological” [9].

Ecofiction has ancient literary origins and continues to flourish with diverse expressions. Concerns about human impact on the natural world have been present since ancient sacred texts. Arne Naess critiques the Judeo-Christian perspective on nature, highlighting the belief in human superiority as intermediaries between the creator and creation. This belief, according to Naess, led humans to view themselves as supreme beings, using other living beings solely to fulfill their often-irrational needs. This viewpoint denies the right to life to all other animals and plants, leading to the extinction of entire species [14, p. 187]. The contemporary concepts, on the contrary, proclaim “the Earth above all”. N. Reimers concludes: “our planet comes first, and the human, whose social and other opportunities are limited, comes second... This is no longer a science, but a biocentric social movement” [16, p. 22].

The environmental movement of the 1960s began to question the human-centered perspective of the natural world, advocating for a more ecologically oriented mindset. This shift led to increased interest in studying planetary ecology and understanding the interactions between organisms and their environments, as well as the underlying principles of environmental change.

While eco-fiction predominantly emerged in the XXth and early XXIst centuries, its foundations can be traced back to earlier times.

Table 23 – *The Periodization of Ecofiction Development*

THE LITERARY PERIOD	REPRESENTATIVES AND THEIR WORKS
1	2
OLD LITERATURE (is endemic for the oral texts on different ethnical background)	Myths: Native America, Aboriginal, pagan, Celtic, Taoist cosmology. Antiquity: Greek and Latin literature
MEDIEVAL EUROPEAN LITERATURE	the <i>Chanson de Roland</i> , <i>Beowulf</i> , <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , the works of St. Francis of Assisi, and others
ENGLISH RENAISSANCE	<i>The Tempest</i> , <i>King Lear</i> , <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , <i>A Winter's Tale</i> , and <i>As You Like It</i> by William Shakespeare
BRITISH ROMANTICISM (as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution)	The writers-representatives of the period + Kenneth Grahame's <i>The Wind and the Willows</i> (1908)
XIXth-CENTURY BRITISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE	BRITISH: <i>After London: or, Wild England</i> (1885) by Richard Jefferies, William Morris's <i>News from Nowhere</i> (1890), <i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i> (1896) by H. G. Wells; W.H. Hudson's (Argentinian-English writer) <i>A Crystal Age</i> (1887), AMERICAN: Susan Warner's <i>The Wide, Wide World</i> (1850), Herman Melville's <i>Moby Dick</i> (1851), Melville's Polynesian trilogy (1846 – 49) consists of <i>Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life</i> (1846), <i>Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas</i> (1847), and <i>Mardi and a Voyage Thither</i> (1849); Nathaniel Hawthorne <i>The Blithedale Romance</i> (1852), Mark Twain's <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> (1884); <i>Green Mansions: A Romance of the Tropical Forest</i> (1904), <i>The Purple Land</i> (1885), <i>A Child of Nature</i> (1901) by Hamilton Wright Mabie; <i>Main Traveled Roads</i> (1891) by Hamlin Garland, Frank Norris's <i>The Octopus</i> (1901); <i>The White Heron and Other Stories</i> (1886) and <i>The Country of Pointed Firs</i> (1896) by Sarah Orne Jewett

Continuation of table 23

1	2
TWENTIETH CENTURY	<p>Around the turn of the twentieth century the Appalachians proved to be fertile ground for several proto-ecofeminists, among them Mary Noailles Murfree (aka Charles Egbert Craddock), Grace MacGowan Cooke, Lucy Furman, Emma Bell Miles, Louise R. Baker, Marie Van Vorst, Amélie Rives Troubetzkoy, and Alice MacGowan.</p> <p>Cooke's <i>The Power and the Glory</i> (1910), Miles's <i>The Spirit of the Mountains</i> (1905), and Murfree's <i>In the Tennessee Mountains</i> (1884) and <i>His Vanished Star</i> (1894); Mary Austin's <i>The Land of Little Rain</i> (1903), <i>Lost Borders</i> (1909), <i>The Basket Woman</i> (1910), <i>The Ford</i> (1917), <i>The Mother of Felipe and Other Early Stories</i> (1950); Jack London's <i>The Son of the Wolf</i> (1900), <i>The God of His Fathers</i> (1901), and <i>Children of the Frost</i> (1902), <i>The Call of the Wild</i> (1903), <i>To Build a Fire</i> (1908), <i>A Daughter of the Snows</i> (1902), <i>Smoke Bellew</i> (1912); Willa Cather's <i>Alexander's Bridge</i> (1912), <i>O Pioneers!</i> (1913), <i>Earth in My Ántonia</i> (1918), <i>The Song of the Lark</i> (1915), <i>Obscure Destinies</i> (1932); Frank Waters's <i>Fever Pitch</i> (1925), <i>The Wild Earth's Nobility</i> (1935), <i>Below Grass Roots</i> (1937), and <i>The Dust Within the Rock</i> (1940), <i>Book of the Hopi</i> (1963), <i>The Lizard Woman</i> (1984); Josephine Johnson's <i>Now in November</i> (1934), <i>The Inland Island</i> (1969); Marjory Stoneman Douglas's <i>The Everglades, River of Grass</i> (1947); Zora Neale Hurston's (African-American) <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> (1937); Clifford Simak <i>City</i> (1952), <i>Way Station</i> (1963); Edward Abbey's <i>Jonathan Troy</i> (1954), <i>Fire on the Mountain</i> (1962), <i>Black Sun</i> (1971); Jack Kerouac <i>The Dharma Bums</i> (1958), Gloria Naylor's <i>Mama Day</i> (1988), Rick Bass's <i>The Watch</i> (1989), etc.</p>

Ending of table 22

1	2
CONTEMPORARY	Douglas Coupland's <i>Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture</i> (1991) and <i>Microserfs</i> (1995); Jane Smiley's <i>A Thousand Acres</i> (1991), and Jonis Agee's <i>Strange Angels</i> (1993); <i>The Plague Years</i> (1997) by Ann Benson, <i>The Testament of Yves Gundron</i> (2000) by Emily Barton, George Saunders's <i>Pastoralia</i> (2000), T.C. Boyle's <i>Tooth and Claw</i> (2005)

Jim Dwyer suggests that within the diverse literary landscape, akin to an old-growth mixed forest, various genres and subgenres have coevolved and depend on each other. It's typical for environmentally conscious writers to express themselves through multiple forms such as poetry, fiction, literary or philosophical essays, environmental activism, and natural history. Authors like Edward Abbey, Mary Austin, Jim Harrison, Barbara Kingsolver, Rick Bass, and Leslie Marmon Silko exemplify this versatility in their nature-oriented works [9, p. 3].

Ecofiction comprises a diverse blend of styles, drawing primarily from modernism, postmodernism, realism, and magic realism. It can be found across various genres, including mainstream, westerns, mystery, romance, and speculative fiction. Speculative fiction encompasses science fiction and fantasy, often blending elements of realism, as seen in the works of authors like Ursula K. Le Guin. According to Jim Dwyer in "*Wild Books Are: A Field Guide to Ecofiction*," it's worth noting that magic realism and speculative fiction frequently incorporate fantastical elements to offer readers alternative perspectives on the nature of reality, exemplified by works such as Kim Stanley Robinson's "*Californias*" or "*The Mars Trilogy*" [9, p. 3].

Mike Vasey defines ECOFICTION as narratives set in fictional environments that embody the characteristics of natural ecosystems. These stories may revolve around human interactions with these ecosystems or exclude humans entirely. Nonetheless, the narrative immerses the reader in the natural world, rendering it vivid and dynamic. Vasey emphasizes that, ideally, the depiction of landscapes and ecosystems, whether fantastical or realistic, should strive for authenticity, and the narrative structure should align with ecological principles.

Patrick D. Murphy distinguishes between “*nature-oriented literature*” and “*environmental literature*.” He defines nature-oriented literature as works that either focus on nonhuman nature itself as the subject, character, or primary setting, or explore human interactions with nature, human philosophies regarding nature, or the potential for engaging with nature within or despite human culture. On the other hand, environmental literature, according to Murphy, goes beyond describing the natural history of a region and delves into the ways in which pollution, urbanization, and other human interventions have impacted the land or environment. It also addresses human efforts to protect or advocate for wild and endangered nature [13, p. 6–7].

Poetry stands out as one of the most fertile genres within ecofiction, consistently reflecting upon humanity’s connections with the broader world. The realm of eco-poetry encompasses various terms, including *topo-poetics* (focusing on place-making), *geo-poetics* (exploring Earth’s creation), and *ethnopoetics* (a term coined by Jerome Rothenberg in 1968, referring to non-Western, non-canonical poetics, often originating from ancient and indigenous cultures). The prefix “*eco-*” originates from the Greek word “*oikos*,” meaning “*household*,” which aligns with the equation “*our earth = our home*.” The term “*topo*” is derived from “*topos*,” meaning “*the place*,” while the Greek prefix “*geo-*” encompasses concepts such as “*the earth*,” “*land*,” “*ground country*,” and “*soil*” [23].

Julia Spahr metaphorically illustrates the boundary between “*nature poetry*” and “*eco-poetry*” by emphasizing the importance of acknowledging both the “*beautiful bird*” (typically depicted in nature poetry) and the “*bulldozer off to the side that was destroying the bird’s habitat*” (which characterizes eco-poetry). In traditional nature poetry, there’s a tendency to separate the natural world from the human world and portray natural objects as inherently beautiful, innocent, or awe-inspiring. In contrast, eco-poetry focuses more on the ways in which humans shape the Earth into a livable habitat, often highlighting the detrimental impact of human actions on the environment [23]. Therefore, eco-poetry can be seen as a departure from the traditional descriptive nature poetry associated with poets like William Blake, William Wordsworth, and later

romanticists such as John Keats. Green poetry stands out for its frequent use of repetition, parataxis, incorporation of multiple points of view, prose fragments, and the integration of existing texts. This approach aims to move away from the notion of individual sensitivity to nature and instead offers a more multifaceted perspective on environmental themes [23].

“Green” poetry emphasizes ecological themes and messages. Notable works in this genre include “*Ecopoemas*” by Nicanor Parra (1982), “*The White Poem*” by Jay Ramsay and Carole Bruce (1988), “*The Green Book of Poetry*” by Ivo Mosley (1995, also published as *Earth Poems* in 1996), “*Bosco*” (1999; 2001) and “*Heavy Water: a poem for Chernobyl*” (2004), “*Entering the City*” (1997), “*Dog Sonnets*” (1998), and the extensive collection “*Red Car Goes By*” (2001) by Jack Collom. Other works include “*Fuck You-Aloha-I Love You*” (2001) by Juliana Spahr, “*Political Cactus Poems*” (2005) by Jonathan Skinner, and “*The Ecopoetry Anthology*” (2012), edited by Ann Fisher-Wirth and Laura Gray Street. Poet Forrest Gander has contributed to this genre with works such as “*Science and Steepleflower*” (1998), “*Torn Awake*” (2001), “*Eye Against Eye*” (2005), and “*Be With*” (2018). According to James Engelhardt, “green” poetry often grapples with ethical questions and highlights a sense of responsibility toward the natural world. Contemporary poets incorporating ethnopoetic motifs include Gary Snyder, Kathleen Stewart, and William Bright. Environmental literature seeks to promote ecological harmony and balance between humanity and nature, advocating for ecological wisdom and the preservation of indigenous religions and cultural practices.

In his 2017 work “*Nature Poem*,” Tommy Pico intertwines themes of racial injustice, the cultural connection to nature, specifically addressing the struggles faced by Native Americans in a predominantly “white” society, and a universal truth about their spiritual beliefs (a collective recognition of nature as sacred, imbued with spirit, and deserving of reverence from humans, who are integral to it). Additionally, Pico explores queer sexual relationships:

“*This white guy asks do I feel more connected to nature*

bc I'm NDN

*asks did I live **like in a regular house***

growing up on the rez

or something more salt

of the earth, something reedy

says it's hot do I have any rain

ceremonies

*When I express frustration, he says **what?** He says **I'm just asking** as if*

being earnest somehow absolves him from being fucked up.

It does not.

*He says **I can't win with you***

because he already did

because he always will

because he could write a nature

poem, or anything he wants, he doesn't understand

why I can't write a fucking nature poem.

Later when he is fucking

me I bite him on the cheek draw

blood I reify savage lust".

Tommy Pico. *Nature Poem*, 2017 [15].

It's noteworthy that in the poem, only the voice of the white man is heard. The text portrays a diminishing reverence for nature, the silencing of the Native American perspective, and depicts a victim of sexual stereotyping, with the perpetrator being a white man. Consequently, what initially seems like an equal footing for two men (one natural and non-verbal) becomes fraught with tension, as white sexuality is depicted as "fucking," while Native American sexuality is portrayed as the "reification of savage lust." Racial stereotyping exacerbates this discomfort, leading to feelings of inferiority and self-demeaning among Native Americans and reinforcing hierarchical notions. Additionally, the etymology of the words used in the poem adds layers of

intertextuality; for instance, “fucking” has Anglo-Saxon roots, while “reify” is a concept with Latin origins.

Kia Sand in her “*Tiny Arctic Ice*” poem, which is a part of “*A Tale of Magician’s Who Puffed Up Money That Lost Its Puff*” collection (2016), depicts ecological crisis by means of social interaction:

*“Inhale, exhale
6.6 billion people breathing
Some of us in captivity
Our crops far-flung
Prison is a place where children sometimes visit
Jetted from Japan, edamame is eaten in England
Airplane air is hard to share
I breathe in what you breathe out, stranger”.*

Kia Sand. *Tiny Arctic Ice*, excerpt, 2016 [17].

The poem diagnosis a planetary condition. By expressing a sensory calamity, the text establishes links between environmental, economic, and political systems, addressing concerns related to agriculture, food distribution, and population growth. The intimate exchange between strangers reflects an acknowledgment of the repercussions of the ecological crisis.

To a certain degree, eco-poetry has evolved from conventional nature poetry, which often focuses on the beauty of individual elements of nature:

*“Mulberry-bushes where the boy would run
To fill his hands with fruit are grubbed and done
And hedgrow-briars – flower-lovers overjoyed
Came and got flower-pots – these are all destroyed
And sky-bound mores in mangled garbs are left
Like mighty giants of their limbs bereft
Fence now meets fence in owners’ little bounds
Of field and meadow large as garden grounds*

*In little parcels little minds to please
With men and flocks imprisoned ill at ease”.*

John Clare. *The Mores*, 1820 [2].

The discerning perspective of eco-poetry steers clear of solely relying on personal sensitivity to nature. “Green” poetry is characterized by a blend of wit, irony, historical backdrop, social observations, landscapes teeming with microbes, disrupted ecosystems, climate shifts, and the interplay between human and natural realms. Eco-texts may also possess an “archaeological” quality, harboring multiple underlying messages.

Juliana Spahr’s poems delve into the self-destructive tendencies of human behavior, which have detrimental effects on the external world:

*“there are things people can do to themselves
they are:
leave molotov cocktail on own yard
set fire to own house
leave a glass of urine on own porch
leave envelope of feces outside own door
send a butcher knife to self at work
send letter to health department that self is spreading v.d.
stab own back”*

Juliana Spahr. *Response collection*, 2002 [19].

The portrayal of a pregnant woman altering her body to terminate her second child is striking and unforgiving. As one reads through Spahr’s poem, they are confronted with a sanctioned act of ending a life, wherein a mother, typically associated with the fecundity of nature, strips her unborn child of the right to exist within the broader natural realm:

*“mutilated claims
fetuses or the organs of elimination are missing
a woman who is carrying twins, for instance,*

might have one removed so only a single twin remains
or a fetus removed from a body by a sucking machine
or the rectal area perfectly cored out of a body
found on the side of the road
or puncture wounds due to needles and probes on
the head, the fingers, the leg
at other times instead of removal insertion, multiplication
one half being, one half human children”

Juliana Spahr. *Response collection*, 2002 [19].

In another poem from the same collection, Juliana Spahr opposes war and nuclear weapons, which she suggests are forced upon humanity by external forces referred to as “them,” individuals who are “pressing” upon us:

testimony:
“they close our eyes”
“our voices are made silent”
“our ears are made deaf”
“we will never be the same again”

Juliana Spahr. *Response collection*, 2002 [19].

Numerous eco-texts of the XXIst century express a strong anger towards the distortion of nature, its disintegration, extinction, and fragmentation.

Ecological concerns find their implementation in the new branch of philosophy, literature, both social and gender movements (eco-feminism), demanding for the vocabulary upgrade. Eco-centrism has generated a number of eco-expressions with a “climate” lexeme, like: “*climate smart*” – a person, helping to prevent climate change; “*climate gentrification*” – the process by which a place that is thought to be less at risk of the effects of climate change turns from a poor area to a richer one; “*climate justice*” – the holding to account of those responsible for climate change and reparation for those most affected by it [21], or “*climatarian*” – choosing to eat a diet that has

minimal impact on the climate, i.e. one that excludes food transported a long way or meat whose production gives rise to 74 CO₂ emissions, a word formed by the analogy of the word “*vegetarian*”; “*cli-fi*” – climate fiction, as the analogy to “*sci-fi*” [3]; “*climate refugee*” – a person who has been forced to relocate due to changing climate or to a disaster caused by or associated with climate change; “*climate canary*” – a natural phenomenon or event that signals a looming environmental disaster caused by climate change [4]; “*climate porn*” – extreme or alarmist language or images used to describe the current or future effects of man-made climate change [8].

There developed a number of expressions with a destructive “*bomb*” or “*-nado*” (coming from “tornado”) element: “*weather bomb*” – a winter storm that has a sudden drop in pressure at the center, causing very strong cold winds [8]; “*carbon bomb*” – a set of conditions that will likely give rise to a catastrophic increase in carbon emissions in the future [4]; “*firenado*” – a fire tornado: a strong, dangerous wind created by a large fire that forms itself into an upsidedown spinning cone [8]; “*snownado*” – a waterspout that forms between the surface of a lake and a snow squall; a tornado that forms over a snow-covered area. Also: *snonado* [22].

“*Eco-*” particle is present in such words as: “*eco-sceptic*” – a person, who is skeptical towards eco-radicalism; “*eco-porn*” – a commercial campaign for the environmental protection; “*eco-anxiety*” – concerns about the future ecological situation on the planet; “*eco-guard*” – a person fighting against the violence towards animals; “*ecotage*” or “*ecoterrorism*” – illegal actions of the ecologists (granting freedom to the caged animals, campaigns against deforestation, extermination of genetically modified crops).

Therefore, contemporary experimental poetry with an ecosophical theme serves as a resounding voice, highlighting the pressing issues faced by global humanity and the suffering of an exploited ecosystem. The gentle melodies of traditional nature poetry found in “green” literature are replaced by expressions of anger, straightforwardness, and vivid metaphors depicting the planet's distress. Key themes include overpopulation, racism, the dominance of white culture, the historical

exploitation of Native Americans by Anglo-Saxons, agricultural practices, food transportation, the ramifications of ecological crises, individual self-destructive tendencies, the relationship between women and nature, and the impacts of war and nuclear weaponry. This ecological consciousness has fostered the development of an extensive ecological vocabulary featuring dominant eco-related terms, which permeate both poetic expression and various spheres of social, political, and cultural discourse.

One of the branches of the eco-critical literature is ECOFEMINISM, which stems from the assumption that the man is a destructive entity. The revisiting of the mythological worldview, provoked by the works by Francis Bacon and René Descartes, freed the man in playing his most ancient role – the role of a “killer”. Live and spiritualized nature started to be identified with a “machine”, a “mechanism” that was subjected to research, exploitation, and experiments. Later, Friedrich Nietzsche challenged the last symbol capable of restraining the human mind – God. The connection between literary and scientific tradition was tracked in the academic discipline of American studies in books like Leo Marx’s *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (1964), a book that followed Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), focusing on the environmental harm caused by the indiscriminate use of pesticides.

Human is in the center (anthropocentric attitude): whatever here on the Earth is to serve and fulfill man’s needs and desires

The issue of parallel oppression of women and nature is not completely new for literature. The roots of ecofeminism date back to the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Such texts as Rachel Carson’s “*Silent Spring*” (1962), Rosemary Redford Ruether’s “*New Woman / New Earth*” (1975), Mary Daily’s “*Gyn / Ecology*” (1978), Susan Griffin’s “*Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her*” (1978), Elizabeth Dodson Gray’s “*Green Paradise lost*” (1979), and Carolyn Merchant’s “*The Death of Nature*” (1980) created the fundamental basis for the development of a full-scale feminist approach to ecology and environmentalism in the 1980s and the subsequent

formation of the theory of ecofeminism, which can be traced in the genre of essay, as well as in the English-language post-colonial literature of Australia, Africa, the USA, New Zealand, Canada, etc.

ECOFEMINISM has significantly influenced contemporary literature. Elizabeth Englehardt introduces the term “*ecological feminism*,” which she outlines through four main principles: the acknowledgment that humans are interconnected with nature and not separate from or superior to it, recognition of the agency within the nonhuman community to deliberate and take action, the necessity for activism to prioritize long-term sustainability and be intertwined with social justice and equality, and the understanding that women are not uniformly united in sisterhood, nor are they uniformly oppressed, and various factors such as race, gender, and class intersect with complex identities. Karen J. Warren builds upon this definition, emphasizing the crucial link between how individuals treat women, people of color, and marginalized communities on one hand, and how they treat the natural environment on the other.

Feminism incorporates gender analysis into its evaluations of various situations. Authentic feminism advocates for equal scrutiny of both feminine and masculine aspects because its goal is gender equality, necessitating that both genders be held to identical standards. Ecofeminism, a recent offshoot of feminism, contends that just as male bias should be acknowledged and eradicated wherever it exists, humanity’s domination over nature should cease. It calls for a shift away from anthropocentrism towards a more equitable perspective, where the perspectives of nature are valued and considered.

“Ecofeminism is a theory that has evolved from various fields of feminist inquiry and activism: peace movements, labor movements, women’s health care, and the anti-nuclear, environmental and animal liberation movements. Drawing on the insights of ecology, feminism, and socialism, ecofeminism’s basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature. Ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature. Its theoretical base is a sense of self most commonly expressed by women and various other non-dominant groups – a self that is interconnected with all life” [11].

Between 1974 and 1982, there was a notable surge in ecofeminist fiction, coinciding with the growth and convergence of feminist and environmental movements. Several significant novels were published during this period, listed

chronologically as follows: Margaret Laurence's *"The Diviners,"* Suzy McKee Charnas's *"Walk to the End of the World,"* Joanna Russ's *"The Female Man,"* Lisa Alther's *"Kin flicks,"* Marge Piercy's *"Woman on the Edge of Time,"* Vonda N. McIntyre's *"Dreamsnake,"* Charnas's *"Motherlines,"* Marilynne Robinson's *"Housekeeping,"* Kate Wilhelm's *"Juniper Time,"* Alice Hoffman's *"Angel Island,"* Susan Griffin's *"Woman and Nature,"* Margaret Atwood's *"Surfacing,"* and Alice Walker's *"The Color Purple."* Alice Walker identifies herself as a "womanist," emphasizing her strong connection to both traditional and contemporary female culture. Within the ecological context, her work juxtaposes themes of love and nature against those of hatred and societal oppression.

Paganism and Goddess religions have served as inspiration for numerous writers, including Kate Horsley, whose works embrace *"Confessions of a Pagan Nun"* (2001) and *"The Changeling of Finnistauth"* (2003). Francine Prose's *"Hunters and Gatherers"* (1995), Elizabeth Cunningham's *"The Return of the Goddess"* (1992), *"The Wild Mother"* (1993), *"How to Spin Gold"* (1997), and *"Daughter of the Shining Isles"* (2000) are also notable examples. Other authors who have drawn inspiration from these themes include Diane DesRochers (*"Walker Between the Worlds,"* 1995), Ellen Galford (*"The Fires of Bride,"* 1988), Starhawk (*"The Fifth Sacred Thing,"* 1993), Mary Mackey (*"The Year the Horses Came,"* 1993; *"The Horses at the Gate,"* 1996; *"The Fires of Spring,"* 1998), and William Sutherland (*"News from Fort God,"* 1993).

Other noteworthy ecofeminists from the United States and Canada distinguish: Kathleen Alcalá (*"Mrs. Vargas and the Dead Naturalist,"* 1992; *"Spirits of the Ordinary,"* 1997; *"Flower in the Skull,"* 1998; *"Treasures in Heaven,"* 2000), Katharine Haake (*"The Height and Depth of Everything,"* 2001; *"That Water, Those Rocks,"* 2002), Pam Houston (*"Cowboys Are My Weakness,"* 1988; *"Waltzing the Cat,"* 1998; *"Sight Hound,"* 2005), Catherine Bush (*"Minus Time,"* 1993), Jane Candia Coleman (*"Stories from Mesa Country,"* 1991; *"Borderlands,"* 2000), Kiana Davenport (*"Shark Dialogues,"* 1994; *"Song of the Exile,"* 1999), Molly Gloss (*"The*

Jump Off Creek”, 1989; “*Dazzle of Day*”, 1997; “*Wild Life*”, 2000), Mary Sojourner (“*Sisters of the Dream*”, 1989; “*Delicate: Stories*”, 2004), Susan Lang (“*Small Rocks Rising*”, 2002), and Susan Vreeland (“*The Forest Lover*”, 2004).

Notable Native American ecofeminists embrace Louise Erdrich and Leslie Marmon Silko, while significant African American figures in this realm include Elaine Perry (author of “*Another Present Era*” in 1990) and Gloria Naylor (known for “*The Women of Brewster Place*” in 1982, “*Mama Day*” in 1988, and “*The Men of Brewster Place*” in 1998). Towards the end of the XXth century, examples of ecofeminist fiction emerged, such as “*Hear the Silence*” (1986) by Irene Zahava, “*Westward the Women*” (1988) by Vicki Piekarski, “*A Gathering of Spirit*” (1988) by Beth Brant, “*Spider Woman’s Granddaughters*” (1989) by Paula Gunn Allen, “*Sisters of the Earth*” (1991) by Lorraine Anderson, and “*Wild Women*” (1994) by Sue Thomas.

Six prominent ecofeminist novelists who have received multiple literary awards and warrant special attention are Andrea Barrett, Ursula K. Le Guin, Barbara Kingsolver, Brenda Peterson, Jane Smiley, and Alice Walker.

The origins of ecofeminism were explored in Elizabeth Englehardt’s work “*The Tangled Roots of Feminism, Environmentalism, and Appalachian Literature*” (2003). This study delved into the writings of several proto-ecofeminists from the late XIXth and early XXth centuries, including Susan Warner, Emma Bell Miles, Mary Noailles Murfree (who wrote under the pseudonym Charles Egbert Craddock), Grace MacGowan Cooke, Lucy Furman, Louise R. Baker, Marie Van Vorst, Amélie Rives Troubetzkoy, and Alice MacGowan. Other significant forerunners of ecofeminist fiction include S. Alice Callahan, Mary Austin, Willa Cather, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Virginia Woolf, Idah Meacham Strobridge, Mary Webb, Martha Ostenso, and Sarah Orne Jewett. They advocated for the inherent value of the land and argued for its stewardship in harmony with nature. The landscape often assumes a feminine and sacred symbolism in their works.

You don't have to be female to be an ecofeminist

George R.R. Martin, for example, in his saga *A Game of Thrones* (1996-present) the women are carriers “certain blood”, some genome, with a power to give life to the stoned dragon eggs (*Daenerys Targaryen*), *proving the vital potential of the femininity*.

The eco-feminism manifesto stresses the urgent need to:

1) Transitioning from aggression to peace has evolved into a crucial necessity for both survival and moral principles.

2) Achieving harmony with the Earth involves nurturing the planet's health, its diverse ecosystems, its inhabitants, and its intricate systems through a compassionate approach to economics. This entails embracing the inherent generosity of life and finding joy in sharing the natural world's blessings. Unlike corporate economies and global markets built on extraction and division, the Economy of Care operates on the principle of gifting, aligning with the natural laws of reciprocity.

3) The resolution to the impending ecological crisis and the future of sustenance lies outside the realm of those responsible for its inception. Instead, they are within the grasp of women, agroecological farmers, and social movements dedicated to safeguarding nature and society. The Ecofeminist Economy champions freedom – the liberty of individuals, regardless of gender, to nurture and protect their offspring, families, communities, and ecosystems. It advocates for the transmission of wisdom and affection among people and towards the Earth, fostering harmony with the rhythms and cycles of all living beings on our shared planet.

4) Preserving diversity entails fostering the proliferation of various options within society, nature, economic structures, and knowledge systems. *Diverse Women for Diversity*, representing a spectrum of cultural backgrounds, races, religions, and socio-economic statuses, unite around a singular objective: the preservation of both biological and cultural diversity as fundamental to life on Earth. They advocate for self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and solidarity, both locally and globally.

5) Currently, women are once more at the forefront of safeguarding biodiversity, advocating for seed autonomy, and championing food sovereignty.

Thus, the ecocritical approach is a branched phenomenon, embracing a range of ecosophical issues produced by the ecological challenges at the contemporary stage of the environmental local and global architecture.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *The sources of ecofeminism. The evolution*
2. *Human culture and ecological coexistence.*
3. *'Awakening' as a revelatory movement.*
4. *The problems of environmental criticism: some emerging trends.*
5. *Ecocriticism and Ecofeminism.*
6. *Nature, women and human others.*
7. *Ecocritical theory: new European and American approaches.*
8. *Ecocritical explorations in literary and cultural studies.*
9. *The contemporary American novel and its challenges to ecocriticism.*
10. *The traditions of Literary Ecology in British / American / New Zealand / Australian / Canadian Writing.*
11. *Gothic environments in literature.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Anthropocentrism: the notion that human interests take precedence over those of non-human entities, often contrasting with biocentrism or ecocentrism. It encompasses a range of perspectives, from a firm belief (strong anthropocentrism) that human needs should always come first, to the acknowledgment that complete detachment from human interests (zero-degree anthropocentrism) may not be realistic or desirable. Thus, it is feasible, without contradiction, to uphold biocentric principles in theory while recognizing that, in practice, they may need to be balanced with anthropocentric considerations, whether for strategic reasons or due to inherent self-interest.

Anthropomorphism: giving non humans, human qualities.

Biocentrism: the perspective that every organism, humans included, belongs to a broader interconnected web or community of life, wherein the interests of this collective should guide or limit human interests. Often used interchangeably with ecocentrism and contrasted with anthropocentrism.

Bioregionalism: political or cultural structure delineated by natural features and regions referred to as "bioregions."

Biophilia: elationship/connection between nature and humans.

Brownfields: In the early 1990s, environmental analysts introduced the term "brownfields" to describe contaminated areas, contrasting with the pristine suburban and exurban "greenfields," especially prevalent in inner-city regions, which present health risks and necessitate cleanup efforts. Additionally, "brownfields" is employed more broadly to depict human-modified landscapes, notably in urban and industrial areas. The disproportionate presence of brownfield sites in low-income and minority communities, along with the looming risk of further deterioration, has been instrumental in mobilizing the environmental justice movement.

Deep ecology: both an environmental philosophy and a social movement, advocates for a fundamental shift in human interaction with nature. It proposes moving away from viewing nature solely for its instrumental value to humans and towards recognizing its intrinsic worth. Referred to

at times as an “ecosophy,” deep ecology presents a conception of self that diverges from traditional notions and encompasses religious and mystical elements. Coined by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in 1972, along with American environmentalist George Sessions, deep ecology outlines eight foundational principles for its social movement. Unlike other environmentalist approaches, deep ecology delves into broader philosophical realms, including metaphysics, epistemology, environmental ethics, and social justice.

Ecocentrism: in environmental ethics, ecocentrism advocates for prioritizing the interests of the ecosphere over those of individual species. It is often used interchangeably with biocentrism as opposed to anthropocentrism, but while biocentrism focuses specifically on organisms, ecocentrism highlights the interconnectedness of living and non-living components. Ecocentrism encompasses various ecophilosophies and generally posits that the world is an inherently dynamic and interrelated system without rigid distinctions between living and non-living entities. The roots of modern ecocentric ethics can be traced back to Aldo Leopold, who introduced the concept of the “land ethic,” expanding the ethical community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals.

Ecofascism: refers to the amalgamation of environmentalism with fascist ideologies by individuals and groups. Philosopher André Gorz conceptualized eco-fascism as potential forms of totalitarianism grounded in an ecological approach to politics. In 2005, environmental historian Michael E. Zimmerman defined “ecofascism” as a totalitarian regime demanding individuals to prioritize the well-being of the ‘land,’ encompassing the interconnected web of life or the entirety of nature, including human populations and their governing bodies. This concept was supported by philosopher Patrick Hassan’s examination of historical allegations of ecofascism in academic discourse. Zimmerman contended that although no explicitly ecofascist government has materialized, elements of such ideology can be discerned in German National Socialism, epitomized by the slogan “*Blood and Soil*”.

Ecophobia: refers to the apprehension or fear of the natural environment.

Ecopoetics is a term used to describe the environmentally conscious and innovative literature that emerges as a national transition from predominantly rural to predominantly urban economies and societies.

Numinous: spiritual.

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PACE 12

POSTHUMAN CONCEPTIONS. CYBERLITERATURE. CYBERSPACE

Key terms: *Cyberspace, a Cyborg manifesto, cyber-punk, AI, the concept of virtual reality, SF, cyberculture, cybercommunities, cyberpunk, a virtual-reality machine, cyberprotest, non-human objects of morality, man-replacement technologies, man-transformation technologies, human computer interface, a computer mimicking human existence, the idea of transhumanism, cyber literature communities, the penetration of the organic by the machines, human body modified with cyber-mechanical devices, biopolitics, cyberfeminism, a phenomenon of “the cognisphere”*

1. *The territory of post-humanism – where does it start?*
2. *Cyber-literature and its features.*
3. *Weird fiction within its branches: cyberpunk, steampunk, diesel-punk, Afrofuturism and graphic novels.*
4. *The contemporary visions of the future in literature.*

The intrusion into the objective reality through technology and a rapid evolution of not-long-ago embryonic virtual world, which parallels and mirrors human life on earth, have resulted in the erosion of the division between human and nonhuman. The end of the XXth and the first quarter of the XXIst century caused a paradigmatic shift in the comprehension of a human race. The new definitions of self-understanding, ethics, politics, sciences and life itself interrupted the traditional perception of human beings. The binary opposition “human beings – machines” started to be heavily exploited by the sci-fi authors at the end of the XIXth-XXth century. The widespread insertion of smart machines into the routine of the mankind started in the noughties defied the earlier understanding of what it means to be human. This fresh mode or method of perception received a name **POSTHUMANISM**.

The concept of dehumanization and the experience of the human beings in a techno-culture had taken place in literature long before the cyber-space epoch and found its manifestation in Mary Shelley’s “*Frankenstein*”, H.G. Wells’s techno-

evolutionary nightmare portrayed in *“The Island of Doctor Moreau”* (1896), the anxious Golden Age humanism of Cordwainer Smith’s *“Scanners Live in Vain”* (1948), Philip K. Dick’s schizophrenic ontologies in *“Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?”* (1968), the dramatization of gender-as-technology in James Tiptree Jr’s ironic feminist fairy tale, *“The Girl Who Was Plugged In”* (1973), William Gibson’s cyberpunk classic *“Neuromancer”* (1984), and the post-cyberpunk collection edited by Constance Ash, *“Not of Woman Born”* (1999). Later postbiological subjects appear in Greg Egan’s *“Schild’s Ladder”* (2001). Posthuman progeny of today’s reality is radically imagined in the post-millennium fiction.

In 1985 in her *“A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century”* Donna Haraway voiced a rejection of rigid boundaries, notably those segregating “human” from “animal” and “human” from “machine”. Haraway explained: *“The cyborg does not dream of community on the model of the organic family, this time without the oedipal project. The cyborg would not recognize the Garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust”*.

Marge Piercy’s *“He, She, and It”* (1991) “freely borrowed” from both Haraway’s cyborg theory and Gibson’s cyberspace metaphor to picture a near-future world in which noteworthy distinctions between (post)humans and their intelligent machines are rapidly wearing away. Haraway’s techno-utopian figure of the cyborg poses a challenge to any version of the unified and bounded “I” of humanism. The hive-mind alien-cyborg collective first introduced in an American science fiction television series *“Star Trek: The Next Generation”*, that desires only to absorb and erase all individual expression and agency.

In 2006 Cory Doctorow painted a unique picture of his own posthuman future in his homage to Isaac Asimov’s Golden Age robot stories. *“I, Row-Boat”* takes place in a future where most former humans have opted for an uploaded existence, residing as virtual inhabitants within the *“noosphere”*. Most post-Singularity fiction like Doctorow’s *“Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom”* (2003) or Charles Stross’s

“*Accelerando*” (2005) shares Egan’s interest in imagining what human beings might become in a future of unimaginable difference.

Literature as a reflection of the objective reality, on the one hand, adopts from it, on the other, to some extent predicts the future. Best and Kellner highlight the profoundly alienating aspects of modern technoscience, noting that recent scientific and technological advancements are blurring the lines between science fiction and reality. They cite examples such as lunar and Martian landings, genetic manipulation, tissue engineering, cloning, xenotransplantation, artificial reproductive technologies, animal head transplants, bionics, robotics, and eugenics as evidence of this convergence [3, p. 103].

POSTHUMANISM, derived from the term “after humanism” or “beyond humanism,” is a concept and vision within continental philosophy and critical theory. It has emerged as a response to the dominance of anthropocentrism in XXIst-century thought. According to Matthew Gladden, posthumanization entails integrating entities beyond “natural” biological humans into societal structures, dynamics, or significance

In literature, biologically modified “posthumans” have become a common theme in science fiction (SF). Initially depicted as menacing creatures or Nietzschean superhumans, genetically altered individuals are increasingly portrayed as ordinary people grappling with unconventional personal challenges [7].

The branches of posthuman studies encompass:

a) *Antihumanism* = is a theory that is critical of traditional views on humanity and the human condition. Antihumanism rejects such concepts as “human nature”, “man” or “humanity” as historically relative, ideological or metaphysical.

b) *Cultural posthumanism* = is a branch of cultural theory critical of the foundational assumptions of humanism and its legacy that examines and questions the historical notions of “human” and “human nature”, often challenging typical notions of human subjectivity and embodiment and strives to move beyond “archaic” concepts of “human nature” to develop ones which constantly adapt to contemporary technoscientific knowledge.

c) *Philosophical posthumanism* = is a movement that aims to continue the process of dethroning the human subject begun with the three ‘masters of suspicion’ –

Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud. Posthumanism challenges a number of the humanist assumptions of Western Philosophy, science and art, dwelling on the findings of Quantum theory, Chaos theory, Cybernetics and technological developments. As a term, ‘posthumanism’ was shaped in an essay by Ihab Hassan, *Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture?* (1977). Posthumanism attempts to escape the constraints of the human condition in order to be inclusive toward non-human viewpoints, captures the cognitive panorama beyond the human horizon. Philosophers of posthumanism include Donna Haraway, Katherine Hayles, Stefan Lorenz Sorgner, David Roden, and Francesca Ferrando. In her compendium *“Philosophical Posthumanism”* (2019), Francesca Ferrando Ferrando argues that transhumanism is a manifestation of posthumanist philosophy.

d) *Posthuman condition* = this concept is multifaceted, revolving around two core notions: firstly, the idea that humans have evolved into posthumans through the fusion with technology, known as “cultural posthumanism”; and secondly, the notion that humans will be surpassed by a new form of posthuman life arising from significant technological transformations, referred to as “transhumanism,” “hyperhumanism,” “hyperbolic posthumanism,” or “speculative posthumanism”.

e) *Posthuman transhumanism* = is seen as a “cure” for posthumanism. It is defined by its rejection of humanism and by its call for a cultural era that moves beyond humanism's core claims. Transhumanism, is a movement that seeks technological enhancement of the human as defined by humanism and. Transhumanist theory advocates for the moral consideration of animals and plants. It suggests that humans not only fail to match machines in functionality but also become disinterested in themselves, losing their capacity to deepen human understanding of the world. One way to reignite interest in humanity is by broadening the anthropological scope beyond humans themselves. Posthumanists in the humanities and arts critique transhumanism, contending that it perpetuates and expands upon the values of Enlightenment humanism and classical liberalism, particularly scientism.

f) *AI takeover* = this concept entails the notion that a form of artificial intelligence could surpass humanity as the predominant intelligent species on Earth, a recurring theme in science fiction. Notable cultural references include *Terminator* and *The Matrix*.

g) *Voluntary human extinction* = is an environmental movement that calls for all people to abstain from reproduction in order to cause the gradual voluntary extinction of humankind.

The Posthuman space does not signal the end of humanity, rather it problematizes the very conception of the human. Robert Pepperell suggests that contemporary advancements in synthetic intelligence, organic computing, and genetic modification pose significant challenges to the notion of human superiority. These advancements evoke profound anxieties regarding the potential threat posed by technology that exceeds our understanding or control. There is an acknowledgment that we possess the capability to create entities that could rival or even surpass human abilities, prompting a serious consideration of the prospect that human-like cognitive attributes may be replicated in non-human forms. While this notion triggers deep-seated fears, it also represents a coveted objective within the realm of computer science. Despite the considerable obstacles involved, the development of an artificially conscious entity could feasibly occur within our lifetimes. Questions arise regarding whether such an entity would experience emotions akin to humans and possess a sense of self-awareness [19].

Posthumanism assumes that human beings are embodied in an extended technological world.

The **POSTHUMAN MANIFESTO**, voiced by Robert Pepperell, proclaims:

1. It's evident that humans no longer hold the utmost significance in the universe. However, this realization remains challenging for humanists to embrace.
2. All advancements in technology within human society are aimed at altering the current state of the human species.
3. In the Posthuman era, numerous beliefs become obsolete, including the belief in the significance of human beings.

4. Human beings, much like gods, only possess existence to the extent that we believe in their existence.
5. The future is perpetually deferred.
6. Not all humans are born with equal opportunities or circumstances, but it is perilous to disregard the notion that they are.
7. In the Posthuman era, machines will cease to be mere machines.
8. It is a deficiency of humans that they require others to tell them what they already know. It is only then they will believe it.
9. Posthumanists avoid envisioning a flawless society. They view economics and political theories as futile exercises, akin to attempting long-range weather forecasts.
10. Surf or die. You cannot control a wave, but you can ride it.
11. We now realize that human knowledge, creativity and intelligence are ultimately limited.
12. Complex machines are an emerging form of life.
13. A complex machine is a machine whose workings we do not fully understand or control.
14. As computers develop to be more like humans, so humans develop like computers more.
15. If we have the capacity to conceive of machines, then those machines can possess the ability to think; if we can imagine machines that contemplate, then those machines can contemplate us.

The theorists of posthumanism stress two groups of ethical consequences:

- 1) the diminishing status of humans in moral considerations due to the emergence of non-human entities;
- 2) decrease in the value status of man in connection with socioeconomic changes.

The three approaches in the works of fiction embrace 1) writers of fiction, who are trying to rethink human identity by positioning human beings within a technologically mediated reality which displaces the biological body and the spontaneity of human sensation; 2) those, who are anticipating the effect of technologically mediated culture on the formation of *posthuman identity*; 3) the ones, who are juxtaposing the human beings and organically anthropomorphic androids.

The posthuman era brought out a number of new concepts and forms of existence, one of which is cyberspace, which itself chronotopically has given a rise to a new genre called CYBER LITERATURE.

The term **CYBERSPACE** was first introduced by a science fiction writer, William Gibson, in his novel *“Burning Chrome”* (1982) before being popularized by his next novel, *“Neuromancer”* (1984). According to the author, cyberspace is “a hallucinatory agreement manifested and experienced every day by billions of operators considered worthy, from all nations, including students studying mathematics; cyberspace is a graphic representation of the abstracted data from computer storage which can be found in human systems”. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, cyberspace is an indefinite, ostensibly “virtual” realm formed by connections among computers, Internet-enabled devices, servers, routers, and other elements of the Internet's framework. This electronic domain offers a more adaptable and user-friendly platform for budding and aspiring authors to express themselves artistically.

Cyberspace requires a human brain to plug into

Cyber literature which emerged towards the end of the 1990s through blogging, later expanded in social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Myspace, etc.

CYBERLITERATURE utilizes digital mediums, particularly aiming for interactivity. According to Espen J. Aarseth's definition outlined in *“Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature”* (1997), CYBERLITERATURE and CYBERTEXTS represent a distinct form of text architecture that examines the influence of the environment as an integral aspect of literary dynamics. Cybertext is characterized by its non-linear and interactive nature, focusing on the reading process where readers make “semiotic choices” by constructing a particular system. These choices are viewed as the physical construction of the text, disregarding various reading strategies. Aarseth also introduces the concept of ergodic literature associated with cybertexts (from the Greek “*ergon*” meaning work, and “*hodos*” meaning path), emphasizing the reader's active engagement and effort required during the reading process.

Cyber literature **doesn't equal the literature about cyborgs or robots, or any forms of penetration of the organic by the machines**. Cyberliterature serves as an umbrella term which could be split in three:

1) All literary texts available on the Internet, covering prose or poetry texts available at the homepages of professional writers; anthologies of prose or poetry published and digitized; collections of classical texts; online literature magazines.

2) Non-professional literary texts available on the Internet, including non-traditional literature and covering home pages of amateur writers, groups of unrecognised young authors and their portals.

3) Hypertext literature and cybertexts would include literary texts of more complex structure, which exploit various hypertext solutions, but also intricate multimedia cybertexts.

Hypertext fiction is a form of electronic literature characterized by the incorporation of hypertext links, which offer a new dimension for reader interaction within literature. Readers typically navigate through the text by selecting links, moving from one textual node to another, thereby constructing a narrative from a vast array of potential storylines. This concept shares similarities with interactive fiction. The term “*hypertext fiction*” can also encompass traditionally-published books wherein nonlinear narratives are achieved through internal references. Early examples predating the term “*hypertext*” include works such as James Joyce’s “*Ulysses*” (1922), Mark Z. Danielewski’s “*House of Leaves*” (2000), Jorge Luis Borges’ “*The Garden of Forking Paths*” (1941), and Vladimir Nabokov’s “*Pale Fire*” (1962).

The three main features of hypertext include:

1) The dispersion of the structure (the information is presented in the form of fragments, and the entry into the structure is enabled from any section);

2) Non-linearity of hypertext (the reader can (or is forced to) independently choose the path of reading, creating his own text);

3) Heterogeneity and multimedia nature, that is, the use of all means of influence on the consumer-reader that are technically possible in this system – from purely literary (choice of narrative strategy and stylistics) through publishing (fonts, layout, illustrations) to the most complex computer means (sound, animation, references to some other, non-artistic materials). A literary critic interprets a hyperlink or a jump as an important structural element of hypertext, which is a kind of “materialization” of connotation.

Reading a physical book is space-restricted and one-dimensional, while the html language (Hypertext Markup Language) used in the Internet provides an instant transition from one text to another without any necessity of leaving the space of the original text field. Therefore, the postmodern nature of hypertext demonstrates the correspondence of its features to the defining features of postmodernism (open form, participation, rhizome, etc.).

To distinguish between cyber and non-cyber literature, the following concepts must be taken into account:

1. Conventional literature refers to traditional literary works distributed in print format on paper.
2. Digital literature utilizes electronic devices, such as e-readers, tablets, laptops, and similar technologies, as its medium, rather than relying on paper-based formats.
3. Cyberliterature, exclusively published online, can be accessed solely through the internet, with blogs serving as its primary, though not exclusive, platform.

These formats share a characteristic of interchangeability, implying that a literary text created in one format can be transferred to another, albeit not always with equal ease and balance in both directions due to varying trends and fluency. This is depicted in the following diagram, illustrating the distinct relationships among the three literary mediums:

Table 24 – *The graphic reflects then the greater or lesser possibilities of format exchange, as well as the costs, the diffusion and some other items.*

	CONVENTIONAL LITERATURE	DIGITAL LITERATURE	CYBER-LITERATURE
Publishing House	+	+	+/-
Edition Control	+	+	+/-
Main Format	Book	Book	Blog
Diffusion	Limited	Enormous	Worldwide
Prices	High	Reduced	Quite reduced or priceless

Cyber literature is a relatively modern phenomenon with the Internet as its medium, giving the opportunity for people to read, write and access literary works worldwide, exploiting the homepage, email, forum, and blogs to publish and promote literary works, opening a new type of creative activity represented by fan fiction. **FAN FICTION** referring to the texts created as ‘pseudo-sequels’ to a book, comic strip, TV-series or film and that are not produced by professional authors but by fans. *FanFiction.Net* holds 50,000 registered sequels of *Harry Potter*, for about 13,000 fanfiction texts of *The Lord of the Rings*, etc.

Literary texts developed in cyberspace include the *Wattpad website* format (also available on *www.Wattpad.com*) and applications or blogs that specialize in posting literary works (poetry, short stories, serial stories, and drama). Genres encompass a wide range, spanning from chick-lit to short stories, fantasy, science fiction, fan fiction, teen fiction, historical fiction, general fiction, humor, horror, classic literature, action, werewolf tales, mystery, nonfiction, psychic themes, adventure stories, poetry, romance, spiritual narratives, and vampire tales. Some examples embrace “*Words that never could be said*” (poetry), “*Cruel Flower*” (historical fiction), “*Me and My Best Friend*” (teenage stories), “*Stevra*” (fantasy), “*Love is Love*” (fiction fans), and “*Billionaire*” (women’s literature).

Cyber-literature texts, which often tend to be rather concise, can be split into three main branches:

1. Micro-fiction consists of highly concise narratives.
2. Micro-poetry includes aphorisms and haikus, among other brief forms.
3. Micro-drama features very short dramatic texts, including role-play scenarios and often monologues.

In contrast to cyber-micro-fiction, micro-fiction has been present in written literature since its inception, with Aesop’s fables serving as an early example. The genre evolved through various forms, including medieval exempla, and persisted into the 20th century, often considered a lesser form of literature. Notable authors such as Kafka, Hemingway, and Borges contributed to its cultivation during this period.

“Alas,” said the mouse, “the whole world is growing smaller every day. At the beginning it was so big that I was afraid, I kept running and running, and I was glad when I saw walls far away to the right and left, but these long walls have narrowed so quickly that I am in the last chamber already, and there in the corner stands the trap that I must run into.”

“You only need to change your direction,” said the cat, and ate it up.

Franz Kafka

For Sale: Baby Shoes, Never Worn.

Ernest Hemingway

Regarding the length of the texts, there are different proposals of classification.

1. Mini-story: typically spans up to a single page in length.
2. Micro-story: consists of up to 150 words.
3. Nano-story: comprises up to 140 characters, based on the Twitter platform’s limit.

The nature, vitality, and extensive dissemination of Cyberliterature are demonstrated by the following characteristics:

1. Global accessibility: Texts are available from any location worldwide.
2. Instant updates: Authors can make changes or revisions immediately.
3. Prompt re-editing of content.
4. Conciseness: Short texts are easily readable on screens, while longer ones may pose challenges.
5. Often lacking a stringent quality filter, encouraging self-editing.
6. Authors double as publishers, fostering a fully independent literature.
7. Websites function akin to magazines (blogs), with irregular publishing schedules.
8. Creative Commons License is frequently included, offering formal permission for use.
9. Interaction between writers and readers is facilitated.
10. Virtually cost-free for both authors and readers.

GENRES OF CYBER LITERATURE distinguish:

- (1) hypertext fiction;
- (2) interactive fiction;
- (3) hypertext poetry;
- (4) interactive poetry;
- (5) animated poetry;
- (6) email- or blog-based fiction;

- (7) computer installed literature;
- (8) computer generated fiction;
- (9) computer generated Poetry;
- (10) collaborative fiction;
- (11) online fiction.

LANGUAGE IN CYBER SPACE:

- announces a change from the layback reading style to commuters reading a screen's worth of narrative inside crowded metros, subways, state service buses and long queues in front of the metropolitan counters;
- drifts away from the conventional grammar and spelling standards;
- attains brevity with orthographic abbreviations/contractions (e.g. *pic* for *picture*), initialisms, acronyms (e.g. *cuz* for *because*); combined letter/number homophones (e.g. *cloud9*); combined letters/words; immoderate use of punctuations; capitalization for expressing emphasis (e.g. *huh???*, *WHAT....?*); emotions reduced to emoticons and smileys (e.g. *:-)* for happy) rather than ornate wordings and typographic symbols (e.g. *< 3* for *love*).

The examples of cyber-text-poetry include:

*The first kiss took her to cloud5
The proposal to cloud8. Marriage
Would have taken her to cloud9,
Had cancer not taken him to Heaven.*

Terribly Tiny Tales, Bodhisahon.

Or:

*Inthertrainwewerelikethis.Adrunken
Mandozedoffandmissedhisstop.He
Awokeandcursedmeloud.Iwantedto
Pushhimofforsmashhishead.But,
Wewerelikethis.*

Terribly Tiny Tales, Sarat.

Terribly Tiny Tales showcases deliberate omissions of punctuation, apostrophes, and capitalization. The standard sentence structure is altered to fit the theme “train,” resulting in nonsensical transformations or trivialities. This literary trend, termed “*Linguistic Whateverism*” by American linguist Naomi Baron, reflects the wired generation's inclination to disregard conventional grammar, punctuation, and usage rules and simply express themselves with a casual “*whatever*” attitude.

Cyber literature falls within a larger category known as *Meta-Modern Literary Culture*. According to Vermeulen and Akker, contemporary artists are moving away from the aesthetic principles of deconstruction, parataxis, and pastiche, and embracing concepts of reconstruction, myth, and metaxis [in-betweenness]. These shifts cannot be adequately explained within the framework of postmodernism. Instead, they convey a sense of guarded optimism and occasional feigned sincerity, suggesting the emergence of a different emotional structure and discourse [25, p. 10].

Online poets and novelists are introducing innovative styles that offer a fresh take on narratives or forms previously explored by postmodernism. Luke Turner, a co-editor of “*Notes on Meta modernism*” (2011) and a contributor to “*The Meta modernist Manifesto*,” along with other intellectuals, defines meta modernism as a dynamic state situated between and beyond irony and sincerity, naivety and knowingness, relativism and truth, optimism and doubt. This pursuit aims for a multitude of diverse and elusive horizons. The manifesto builds upon the earlier conceptions of meta modernism proposed by Vermeulen and Akker. It emphasizes the boundless potential of human creativity and the inherent evolution of all systems, considering the past, present, and future as deeply interconnected [24].

Cyber literature, stemming from electronic literature, shares the same underlying philosophy as oral, written, print, and other forms of literature. Its purpose is to intellectually engage and enrich society's cultural landscape.

In the current literary landscape, the fusion of literature with various mediums has given rise to several revised concepts, building upon preexisting forms, as exemplified by the so-called *weird literature* (here: the New Wierd).

The New Weird fiction, introduced by cyber-sphere include a range of branches like: *cyberpunk*, *steampunk*, *dieselpunk*, *Afrofuturism* and *graphic novels*.

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, is a subgenre of science fiction characterized by antiheroes who rebel against a dehumanized, high-tech future. The term “cyberpunk” was coined by writer Bruce Bethke in 1982, derived from “cybernetics,” the science of integrating computerized functions with human ones, and “punk,” representing the rebellious and nihilistic youth culture of the 1970s and ‘80s. Although science fiction editor Gardner Dozois is often credited with popularizing the term, its roots extend back to the technological fiction of the 1940s and ‘50s, as well as the writings of Samuel R. Delany and others who explored themes of alienation in a futuristic setting. Bruce Sterling's criticism in the 1970s also contributed to the emergence of cyberpunk by advocating for science fiction that addresses contemporary social and scientific issues. However, it was William Gibson's 1984 novel *Neuromancer* that propelled cyberpunk into a full-fledged movement within the genre. Other notable figures associated with cyberpunk include Sterling, John Shirley, and Rudy Rucker.

The concept of the cyborg, central to cyberpunk, finds its origins in Donna Haraway's “*Manifesto for Cyborgs*” (1985, 1991), which she presented as a satirical political myth grounded in feminism, socialism, and materialism. Throughout the 1980s and ‘90s, cyberpunk literature featured a plethora of cyborg characters navigating dystopian futures where advancements in biotechnology, such as prosthetics, drugs, artificial organs, and genetic engineering, have a direct and often transformative impact on the human body.

STEAMPUNK: is a branch of science fiction that integrates retrofuturistic technology and aesthetics, drawing inspiration from, though not exclusively, 19th-century industrial steam-powered machinery. Steampunk narratives frequently unfold in alternate versions of the Victorian era or the American “Wild West,” where steam power continues to dominate, or in fantasy realms that similarly utilize steam-based technology.

DIESELPUNK: a science fiction subgenre stemming from cyberpunk, depicting a world characterized by technologies prevalent during World War I and World War II. These works often adopt a retrospective approach, immersing audiences in the historical period spanning from 1914 to 1950, including the onset of the Cold War.

AFROFUTURISM: is a genre of fiction that envisions alternative worlds, drawing from the perspectives and experiences of individuals of African descent. This speculative fiction challenges and subverts systems of slavery, colonialism, and racism.

GRAPHIC NOVEL: In American and British contexts, a graphic novel, a term that emerged in the 1970s, refers to a form of literature that integrates both words and images, akin to a comic book. However, it typically denotes a self-contained narrative presented in book format, as opposed to serialized publications.

Modern posthuman fiction frequently looks ahead to the future, offering diverse portrayals of a technologically advanced world. Today's literary depictions of the future are grounded in temporal frameworks, often associated with specific examples of chronotopes:

- a) a society fueled by a vast machine, where impoverished workers residing underground operate it to serve the affluent elite living in luxury (Metropolis societies, e.g. “*Silo*” series by Hugh Howey);
- b) in a future scenario, individuals are subjected to constant surveillance of their bodies, with their sexual activities monitored, and compelled by telescreens to engage in daily exercises. Those deemed guilty of “thought crime” face severe physical torture (“*Nineteen Eighty-Four*” by George Orwell);
- c) North America depicted as a dumping ground for toxic waste (David Foster Wallace’s “*Infinite Jest*”);
- d) utopian (“*Woman on the Edge of Time*” (1976) by Marge Piercy);
- e) post-apocalyptic North America (Marge Piercy “*He, She, It*” (retitled in the UK as “*Body of Glass*”) (1991);
- f) the Endarkenment – a climate-change-fueled collapse into a post-oil, pre-industrial state of the society (“*The Bone Clocks*” by Davis Mitchell);

g) space colonies (“*The Expanse*” novel series by James S.A. Corey), etc.

The implications of the future in Cyberliterature include: *cautionary tales* (dystopian vision of the future under control of AI and corporations); *responsible innovation*; *ethical consideration* (technology altering all of what it means to be human); *deeper understanding of benefits and pitfalls of AI*.

The often-raised question in the post-human and New Weird fiction in particular is **THE ROLE OF HUMANITY IN THE FUTURE SOCIETY**.

Science fiction and fantasy literature play a significant role in promoting feminist ideologies, ethical discourse, and the reevaluation of perennial concerns.

Consequently, cyberliterature emerges as a dynamic and evolving literary form, operating within cyberspace. Increasingly, it delves into the realm of posthumanism, engaging in linguistic experimentation and offering diverse visions of future developments.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Webnovel as Generation Z reading in the digital world.*
2. *Metamodern “wings of Poesy”.*
3. *Language and literature in cyberspace.*
4. *Adaptation of texts in cyberspace: concluding remark.*
5. *Fanfiction in specific English-language countries (e.g. the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, India, Indonesia, Burma, etc.) and its peculiar features.*

GLOSSARY to the Unit:

Cyberfeminism is a feminist perspective that emphasizes the intersection of cyberspace, the Internet, and technology. It encompasses a philosophy, methodology, and community. Coined in the early 1990s, the term describes the efforts of feminists who seek to theorize, critique, explore, and reshape the Internet, cyberspace, and new-media technologies. The development of cyberfeminist thought is attributed to various influences, including Donna Haraway’s “*A Cyborg Manifesto*,” third wave feminism, post-structuralist feminism, riot grrrl culture, and feminist critiques of the perceived marginalization of women in technology discussions.

Cyberpeace refers to tranquility within digital realms. It is achieved when digital ecosystems prioritize human security, dignity, and fairness. This narrative places people and their rights at the forefront, rather than focusing solely on technology.

Cyberspace = digital systems and the virtual realm collectively constitute cyberspace, encompassing all content accessible through computer networks and the internet. This encompasses a wide array of entities, ranging from corporate networks and social media platforms

to bank accounts and cloud services. Additionally, it includes interconnected devices such as video surveillance cameras, gaming consoles, television sets, or robotic vacuum cleaners.

Epimodernism emerges as a revitalized contemporary force, supplanting postmodernism. Epimodernist principles prioritize superficiality, secrecy, energy, acceleration, credit, and consistency.

Riot grrrl, originating in Olympia, Washington, during the early 1990s, is an underground feminist punk movement that has since spread to over 26 countries worldwide. This subcultural phenomenon blends feminism, punk music, and political activism. It is closely linked with third-wave feminism and is viewed as a precursor to fourth-wave feminist punk music that emerged in the 2010s. Emerging from the indie rock scene, riot grrrl drew inspiration from punk music, providing a platform for women to express emotions such as anger, rage, and frustration, which were traditionally more accepted for male songwriters than for female artists.

Weird fiction, a subgenre of speculative fiction that emerged in the late XIXth and early XXth centuries, either avoids or radically reinterprets traditional supernatural antagonists like ghosts, vampires, and werewolves. Scholars of weird fiction, such as China Miéville, sometimes use “the tentacle” as a symbol for this genre. The tentacle, uncommon in European folklore and gothic fiction, is often associated with monstrous creatures in works by writers like William Hope Hodgson, M.R. James, Clark Ashton Smith, and H.P. Lovecraft. Weird fiction seeks to evoke both awe and fear in its readers, prompting comparisons to Goethe's notion of the numinous. While “weird fiction” historically refers to works up to the 1930s, it saw a resurgence in the 1980s and 1990s as the New Weird, a trend that continues into the XXIst century.

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PACE 13

***CITY AS A TEXT IN THE ARCHIVE OF THE XXTH-XXIST CENTURY
ENGLISH-LANGUAGE WRITERS***

Key terms: *The theory of space, the blend of realities, urban space, the city-cave, the city-labyrinth, the sun city, the maiden-city, the party town, the forest-city, the garden city, the mother city*

1. *The investigation of the urban text by literary theory. City archetypes in the English-language literature.*
2. *Cities in British literature as literary sources for the further development. George Orwell as a forerunner of the colonial, anticolonial literature and the creator of the city of the future.*
3. *City types in Contemporary American literature.*

In the XXth century, the traditional boundaries of textual structure underwent expansion due to the influence of Postmodern culture. During this time, the concept of “the text” evolved into an open system that was perceived as generating multiple contexts independently, thus eliminating the necessity for external context. This perspective encouraged a shift from textual interpretation to its coding over time.

The notion of the “city as a text” arises when the parameters of a city become interpretable, as noted by M. de Certeau. This idea of viewing a city as a complete, comprehensible text existed prior to the emergence of postmodern theories and can be traced back to the writings of XIXth and XXth-century figures such as Walter Benjamin, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud. Yu. Lotman characterizes the city as a “semiotic mechanism,” emphasizing its role as a cultural generator and a convergence point for numerous texts and codes [3]. The city’s imagery is conveyed through visual metaphors in both artistic and physical realms, giving rise to an array of narratives. Within this framework, the significance of citizenship and individual subjectivity becomes heightened. Structuralist and poststructuralist thinkers like Roland Barthes

and urbanist Kevin A. Lynch, in their theories on reading and creating the urban text, liken the pedestrian's route to the formation of a sentence [5]. According to R. Barthes, the “direct language of the city” is manifested through both internal and external topography, as well as literary references, which constitute essential fragments of the urban archive [1, p. 45]. M. Bakhtin views the urban archive as a repository where the past is continuously constructed and reproduced. This archive is dynamic and cannot be fixed; rather, it is meant to be continually reread and reinterpreted, acquiring new meanings and engaging in dialogue with other texts [2].

The city, depicted as a living entity with its own unique existential code and considered a “local text,” undergoes significant transformations, its form adapting to the historical era and prevailing philosophies. In the realm of literature, particularly during the era of industrialization, the city and its “urban text” become prominent focal points. Within the urban novel genre, the city is not merely a backdrop or setting for events but emerges as a distinct character, integral to the author's artistic vision. This portrayal is evident in the works of William Makepeace Thackeray (“*Vanity Fair*” (1847-1853), “*The Luck of Barry Lyndon*” (1844), “*The Newcomes*” (1855)), Ch. Dickens, G. Orwell (“1984”) it’s London, in the text by Feodor Dostoyevsky (“*Crime and Punishment*” (1866)) and Andrei Bely it’s St. Petersburg (the novel “*Petersburg*” (1913)), in M. Bulgakov’s legacy it’s Kyiv and Moscow (“*Belaya Gvardiya*” (1924), “*Master and Margarita*” (1929-1940) in the novels by Erich Maria Remark it’s Paris (1945), in “*The Slaughterhouse-Five*” (1969) by Kurt Vonnegut it’s Dresden. In the realm of global literary criticism, which encompasses the world's literary heritage over time, various fundamental types of cities depicted in literature have been identified, each reflecting a distinct philosophical backdrop. These include the city-cave, the city-labyrinth, the sun city, the maiden-city, the party town, the forest-city, the garden city, and the mother city [8, p. 200-410]; [7, p. 11-14]. The concept of the “prostitute city” originated from the Biblical text, whereas Slavic literature often upheld the idea of a nurturing mother city, frequently linked with Kyiv.

In her research thesis titled “London as a Text in the Novels ‘Vanity Fair’, ‘The Luck of Barry Lyndon’, ‘The Newcomes’ by W. Thackeray” (2016), E.V. Shcherbakova highlights that the city comprises spatial locations, place names, architectural landmarks, and thus can be regarded as a rich repository of information. The urban fabric encompasses various texts authored by its inhabitants: “The city, as a textual entity, possesses indistinct boundaries, yet it also exhibits distinct characteristics” (Shcherbakova, 2016; 4). The city resides in intimate proximity to individuals, fostering a “two-way dialogue.” As the researcher suggests, individuals come to know a city through direct engagement with its essence, and the city can serve as a unique internal voice for the writer, prompting introspection. Each aspect of the city functions as either a social or psychological indicator of the character. The textual representation of the city extends beyond the mere aggregation of its elements [6, p. 4].

In fiction, the city as a textual construct emerges through the portrayal of either a real or alternative (dystopian) urban environment, encompassing elements of time, space, and biology within the context of a particular era, resulting in a distinct socio-cultural entity.

British literature, serving as a wellspring for Anglo-Saxon colonies, offers vivid illustrations (“skeletons”) of city archetypes. In the XXth century, George Orwell, a pioneer of colonial literature, presents various city models associated with the British Empire, along with a portrayal of the futuristic totalitarian city.

In the realm of George Orwell's literary legacy, the concept of the “city as a text” represents a distinct form of textual expression characterized by a rich concentration of informational, cultural, psychological, spatial, ethical, and spiritual elements. Despite its significance within Orwell's own narrative universe, the parameters surrounding the “city as a text” have largely escaped the attention of researchers. Recent scholarly pursuits have explored various facets of Orwell's work, including examinations of humanistic themes expressed in his social and political journalism, analyses of hidden layers within his dystopian masterpiece “1984,” considerations of the portrayal of a unified state, investigations into fictional languages within

XXth-century English literature, and evaluations of Orwell's prose within the context of his creative development. Contemporary research in English-language studies has delved into topics such as the dynamics of social order, the mechanisms of linguistic power, explorations of behavioral and emotional deviations, and discussions on the themes of truth and deception in literature (A. Zabel, Robert H. Zabel *Reflections*, Stephen Ingle *Lies*).

The urban narrative in Orwell's works manifests across various phases of his literary evolution, exhibiting distinct expressions in his colonial essays and larger narratives within the genre of social fiction. In Orwell's dystopian novel "1984," the city's narrative is distinguished by its meticulous accumulation of details, whereas the depiction of Burmese locales in his 1930s essays is primarily shaped by the psychological perspectives of its inhabitants rather than physical attributes. The interpretation of the urban narrative through the expressions of the city's residents is a central theme in Orwell's essays 1936 "Shooting an Elephant": "I looked at the sea of yellow faces above the garish clothes-faces all happy and excited over this bit of fun, The certainty of the elephant's fate being execution is evident in Orwell's observation [10, p. 17]. The depiction of "yellow faces," symbolizing an unfamiliar racial environment, juxtaposed with the presence of a white soldier in a conquered territory, serves as a metaphor for animosity towards the British Empire's colonialism. This portrayal highlights direct opposition and rejection of colonial dominance: "In Moulmein, in lower Burma" [10, p. 15]. A psychological conflict arises between the two groups: the military figure is seen as an intruder in the Burmese landscape, while the colonizers view the "yellow faces" of the natives as foreign and unfamiliar: "Here was I, the white man with his gun, standing in front of the unarmed native crowd – seemingly the leading actor of the piece; but in reality, I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind" [10, p. 17]. The portrayal of the city is stark, depicted through scenes of mud covering a dead coolie's body, bustling bazaar stalls, and rural structures rarely seen in English towns: "It was a very

poor quarter, a labyrinth of squalid bamboo huts, thatched with palm-leaf, winding all over a steep hillside” [10, p. 16].

The essay “*Shooting an Elephant*” originally portrays human beings with animalistic characteristics amidst the untamed wilderness, which also finds its representation in the essay “*A Hanging*” (1931): “*It was in Burma, a sodden morning of the rains*” (Orwell, *Fifty Orwell Essays*; 7); “*We were waiting outside the condemned cells, a row of sheds fronted with double bars, like small animal cages*” [10, p. 7].

In his later essays, Orwell shifts his focus to depict the internal urban landscape of England, highlighting the prevalence of the topography of mines. These essays explore various locations such as Chesterton, London Bridge, Oxford Circus, Derbyshire in “*Down the Mine*” (1937), as well as Birmingham, Finsbury Park, and the Bull Ring in Birmingham, along with towns of Midlands and Sheffield (“*North and South*”, 1937): “*It is something just dumped on the earth, like the emptying of a giant’s dust-bin. On the outskirts of the mining towns there are frightful landscapes where your horizon is ringed completely round by jagged grey mountains, and underfoot is mud and ashes and over-head the steel cables where tubs of dirt travel slowly across miles of country*” [10, p. 28]. The theme of a deformed landscape is accentuated by the architectural element: “*the hideous shapes of the houses and the blackness of everything, a town like Sheffield*” [10, p. 28]; “*the drifts of smoke are rosy with sulphur, and serrated flames, like circular saws, squeeze themselves out from beneath the cowls of the foundry chimneys*” [10, p. 28].

The political landscape of the Spanish city is portrayed in the 1937 essay “*Spilling the Spanish Beans*,” shifting the focus from Oceania to Europe, which was in turmoil due to the Spanish Civil War: “*When I left Barcelona in late June the jails were bulging; indeed, the regular jails had long since overflowed and the prisoners were being huddled into empty shops and any other temporary dump that could be found for them*” [10, p. 34]. The urban setting, shaped by the rise of fascism, takes center stage in the portrayal: “*Franco’s bid for power differed from those of Hitler and*

Mussolini in that it was a military insurrection, comparable to a foreign invasion, and therefore had not much mass backing, though Franco has since been trying to acquire one” [10, p. 35]. The atmosphere of the city is depicted through the perspectives of various social classes: the “parasitic Church,” the “land-owning aristocracy,” the “liberal bourgeoisie,” the “Communist-Liberal alliance,” and the “right-wing intellectuals”.

The sociological backdrop is mirrored in the literary portrayal of Morocco in the essay “*Marrakech*” (1939). Orwell, positioned within the heart of the urban environment, attempts to capture the cityscape as a multifaceted phenomenon, oscillating between control and chaos. Marrakech and its inhabitants are depicted as a dual entity, with the unusual characteristic that the vibrancy of the place and its people fail to merge into a productive, dynamic force. Instead, the lethargic, lifeless earth seems to swallow its inhabitants, eradicating any trace of their existence: “*the flies left the restaurant table*” [10, p. 40]; “*The little crowd of mourners—all men and boys, no women – threaded their way across the market-place between the piles of pomegranates and the taxis and the camels, wailing a short chant over and over again*” [10, p. 40]; “*What really appeals to the flies is that the corpses here are never put into coffins, they are merely wrapped in a piece of rag and carried on a rough wooden bier on the shoulders of four friends*” [10, p. 40]; “*a little of the dried-up, lumpy earth, which is like broken brick*” [10, p. 40]; “*The burying-ground is merely a huge waste of hummocky earth, like a derelict building-lot. After a month or two no one can even be certain where his own relatives are buried*” [10, p. 40]; “*Most of Morocco is so desolate that no wild animal bigger than a hare can live on it. Huge areas which were once covered with forest have turned into a treeless waste where the soil is exactly like broken-up brick*” [10, p. 42]. The theme of depersonalization, linked to spatial elements, is manifested in the constrained journey confined within the textual boundaries of the urban setting: “*When you walk through a town like this – two hundred thousand inhabitants, of whom at least twenty thousand own literally nothing except the rags they stand up in – when you see how the people live, and still more how easily*

they die, it is always difficult to believe that you are walking among human beings” [10, p. 40].

The process of diminishing, eradicating, and amalgamating an individual's identity unfolds gradually and is reinforced by Orwell through the portrayal of female figures, who serve as a component of the Moroccan landscape subdued by both men and nature: *“Every afternoon a file of very old women passes down the road outside my house, each carrying a load of firewood. All of them are mummified with age and the sun, and all of them are tiny. It seems to be generally the case in primitive communities that the women, when they get beyond a certain age, shrink to the size of children”* [10, p. 42]. The form of a woman undergoes alteration: *“Long lines of women, bent double like inverted capital Ls, work their way slowly across the fields”* [10, p. 42].

At the same time, the sun-darkened faces of the indigenous people blend into the surroundings, acting as a form of concealment, shielding them from the notice of the white outsiders: *“In a tropical landscape one’s eye takes in everything except the human beings. It takes in the dried-up soil, the prickly pear, the palm-tree and the distant mountain, but it always misses the peasant hoeing at his patch. He is the same colour as the earth, and a great deal less interesting to look at”* [10, p. 42]. The idea of invisibility is intertwined with the sense of insignificance, where individuals become akin to elements within the space. This transition involves a transformation of personality into a tangible or animalistic form, reminiscent of the portrayal of Burmese society in earlier essays. While “the yellow faces” symbolize a potent will, representing resistance and steadfast defiance against the colonizer on the conquered land, the human presence within the Moroccan narrative becomes a passive entity, scarcely distinguishable from the backdrop of Marrakech: *“The people have brown faces – besides, there are so many of them! Are they really the same flesh as yourself? Do they even have names? Or are they merely a kind of undifferentiated brown stuff, about as individual as bees or coral insects?”* [10, p. 40].

The complete assimilation of the locals into the urban narrative renders them indistinguishable from the physical elements of the environment, leading outsiders to perceive the territory solely through its inanimate features: *“What does Morocco mean to a Frenchman? <...> Camels, castles, palm-trees, Foreign Legionnaires, brass trays and bandits”* [10, p. 42].

The social hierarchy within the city is reflected in the internal dynamics of the Arab community. The city's layout and distribution are characterized by the presence of Jewish ghettos, where individuals are devalued to the point of insignificance, akin to insects: *“When you go through the Jewish quarters you gather some idea of what the medieval ghettos were probably like. Under their Moorish rulers the Jews were only allowed to own land in certain restricted areas, and after centuries of this kind of treatment they have ceased to bother about overcrowding. Many of the streets are a good deal less than six feet wide, the houses are completely windowless, and sore-eyed children cluster everywhere in unbelievable numbers, like clouds of flies. Down the centre of the street there is generally running a little river of urine”* [10, p. 41]. The portrayal of the Jewish community's position within the urban landscape is conveyed through both character descriptions and architectural features: *“In the bazaar huge families of Jews, all dressed in the long black robe and little black skull-cap, are working in dark fly-infested booths that look like caves. A carpenter sits cross-legged at a prehistoric lathe, turning chair-legs at lightning speed”* [10, p. 41]; *“As a matter of fact there are thirteen thousand of them, all living in the space of a few acres. A good job Hitler isn't here”* [10, p. 41]. Therefore, the social significance of the locals, situated within specific urban areas, is accentuated by spatial landmarks and the distinctive features of their respective neighborhoods.

The culmination of dense information and spatial encoding is epitomized in George Orwell's dystopian novel *“1984,”* portraying a post-catastrophic world confined within the alternate framework of Orwellian London. The urban text in Orwell's depiction encompasses various internal themes: reflections of historical events through the city's interface and destiny (the Revolution, WWII with a focus on

nuclear arms, ideological restructuring of society, the reconfiguration of the world under the influence of three superpowers – Oceania, Eurasia, Eastasia – erasing unique ethnic and cultural distinctions); the segregation of city boroughs (the party district – the proles’ district); territorial division, organization based on class or occupational principles (the inner party, the outer party, proles, the territories of the Ministries); the influence of territorial stratification on interpersonal dynamics, rights, and lifestyle, where the streets and districts of the city serve as a means of expressing general characteristics intertwined with personal ones.

In the conventional urban setting, social stratification along the familiar lines of “us” versus “them” is expected. Within the Orwellian universe, protagonist Winston Smith views his surroundings as foreign, uninviting, unwelcoming, bleak, dreary, and grimy: *“the world looked cold”* [9, p. 4]; *“grimy landscape”* [9, p. 5]; *Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere* [9, p. 4]; *“On the opposite side of the alley there was a dingy little pub whose windows appeared to be frosted over but in reality were merely coated with dust”* [9, p. 110]; *“The ideal set up by the Party was something huge, terrible, and glittering – a world of steel and concrete, of monstrous machines and terrifying weapons – a nation of warriors and fanatics, marching forward in perfect unity, all thinking the same thoughts and shouting the same slogans, perpetually working, fighting, triumphing, persecuting – three hundred million people all with the same face. The reality was decaying, dingy cities”* [9, p. 94]; *“where underfed people shuffled to and fro in leaky shoes, in patched-up nineteenth-century houses that smelt always of cabbage and bad lavatories”* [9, p. 95]; *“he thought with a sort of vague distaste – this was London, chief city of Airstrip One, itself the third most populous of the provinces of Oceania”* [9, p. 5]. Julia effortlessly perceives Winston's unease during their occasional meetings: *‘It was something in your face. I thought I’d take a chance. I’m good at spotting people who don’t belong. As soon as I saw you I knew you were against THEM’* [9, p. 154]. The “telescreen” embodies the

invasive essence of the post-revolutionary society, with its detailed auditory attributes carrying negative connotations: “*the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig-iron*” [9, p. 5], “*Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron*” [9, p. 3–4]. The “telescreen” is seen as a representation of intrusion into an individual’s personal sphere: “*the instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely*” [9; p. 4], this triggers a resolute objection from the protagonist, which unfolds in three successive stages: keeping a diary, engaging in forbidden love, and joining the Brotherhood. The inclusion of an element deemed impossible, something reminiscent of the past, serves as a tangible denial of the post-nuclear world of Oceania: “*he was about to do was to open a diary. This was not illegal (nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced-labour camp*” [9, p. 9].

The protagonist’s spiritual escapism exhibits Freudian characteristics, manifesting through internal resistance and transporting Winston Smith into a parallel ephemeral realm, depicted as a dream referred to as the “Golden Country”: “*Suddenly he was standing on short springy turf, on a summer evening when the slanting rays of the sun gilded the ground. The landscape that he was looking at recurred so often in his dreams that he was never fully certain whether or not he had seen it in the real world. In his waking thoughts he called it the Golden Country*” [9, p. 39]. The dream’s significance is intertwined with Winston’s rendezvous with Julia: “*‘It’s the Golden Country – almost,’ he murmured. ‘The Golden Country?’ ‘It’s nothing, really. A landscape I’ve seen sometimes in a dream’*” [9, p.155].

The internal resistance against reality takes on feminine manifestations: “*The girl with dark hair was coming towards them across the field. With what seemed a single movement she tore off her clothes and flung them disdainfully aside. Her body was white and smooth, but it aroused no desire in him, indeed he barely looked at it. What overwhelmed him in that instant was admiration for the gesture with which she*

had thrown her clothes aside. With its grace and carelessness it seemed to annihilate a whole culture, a whole system of thought, as though Big Brother and the Party and the Thought Police could all be swept into nothingness by a single splendid movement of the arm. That too was a gesture belonging to the ancient time. Winston woke up with the word 'Shakespeare' on his lips" [9, p. 39]. Therefore, the defiance of the enforced societal norms is consistently demonstrated through expressions of sexuality. This display of sexuality is evident in the use of makeup, which is permissible within the proles' district and contrasts with the austere atmosphere of the party-controlled areas: "It was three years ago. It was on a dark evening, in a narrow side-street near one of the big railway stations. She was standing near a doorway in the wall, under a street lamp that hardly gave any light. She had a young face, painted very thick. It was really the paint that appealed to me, the whiteness of it, like a mask, and the bright red lips. Party women never paint their faces. There was nobody else in the street, and no telescreens. She said two dollars" [9, p. 81]; "He turned round, and for a second almost failed to recognize her. What he had actually expected was to see her naked. But she was not naked. The transformation that had happened was much more surprising than that. She had painted her face" [9, p. 178].

The city, depicted as a text, is stratified and interpreted through the protagonist's perspective. The party-controlled space is defined by large-scale place names such as the Ministry of Truth, the Ministry of Peace, the Ministry of Plenty, and the Ministry of Love. Among these, the Ministry of Love stands out for its extreme secrecy, which is mirrored in the urban narrative: *"the Ministry of Love was the really frightening one. There were no windows in it at all. Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometre of it. It was a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbedwire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons" [9, p. 7].* Yu.M. Lotman suggests that elements such as "architectural

diachrony,” “the layout of the city,” “names,” and “numerous other artifacts” function as encoded programs or semiotic structures [3].

The inaccessibility of the Ministries contrasts with the spatial openness of the Victory Mansions, accessible to party members, a distinction underscored by the material used for the front door: “*the glass doors of Victory Mansions*” [9, p. 3]. Victory Mansions, where the outer party members reside, serve as a connecting geographical feature among the four Ministries: “*So completely did they dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously*” [9, p. 6–7]. The olfactory and interior details of this location are depicted in a negative light: “*The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall*” [9, p. 3]. Simultaneously, the negative portrayal of odors is a consistent attribute across the entirety of Oceania’s alternative London, applied to both the party districts and the more attractive prole city quarters preferred by the protagonist: “*He seemed to breathe again the warm stuffy odour of the basement kitchen, an odour compounded of bugs and dirty clothes and villainous cheap scent, but nevertheless alluring, because no woman of the Party ever used scent*” [9, p. 82].

The party’s area within the city is intricately described and imbued with distinct symbolism, conveying connotations of control and restriction: “*heavy black moustache, ruggedly handsome features, the enormous face gazed from the wall, the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU*” [9, p. 3]; “*There were telescreens all round the pediment*” [9, p. 144]. The controlling nature of space is reflected in communication patterns: “*They did not speak above a whisper*” [9, p. 155]. The auditory depiction of London is defined by its aggression, obsession, lack of diversity, and absence of alternatives: “*The tune had been haunting London for weeks past. It was one of countless similar songs published for the benefit of the proles by a sub-section of the Music Department*” [9, p. 173].

The architectural uniqueness of the Ministry of Truth carries implications for its topography: “*the Ministry of Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above*

the grimy landscape” [9, p. 5]; *“the Ministry of Truth – Minitrue <...> was startlingly different from any other object in sight. It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air”* [9, p. 6]. The Ministries act as indicators of a binary reality, situated beneath the urban landscape: *“The Ministry of Truth contained, it was said, three thousand rooms above ground level, and corresponding ramifications below. Scattered about London there were just three other buildings of similar appearance and size”* [9, p. 6-7]; *“In the low-ceilinged canteen, deep underground, the lunch queue jerked slowly forward”* [9, p. 62]. The urban environment created through both micro- and macro-topography highlights the restrictions within the social space and its militarization: *“He looked round the canteen. A low-ceilinged, crowded room, its walls grimy from the contact of innumerable bodies; battered metal tables and chairs, placed so close together that you sat with elbows touching; bent spoons, dented trays, coarse white mugs; all surfaces greasy, grime in every crack; and a sourish, composite smell of bad gin and bad coffee and metallic stew and dirty clothes”* [9, p. 75]; *“the gin was served out to them in handleless china mugs. They threaded their way across the crowded room and unpacked their trays on to the metal-topped table, on one corner of which someone had left a pool of stew, a filthy liquid mess that had the appearance of vomit”* [9, p. 64]. The suffix “less” actively contributes to word formation, emphasizing the absence or scarcity within the inner reality: *“a mug of milkless Victory Coffee”*; *“handleless china mugs”* [9, p. 64]. The dietary specifics within the urban realm of the Ministries act as an indicator of social deprivation: *“With the tobacco ration at 100 grammes a week it was seldom possible to fill a pipe to the top. Winston was smoking a Victory Cigarette which he held carefully horizontal. The new ration did not start till tomorrow and he had only four cigarettes left”* [9, p. 74]; *“Always in your stomach and in your skin there was a sort of protest, a feeling that you had been cheated of something that you had a right to”* [9, p. 76]; *“In any time that he could accurately remember, there had never been quite enough to eat, one had never had socks or underclothes that were not full of holes, furniture had always been battered and rickety, rooms underheated, tube*

trains crowded, houses falling to pieces, bread dark-coloured, tea a rarity, coffee filthy-tasting, cigarettes insufficient – nothing cheap and plentiful except synthetic gin” [9, p. 76]; *“there were various things, such as shoelaces and razor blades, which it was impossible to get hold of in any other way”* [9, p. 9]. The portrayal of post-catastrophic reality is embodied in the minutiae of daily existence, the outward appearance of the populace, and the dimensions of their living spaces: *“The lights would be switched off at the main at twenty three thirty”* [9, p. 128]; *“And though, of course, it grew worse as one’s body aged, was it not a sign that this was NOT the natural order of things, if one’s heart sickened at the discomfort and dirt and scarcity, the interminable winters, the stickiness of one’s socks, the lifts that never worked, the cold water, the gritty soap, the cigarettes that came to pieces, the food with its strange evil tastes?”* [9, p. 76]; *“He looked round the canteen again. Nearly everyone was ugly, and would still have been ugly even if dressed otherwise than in the uniform blue overalls”* [9, p. 76]; *“He crossed the room into the tiny kitchen”* [9, p. 7]. The cityscape lacks the spirituality and human connection found in interpersonal relationships: *“You did not have friends nowadays, you had comrades: but there were some comrades whose society was pleasanter than that of others”* [9, p. 62].

The architecture of London reflects the destructive nature of the ideological system, which is discernible through its urban layout: *“vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with baulks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs with corrugated iron, their crazy 1984 garden walls sagging in all directions? And the bombed sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the willow-herb straggled over the heaps of rubble; and the places where the bombs had cleared a larger patch and there had sprung up sordid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken-houses?”* [9, p. 5–6]. The controlled, colorless zone of the inner party stands in stark contrast to the squalid, dirty prole quarters, not as a mere “positive versus negative” dichotomy, but rather as a “negative versus even greater negative” scenario: *“He was somewhere in the vague, brown-coloured slums to the north and east of what had once been Saint Pancras Station. He was walking up a cobbled street*

of little two-storey houses with battered doorways which gave straight on the pavement and which were somehow curiously suggestive of ratholes. There were puddles of filthy water here and there among the cobbles. In and out of the dark doorways, and down narrow alley-ways that branched off on either side, people swarmed in astonishing numbers – girls in full bloom, with crudely lipsticked mouths, and youths who chased the girls, and swollen waddling women who showed you what the girls would be like in ten years' time, and old bent creatures shuffling along on splayed feet, and ragged barefooted children who played in the puddles and then scattered at angry yells from their mothers. Perhaps a quarter of the windows in the street were broken and boarded up” [9, p. 104].

The values depicted in Orwellian reality are manifested in the urban landscape's sculptural form: *“Winston was in Victory Square <...>. He wandered round the base of the enormous fluted column, at the top of which Big Brother's statue gazed southward towards the skies where he had vanquished the Eurasian aeroplanes (the Eastasian aeroplanes, it had been, a few years ago) in the Battle of Airstrip One. In the street in front of it there was a statue of a man on horseback which was supposed to represent Oliver Cromwell” [9, p. 143].* The scale of architectural constructions, the essence, and significance of monumental art overtly convey notions of power's strength, endurance, and military supremacy: *“scale models of rocket bombs and Floating Fortresses, waxwork tableaux illustrating enemy atrocities” [9, p. 125].* The message is further reinforced through spatial elements. The layout of the capital city is unified by a shared feature: a three-meter depiction of a Eurasian soldier: *“A new poster had suddenly appeared all over London. It had no caption, and represented simply the monstrous figure of a Eurasian soldier, three or four metres high, striding forward with expressionless Mongolian face and enormous boots, a submachine gun pointed from his hip. From whatever angle you looked at the poster, the muzzle of the gun, magnified by the foreshortening, seemed to be pointed straight at you. The thing had been plastered on every blank space on every wall, even outnumbering the portraits of Big Brother” [9, p. 188].*

The urban setting in the novel communicates with readers through numerous signs of aggressive, impersonal, and uniform reality. Meanwhile, the countryside, which is typically considered a fundamental aspect of British culture, is reimaged and altered. While markers of danger and aggression in urban areas are evident, direct, and implied through architecture, the rural landscape disguises them, creating a sense of false security. The seemingly unregulated space of the countryside may give the illusion of freedom, but in reality, it remains as restricted as London itself: *“Presumably she could be trusted to find a safe place. In general you could not assume that you were much safer in the country than in London. There were no telescreens, of course, but there was always the danger of concealed microphones by which your voice might be picked up and recognized”* [9, p. 148].

The city’s hierarchy is illustrated through the contrast between the food and living conditions of the proles, the outer party members, and the inner party representatives: *“The social atmosphere is that of a besieged city, where the possession of a lump of horseflesh makes the difference between wealth and poverty”* [9, p. 242]. O’Brien’s distinct location stands apart from the rest of the city, inaccessible to members of other social classes: *“It was only on very rare occasions that one saw inside the dwelling-places of the Inner Party, or even penetrated into the quarter of the town where they lived. The whole atmosphere of the huge block of flats, the richness and spaciousness of everything, the unfamiliar smells of good food and good tobacco, the silent and incredibly rapid lifts sliding up and down, the white-jacketed servants hurrying to and fro – everything was intimidating”* [9, p. 212]; *“the richness of the dark-blue carpet gave one the impression of treading on velvet”* [9, p. 212]. The inner party’s space remains impenetrable, contrasting with the transparency observed in other areas of London. Here, control extends beyond physical boundaries, manifesting as psychological barriers: *“‘They can’t get inside you,’ she had said. But they could get inside you”* [9, p. 367], – says Julia. The attempts to breach spatial boundaries lead to the protagonist's confinement within increasingly restricted areas. Initially confined to a single telescreen at home, Winston finds himself confronted with four of them in

the Ministry of Love cell, while the once familiar window in his cold room is replaced by an aggressive, featureless space devoid of any indication of an exit: *“He was in a high-ceilinged windowless cell with walls of glittering white porcelain. Concealed lamps flooded it with cold light, and there was a low, steady humming sound which he supposed had something to do with the air supply. A bench, or shelf, just wide enough to sit on ran round the wall, broken only by the door and, at the end opposite the door, a lavatory pan with no wooden seat. There were four telescreens, one in each wall”* [9, p. 285]. Winston’s internal resistance diminishes in “Room 101,” stripping him of his final spiritual sanctuary – “the Golden Country,” which he once shared with Julia.

Following Winston’s year-long spiritual battle, the city remains unchanged, its text reinforced with even more alien parameters: *“the earth was like iron and all the grass seemed dead and there was not a bud anywhere except a few crocuses which had pushed themselves up to be dismembered by the wind”* [9, p. 367]; *“It was vilely cold. The wind whistled through the twigs and fretted the occasional, dirty-looking crocuses”* [9, p. 367]; *“They sat down on two iron chairs, side by side but not too close together”* [9, p. 368]. According to Yu.M. Lotman, the cyclical nature of time, where an annual cycle corresponds to a daily one, and human life is linked with the life cycle of a plant, is inherent in primary, mythological consciousness [4, p. 36]. The simplified representations of the city mirror a simplified perspective on human life; in the Orwellian realm, human consciousness lacks the typical complexity that evolved alongside civilization. The architectural simplicity within the cityscape flattens and eliminates every aspect of individuality. The protagonist’s perception experiences a stark shift, and the intrusive sounds of the telescreen lose their negative connotations: *“Something changed in the music that trickled from the telescreen. A cracked and jeering note, a yellow note, came into it”* [9, p. 370]. The system triumphs over individuality, assimilating it and reducing it to a mundane component of the metropolis.

Thus, the Orwellian London depicted in “1984” emerges as a multi-dimensional narrative, encompassing various social, psychological, territorial, architectural, cultural, and economic layers. Compared to the author's contemporary capital, the

fictional London map undergoes significant changes, particularly in its social zoning, distinguishing between the areas inhabited by proles and those by members of the outer and inner party. This urban space is characterized by a sense of “*otherness*” and aggression, embodying alien parameters. The concept of topographical aggression, initially explored in Orwell’s early essays, is evident in the portrayal of social divides, such as the contrast between “yellow faces” and “brown skin” against a white protagonist. The theme of personal transformation into an object within the material world, or a mere spatial element, pervades Orwell’s artistic vision, evident across various genres. Overall, Orwell’s narrative landscape is marked by themes of dehumanization, animalism, and the relegation of individuality to a mere backdrop within the unified reality of the urban setting.

Ernest Hemingway’s works hold a distinctive position in American literature, particularly in their portrayal of urban landscapes (Paris and Pamplona in “*The Sun Also Rises*”, 1926), by Philip K. Dick (San Francisco in the novel “*The Man in the High Castle*”, 1962), by Breece Dexter Pancake (American urban scapes in his short stories, collection published in 1983), by William Gibson Cassandra Clare (the futuristic city in “*Neuromancer*”, 1984), by Don DeLillo (college town in “*White noise*”, 1985), (urban space in her fantasy novel “*City of Glass*”, 2009), and by George R.R. Martin (medieval urbanity in a series of epic fantasy novel of “*A Song of Ice and Fire*” cycle, 1996-present), etc. Contemporary American literature presents a rich array of cities that mirror real-world global and local landscapes while also transcending temporal and spatial boundaries, as evidenced in science fiction works like James S.A. Corey’s “*The Expanse*” series (2011-2021). In literature by authors with mixed cultural identities, cities are depicted with a focus on ethnic elements such as color symbolism, odors, sounds, and architecture.

Topics for reports, essays and presentations:

1. *Fictional towns in literature.*
2. *City archetypes in global literature.*
3. *Urban space theory and its investigation in fiction.*

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PART II: *PRACTICE*

PACE 1

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND SOCIAL ORDER IN AMERICAN POSTMODERN LITERATURE

“The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time.”
Mark Twain

“It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live”.
Marcus Aurelius

“Everything...affects everything”
Jay Asher, *Thirteen Reasons Why*

“I didn't want to wake up. I was having a much better time asleep. And that's really sad. It was almost like a reverse nightmare, like when you wake up from a nightmare you're so relieved. I woke up into a nightmare.”
Ned Vizzini, *It's Kind of a Funny Story*

Key terms: *Cultural backdrop of television, electronic media, consumer ease, the feeling of impending catastrophe, academic career, convicted murder, toxic gas, the toxic air, own morality, senseless killing, emotional armor, a sense of threatened masculinity, an impending sense of dread, the ever-present noise, disaster management, simulation, fragmented family*

DON DELILLO, born on November 20, 1936, in New York, USA, is an American novelist known for his postmodern style. Following his debut with *“Americana”* in 1971, he released *“End Zone”* in 1972 and *“Great Jones Street”* in 1973. *“Ratner’s Star,”* published in 1976, garnered acclaim for its elaborate humor and linguistic prowess.

Starting with *“Players”* in 1977, DeLillo’s narrative took a darker turn, portraying characters increasingly driven by destructiveness and ignorance. This shift was evident in thrillers like *“Running Dog”* (1978) and *“The Names”* (1982), primarily set in Greece. *“White Noise”* (1985; adapted into a film in 2022) marked a significant milestone, winning the National Book Award for fiction. It revolves around

a suburban college professor whose routine is disrupted by a catastrophic train accident, leading to a massive chemical spill. As the characters grapple with their mortality, the novel delves into contemporary themes such as consumerism, mass media, and conspiracy theories. Recognizing its significance, Time Magazine included “*White Noise*” in its 2005 list of the 100 best English-language novels since 1923.

In “*Libra*” (1988), DeLillo crafted a fictional depiction of Lee Harvey Oswald, the individual responsible for the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy. Meanwhile, “*Mao II*” (1991) commences with a mass wedding presided over by cult figure Sun Myung Moon, unfolding the narrative of a secluded writer drawn into a realm of political turmoil and violence.

The novel “*Underworld*” (1997) offers a reflection on American history and culture during the Cold War era, partly by following the imagined trajectory of the baseball struck by New York Giants outfielder Bobby Thomson for a game-winning home run in 1951. DeLillo’s subsequent literary endeavors include “*The Body Artist*” (2001), which explores the supernatural encounters of a recent widow; “*Cosmopolis*” (2003; adapted into a film in 2012), predominantly unfolding within a billionaire’s limousine traversing Manhattan; “*Falling Man*” (2007), narrating the experiences of a survivor of the September 11 attacks; “*Point Omega*” (2010), a contemplation on the nature of time; and “*Zero K*” (2016), an exploration of cryogenics and the quest for human immortality. “*The Silence*” (2020) portrays the attendees of a Super Bowl gathering amid a global catastrophic event.

Alongside his novels, DeLillo penned various plays, crafted the screenplay for the independent film “*Game 6*” (2005), and compiled the short-story collection “*The Angel Esmeralda: Nine Stories*” (2011). His accolades include the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction in 2013 and the National Book Awards Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters in 2015.

1. *Reflect on the personality of Hitler. What, in your opinion, Hitler Studies are about? Why might it be interesting in the academic environment? Would you take up such a course? Why? Why not?*
2. *What problems, do you think, could be brought by multiple marriages?*
3. *Is human fear of death natural? How do the world mainstream religions deal with the fear of death?*
4. *Define the term “postmodernism”. What are the features of the postmodern text?*

Don DELILLO

WHITE NOISE

(Excerpt)

I

Waves and Radiation

1

The station wagons arrived at noon, a long shining line that coursed through the west campus. In single file they eased around the orange I-beam sculpture and moved toward the dormitories. The roofs of the station wagons were loaded down with carefully secured suitcases full of light and heavy clothing; with boxes of blankets, boots and shoes, stationery and books, sheets, pillows, quilts; with rolled-up rugs and sleeping bags; with bicycles, skis, rucksacks, English and Western saddles, inflated rafts. As cars slowed to a crawl and stopped, students sprang out and raced to the rear doors to begin removing the objects inside; the stereo sets, radios, personal computers; small refrigerators and table ranges; the cartons of phonograph records and cassettes; the hairdryers and styling irons; the tennis rackets, soccer balls, hockey and lacrosse sticks, bows and arrows; the controlled substances, the birth control pills and devices; the jurik food still in shopping bags – onion-and-garlic chips, nacho thins, peanut

creme patties, Waffelos and Kabooms, fruit chews and toffee popcorn; the Dum-Dum pops, the Mystic mints.

I've witnessed this spectacle every September for twenty-one years. It is a brilliant event, invariably. The students greet each other with comic cries and gestures of sodden collapse. Their summer has been bloated with criminal pleasures, as always. The parents stand sun-dazed near their automobiles, seeing images of themselves in every direction. The conscientious suntans. The well-made faces and wry looks. They feel a sense of renewal, of communal recognition. The women crisp and alert, in diet trim, knowing people's names. Their husbands content to measure out the time, distant but ungrudging, accomplished in parenthood, something about them suggesting massive insurance coverage. This assembly of station wagons, as much as anything they might do in the course of the year, more than formal liturgies or laws, tells the parents they are a collection of the like-minded and the spiritually akin, a people, a nation.

I left my office and walked down the hill and into town. There are houses in town with turrets and two-story porches where people sit in the shade of ancient maples. There are Greek revival and Gothic churches. There is an insane asylum with an elongated portico, ornamented dormers and a steeply pitched roof topped by a pineapple finial. Babette and I and our children by previous marriages live at the end of a quiet street in what was once a wooded area with deep ravines. There is an expressway beyond the backyard now, well below us, and at night as we settle into our brass bed the sparse traffic washes past, a remote and steady murmur around our sleep, as of dead souls babbling at the edge of a dream.

I am chairman of the department of Hitler studies at the College-on-the-Hill. I invented Hitler studies in North America in March of 1968. It was a cold bright day with intermittent winds out of the east. When I suggested to the chancellor that we might build a whole department around Hitler's life and work, he was quick to see the possibilities. It was an immediate and electrifying success. The chancellor went on to serve as adviser to Nixon, Ford and Carter before his death on a ski lift in Austria.

At Fourth and Elm, cars turn left for the supermarket. A policewoman crouched inside a boxlike vehicle patrols the area looking for cars parked illegally, for meter violations, lapsed inspection stickers. On telephone poles all over town there are homemade signs concerning lost dogs and cats, sometimes in the handwriting of a child.

2

Babette is tall and fairly ample; there is a girth and heft to her. Her hair is a fanatical blond mop, a particular tawny hue that used to be called dirty blond. If she were a petite woman, the hair would be too cute, too mischievous and contrived. Size gives her tousled aspect a certain seriousness. Ample women do not plan such things. They lack the guile for conspiracies of the body.

“You should have been there,” I said to her. “Where?”

“It’s the day of the station wagons.”

“Did I miss it again? You’re supposed to remind me.”

“They stretched all the way down past the music library and onto the interstate. Blue, green, burgundy, brown. They gleamed in the sun like a desert caravan.”

“You know I need reminding, Jack.”

Babette, disheveled, has the careless dignity of someone too preoccupied with serious matters to know or care what she looks like. Not that she is a gift-bearer of great things as the world generally reckons them. She gathers and tends the children, teaches a course in an adult education program, belongs to a group of volunteers who read to the blind. Once a week she reads to an elderly man named Treadwell who lives on the edge of town. He is known as Old Man Treadwell, as if he were a landmark, a rock formation or brooding swamp. She reads to him from the *National Enquirer*, the *National Examiner*, the *National Express*, the *Globe*, the *World*, the *Star*. The old fellow demands his weekly dose of cult mysteries. Why deny him? The point is that Babette, whatever she is doing, makes me feel sweetly rewarded, bound up with a full-souled woman, a lover of daylight and dense life, the miscellaneous swarming air of

families. I watch her all the time doing things in measured sequence, skillfully, with seeming ease, unlike my former wives, who had a tendency to feel estranged from the objective world – a self-absorbed and high-strung bunch, with ties to the intelligence community.

“It's not the station wagons I wanted to see. What are the people like? Do the women wear plaid skirts, cable-knit sweaters? Are the men in hacking jackets? What's a hacking jacket?”

“They've grown comfortable with their money,” I said. “They genuinely believe they're entitled to it. This conviction gives them a kind of rude health. They glow a little.”

“I have trouble imagining death at that income level,” she said.

“Maybe there is no death as we know it. Just documents changing hands.” “Not that we don't have a station wagon ourselves.”

“It's small, it's metallic gray, it has one whole rusted door.”

“Where is Wilder?” she said, routinely panic-stricken, calling out to the child, one of hers, sitting motionless on his tricycle in the backyard.

Babette and I do our talking in the kitchen. The kitchen and the bedroom are the major chambers around here, the power haunts, the sources. She and I are alike in this, that we regard the rest of the house as storage space for furniture, toys, all the unused objects of earlier marriages and different sets of children, the gifts of lost in-laws, the hand-me-downs and rummages. Things, boxes. Why do these possessions carry such sorrowful weight? There is a darkness attached to them, a foreboding. They make me wary not of personal failure and defeat but of something more general, something large in scope and content.

She came in with Wilder and seated him on the kitchen counter. Denise and Steffie came downstairs and we talked about the school supplies they would need. Soon it was time for lunch. We entered a period of chaos and noise. We milled about, bickered a little, dropped utensils. Finally we were all satisfied with what we'd been able to snatch from the cupboards and refrigerator or swipe from each other and we

began quietly plastering mustard or mayonnaise on our brightly colored food. The mood was one of deadly serious anticipation, a reward hard-won. The table was crowded and Babette and Denise elbowed each other twice, although neither spoke. Wilder was still seated on the counter surrounded by open cartons, crumpled tinfoil, shiny bags of potato chips, bowls of pasty substances covered with plastic wrap, flip-top rings and twist ties, individually wrapped slices of orange cheese. Heinrich came in, studied the scene carefully, my only son, then walked out the back door and disappeared.

“This isn't the lunch I'd planned for myself,” Babette said. “I was seriously thinking yogurt and wheat germ.”

“Where have we heard that before?” Denise said. “Probably right here,” Steffie said.

“She keeps buying that stuff.”

“But she never eats it,” Steffie said.

“Because she thinks if she keeps buying it, she'll have to eat it just to get rid of it. It's like she's trying to trick herself.”

“It takes up half the kitchen.”

“But she throws it away before she eats it because it goes bad,” Denise said. “So then she starts the whole thing all over again.”

“Wherever you look,” Steffie said, “there it is.”

“She feels guilty if she doesn't buy it, she feels guilty if she buys it and doesn't eat it, she feels guilty when she sees it in the fridge, she feels guilty when she throws it away.”

“It's like she smokes but she doesn't,” Steffie said.

Denise was eleven, a hard-nosed kid. She led a more or less daily protest against those of her mother's habits that struck her as wasteful or dangerous. I defended Babette. I told her I was the one who needed to show discipline in matters of diet. I reminded her how much I liked the way she looked. I suggested there was an honesty

inherent in bulkiness if it is just the right amount. People trust a certain amount of bulk in others.

But she was not happy with her hips and thighs, walked at a rapid clip, ran up the stadium steps at the neoclassical high school.

She said I made virtues of her flaws because it was my nature to shelter loved ones from the truth. Something lurked inside the truth, she said.

The smoke alarm went off in the hallway upstairs, either to 'et us know the battery had just died or because the house was on fire. We finished our lunch in silence.

3

Department heads wear academic robes at the College-on-the-Hill. Not grand sweeping full-length affairs but sleeveless tunics puckered at the shoulders. I like the idea. I like clearing my arm from the folds of the garment to look at my watch. The simple act of checking the time is transformed by this flourish. Decorative gestures add romance to a life. Idling students may see time itself as a complex embellishment, a romance of human consciousness, as they witness the chairman walking across campus, crook'd arm emerging from his medieval robe, the digital watch blinking in late summer dusk. The robe is black, of course, and goes with almost anything.

There is no Hitler building as such. We are quartered in Centenary Hall, a dark brick structure we share with the popular culture department, known officially as American environments. A curious group. The teaching staff is composed almost solely of New York émigrés, smart, thuggish, movie-mad, trivia-crazed. They are here to decipher the natural language of the culture, to make a formal method of the shiny pleasures they'd known in their Europe-shadowed childhoods – an Aristotelianism of bubble gum wrappers and detergent jingles. The department head is Alfonse (Fast Food) Stompanato, a broad-chested glowering man whose collection of prewar soda pop bottles is on permanent display in an alcove. All his teachers are male, wear rumpled clothes, need haircuts, cough into their armpits. Together they look like

teamster officials assembled to identify the body of a mutilated colleague. The impression is one of pervasive bitterness, suspicion and intrigue.

An exception to some of the above is Murray Jay Siskind, an ex-sportswriter who asked me to have lunch with him in the dining room, where the institutional odor of vaguely defined food aroused in me an obscure and gloomy memory. Murray was new to the Hill, a stoop-shouldered man with little round glasses and an Amish beard. He was a visiting lecturer on living icons and seemed embarrassed by what he'd gleaned so far from his colleagues in popular culture.

“I understand the music, I understand the movies, I even see how comic books can tell us things. But there are full professors in this place who read nothing but cereal boxes.”

“It's the only avant-garde we've got.”

“Not that I'm complaining. I like it here. I'm totally enamored of this place. A small-town setting. I want to be free of cities and sexual entanglements. Heat. This is what cities mean to me. You get off the train and walk out of the station and you are hit with the full blast. The heat of air, traffic and people. The heat of food and sex. The heat of tall buildings. The heat that floats out of the subways and the tunnels. It's always fifteen degrees hotter in the cities. Heat rises from the sidewalks and falls from the poisoned sky. The buses breathe heat. Heat emanates from crowds of shoppers and office workers. The entire infrastructure is based on heat, desperately uses up heat, breeds more heat. The eventual heat death of the universe that scientists love to talk about is already well underway and you can feel it happening all around you in any large or medium-sized city. Heat and wetness.”

“Where are you living, Murray?”

“In a rooming house. I'm totally captivated and intrigued. It's a gorgeous old crumbling house near the insane asylum. Seven or eight boarders, more or less permanent except for me. A woman who harbors a terrible secret. A man with a haunted look. A man who never comes out of his room. A woman who stands by the letter box for hours, waiting for something that never seems to arrive. A man with no

past. A woman with a past. There is a smell about the place of unhappy lives in the movies that I really respond to.”

“Which one are you?” I said.

“I'm the Jew. What else would I be?”

There was something touching about the fact that Murray was dressed almost totally in corduroy. I had the feeling that since the age of eleven in his crowded plot of concrete he'd associated this sturdy fabric with higher learning in some impossibly distant and tree-shaded place.

“I can't help being happy in a town called Blacksmith,” he said. “I'm here to avoid situations. Cities are full of situations, sexually cunning people. There are parts of my body I no longer encourage women to handle freely. I was in a situation with a woman in Detroit. She needed my semen in a divorce suit. The irony is that I love women. I fall apart at the sight of long legs, striding, briskly, as a breeze carries up from the river, on a weekday, in the play of morning light. The second irony is that it's not the bodies of women that I ultimately crave but their minds. The mind of a woman. The delicate chambering and massive unidirectional flow, like a physics experiment. What fun it is to talk to an intelligent woman wearing stockings as she crosses her legs. That little staticky sound of rustling nylon can make me happy on several levels. The third and related irony is that it's the most complex and neurotic and difficult women that I am invariably drawn to. I like simple men and complicated women.”

Murray's hair was tight and heavy-looking. He had dense brows, wisps of hair curling up the sides of his neck. The small stiff beard, confined to his chin and unaccompanied by a mustache, seemed an optional component, to be stuck on or removed as circumstances warranted.

“What kind of lectures do you plan giving?”

“That's exactly what I want to talk to you about,” he said. “You've established a wonderful thing here with Hitler. You created it, you nurtured it, you made it your own. Nobody on the faculty of any college or university in this part of the country can so much as utter the word Hitler without a nod in your direction, literally or

metaphorically. This is the center, the unquestioned source. He is now your Hitler, Gladney's Hitler. It must be deeply satisfying for you. The college is internationally known as a result of Hitler studies. It has an identity, a sense of achievement. You've evolved an entire system around this figure, a structure with countless substructures and interrelated fields of study, a history within history. I marvel at the effort. It was masterful, shrewd and stunningly preemptive. It's what I want to do with Elvis.”

Several days later Murray asked me about a tourist attraction known as the most photographed barn in America. We drove twenty-two miles into the country around Farmington. There were meadows and apple orchards. White fences trailed through the rolling fields. Soon the signs started appearing. THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED BARN IN AMERICA. We counted five signs before we reached the site. There were forty cars and a tour bus in the makeshift lot. We walked along a cowpath to the slightly elevated spot set aside for viewing and photographing. All the people had cameras; some had tripods, telephoto lenses, filter kits. A man in a booth sold postcards and slides – pictures of the barn taken from the elevated spot. We stood near a grove of trees and watched the photographers. Murray maintained a prolonged silence, occasionally scrawling some notes in a little book.

“No one sees the barn,” he said finally. A long silence followed.

“Once you've seen the signs about the barn, it becomes impossible to see the barn.” He fell silent once more. People with cameras left the elevated site, replaced at once by others.

“We're not here to capture an image, we're here to maintain one. Every photograph reinforces the aura. Can you feel it, Jack? An accumulation of nameless energies.”

There was an extended silence. The man in the booth sold postcards and slides.

“Being here is a kind of spiritual surrender. We see only what the others see. The thousands who were here in the past, those who will come in the future. We've

agreed to be part of a collective perception. This literally colors our vision. A religious experience in a way, like all tourism.”

Another silence ensued.

“They are taking pictures of taking pictures,” he said.

He did not speak for a while. We listened to the incessant clicking of shutter release buttons, the rustling crank of levers that advanced the film.

“What was the barn like before it was photographed?” he said. “What did it look like, how was it different from other barns, how was it similar to other barns? We can't answer these questions because we've read the signs, seen the people snapping the pictures. We can't get outside the aura. We're part of the aura. We're here, we're now.”

He seemed immensely pleased by this.

4

When times are bad, people feel compelled to overeat. Blacksmith is full of obese adults and children, baggy-pantsed, short-legged, waddling. They struggle to emerge from compact cars; they don sweatsuits and run in families across the landscape; they walk down the street with food in their faces; they eat in stores, cars, parking lots, on bus lines and movie lines, under the stately trees.

Only the elderly seem exempt from the fever of eating. If they are sometimes absent from their own words and gestures, they are also slim and healthy-looking, the women carefully groomed, the men purposeful and well dressed, selecting shopping carts from the line outside the supermarket.

I crossed the high school lawn and walked to the rear of the building and toward the small open stadium. Babette was running up the stadium steps. I sat across the field in the first row of stone seats. The sky was full of streaking clouds. When she reached the top of the stadium she stopped and paused, putting her hands to the high parapet and leaning into it to rest diagonally. Then she turned and walked back down, breasts chugging. The wind rippled her oversized suit. She walked with her hands on her hips, fingers spread. Her face was tilted up, catching the cool air, and she didn't see me.

When she reached the bottom step she turned to face the seats and did some kind of neck stretching exercise. Then she started running up the steps. Three times she ascended the steps, walked slowly down. There was no one around. She worked hard, hair floating, legs and shoulders working. Every time she reached the top she leaned into the wall, head down, upper body throbbing. After the last descent I met her at the edge of the playing field and embraced her, putting my hands inside the sweatband of her gray cotton pants. A small plane appeared over the trees. Babette was moist and warm, emitting a creaturely hum.

She runs, she shovels snow, she caulks the tub and sink. She plays word games with Wilder and reads erotic classics aloud in bed at night. What do I do? I twirl the garbage bags and twist-tie them, swim laps in the college pool. When I go walking, joggers come up soundlessly behind me, appearing at my side, making me jump in idiotic fright. Babette talks to dogs and cats. I see colored spots out of the corner of my right eye. She plans ski trips that we never take, her face bright with excitement. I walk up the hill to school, noting the whitewashed stones that line the driveways of newer homes.

Who will die first?

This question comes up from time to time, like where are the car keys. It ends a sentence, prolongs a glance between us. I wonder if the thought itself is part of the nature of physical love, a reverse Darwinism that awards sadness and fear to the survivor. Or is it some inert element in the air we breathe, a rare thing like neon, with a melting point, an atomic weight? I held her in my arms on the cinder track. Kids came running our way, thirty girls in bright shorts, an improbable bobbing mass. The eager breathing, the overlapping rhythms of their footfalls. Sometimes I think our love is inexperienced. The question of dying becomes a wise reminder. It cures us of our innocence of the future. Simple things are doomed, or is that a superstition? We watched the girls come round again. They were strung out now, with faces and particular gaits, almost weightless in their craving, able to land lightly.

The Airport Marriott, the Downtown Travelodge, the Sheraton Inn and Conference Center. On our way home I said, “Bee wants to visit at Christmas. We can put her in with Steffie.” “Do they know each other?”

“They met at Disney World. It’ll be all right.” “When were you in Los Angeles?”

“You mean Anaheim.”

“When were you in Anaheim?”

“You mean Orlando. It’s almost three years now.” “Where was I?” she said.

My daughter Bee, from my marriage to Tweedy Browner, was just starting seventh grade in a Washington suburb and was having trouble readjusting to life in the States after two years in South Korea. She took taxis to school, made phone calls to friends in Seoul and Tokyo. Abroad she’d wanted to eat ketchup sandwiches with Trix sticks. Now she cooked fierce sizzling meals of scallion bushes and baby shrimp, monopolizing Tweedy’s restaurant-quality range.

That night, a Friday, we ordered Chinese food and watched television together, the six of us. Babette had made it a rule. She seemed to think that if kids watched television one night a week with parents or stepparents, the effect would be to de-glamorize the medium in their eyes, make it wholesome domestic sport. Its narcotic undertow and eerie diseased brain-sucking power would be gradually reduced. I felt vaguely slighted by this reasoning. The evening in fact was a subtle form of punishment for us all. Heinrich sat silent over his egg rolls. Steffie became upset every time something shameful or humiliating seemed about to happen to someone on the screen. She had a vast capacity for being embarrassed on other people’s behalf. Often she would leave the room until Denise signaled to her that the scene was over. Denise used these occasions to counsel the younger girl on toughness, the need to be mean in the world, thick-skinned.

It was my own formal custom on Fridays, after an evening in front of the TV set, to read deeply in Hitler well into the night.

On one such night I got into bed next to Babette and told her how the chancellor had advised me, back in 1968, to do something about my name and appearance if I

wanted to be taken seriously as a Hitler innovator. Jack Gladney would not do, he said, and asked me what other names I might have at my disposal. We finally agreed that I should invent an extra initial and call myself J. A. K. Gladney, a tag I wore like a borrowed suit.

The chancellor warned against what he called my tendency to make a feeble presentation of self. He strongly suggested I gain weight. He wanted me to "grow out" into Hitler. He himself was tall, paunchy, ruddy, jowly, big-footed and dull. A formidable combination. I had the advantages of substantial height, big hands, big feet, but badly needed bulk, or so he believed – an air of unhealthy excess, of padding and exaggeration, hulking massive-ness. If I could become more ugly, he seemed to be suggesting, it would help my career enormously.

So Hitler gave me something to grow into and develop toward, tentative as I have sometimes been in the effort. The glasses with thick black heavy frames and dark lenses were my own idea, an alternative to the bushy beard that my wife of the period didn't want me to grow. Babette said she liked the series J. A. K. and didn't think it was attention-getting in a cheap sense. To her it intimated dignity, significance and prestige.

I am the false character that follows the name around.

5

Let's enjoy these aimless days while we can, I told myself, I fearing some kind of deft acceleration.

At breakfast, Babette read all our horoscopes aloud, using her storytelling voice. I tried not to listen when she got to mine, although I think I wanted to listen, I think I sought some clues.

After dinner, on my way upstairs, I heard the TV say: "Let's sit half lotus and think about our spines."

That night, seconds after going to sleep, I seemed to fall through myself, a shallow heart-stopping plunge. Jarred awake, I stared into the dark, realizing I'd

experienced the more or less normal muscular contraction known as the myoclonic jerk. Is this what it's like, abrupt, peremptory? Shouldn't death, I thought, be a swan dive, graceful, white-winged and smooth, leaving the surface undisturbed?

Blue jeans tumbled in the dryer.

We ran into Murray Jay Siskind at the supermarket. His basket held generic food and drink, nonbrand items in plain white packages with simple labeling. There was a white can labeled CANNED PEACHES. There was a white package of bacon without a plastic window for viewing a representative slice. A jar of roasted nuts had a white wrapper bearing the words IRREGULAR PEANUTS. Murray kept nodding to Babette as I introduced them.

“This is the new austerity,” he said. “Flavorless packaging. It appeals to me. I feel I'm not only saving money but contributing to some kind of spiritual consensus. It's like World War III. Everything is white. They'll take our bright colors away and use them in the war effort.”

He was staring into Babette's eyes, picking up items from our cart and smelling them. “I've bought these peanuts before. They're round, cubical, pockmarked, seamed. Broken peanuts. A lot of dust at the bottom of the jar. But they taste good. Most of all I like the packages themselves. You were right, Jack. This is the last avant-garde. Bold new forms. The power to shock.”

A woman fell into a rack of paperback books at the front of the store. A heavysset man emerged from the raised cubicle in the far corner and moved warily toward her, head tilted to get a clearer sightline. A checkout girl said, “Leon, parsley,” and he answered as he approached the fallen woman, “Seventy-nine.” His breast pocket was crammed with felt-tip pens.

“So then you cook at the rooming house,” Babette said.

“My room is zoned for a hot plate. I'm happy there. I read the TV listings, I read the ads in *Ufologist Today*. I want to immerse myself in American magic and dread. My seminar is going well. The students are bright and responsive. They ask questions and I answer them. They jot down notes as I speak. It's quite a surprise in my life.”

He picked up our bottle of extra-strength pain reliever and sniffed along the rim of the child-proof cap. He smelled our honeydew melons, our bottles of club soda and ginger ale. Babette went down the frozen food aisle, an area my doctor had advised me to stay out of.

“Your wife's hair is a living wonder,” Murray said, looking closely into my face as if to communicate a deepening respect for me based on this new information.

“Yes, it is,” I said.

“She has important hair.”

“I think I know what you mean.”

“I hope you appreciate that woman.” “Absolutely.”

“Because a woman like that doesn't just happen.” “I know it.”

“She must be good with children. More than that, I'll bet she's great to have around in a family tragedy. She'd be the type to take control, show strength and affirmation.”

“Actually she falls apart. She fell apart when her mother died.” “Who wouldn't?”

“She fell apart when Steffie called from camp with a broken bone in her hand. We had to drive all night. I found myself on a lumber company road. Babette weeping.”

“Her daughter, far away, among strangers, in pain. Who wouldn't?” “Not her daughter. My daughter.”

“Not even her own daughter.” “No.”

“Extraordinary. I have to love it.”

The three of us left together, trying to maneuver our shopping carts between the paperback books scattered across the entrance. Murray wheeled one of our carts into the parking lot and then helped us heave and push all our double-bagged merchandise into the back of the station wagon. Cars entered and exited. The policewoman in her zippered minicab scouted the area for red flags on the parking meters. We added Murray's single lightweight bag of white items to our load and headed across Elm in the direction of his rooming house. It seemed to me that Babette and I, in the mass and variety of our purchases, in the sheer plenitude those crowded bags suggested, the

weight and size and number, the familiar package designs and vivid lettering, the giant sizes, the family bargain packs with Day-Glo sale stickers, in the sense of replenishment we felt, the sense of well-being, the security and contentment these products brought to some snug home in our souls – it seemed we had achieved a fullness of being that is not known to people who need less, expect less, who plan their lives around lonely walks in the evening.

Murray took Babette's hand on leaving.

“I'd ask you to visit my room but it's too small for two people unless they're prepared to be intimate.”

Murray is able to produce a look that is sneaky and frank at the same time. It is a look that gives equal credence to disaster and lecherous success. He says that in the old days of his urban entanglements he believed there was only one way to seduce a woman, with clear and open desire. He took pains to avoid self-depreciation, self-mockery, ambiguity, irony, subtlety, vulnerability, a civilized world-weariness and a tragic sense of history – the very things, he says, that are most natural to him. Of these he has allowed only one element, vulnerability, to insert itself gradually into his program of straightforward lust. He is trying to develop a vulnerability that women will find attractive. He works at it consciously, like a man in a gym with weights and a mirror. But his efforts so far have produced only this half sneaky look, sheepish and wheedling.

He thanked us for the lift. We watched him walk toward the lopsided porch, propped with cinder blocks, where a man in a rocker stared into space.

6

Heinrich's hairline is beginning to recede. I wonder about this. Did his mother consume some kind of gene-piercing substance when she was pregnant? Am I at fault somehow? Have I raised him, unwittingly, in the vicinity of a chemical dump site, in the path of air currents that carry industrial wastes capable of producing scalp degeneration, glorious sunsets? (People say the sunsets around here were not nearly so

stunning thirty or forty years ago.) Man's guilt in history and in the tides of his own blood has been complicated by technology, the daily seeping falsehearted death.

The boy is fourteen, often evasive and moody, at other times disturbingly compliant. I have a sense that his ready yielding to our wishes and demands is a private weapon of reproach. Babette is afraid he will end up in a barricaded room, spraying hundreds of rounds of automatic fire across an empty mall before the SWAT teams come for him with their heavy-barreled weapons, their bullhorns and body armor.

“It's going to rain tonight.” “It's raining now,” I said. “The radio said tonight.”

I drove him to school on his first day back after a sore throat and fever. A woman in a yellow slicker held up traffic to let some children cross. I pictured her in a soup commercial taking off her oilskin hat as she entered the cheerful kitchen where her husband stood over a pot of smoky lobster bisque, a smallish man with six weeks to live.

“Look at the windshield,” I said. “Is that rain or isn't it?” “I'm only telling you what they said.”

“Just because it's on the radio doesn't mean we have to suspend belief in the evidence of our senses.”

“Our senses? Our senses are wrong a lot more often than they're right. This has been proved in the laboratory. Don't you know about all those theorems that say nothing is what it seems? There's no past, present or future outside our own mind. The so-called laws of motion are a big hoax. Even sound can trick the mind. Just because you don't hear a sound doesn't mean it's not out there. Dogs can hear it. Other animals. And I'm sure there are sounds even dogs can't hear. But they exist in the air, in waves. Maybe they never stop. High, high, high-pitched. Coming from somewhere.”

“Is it raining,” I said, “or isn't it?” “I wouldn't want to have to say.”

“What if someone held a gun to your head?” “Who, you?”

“Someone. A man in a trenchcoat and smoky glasses. He holds a gun to your head and says, 'Is it raining or isn't it? All you have to do is tell the truth and I'll put away my gun and take the next flight out of here.’”

“What truth does he want? Does he want the truth of someone traveling at almost the speed of light in another galaxy? Does he want the truth of someone in orbit around a neutron star? Maybe if these people could see us through a telescope we might look like we were two feet two inches tall and it might be raining yesterday instead of today.”

“He's holding the gun to *your* head. He wants your truth.”

“What good is my truth? My truth means nothing. What if this guy with the gun comes from a planet in a whole different solar system? What we call rain he calls soap. What we call apples he calls rain. So what am I supposed to tell him?”

“His name is Frank J. Smalley and he comes from St. Louis.” “He wants to know if it's raining *now*, at this very minute?” “Here and now. That's right.”

“Is there such a thing as now? 'Now' comes and goes as soon as you say it. How can I say it's raining now if your so-called 'now' becomes 'then' as soon as I say it?”

“You said there was no past, present, or future.” “Only in our verbs. That's the only place we find it.”

“Rain is a noun. Is there rain here, in this precise locality, at whatever time within the next two minutes that you choose to respond to the question?”

“If you want to talk about this precise locality while you're in a vehicle that's obviously moving, then I think that's the trouble with this discussion.”

“Just give me an answer, okay, Heinrich?” “The best I could do is make a guess.”

“Either it's raining or it isn't,” I said.

“Exactly. That's my whole point. You'd be guessing. Six of one, half dozen of the other.” “But you *see* it's raining.”

“You see the sun moving across the sky. But is the sun moving across the sky or is the earth turning?”

“I don't accept the analogy.”

“You're so sure that's rain. How do you know it's not sulfuric acid from factories across the river? How do you know it's not fallout from a war in China? You want an

answer here and now. Can you prove, here and now, that this stuff is rain? How do I know that what you call rain is really rain? What *is* rain anyway?"

"It's the stuff that falls from the sky and gets you what is called wet." "I'm not wet. Are you wet?"

"All right," I said. "Very good." "No, seriously, are you wet?"

"First-rate," I told him. "A victory for uncertainty, randomness and chaos. Science's finest hour."

"Be sarcastic."

"The sophists and the hairsplitters enjoy their finest hour." "Go ahead, be sarcastic, I don't care."

Heinrich's mother lives in an ashram now. She has taken the name Mother Devi and runs the business end of things. The ashram is located on the outskirts of the former copper-smelting town of Tubb, Montana, now called Dharamsalapur. The usual rumors abound of sexual freedom, sexual slavery, drugs, nudity, mind control, poor hygiene, tax evasion, monkey-worship, torture, prolonged and hideous death.

I watched him walk through the downpour to the school entrance. He moved with deliberate slowness, taking off his camouflage cap ten yards from the doorway. At such moments I find I love him with an animal desperation, a need to take him under my coat and crush him to my chest, keep him there, protect him. He seems to bring a danger to him. It collects in the air, follows him from room to room. Babette bakes his favorite cookies. We watch him at his desk, an unpainted table covered with books and magazines. He works well into the night, plotting chess moves in a game he plays by mail with a convicted killer in the penitentiary.

It was warm and bright the next day and students on the Hill sat on lawns and in dorm windows, playing their tapes, sunbathing. The air was a reverie of wistful summer things, the last languorous day, a chance to go bare-limbed once more, smell the mown clover. I went into the Arts Duplex, our newest building, a winged affair with a facade of anodized aluminum, sea-green, cloud-catching. On the lower level

was the movie theater, a sloped and dark-carpeted space with two hundred plush seats. I sat in shallow light at the end of the first row and waited for my seniors to arrive.

They were all Hitler majors, members of the only class I still taught, Advanced Nazism, three hours a week, restricted to qualified seniors, a course of study designed to cultivate historical perspective, theoretical rigor and mature insight into the continuing mass appeal of fascist tyranny, with special emphasis on parades, rallies and uniforms, three credits, written reports.

Every semester I arranged for a screening of background footage. This consisted of propaganda films, scenes shot at party congresses, outtakes from mystical epics featuring parades of gymnasts and mountaineers – a collection I'd edited into an impressionistic eighty-minute documentary. Crowd scenes predominated. Close-up jostled shots of thousands of people outside a stadium after a Goebbels speech, people surging, massing, bursting through the traffic. Halls hung with swastika banners, with mortuary wreaths and death's-head insignia. Ranks of thousands of flagbearers arrayed before columns of frozen light, a hundred and thirty antiaircraft searchlights aimed straight up – a scene that resembled a geometric longing, the formal notation of some powerful mass desire. There was no narrative voice. Only chants, songs, arias, speeches, cries, cheers, accusations, shrieks.

I got to my feet and took up a position at the front of the theater, middle aisle, facing the entranceway.

They came in out of the sun in their poplin walk shorts and limited-edition T-shirts, in their easy-care knits, their polo styling and rugby stripes. I watched them take their seats, noting the subdued and reverent air, the uncertain anticipation. Some had notebooks and pencil lights; some carried lecture material in bright binders. There were whispers, rustling paper, the knocking sound of seats dropping as one by one the students settled in. I leaned against the front of the apron, waiting for the last few to enter, for someone to seal the doors against our voluptuous summer day.

Soon there was a hush. It was time for me to deliver the introductory remarks. I let the silence deepen for a moment, then cleared my arms from the folds of the academic robe in order to gesture freely.

When the showing ended, someone asked about the plot to kill Hitler. The discussion moved to plots in general. I found myself saying to the assembled heads, “All plots tend to move deathward. This is the nature of plots. Political plots, terrorist plots, lovers' plots, narrative plots, plots that are part of children's games. We edge nearer death every time we plot. It is like a contract that all must sign, the plotters as well as those who are the targets of the plot.”

Is this true? Why did I say it? What does it mean?

7

Two nights a week Babette goes to the Congregational church at the other end of town and lectures to adults in the basement on correct posture. Basically she is teaching them how to stand, sit and walk. Most of her students are old. It isn't clear to me why they want to improve their posture. We seem to believe it is possible to ward off death by following rules of good grooming. Sometimes I go with my wife to the church basement and watch her stand, turn, assume various heroic poses, gesture gracefully. She makes references to yoga, kendo, trance-walking. She talks of Sufi dervishes, Sherpa mountaineers. The old folks nod and listen. Nothing is foreign, nothing too remote to apply. I am always surprised at their acceptance and trust, the sweetness of their belief. Nothing is too doubtful to be of use to them as they seek to redeem their bodies from a lifetime of bad posture. It is the end of skepticism. We walked home under a marigold moon. Our house looked old and wan at the end of the street, the porch light shining on a molded plastic tricycle, a stack of three-hour colored-flame sawdust and wax logs. Denise was doing her homework in the kitchen, keeping an eye on Wilder, who had wandered downstairs to sit on the floor and stare through the oven window. Silence in the halls, shadows on the sloping lawn. We closed the door and disrobed. The bed was a mess. Magazines, curtain rods, a child's sooty

sock. Babette hummed something from a Broadway show, putting the rods in a corner. We embraced, fell sideways to the bed in a controlled way, then repositioned ourselves, bathing in each other's flesh, trying to kick the sheets off our ankles. Her body had a number of long hollows, places the hand might stop to solve in the dark, tempo-slowing places. We believed something lived in the basement.

“What do you want to do?” she said. “Whatever you want to do.”

“I want to do whatever's best for you.” “What's best for me is to please you,” I said. “I want to make you happy, Jack.”

“I'm happy when I'm pleasing you.”

“I just want to do what you want to do.” “I want to do whatever's best for you.”

“But you please me by letting me please you,” she said.

“As the male partner I think it's my responsibility to please.”

“I'm not sure whether that's a sensitive caring statement or a sexist remark.” “Is it wrong for the man to be considerate toward his partner?”

“I'm your partner when we play tennis, which we ought to start doing again, by the way. Otherwise I'm your wife. Do you want me to read to you?”

“First-rate.”

“I know you like me to read sexy stuff.” “I thought you liked it too.”

“Isn't it basically the person being read to who derives the benefit and the satisfaction? When I read to Old Man Treadwell, it's not because I find those tabloids stimulating.”

“Treadwell's blind, I'm not. I thought you liked to read erotic passages.” “If it pleases you, then I like to do it.”

“But it has to please you too, Baba. Otherwise how would I feel?” “It pleases me that you enjoy my reading.”

“I get the feeling a burden is being shifted back and forth. The burden of being the one who is pleased.”

“I want to read, Jack. Honestly.”

“Are you totally and completely sure? Because if you're not, we absolutely won't.”

Someone turned on the TV set at the end of the hall, and a woman's voice said: “If it breaks easily into pieces, it is called shale. When wet, it smells like clay.”

We listened to the gently plummeting stream of nighttime traffic.

I said, “Pick your century. Do you want to read about Etruscan slave girls, Georgian rakes? I think we have some literature on flagellation brothels. What about the Middle Ages? We have incubi and succubi. Nuns galore.”

“Whatever's best for you.”

“I want you to choose. It's sexier that way.”

“One person chooses, the other reads. Don't we want a balance, a sort of give-and-take? Isn't that what makes it sexy?”

“A tautness, a suspense. First-rate. I will choose.”

“I will read,” she said. “But I don't want you to choose anything that has men inside women, quote-quote, or men entering women. ‘I entered her.’ ‘He entered me.’ We're not lobbies or elevators. ‘I wanted him inside me,’ as if he could crawl completely in, sign the register, sleep, eat, so forth. Can we agree on that? I don't care what these people do as long as they don't enter or get entered.”

“Agreed.”

“‘I entered her and began to thrust.’” “‘I'm in total agreement,’” I said. “‘Enter me, enter me, yes, yes.’” “‘Silly usage, absolutely.’”

“‘Insert yourself, Rex. I want you inside me, entering hard, entering deep, yes, now, oh.’” I began to feel an erection stirring. How stupid and out of context. Babette laughed at her own lines. The TV said: “Until Florida surgeons attached an artificial flipper.”

Babette and I tell each other everything. I have told everything, such as it was at the time, to each of my wives. There is more to tell, of course, as marriages accumulate. But when I say I believe in complete disclosure I don't mean it cheaply, as anecdotal sport or shallow revelation. It is a form of self-renewal and a gesture of custodial trust.

Love helps us develop an identity secure enough to allow itself to be placed in another's care and protection. Babette and I have turned our lives for each other's thoughtful regard, turned them in the moonlight in our pale hands, spoken deep into the night about fathers and mothers, childhood, friendships, awakenings, old loves, old fears (except fear of death). No detail must be left out, not even a dog with ticks or a neighbor's boy who ate an insect on a dare. The smell of pantries, the sense of empty afternoons, the feel of things as they rained across our skin, things as facts and passions, the feel of pain, loss, disappointment, breathless delight. In these night recitations we create a space between things as we felt them at the time and as we speak them now. This is the space reserved for irony, sympathy and fond amusement, the means by which we rescue ourselves from the past.

I decided on the twentieth century. I put on my bathrobe and went down the hall to Heinrich's room to find a trashy magazine Babette might read from, the type that features letters from readers detailing their sexual experiences. This struck me as one of the few things the modern imagination has contributed to the history of erotic practices. There is a double fantasy at work in such letters. People write down imagined episodes and then see them published in a national magazine. Which is the greater stimulation?

Wilder was in there watching Heinrich do a physics experiment with steel balls and a salad bowl. Heinrich wore a terry cloth robe, a towel around his neck, another towel on his head. He told me to look downstairs.

In a stack of material I found some family photo albums, one or two of them at least fifty years old. I took them up to the bedroom. We spent hours going through them, sitting up in bed. Children wincing in the sun, women in sun hats, men shading their eyes from the glare as if the past possessed some quality of light we no longer experience, a Sunday dazzle that caused people in their churchgoing clothes to tighten their faces and stand at an angle to the future, somewhat averted it seemed, wearing fixed and finedrawn smiles, skeptical of something in the nature of the box camera.

Who will die first?

Questions for discussion:

1. Comment on the title of the novel. What sort of idea is coded behind it? Can you predict, what is the thematic aura of the book?
2. When was the book written? What do you know about the history of creation? Do you think the tone of the novel reflect the epoch it was created in?
3. What is the setting of the novel? What are the temporal and spatial markers in the text?
4. Analyze the imagery system and the artistic details in the excerpt.
5. What do you believe is the reason behind the author's choice to have the protagonist instruct Hitler studies?
6. After musing for a while about the parents dropping their kids off, Jack tells us that he actually invented the university department that he's the head of (Hitler Studies). How's that for a self-starter?
7. How do the books Babette reads characterize her?
8. What does the communal dining of the characters suggest about the familial atmosphere? How does food function within the passage?
9. Examine the discussion surrounding Jewish themes within the text.
10. What is DeLillo aiming to accomplish by initiating the book at a leisurely pace? At what point does the conventional plot truly commence?
11. What event serves as the catalyst for the story's unfolding?
12. Does the author employ any unconventional vocabulary or expressions? What impact do they create?
13. In Part 1, Chapter 4 of "*White Noise*", what does Jack Gladney imply by saying, "*I am the false character that follows the name around*"?
14. In Part 1, Chapter 4 of "*White Noise*", what is the importance of juxtaposing Babette Gladney's workout routine with Jack's contemplation on who will perish first? How does Wilder, in "*White Noise*," challenge Jack and Babette Gladney's apprehension of mortality: "*I have trouble imagining death at that income*"

level”. What is her intended message? Why does mortality cast such a pervasive shadow throughout this narrative?

15. Why does Jack Gladney inform his Hitler Studies class that, “*All plots tend to move deathward*”? Does this statement hold true for plots in novels? Plots in reality? Explain the rationale behind your answer.

16. In Part 1, Chapter 6 of “*White Noise*”, what does Jack Gladney imply by “*all plots tend to move deathward*”?

17. In Part 1, Chapter 7 of “*White Noise*”, how does Jack Gladney’s disclosure regarding love reinforce the theme of simulation versus reality?

18. Does the excerpt contain any symbolic elements?

19. What is the sound and olfactory system in the novel?

20. Is there any philosophy manifested in the excerpt?

21. Summarize the plot of chapters 1-7.

Read the rest of the novel and answer the questions below:

22. Discuss the idea of faith in an afterlife in connection with mortality. What are the nuns’ attitudes toward those who don’t share this belief?

23. What impact does the influence of suggestion have on the family in the midst of the catastrophe?

24. How does Jack characterize Babbette’s understanding of her own identity?

25. In Part 1, Chapter 8 of “*White Noise*”, how does Jack Gladney’s reflection on “*what we are reluctant to touch*” relate to his quest for redemption?

26. In Part 1, Chapter 9 of “*White Noise*”, what is the significance of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*?

27. In Part 1, Chapter 9 of “*White Noise*”, what does Murray Siskind intend to convey with the term “*psychic data*”?

28. In Part 1, Chapter 14 of “*White Noise*”, what does the Gladney family’s fixation on watching natural disasters on television indicate?

29. In Part 1, Chapter 16 of “*White Noise*”, what does Wilder’s episode of crying symbolize for Jack Gladney?

30. In Part 2, Chapter 21 of *“White Noise”*, what does Jack Gladney's contemplation about the potential for a *“possible to have a false perception of an illusion”* signify?
31. In Part 2, Chapter 21 of *“White Noise”*, what does the SIMUVAC program's examination of the actual evacuation entail?
32. In Part 2, Chapter 21 of *“White Noise”*, what does Murray Siskind mean by *“this is the nature of modern death”*?
33. In *“White Noise”* what does Babette Gladney's admission of her affair with Willie Mink in Part 3, Chapter 26 unveil about both her and her marital relationship?
34. In Part 3, Chapter 30 of *“White Noise”*, what does the alternative viewpoint provided by Winnie Richards regarding Dylar symbolize?
35. In Part 3, Chapter 33 of *“White Noise”*, what is Jack Gladney expressing when he asserts, *“if I think it will help me, it will help me”*?
36. In Part 3, Chapter 34 of *“White Noise”*, how does Jack Gladney's examination of the family's garbage connect to the idea of *“data”* in the novel?
37. In Part 3, Chapter 37 of *“White Noise”*, how does Murray Siskind's perspective on plots contrast with Jack Gladney's viewpoint on plots?
38. Throughout *“White Noise,”* how does Jack Gladney's quest for significance evolve?
39. What function does the supermarket serve as a backdrop in *“White Noise”*? How does consumerism contribute to the thematic elements within Don DeLillo's *“White Noise”*?
40. Who is Murray Siskind, and what purpose does he serve within the narrative?
41. In *“White Noise”*, how does television impact the Gladney family's daily lives? How does the novel incorporate excerpts and brand names from television and radio advertisements?

42. In “*White Noise*”, how does the author integrate the theme of mortality into the fabric of the novel?
43. In “*White Noise*”, what significance does Mercator hold in Jack Gladney’s existence?
44. How does Jack Gladney’s family in “*White Noise*” epitomize characteristics of the postmodern era?
45. What roles do faith and spirituality serve in “*White Noise*?”
46. How does the depiction of the characters’ “*White Noise*” influence the overall structure of?
47. Do you think it’s plausible that Heinrich, Jack Gladney’s 14-year-old son, can develop and articulate such sophisticated concepts? Why might DeLillo choose to convey such intricate ideas through Heinrich specifically?
48. What overarching message is the eccentric Murray Siskind attempting to convey to Jack throughout the novel? Is there a central theme he’s trying to communicate?
49. From a stylistic standpoint, what does DeLillo achieve by frequently incorporating quotes from the television or car radio that constantly plays in the backdrop of Jack’s family discussions? What message is DeLillo trying to convey through these excerpts?
50. Why does Murray accompany Jack on a trip out of town to see the “*Most Photographed Barn in America*”? What is the allure of this barn that compels people to photograph it repeatedly? How does the barn serve as a symbol for the America depicted by DeLillo in this novel?
51. How does Jack Gladney’s life transform after encountering the “*Airborne Toxic Event*”? In what aspects does his life remain unchanged, despite the event?
52. Symbolically, how could Babette’s forgetfulness be linked to the experimental drug Dylar? What message might DeLillo be conveying about our attempts to suppress thoughts of mortality?

53. How does “*White Noise*” conclude? Does it feature an open-ended conclusion or not?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) The definition of the family by the modern society in the novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; b) The American culture in the novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; c) Consumerism, technology and the economic factors novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; d) Religion and philosophy novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; e) Female images novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; f) Male images novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; g) The theme of death novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo; h) Bright lights and a big city novel “*White Noise*” by Don DeLillo.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *Postmodernism, the history of evolution.*
2. *Don DeLillo and his creative genius.*
3. *A literary satire and its features.*
4. *Tibetan Book of the Dead.*
5. *The concept of death through the prism of the world’s mainstream religions.*

Recommended reading:

1. “*The Sellout*” (2015) by Paul Beatty.
2. “*Harrow*” (2021) by Joy Williams.
3. “*The Crying of Lot 49*” by Thomas Pynchon.

GLOSSARY:

Inciting event: the occurrence that initiates the narrative's series of events, typically introducing a challenge that the characters endeavor to resolve.

PACE 2

***THE REFLECTION OF THE VIETNAM WAR IN AMERICAN FICTION.
INTERTEXTUAL STRUCTURES IN THE TEXT***

“All men are created equal; they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights; among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

The first lines of the *Vietnamese Declaration of Independence*, issued on September 2, 1945, quoting the American Declaration of Independence.

“We are fighting a war with no front lines, since the enemy hides among the people, in the jungles and mountains, and uses covertly border areas of neutral countries. One cannot measure [our] progress by lines on a map.”

General William C. Westmoreland, the commander of all U.S. military forces in Vietnam, in a speech to a joint session of Congress on April 28, 1967.

“Hey, Hey LBJ, How many kids did you kill today?”

A protest chant that first became popular in late 1967.

“In World War One, they called it shell shock. Second time around, they called it battle fatigue. After 'Nam, it was post-traumatic stress disorder.”

Jan Karon, *Home to Holly Springs*

“A president who is burdened with a failed and unpopular war, and who has lost the trust of the country, simply can no longer govern. He is destined to become as much a failure as his war.”

Glenn Greenwald, *A Tragic Legacy: How a Good vs. Evil Mentality Destroyed the Bush Presidency*

Key terms: *Chaos, the South Vietnamese army, the Vietnamese voice, a spy novel, the morality of torture, raw voice on the Asian experience, the most discussed and argued events in world history, to explore identity, a mutable event*

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Vietnamese-American novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen made his debut with *“The Sympathizer,”* which clinched the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, and numerous other awards. He received MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2017. Nguyen regularly contributes as an op-ed columnist for *The New York Times*, covering

topics such as immigration, refugees, politics, culture, and Southeast Asia. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and, in 2020, became the first Asian-American member of the Pulitzer Prize Board in its 103-year history.

Viet Thanh Nguyen's additional works include *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (a contender for the National Book Award in nonfiction and the National Book Critics Circle Award in General Nonfiction) and *Race and Resistance: Literature and Politics in Asian America*. His second novel, *The Committed*, a sequel to *The Sympathizer*, was released in 2021.

Nguyen's short stories have appeared in various publications, including Best New American Voices 2007 (*"A Correct Life"*), Manoa (*"Better Homes and Gardens"*), Narrative Magazine (*"Someone Else Besides You," "Arthur Arellano,"* and *"Fatherland,"* which received an award in the 2011 Winter Fiction Contest), TriQuarterly (*"The War Years"*), The Good Men Project (*"Look At Me"*), the Chicago Tribune (*"The Americans,"* also a finalist in the 2010 Nelson Algren Short Story Awards), and Gulf Coast, where his story earned the 2007 Fiction Prize.

1. *What do you know of the Vietnam war and its prerequisites? How was the Vietnam war different from any other war?*
2. *Do you know anyone close to you serve in the Vietnam War? Do they ever discuss their experience? How did it affect their lives?*
3. *Tell about the other war books. What are the common approaches in depiction of the painful historical experience?*
4. *In what way does the war change the relationships between the nations involved? What is the cultural impact of the wars?*

VIET THANH NGUEN

THE SYMPATHISER

(Excerpts)

CHAPTER 1

I am a spy, a sleeper, a spook, a man of two faces. Perhaps not surprisingly, I am also a man of two minds. I am not some misunderstood mutant from a comic book or a horror movie, although some have treated me as such. I am simply able to see any issue from both sides. Sometimes I flatter myself that this is a talent, and although it is

admittedly one of a minor nature, it is perhaps also the sole talent I possess. At other times, when I reflect on how I cannot help but observe the world in such a fashion, I wonder if what I have should even be called talent. After all, a talent is something you use, not something that uses you. The talent you cannot *not* use, the talent that possesses you – that is a hazard, I must confess. But in the month when this confession begins, my way of seeing the world still seemed more of a virtue than a danger, which is how some dangers first appear.

The month in question was April, the cruelest month. It was the month in which a war that had run on for a very long time would lose its limbs, as is the way of wars. It was a month that meant everything to all the people in our small part of the world and nothing to most people in the rest of the world. It was a month that was both an end of a war and the beginning of... well, “peace” is not the right word, is it, my dear Commandant? It was a month when I awaited the end behind the walls of a villa where I had lived for the previous five years, the villa’s walls glittering with broken brown glass and crowned with rusted barbed wire. I had my own room at the villa, much like I have my own room in your camp, Commandant. Of course, the proper term for my room is an “isolation cell,” and instead of a housekeeper who comes to clean every day, you have provided me with a baby-faced guard who does not clean at all. But I am not complaining. Privacy, not cleanliness, is my only prerequisite for writing this confession.

While I had sufficient privacy in the General’s villa at night, I had little during the day. I was the only one of the General’s officers to live in his home, the sole bachelor on his staff and his most reliable aide. In the mornings, before I chauffeured him the short distance to his office, we would breakfast together, parsing dispatches at one end of the teak dining table while his wife oversaw a well-disciplined quartet of children at the other, ages eighteen, sixteen, fourteen, and twelve, with one seat empty for the daughter studying in America. Not everyone may have feared the end, but the General sensibly did. A thin man of excellent posture, he was a veteran campaigner whose many medals had been, in his case, genuinely earned. Although he possessed

but nine fingers and eight toes, having lost three digits to bullets and shrapnel, only his family and confidants knew about the condition of his left foot. His ambitions had hardly ever been thwarted, except in his desire to procure an excellent bottle of Bourgogne and to drink it with companions who knew better than to put ice cubes in their wine. He was an epicurean and a Christian, in that order, a man of faith who believed in gastronomy and God; his wife and his children; and the French and the Americans. In his view, they offered us far better tutelage than those other foreign Svengalis who had hypnotized our northern brethren and some of our southern ones: Karl Marx, V. I. Lenin, and Chairman Mao. Not that he ever read any of those sages! That was my job as his aide-de-camp and junior officer of intelligence, to provide him with cribbed notes on, say, *The Communist Manifesto* or Mao's *Little Red Book*. It was up to him to find occasions to demonstrate his knowledge of the enemy's thinking, his favorite being Lenin's question, plagiarized whenever the need arose: Gentlemen, he would say, rapping the relevant table with adamantine knuckles, *what is to be done?* To tell the General that Nikolay Chernyshevsky actually came up with the question in his novel of the same title seemed irrelevant. How many remember Chernyshevsky now? It was Lenin who counted, the man of action who took the question and made it his own.

In this gloomiest of Aprils, faced with this question of what should be done, the general who always found something to do could no longer do so. A man who had faith in the *mission civilisatrice* and the American Way was at last bitten by the bug of disbelief. Suddenly insomniac, he took to wandering his villa with the greenish pallor of a malarial patient. Ever since our northern front had collapsed a few weeks before in March, he would materialize at my office door or at my room in the villa to hand off a snatch of news, always gloomy. Can you believe it? he would demand, to which I said one of two things: No, sir! or Unbelievable! We could not believe that the pleasant, scenic coffee town of Ban Me Thuot, my Highlands hometown, had been sacked in early March. We could not believe that our president, Thieu, whose name begged to be spit out of the mouth, had inexplicably ordered our forces defending the Highlands to

retreat. We could not believe that Da Nang and Nha Trang had fallen, or that our troops had shot civilians in the back as they all fought madly to escape on barges and boats, the death toll running to the thousands. In the secret privacy of my office, I dutifully snapped pictures of these reports, which would please Man, my handler. While they pleased me, too, as signs of the regime's inevitable erosion, I could not help but feel moved by the plight of these poor people. Perhaps it was not correct, politically speaking, for me to feel sympathy for them, but my mother would have been one of them if she were alive. She was a poor person, I was her poor child, and no one asks poor people if they want war. Nor had anyone asked these poor people if they wanted to die of thirst and exposure on the coastal sea, or if they wanted to be robbed and raped by their own soldiers. If those thousands still lived, they would not have believed how they had died, just as we could not believe that the Americans – our friends, our benefactors, our protectors – had spurned our request to send more money. And what would we have done with that money? Buy the ammunition, gas, and spare parts for the weapons, planes, and tanks the same Americans had bestowed on us for free. Having given us the needles, they now perversely no longer supplied the dope. (Nothing, the General muttered, is ever so expensive as what is offered for free.)

At the end of our discussions and meals, I lit the General's cigarette and he stared into space, forgetting to smoke the Lucky Strike as it slowly consumed itself in his fingers. In the middle of April, when the ash stung him awake from his reverie and he uttered a word he should not have, Madame silenced the tittering children and said, If you wait much longer, we won't be able to get out. You should ask Claude for a plane now. The General pretended not to hear Madame. She had a mind like an abacus, the spine of a drill instructor, and the body of a virgin even after five children. All of this was wrapped up in one of those exteriors that inspired our Beaux Arts-trained painters to use the most pastel of watercolors and the fuzziest of brushstrokes. She was, in short, the ideal Vietnamese woman. For this good fortune, the General was eternally grateful and terrified. Kneading the tip of his scorched finger, he looked at me and said, I think

it's time to ask Claude for a plane. Only when he resumed studying his damaged finger did I glance at Madame, who merely raised an eyebrow. Good idea, sir, I said.

Claude was our most trusted American friend, our relationship so intimate he once confided in me to being one-sixteenth Negro. Ah, I had said, equally smashed on Tennessee bourbon, that explains why your hair is black, and why you tan well, and why you can dance the cha-cha like one of us. Beethoven, he said, was likewise of hexadecimal descent. Then, I said, that explains why you can carry the tune of "Happy Birthday" like no one's business. We had known each other for more than two decades, ever since he had spotted me on a refugee barge in '54 and recognized my talents. I was a precocious nine-year-old who had already learned a decent amount of English, taught to me by a pioneering American missionary. Claude supposedly worked in refugee relief. Now his desk was in the American embassy, his assignment ostensibly to promote the development of tourism in our war-stricken country. This, as you might imagine, required every drop he could squeeze from a handkerchief soaked with the sweat of the can-do American spirit. In reality, Claude was a CIA man whose time in this country dated back to the days when the French still ruled an empire. In those days, when the CIA was the OSS, Ho Chi Minh looked to them for help in fighting the French. He even quoted America's Founding Fathers in his declaration of our country's independence. Uncle Ho's enemies say he spoke out of both sides of his mouth at the same time, but Claude believed he saw both sides at once. I rang Claude from my office, down the hall from the General's study, and informed him in English that the General had lost all hope. Claude's Vietnamese was bad and his French worse, but his English was excellent. I point this out only because the same thing could not be said of all his countrymen.

It's over, I said, and when I said it to Claude it finally seemed real. I thought Claude might protest and argue that American bombers might yet fill our skies, or that American air cavalry might soon ride on gunships to our rescue, but Claude did not disappoint. I'll see what I can arrange, he said, a murmur of voices audible in the background. I imagined the embassy in disarray, teletypes overheating, urgent cables

crisscrossing between Saigon and Washington, the staff working without respite, and the funk of defeat so pungent it overwhelmed the air conditioners. Amid short tempers, Claude stayed cool, having lived here so long he barely perspired in the tropical humidity. He could sneak up on you in the dark, but he could never be invisible in our country. Although an intellectual, he was of a peculiarly American breed, the muscular kind who rowed crew and who flexed substantial biceps. Whereas our scholarly types tended to be pale, myopic, and stunted, Claude was six-two, had perfect vision, and kept himself in shape by performing two hundred push-ups each morning, his Nung houseboy squatting on his back. During his free time, he read, and whenever he visited the villa, a book was tucked under his arm. When he arrived a few days later, Richard Hedd's *Asian Communism and the Oriental Mode of Destruction* was the paperback he carried.

The book was for me, while the General received a bottle of Jack Daniel's – a gift I would have preferred if given the choice. Nevertheless, I took care to peruse the book's cover, crowded with blurbs so breathless they might have been lifted from the transcript of a teenage girls' fan club, except that the excited giggling came from a pair of secretaries of defense, a senator who had visited our country for two weeks to find facts, and a renowned television anchor who modeled his enunciation on Moses, as played by Charlton Heston. The reason for their excitement was found in the significant type of the subtitle, *On Understanding and Defeating the Marxist Threat to Asia*. When Claude said everyone was reading this how to manual, I said I would read it as well. The General, who had cracked open the bottle, was in no mood to discuss books or chitchat, not with eighteen enemy divisions encircling the capital. He wanted to discuss the plane, and Claude, rolling his glass of whiskey between his palms, said the best he could do was a black flight, off the books, on a C-130. It could hold ninety-two paratroopers and their gear, as the General well knew, having served in the Airborne before being called on by the president himself to lead the National Police. The problem, as he explained to Claude, was that his extended family alone amounted to

fifty-eight. While he did not like some of them, and in fact despised a few, Madame would never forgive him if he did not rescue all of her relations.

And my staff, Claude? The General spoke in his precise, formal English. What of them? Both the General and Claude glanced at me. I tried to look brave. I was not the senior officer on the staff, but as the aide-de-camp and the officer most fluent in American culture, I attended all the General's meetings with Americans. Some of my countrymen spoke English as well as I, although most had a tinge of an accent. But almost none could discuss, like I, baseball standings, the awfulness of Jane Fonda, or the merits of the Rolling Stones versus the Beatles. If an American closed his eyes to hear me speak, he would think I was one of his kind. Indeed, on the phone, I was easily mistaken for an American. On meeting in person, my interlocutor was invariably astonished at my appearance and would almost always inquire as to how I had learned to speak English so well. In this jackfruit republic that served as a franchise of the United States, Americans expected me to be like those millions who spoke no English, pidgin English, or accented English. I resented their expectation. That was why I was always eager to demonstrate, in both spoken and written word, my mastery of their language. My vocabulary was broader, my grammar more precise than the average educated American. I could hit the high notes as well as the low, and thus had no difficulty in understanding Claude's characterization of the ambassador as a "putz," a "jerkoff" with "his head up his ass" who was in denial about the city's imminent fall. Officially, there's no evacuation, said Claude, because we're not pulling out any time soon.

The General, who hardly ever raised his voice, now did. Unofficially, you are abandoning us, he shouted. All day and night planes depart from the airport. Everyone who works with Americans wants an exit visa. They go to your embassy for these visas. You have evacuated your own women. You have evacuated babies and orphans. Why is it that the only people who do not know the Americans are pulling out are the Americans? Claude had the decency to look embarrassed as he explained how the city would erupt in riots if an evacuation was declared, and perhaps then turn against the

Americans who remained. This had happened in Da Nang and Nha Trang, where the Americans had fled for their lives and left the residents to turn on one another. But despite this precedent, the atmosphere was strangely quiet in Saigon, most of the Saigonese citizenry behaving like people in a scuppered marriage, willing to cling gamely to each other and drown so long as nobody declared the adulterous truth. The truth, in this case, was that at least a million people were working or had worked for the Americans in one capacity or another, from shining their shoes to running the army designed by the Americans in their own image to performing fellatio on them for the price, in Peoria or Poughkeepsie, of a hamburger. A good portion of these people believed that if the communists won – which they refused to believe would happen – what awaited them was prison or a garrote, and, for the virgins, forced marriage with the barbarians. Why wouldn't they? These were the rumors the CIA was propagating.

So – the General began, only to have Claude interrupt him. You have one plane and you should consider yourself lucky, sir. The General was not one to beg. He finished his whiskey, as did Claude, then shook Claude's hand and bid him good-bye, never once letting his gaze fall away from Claude's own. Americans liked seeing people eye to eye, the General had once told me, especially as they screwed them from behind. This was not how Claude saw the situation. Other generals were only getting seats for their immediate families, Claude said to us in parting. Even God and Noah couldn't save everyone. Or wouldn't, anyway.

Could they not? What would my father say? He had been a Catholic priest, but I could not remember this poor man of the cloth ever sermonizing about Noah, although admittedly I went to Mass only to daydream. But regardless of what God or Noah could do, there was little doubt that every man on the General's staff, if given the chance, would rescue a hundred blood relatives as well as any paper ones who could afford the bribe. Vietnamese families were complicated, delicate affairs, and while sometimes I longed for one, being the only son of an ostracized mother, now was not one of those times.

Later that day, the president resigned. I had expected the president to abandon the country weeks ago in the manner befitting a dictator, and I spared him barely a thought as I worked on the list of evacuees. The General was fastidious and detail-oriented, habituated to making quick, hard decisions, but this was one task that he deferred to me. He was preoccupied with the matters of his office: reading the morning's interrogation reports, attending meetings at the Joint General Staff compound, phoning his confidants as they discussed how to hold the city and yet be ready to abandon it at the same time, a maneuver as tricky as playing musical chairs to the tune of one's most beloved song. Music was on my mind, for as I worked on the list in the nocturnal hours, I listened to American Radio Service on a Sony in my room at the villa. The songs of the Temptations and Janis Joplin and Marvin Gaye usually always made bad things bearable and good things wonderful, but not in times like these. Every stroke of my pen through a name felt like a death sentence. All of our names, from the lowest officer to the General, had been found on a list being crammed into its owner's mouth as we broke down her door three years ago. The warning I had sent to Man had not gotten to her in time. As the policemen wrestled her to the ground, I had no choice but to reach into this communist agent's mouth and pull from it that saliva-soaked list. Its papier-mâché existence proved that members of the Special Branch, accustomed to watching, were ourselves watched. Even had I a moment alone with her, I could not have risked my cover by telling her that I was on her side. I knew what fate awaited her. Everyone talked in the Special Branch's interrogation cells, and she would have told my secret despite herself. She was younger than me, but she was wise enough to know what awaited her, too. For just a moment I saw the truth in her eyes, and the truth was that she hated me for what she thought I was, the agent of an oppressive regime. Then, like me, she remembered the role she had to play. Please, sirs! she cried. I'm innocent! I swear!

Three years later, this communist agent was still in a cell. I kept her folder on my desk, a reminder of my failure to save her. It was my fault, too, Man had said. When the day of liberation comes, I'll be the one unlocking her cell. She was twenty-two

when arrested, and in the folder was a picture of her at her capture, and another one of her from a few months ago, her eyes faded and her hair thinning. Our prison cells were time machines, the inmates aging much faster than they normally would. Looking at her faces, then and now, helped me with the task of selecting a few men for salvation and condemning many more, including some I liked. For several days I worked and reworked the list while the defenders of Xuan Loc were annihilated and, across our border, Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge. A few nights later, our ex-president secretly fled for Taiwan. Claude, who drove him to the airport, noticed how the president's inordinately heavy suitcases clanked with something metallic, presumably a hefty share of our nation's gold. He told me this the next morning, when he called to say that our plane was leaving in two days. I finished my list early that evening, telling the General that I had decided to be democratic and representative, choosing the highest-ranking officer, the officer everyone thought the most honest, the one whose company I liked the most, and so on. He accepted my reasoning and its inevitable consequence, that a good number of the senior officers with the most knowledge and culpability in the work of the Special Branch would be left behind. I wound up with a colonel, a major, another captain, and two lieutenants. As for myself, I reserved one seat and three more for Bon, his wife, and his child, my godson.

When the General visited me that night to commiserate, bearing the now half-empty bottle of whiskey, I asked for the favor of taking Bon with us. Although not my real brother, he was one of my two blood brothers since our school days. Man was the other, the three of us having sworn undying loyalty to one another by slicing our adolescent palms and mingling our blood in ritual handshakes. In my wallet was a black-and-white photograph of Bon and his family. Bon had the appearance of a good-looking man beaten to a pulp, except that was simply his God-given face. Not even his paratrooper's beret and crisply ironed tiger stripe fatigues could distract from his parachute-like ears, his chin perpetually tucked into the folds of his neck, and his flat nose bent hard right, the same as his politics. As for his wife, Linh, a poet might compare her face to the harvest moon, insinuating not only its fullness and roundness

but also how it was mottled and cratered, dappled with acne scars. How those two concocted a child as cute as Duc was a mystery, or perhaps simply as logical as how two negatives when multiplied together yield a positive. The General handed me the photo and said, It's the least I could do. He's Airborne. If our army was just Airborne men, we'd have won this war.

If... but there was no if, only the incontrovertible fact of the General sitting on the edge of my chair while I stood by the window, sipping my whiskey. In the courtyard, the General's orderly fed fistfuls of secrets into a fire blazing in a fifty-five-gallon drum, making the hot night hotter. The General got up and paced my small chamber, glass in hand, clad only in his boxer shorts and a sleeveless undershirt, a midnight shadow of stubble across his chin. Only his housekeepers, his family, and myself ever saw him like this. At any hour of the day when visitors came to the villa, he would pomade his hair and don his starched khakis, the breast festooned with more ribbons than could be found in a beauty queen's hair. But this evening, with the villa's hush punctuated only by occasional shouts of gunfire, he allowed himself to be querulous about how the Americans had promised us salvation from communism if we only did as we were told. They started this war, and now that they're tired of it, they've sold us out, he said, pouring me another drink. But who is there to blame but ourselves? We were foolish enough to think they would keep their word. Now there's nowhere to go but America. There are worse places, I said. Perhaps, he said. At least we'll live to fight again. But for now, we are well and truly fucked. What kind of toast is right for that?

The words came to me after a moment.

Here's blood in your eye, I said.

Damn right.

I forget from whom I learned this toast, or even what it meant, except that I had acquired it sometime during my years in America. The General had been to America, too, if only for a few months as a junior officer, training with a platoon of his fellows at Fort Benning in '58, where the Green Berets inoculated him permanently against

communism. In my case, the inoculation did not take. I was already undercover, part scholarship student, part spy-in-training, the lone representative of our people at a sylvan little college called Occidental, its motto *Occidens Proximus Orienti*. There I passed six idyllic years in the dreamy, sun-besotted world of Southern California during the sixties. Not for me the study of highways, sewage systems, or other such useful enterprises. Instead, the mission assigned to me by Man, my fellow conspirator, was to learn American ways of thinking. My war was psychological. To that end, I read American history and literature, perfected my grammar and absorbed the slang, smoked pot and lost my virginity. In short, I earned not only my bachelor's but my master's degree, becoming expert in all manner of American studies. Even now I can see quite clearly where I first read the words of that greatest of American philosophers, Emerson, on a lawn by an iridescent grove of jacaranda trees. My attention was divided between the exotic, tawny co-eds in halter tops and shorts, sunning themselves on beds of June grass, and the words so stark and black on a bare white page – “consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.” Nothing Emerson wrote was ever truer of America, but that was not the only reason I underlined his words once, twice, thrice. What had smitten me then, and strikes me now, was that the same thing could be said of our motherland, where we are nothing if not inconsistent.

On our last morning, I drove the General to his office at the National Police compound. My office was down the hallway from the General's, and from there I summoned the five chosen officers for a private meeting, one by one. We leave tonight? asked the very nervous colonel, his eyes big and wet. Yes. My parents? The parents of my wife? asked the major, a crapulent devotee of the Chinese restaurants in Cholon. No. Brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews? No. Housekeepers and nannies? No. Suitcases, wardrobes, collections of china? No. The captain, who hobbled a bit because of venereal disease, threatened to commit suicide unless I found more seats. I offered him my revolver and he skulked off. In contrast, the young lieutenants were grateful.

Having earned their precious positions via parental connections, they bore themselves with the herky-jerky nervousness of marionettes.

I closed the door on the last of them. When distant booms rattled the windows, I saw fire and smoke boiling from the east. Enemy artillery had ignited the Long Binh ammunition depot. Feeling a need both to mourn and to celebrate, I turned to my drawer, where I kept a fifth of Jim Beam with several ounces remaining. If my poor mother were alive, she would say, Don't drink so much, son. It can't be good for you. But can't it, Mama? When one finds oneself in as difficult a situation as I did, a mole in the General's staff, one looked for comfort wherever one could find it. I finished the whiskey, then drove the General home through a storm, the amniotic water bursting over the city a hint of the forthcoming season. Some hoped the monsoon might slow down the advancing northern divisions, but I thought that unlikely. I skipped dinner and packed my rucksack with my toiletries, a pair of chinos and a madras shirt bought at a J. C. Penney in Los Angeles, loafers, three changes of underwear, an electric toothbrush from the thieves' market, a framed photograph of my mother, envelopes of photographs from here and America, my Kodak camera, and Asian Communism and the *Oriental Mode of Destruction*.

The rucksack was a gift from Claude, given in honor of my college graduation. It was the handsomest thing I owned, capable of being worn on my back or, with a tuck of a strap here and there, converted to a handcarried valise. Fabricated of supple brown leather by an esteemed New England manufacturer, the rucksack smelled richly, mysteriously of autumn leaves, grilled lobster, and the sweat and sperm of boys' boarding schools. A monogram of my initials was branded on the side, but the most special feature was the false bottom. Every man should have a false bottom in his luggage, Claude had said. You never know when you'll need it. Unbeknownst to him, I used it to hide my Minox mini-camera. The cost of the Minox, a present from Man, was a few times my annual salary. It was this I had used to photograph certain classified documents to which I had access, and I thought perhaps it would be useful again. Lastly, I sorted through the rest of my books and my records, most purchased in the

States and all bearing the fingerprints of memory. I had no room for Elvis or Dylan, Faulkner or Twain, and while I could replace them, my spirit was still heavy when I wrote Man's name on the box of books and records. They were too much to bear, as was my guitar, displaying its full, reproachful hips on my bed as I left.

I finished packing and borrowed the Citroën to retrieve Bon. The military police at the checkpoints waved me by when they saw the General's stars on the automobile. My destination was across the river, a wretched waterway lined with the shanties of refugees from the countryside, their homes and farms obliterated by pyromaniacal soldiers and clean-cut arsonists who had found their true calling as bombardiers. Past this haphazard expanse of hovels, deep in District Four, Bon and Man waited at a beer garden where the three of us had passed more drunken hours than I could recall. Soldiers and marines crowded the tables, rifles under their stools, hair cropped close by sadistic military barbers intent on revealing the contours of their skulls for some nefarious phrenological purpose. Bon poured me a glass of beer as soon as I sat down, but would not allow me to drink until he offered a toast. Here's to reunion, he said, lifting his own glass. We'll meet again in the Philippines! I said it was actually Guam, for the dictator Marcos was fed up with refugees and no longer accepting any more. Groaning, Bon rubbed his glass against his forehead. I didn't think it could get any worse, he said. But now we've got Filipinos looking down on us? Forget the Philippines, Man said. Let's drink to Guam instead. They say it's where America's day begins. And our day ends, Bon muttered.

Unlike Man and I, Bon was a genuine patriot, a republican who had volunteered to fight, having hated the communists ever since the local cadre encouraged his father, the village chief, to kneel in the village square and make his confession before forcefully inserting a bullet behind his ear. Left to his own devices, Bon was sure to go Japanese and fight to the end or even put a gun to his own head, so Man and I had persuaded him to think of his wife and child. Leaving for America was not desertion, we claimed. This was strategic retreat. We had told Bon that Man would also flee with his family tomorrow, whereas the truth was that Man would stay to witness the

liberation of the south by the northern communists Bon so despised. Now Man squeezed him on the shoulder with fingers long and delicate and said, We're blood brothers, us three. We'll be blood brothers even if we lose this war, even if we lose our country. He looked at me and his eyes were damp. For us there is no end.

You're right, Bon said, shaking his head vigorously to disguise the tears in his eyes. So enough sadness and gloom. Let's drink to hope. We'll return to take our country back. Right? He, too, looked at me. I was not ashamed of the tears in my own eyes. These men were better than any real brothers I could have had, for we had chosen each other. I raised my beer glass. Here's to coming back, I said. And to a brotherhood that never ends. We drained our glasses, shouted for another round, threw our arms around one another's shoulders, and settled into an hour of brotherly love and song, the music provided by a duo at the other end of the garden. The guitarist was a longhaired draft dodger, sickly pale from having lived for the last ten years in between the walls of the bar owner's house during the day, emerging only at night. His singing partner was an equally long-haired woman of dulcet voice, her slim figure outlined by a silk ao dai the same shade as a virgin's blush. She was singing the lyrics of Trinh Cong Son, the folk singer beloved even by the paratroopers. *Tomorrow I'm going, dear...* Her voice rose above the chatter and rain. *Remember to call me home...* My heart trembled. We were not a people who charged into war at the beck and call of bugle or trumpet. No, we fought to the tunes of love songs, for we were the Italians of Asia.

Tomorrow I'm going, dear. The city's nights are no longer beautiful... If Bon knew this was the last time he would see Man for years, perhaps ever, he would never step on the airplane. Ever since our lycée days, we had fancied ourselves the Three Musketeers, all for one and one for all. Man had introduced us to Dumas: first, because he was a great novelist, and second, because he was a quadron. Hence he was a model for us, colonized by the same French who despised him for his ancestry. An avid reader and storyteller, Man would have likely become a teacher of literature at our lycée if we had lived in a time of peace. Besides translating three of the Perry Mason mysteries of Erle Stanley Gardner into our native tongue, he had also written a forgettable Zolaesque

novel under a pen name. He had studied America but never been there himself, as was the case with Bon, who called for another round and asked if America had beer gardens. They have bars and supermarkets where you can always get a beer, I said. But are there beautiful women who sing songs like these? he asked. I refilled his glass and said, They have beautiful women but they do not sing songs like these.

Then the guitarist began strumming the chords of another song. They do sing songs like this, Man said. It was *Yesterday* by the Beatles. As the three of us joined in singing, my eyes grew moist. What was it like to live in a time when one's fate was not war, when one was not led by the craven and the corrupt, when one's country was not a basket case kept alive only through the intravenous drip of American aid? I knew none of these young soldiers around me except for my blood brothers and yet I confess that I felt for them all, lost in their sense that within days they would be dead, or wounded, or imprisoned, or humiliated, or abandoned, or forgotten. They were my enemies, and yet they were also brothers-in-arms. Their beloved city was about to fall, but mine was soon to be liberated. It was the end of their world, but only a shifting of worlds for me. So it was that for two minutes we sang with all our hearts, feeling only for the past and turning our gaze from the future, swimmers doing the backstroke toward a waterfall.

The rain finally ceased by the time we left. We were smoking a final cigarette at the mouth of the dank, dripping alley that was the beer garden's exit when a trio of hydrocephalic marines stumbled out of the vaginal darkness. *Beautiful Saigon!* they sang. *Oh, Saigon! Oh, Saigon!* Although it was only six, they were inebriated, fatigues stained with beer. Each had an M16 hanging from a shoulder strap, and each showed off a spare pair of testicles. These, on closer inspection, turned out to be two grenades clamped to either side of their belt buckles. Although their uniforms, weapons, and helmets were all of American manufacture, as were ours, it was impossible to mistake them for Americans, the dented helmets being the giveaway, steel pots sized for American heads that were too big for any of us. The first marine's head swung this way

and that before he bumped into me and cursed, the brim of his helmet falling all the way to his nose. When he pushed up the brim, I saw bleary eyes trying to focus. Hello! he said, breath reeking, his southern accent so thick I had some trouble understanding him. What's this? A policeman? What're you doing with the real soldiers?

Man flicked ashes at him. This policeman's a captain. Salute your superior, Lieutenant.

The second marine, also a lieutenant, said, If you say so, Major, to which the third marine, a lieutenant as well, said, The hell with majors and colonels and generals. The president's run off. The generals – poof! Like smoke. Gone. Saving their own asses like they always do. Guess what? That leaves us to cover the retreat. Like we always do. What retreat? the second marine said. There's nowhere to go. The third agreed: We're dead. As good as dead, the first said. Our job is to be dead.

I tossed away my cigarette. You're not dead yet. You should get back to your posts.

The first marine focused once more on my face, taking a step closer until his nose nearly touched mine. What *are* you?

You are out of line, Lieutenant! Bon shouted.

I'll tell you what you are. The marine poked his finger in my chest.

Don't say it, I said.

A bastard! he cried. The two other marines laughed and chimed in. A bastard!

I drew my revolver and placed the muzzle between the marine's eyes. Behind him, his friends fingered their rifles nervously but did no more. They were impaired, but not enough to think they could be faster on the draw than my more sober friends.

You're drunk, aren't you, Lieutenant? Despite myself, my voice trembled.

Yes, the marine said. Sir.

Then I won't shoot you.

It was then, to my great relief, that we heard the first of the bombs. Everybody's head swiveled in the direction of the explosion, which was followed by another and another, to the northwest. It's the airport, Bon said. Five-hundred-pound bombs. He

would turn out to be correct in both cases. From our vantage point, we could see nothing except, after a few moments, billowing plumes of black smoke. Then it seemed as if every gun in the city went off from downtown to the airport, light weaponry going *clack-clack-clack* and heavy weaponry going *chug-chug-chug*, flurries of orange tracers swirling into the sky. The racket drew all the residents of the pitiful street to their windows and into the doorways, and I holstered my revolver. Likewise sobered by the presence of witnesses, the marine lieutenants clambered into their jeep without another word and drove off, weaving through the handful of motorbikes on the street until they reached the intersection. Then the jeep braked to a halt and the marines stumbled out with M16s in hand, even as the explosions continued and civilians thronged the sidewalks. My pulse quickened when the marines glared at us from under the jaundiced light of a streetlamp, but all they did was aim skyward, howling and screaming as they fired their weapons until the magazines were empty. My heart was beating fast and the sweat was trickling down my back, but I smiled for the sake of my friends and lit another cigarette.

Idiots! Bon shouted as the civilians crouched in doorways. The marines called us a few choice names before they got back into the jeep, turned the corner, and vanished. Bon and I said good-bye to Man, and after he left in his own jeep I tossed Bon the keys. The bombing and the gunfire had ceased, and as he drove the Citroën to his apartment he swore bloody murder at the Marine Corps the entire way. I kept my silence. One did not depend on marines for good table manners. One depended on them to have the right instincts when it came to matters of life and death. As for the name they had called me, it upset me less than my reaction to it. I should have been used to that misbegotten name by now, but somehow I was not. My mother was native, my father was foreign, and strangers and acquaintances had enjoyed reminding me of this ever since my childhood, spitting on me and calling me bastard, although sometimes, for variety, they called me bastard before they spit on me.

CHAPTER 3

[EXCERPT]

The explosion was deafening, the force of it launching the crewman onto the passengers, the last thing I saw for several moments as the flash of light through the open door washed the sight from my eyes. The General tumbled into me and I fell onto the bulkhead, then onto screaming bodies, hysterical civilians spraying my face with sour saliva. The tires of the plane squealed on the runway as it spun to the right, and when my sight returned a blaze of fire shone through the door. I feared nothing more than burning to death, nothing more than being pureed by a propeller, nothing more than being quartered by a Katyusha, which even sounded like the name of a demented Siberian scientist who had lost a few toes and a nose to frostbite. I had seen roasted remains before, in a desolate field outside of Hue, carbonized corpses fused into the metal of a downed Chinook, the fuel tanks having incinerated the three dozen occupants, their teeth exposed in a permanent, simian rictus; the flesh of their lips and faces burned off; the skin a finely charred obsidian, smooth and alien, all the hair converted to ash, no longer recognizable as my countrymen or as human beings. I did not want to die that way; I did not want to die in any way, least of all in a long-range bombardment from the artillery of my communist comrades, launched from the suburbs they had captured outside Saigon. A hand squeezed my chest and reminded me I was still alive. Another clawed my ear as the howling people beneath me struggled to heave me off. Pushing back to try to right myself, I found my hand on someone's oily head and myself pressed against the General. Another explosion somewhere on the runway heightened the frenzy. Men, women, and children caterwauled at an even higher pitch. All of a sudden the plane halted its gyrations at such an angle where the eye of the door did not look out onto fire but only onto the darkness, and a man screamed, We're all going to die! The loadmaster, cursing inventively, began the lowering of the ramp, and when the refugees surged forward against the opening, they bore me backward with them. The only way to survive being trampled to death was to cover my head with my rucksack and roll down the ramp, knocking people down as I

did so. Another rocket exploded on the runway a few hundred meters behind us, lighting up an acre of tarmac and revealing the nearest shelter to be a battered concrete divider fifty meters from the runway. Even after the explosion faded, the disturbed night was no longer dark. The plane's starboard engines were aflame, two blazing torches spewing gusts of spark and smoke.

I was on my hands and knees when Bon seized me by the elbow, dragging me with one hand and Linh with the other. She in turn carried a wailing Duc, her arm wrapped around his chest. A meteorite shower of rockets and artillery shells was falling on the runways, an apocalyptic light show that revealed the evacuees dashing for the concrete divider, stumbling and tripping along the way, suitcases forgotten, the thundering prop wash from the two remaining engines blowing little children off their feet and staggering adults. Those who had reached the divider kept their whimpering heads below the concrete, and when something whizzed overhead – a fragment or a bullet – I fell to the earth and began crawling. Bon did likewise with Linh, her face tense but determined. By the time we fumbled our way to an unoccupied space at the divider, the crew had turned off the engines. The relief from the noise only made audible that someone was shooting at us. Bullets zipped overhead or ricocheted off the concrete, the gunners zeroing in on the bonfire of the burning plane. Our guys, Bon said, knees drawn up to his chest and one arm thrown around Duc, huddled between him and Linh. They're pissed. They want a seat out of here. No way, I said, that's NVA, they've taken the perimeter, even though I thought there was a fairly good chance it was our own men venting their frustrations. Then the plane's gas tanks blew, the fireball illuminating a vast stretch of the airfield, and when I turned my face away from the bonfire I found that I was next to the sub-undersecretary, civil servant unextraordinaire, his face nearly pressed against my back and the message in his Chihuahua eyes as clear as the title on a cinema marquee. Like the communist agent and the lieutenant at the gate, he would have been happy to see me dead.

I deserved his hatred. After all, I had denied him a considerable fortune as a result of my unannounced visit to his house, the address procured for me by the louche

major. It is true I have some visas, the sub-undersecretary had said as we sat in his living room. I and some colleagues are making them available in the interests of justice. Isn't it unjust that only the most privileged or fortunate have the opportunity to escape? I made some sympathetic noises. If there was true justice, he went on, everyone would leave who needed to. That is clearly not the case. But this puts someone like me in rather difficult circumstances. Why should I be the judge of who gets to leave and who does not? I am, after all, merely a glorified secretary. If you were in my situation, Captain, what would you do?

I can appreciate the situation you find yourself in, sir. My dimples hurt from smiling, and I was impatient to arrive at the inevitable end game, but the middle had to be played, to provide me with the same moth-eaten moral covers he had already pulled up to his chin. You are clearly a respectable man of taste and values. Here I nodded to the left and right, gesturing at the tidy house that had to be paid for. Plastered walls were dotted with a few geckos and some decorative objects: clock, calendar, Chinese scroll, and colorized photograph of Ngo Dinh Diem in better days, when he had not yet been assassinated for believing he was a president and not an American puppet. Now the little man in a white suit was a saint to his fellow Vietnamese Catholics, having suffered an appropriately martyred death with hands hogtied, face masked in blood, a Rorschach blot of his cerebral tissue decorating the interior of an American armored personnel carrier, his humiliation captured in a photograph circulated worldwide. Its subtext was as subtle as Al Capone: *Do not fuck with the United States of America.*

CHAPTER 4

[EXCERPT]

As no one on the faculty possessed any knowledge of our country, the Chair enjoyed engaging me in long discussions of our culture and language. Hovering somewhere between seventy and eighty years old, the Chair nestled in an office feathered with the books, papers, notes, and tchotchkes accumulated over a lifetime career devoted to the study of the Orient. He had hung an elaborate Oriental rug on his wall, in lieu, I suppose, of an actual Oriental. On his desk facing anyone who entered

was a gilt-framed picture of his family, a brown-haired cherub and an Asian wife somewhere between one-half and two-thirds his age. She was not exactly beautiful but could hardly help but look beautiful next to the bow-tied Chair, the tight neck of her scarlet cheongsam squeezing the bubble of a smile to her frosted lips.

Her name is Ling Ling, he said, seeing my gaze rest on the picture. Decades of hunching over a desk had bent the great Orientalist's back into the shape of a horseshoe, thrusting his head forward in the inquisitorial fashion of a dragon. I met my wife in Taiwan where her family had fled from Mao. Our son is considerably bigger now than in that picture. As you can see, his mother's genes are more resilient, which is not to be unexpected. Blond hair fades when mixed with black. He said all this during our fifth or sixth conversation, when we had achieved a certain degree of intimacy. As usual, he reclined in an overstuffed leather club chair that enfolded him like the generous lap of a black mammy. I was equally enveloped in the chair's twin, sucked backward by the slope and softness of the leather, my arms on the rests like Lincoln on his memorial throne. A metaphor to explain the situation is available in our own Californian landscape, he continued, where foreign weeds choke to death much of our native foliage. Mixing native flora with a foreign plant oftentimes has tragic consequences, as your own experience may have taught you.

Yes, it has, I said, reminding myself that I needed my minimum wage.

Ah, the Amerasian, forever caught between worlds and never knowing where he belongs! Imagine if you did not suffer from the confusion you must constantly experience, feeling the constant tug-of-war inside you and over you, between Orient and Occident. "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," as Kipling so accurately diagnosed. This was one of his favorite themes, and he had even concluded one of our meetings by giving me a homework assignment to test Kipling's point. I was to take a sheet of paper and fold it in half vertically. On the top, I was to write *Orient* on the left and *Occident* on the right. Then I was to write down my Oriental and Occidental qualities. Imagine this exercise as an indexing of yourself, the Chair had said. My students of Oriental ancestry inevitably find this beneficial.

At first I thought he was playing a joke on me, since the day he gave me the task was the first of April, the occasion for that funny Western custom called April Fools' Day. But he was looking at me quite seriously and I remembered that he did not have a sense of humor. So I went home and after some thought came up with this:

ORIENT

self-effacing

respectful of authority

worried about others' opinions

usually quiet

always trying to please

teacup is half empty

say yes when I mean no

almost always look to the past

prefer to follow

comfortable in a crowd

deferential to elders

self-sacrificial

follow my ancestors

straight black hair

short (for an Occidental)

somewhat yellowish

OCCIDENT

occasionally opinionated

sometimes independent

now and then carefree

talkative (with a drink or two)

once or twice have not given a damn

glass is half full

say what I mean, do what I say

once in a while look to the future

yet yearn to lead

but ready to take the stage

value my youth

live to fight another day

forget my ancestors!

limpid brown eyes

tall (for an Oriental)

white somewhat palish yellow

When I shared this exercise with him the next day, he said, Splendid! A fine beginning. You are a good student, as all Orientals are. Despite myself, I felt a small surge of pride. Like all good students, I yearned for nothing but approval, even from fools. But there is a drawback, he continued. See how so many of the Oriental qualities diametrically oppose the Occidental? In the West, many Oriental qualities unfortunately take on a negative cast. This leads to the severe problems of identity suffered by Americans of Oriental ancestry, at least those born or raised here. They feel themselves out of place. They are not so different from yourself, also split down

the middle. What, then, is the cure? Is the Oriental in the West to feel forever homeless, a stranger, a foreigner, no matter how many generations lived on the soil of Judeo-Christian culture, never able to do away with the Confucian residue of his ancient, noble heritage? This is where you, as the Amerasian, offer hope.

I knew he meant to be kind, so I did my best to keep a straight face. Me?

Yes, you! You embody the symbiosis of Orient and Occident, the possibility that out of two can come one. We can no more separate the physical Oriental from you than we can separate the physical Occidental. Likewise with your psychic components. But while you are out of place today, in the future you will be the average! Look at my Amerasian child. A hundred years ago, he would have been seen as a monstrosity, whether in China or in America. Today, the Chinese would still see him as anomalous, but here we have made steady progress forward, not as fast as you or I would like, yet enough to hope that when he reaches your age no opportunity will be denied him. Born on this soil, he could even be president! There are more of you and he than you can probably imagine, but most are ashamed and seek to disappear in the foliage of American life. But your numbers are growing, and democracy gives you the best chance of finding your voice. Here you can learn how not to be torn apart by your opposing sides, but rather to balance them and benefit from both. Reconcile your divided allegiances and you will be the ideal translator between two sides, a goodwill ambassador to bring opposing nations to peace!

Me?

Yes, you! You must assiduously cultivate those reflexes that Americans have learned innately, in order to counterweigh your Oriental instincts.

I couldn't help myself any longer. Like yin and yang?

Exactly!

I cleared my throat of a sour taste, the gastric reflux of my confused Oriental and Occidental insides. Professor?

Hmm?

Would it make any difference if I told you I was actually Eurasian, not Amerasian?

The Chair regarded me kindly and took out his pipe

No, dear boy, absolutely not.

CHAPTER 5

[EXCERPT]

Ms. Mori, I said, I am shocked by what I am hearing. I'll bet, she said. Call me Sofia, for Chrissakes. I'm not your girlfriend's over-the-hill mother. Get me another drink and light me another cigarette. I'm forty-six years old and I don't care who knows it, but what I will tell you is that when a woman is forty-six and has lived her life the way she's wanted to live it, she knows everything there is to know about what to do in the sack. It's got nothing to do with the *Kama Sutra* or *The Carnal Prayer Mat* or any of that Oriental hocus-pocus of our beloved Department Chair. You've worked for him for six years, I said. And don't I know it, she said. Is it just my imagination, or does every time he opens the door to his office a gong goes off somewhere? And does he smoke tobacco in his office, or is that incense in his bowl? I can't help but feel he's a little disappointed in me because I don't bow whenever I see him. When he interviewed me, he wanted to know whether I spoke any Japanese. I explained that I was born in Gardena. He said, Oh, you nisei, as if knowing that one word means he knows something about me. You've forgotten your culture, Ms. Mori, even though you're only second generation. Your issei parents, they hung on to their culture. Don't you want to learn Japanese? Don't you want to visit Nippon? For a long time I felt bad. I wondered why I didn't want to learn Japanese, why I didn't already speak Japanese, why I would rather go to Paris or Istanbul or Barcelona rather than Tokyo. But then I thought, Who *cares*? Did anyone ask John F. Kennedy if he spoke Gaelic and visited Dublin or if he ate potatoes every night or if he collected paintings of leprechauns? So why are we supposed to *not* forget our culture? Isn't my culture right here since I was born here? Of course I didn't ask him those questions. I just smiled and said, You're so right, sir. She sighed. It's a job. But I'll tell you something else. Ever since I got it

straight in my head that I haven't forgotten a damn thing, that I damn well know my culture, which is American, and my language, which is English, I've felt like a spy in that man's office. On the surface, I'm just plain old Ms. Mori, poor little thing who's lost her roots, but underneath, I'm Sofia and you better not fuck with me.

I cleared my throat. Ms. Mori?

Hmm?

I think I'm falling in love with you.

It's Sofia, she said. And let's get one thing straight, playboy. If we get involved, and that's a big if, there are no strings attached. You do not fall in love with me and I do not fall in love with you. She exhaled twin plumes of smoke. Just so you know, I do not believe in marriage but I do believe in free love.

What a coincidence, I said. So do I.

Questions for discussion:

1. What does the title "*The Sympathizer*" signify?
2. What does the narrator imply by saying, "*I am a man of two minds*"? How does this declaration resonate throughout the narrative? How does the protagonist's mixed heritage, his sense of being an outsider, foreshadow his dual identity and conflicting allegiances?
3. During his conversation with Paul Tran, Nguyen mentions, "*I want this book to provoke people to rethink their assumptions about this history, and also about the literature they've encountered before – to make them uncomfortable in a good way*". What do you believe is suggested by this?
4. In the interview, Nguyen defines a sympathizer as someone who aligns with or endorses a particular feeling or viewpoint, "*our life and our death have taught us always to sympathize with the undesirables among the undesirables. Thus magnetized by experience, our compass continually points towards those who suffer*". Did any character evoke your sympathy? Perhaps the anonymous narrator, his friend Bon, Man, or the narrator's mother?

5. What are your thoughts on the unnamed narrator? Does the narrator hold any beliefs?
6. The Sympathizer has been likened to Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, known for its absurdist portrayal of World War II. Nguyen employs comparable satire in his novel. For instance, there's the following statement: "*It was a smashingly successful cease-fire, for in the last two years only 150,000 soldiers had died. Imagine how many would have died without a truce!*" Can you identify any other instances where the author employs similar satirical humor? How does this stylistic device impact your reading experience? Does the dark humor diminish the gravity of the war, or does it highlight it further?
7. The narrator suggests that the Vietnam War "*was the first war where the losers would write history instead of the victors.*" What does he imply by this statement? What is your knowledge or recollection of the war, and how did you acquire it? How does the perspective of the storyteller influence one's comprehension of history?
8. What themes regarding identity emerge in the novel?
9. What distinctions between the Orient and the Occident are highlighted in the novel, and why are they significant to the plot? How does the narrator embody a hybrid identity?
10. What prompts Ms. Mori to alter her name when she's with the narrator?
11. How did American culture influence Vietnamese refugees as they endeavored to integrate into their new country?
12. What religious themes are explored in an intertextual manner?
13. The novel is filled with references to various historical markers, national realities, and symbols of military authority. What specific examples can you identify?
14. Locate the references to Chinese philosophy and culture, as well as to Soviet and American identities.
15. Examine the setting of the novel. How does it reflect the progression of the plot?

16. Explore the military sequences. What purpose do they serve?

17. Why do you suppose April was referred to as “*a cruel month*” in the initial chapter? Do the dates and numerical references hold significance within the narrative?

Evaluate the importance of sound, smell, and color in the novel.

18. Examine the language and stylistic techniques utilized in the novel.

19. What genre does the work belong to?

20. What issues does the text tackle?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Contemporary wars and their reflection in American literature; b) Women in the war; c) The role of technology in Modern warfare and the depiction of its destructive consequences in literature; d) War and identity.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *The Vietnam war and its historical consequences.*
2. *The Vietnam war and its reflection in the contemporary American fiction.*
3. *Classical representation of the military reality in literature and war traumas.*
4. *Intertext and types of the intertextual connections.*

Recommended reading:

1. *“The Quiet American” by Graham Greene.*
2. *“Tree of Smoke” by Denis Johnson.*
3. *“Matterhorn” by Karl Marlantes.*
4. *“Embers of War” by Fredrik Logevall.*

PACE 3

***POLITICAL CONTEXT IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY.
TRAUMAS IN THE GLOBALIZED REALITY***

“Poetry is nearer to vital truth than history”.
Plato

“Poetry is an echo, asking a shadow to dance”.
Carl Sandburg

“A poet looks at the world the way a man looks at a woman”.
Wallace Stevens

“All poets, all writers are political. They either maintain the status quo, or they say, ‘Something’s wrong, let’s change it for the better.’”
Sonia Sanchez

“Poetry comes from the highest happiness or the deepest sorrow.”
A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Key terms: *War, conquest, colonialism, Orient, Israel, churches, destruction, urbanity*

CHRISTOPHER MERRILL, a poet, translator, and journalist, was born in Northampton, Massachusetts, and raised in New Jersey. He obtained degrees from Middlebury College and the University of Washington. Merrill has authored several poetry collections, including *“Watch Fire”* (1995), recipient of the I.B. Lavan Younger Poets Award, *“Brilliant Water”* (2001), *“Boat”* (2013), and *“Necessities”* (2013). Additionally, he has translated the works of Aleš Debeljak in collections such as *“Anxious Moments”* (1995) and *“The City and the Child”* (1999). Merrill has also translated or collaborated on translations of poets like Ji-woo Hwang, Heeduk Ra, and Chankyung Sung.

Merrill wrote nonfiction accounts of his experiences in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, including *“Things of the Hidden God: Journey to the Holy Mountain”* (2005) and *“The Tree of the Doves: Ceremony, Expedition, War”* (2011). He has authored two books on the Balkan Wars, titled *“The Old Bridge: The Third Balkan War and the Age of the Refugee”* (1995) and *“Only the Nails Remain: Scenes from the Balkan Wars”* (2001). His journalistic work has been widely published, and his writing has been translated into over 25 languages.

Merrill has been honored with a knighthood in arts and letters by the French government. He previously held the William H. Jenks Chair in Contemporary Letters

at the College of the Holy Cross. In 2000, Merrill assumed the role of director of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. He has traveled to more than 30 countries for cultural diplomacy initiatives. Merrill is a member of both the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO and the National Council on the Humanities. He currently resides in Iowa City.

1. *Do you think that poetry should interfere with politics or have religious flavor?*
2. *What, do you consider, are the burning issues reflected in North American poetry today?*
3. *Have you got your favourite poets? What things attract you in their works? What sort of images do you find powerful?*
4. *Have you ever tried your hand at writing poetry?*

Christopher MERRILL

COORDINATES

A map on which the names have been erased,
 A compass pivoting on a black cross,
 Sextants dismantled and displayed in a store
 Razed and rebuilt in the Jewish Quarter – this is
 How to draw coordinates for the next battle
 On memory and desire, with a set of tools
 No one knows how to use. And so the colonel
 Peeling an orange at the command post
 Hums an aria from *La Bohème*
 Until a mortar lands outside his door.

The trial will resume next week, if the judge
 Survives the latest attempt on his life – though the jury
 Impaneled for the duration of the war
 Cannot reach a verdict in the case

Of the man gagged and hanging from the ceiling
 Of the machine shop: the ghost prisoner,
 AKA God's beloved. His testimony
 Must be thrown out, new witnesses examined,
 And the court reporters banished before the judge
 Can order him to be strung up again.

Cicadas emerge, numbered and ranked, their clear
 Wings beating – a light arriving from a star
 Glimpsed from the depths of an abandoned mine.
 We won't make it out alive, the guide said
 And tumbled down the shaft. What remains?
 A shred of plastic flapping in the nest
 The birds left in the hedge, a speckled egg
 That never hatched, a file of summonses
 Lost in the flood. The trees hum in the dark.
 Pray for the guide. Pray for everyone.

Heroic poses generate suspicion,
 According to a poll taken on board
 The wooden ship bound for the Orient.
 Hence the captain's orders are delivered
 Through the sous-chef who signed up to resurrect
 The art of navigating by the stars.
 The first mate is afraid to leave his cabin.
 The stowaway will lead the mutineers.
 And the passengers will tell you anything
 If you will take them safely to Ceylon.

To break the back of the iambic line,
 The prisoner in his metal cage, exposed
 To sun and wind and rain, summoned a host
 Of voices from the vast storehouse of his reading
 And listening, and cast them on the page
 Like glittering shells collected at high tide,
 In a new line variable as the surf
 He could no longer hear from his death cell
 In Pisa: by the law, so build yr/ temple...
 The verdict? Silence and unsentencing.

The tower leans toward mystery. Which is to say:
 The past, present, and future, the masonry
 Of which is lined with cracks through which to glimpse
 A second space – i.e. eternity.
 Thus Mimi, coughing, seizes Rodolfo's sleeve
 To sing goodbye. Thus a seasick passenger
 Prays for deliverance. And thus the poet charged
 With treason marks off in the sand the days
 Until his execution, while the colonel
 Is buried with full military honors.

After the torture and interrogations,
 The water-boarding and sleep deprivation
 And menstrual blood flung in his face, the ghost
 Prisoner revealed the coordinates
 For the Roman razing of Jerusalem
 And the itinerary that John followed
 To Patmos to compose his Revelation

For the seven churches in Asia. The guard
 Removed her underwear. And from the throne
 Proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices...

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

WITHOUT

On the first day the goat climbed to the top branch of the acacia tree and said, The ship sailing to the new world will sink before it leaves the harbor. He stayed there all night, counting the stars in three constellations that he had never seen before, and in the morning he cleaned himself up and said, The fishermen mending their nets will never take to the sea again. Leaves fell from the tree, the herder called from the ridge, and the goat, frisky in the heat, bounced on the bare branch until late afternoon, when he drifted off to sleep, unafraid of what the waxing moon might bring. That night he dreamed of a hyena chasing a lion up a valley into which the sea rushed, dividing the continent between the ones with gold and the ones without. And when he woke at sunrise on the third day, believing that the whitecaps in his dream were the pages of an unwritten book left on the ridge from which the herder called to him, he said, Here I am.

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Questions for discussion:

1. Assess the poems' titles. What do they appeal to?
2. Comment on the imagery in both poems. Why do you think the poet included these images in his texts? What words or phrases give the images emphasis or clarity?
3. What is the structure of Merrill's poetry? How are the poems organized? Is it free verse or something more classical? How many stanzas do the poems have?
4. Consider the use of figurative language in the writings of Chris Merrill. Is it terse, direct, modern? What stylistic devices can you single out? Do the poems contain similes, metaphors, or personification? What is their function?

5. Discuss the proper names in the poem. Can the reader pin point a time frame?

What details specify the time?

6. What overall themes are raised in the poem? Summarize the author's message.

7. How is the idea developed? What do the poems make you think / feel about?

What opinion do they show about the subject?

8. What events do you think the poem "*Coordinates*" reflect on?

9. What is the historical context for the poem "*Without*"? "Unpack" what the poem is about. What is the author reflecting on?

10. Discuss symbolism represented in Merrill's texts.

11. Can you reconstruct the personality of the lyrical hero in both poems?

12. Is there a dominant rhythm? Does it dance, frolic, meander, slither, or march?

What is the tone (mood) of Merrill's poetry?

13. What was your first impression of Merrill's poetry?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Contemporary North American poetry: form, topics, imagery system; b) Ecological poetry of today; c) Poetry as a reflection of global problems; d) Poetry as a mirror of the inner country and its burning issues; e) Urban folk; f) Poetry and gender issues; g) Poetry and ethnicity; h) Poetry and the beauty of the natural world.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *The personality of Christopher Merrill and his non-fiction.*
2. *North American poetry of the XXIst century: form, style, themes.*
3. *The contemporary lyrical authors-Noble Prize laureates / other prize laureates.*
4. *Famous American almanacs.*
5. *Critical essays on contemporary American poetry.*
6. *Poetry of Americans of mixed origin.*

Recommended reading:

1. *Poetry by Shonto Begay, a Native American poet and artist.*
2. *Poetry by Ocean Vuong, a Vietnamese-American poet.*
3. *"Bright Dead Things" (2015) By Ada Limon.*
4. *"Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth" (2011) by Warsan Shire, feminism.*
5. *Richard Siken's writings.*

PACE 4

**COLONIALISM, INTERTEXT AND GREEN ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY
TEXTS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE**

“What colonialism does is cause an identity crisis about one's own culture”.
Lupita Nyong'o

“Here's the reality. The image of a white Jesus has been used to justify enslavement, conquest, colonialism, the genocide of indigenous peoples. There are literally millions of human beings whose lives have been snuffed out by people who conquered under the banner of a white god”.
Tim Wise

“Colonialism is a force that has radically transformed the world, sowing seeds of gender-based violence, environmental degradation and economic inequality that have taken deep root. The death of languages, the birth of nations, how we understand each other and how we understand ourselves have all come about because of either colonization or resistance to it”.
Siri Chilukuri

“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.”
Chinua Achebe

Key terms: *Captivity, freedom, imbalance, cultural clash, religious fanaticism, human spirit, family dynamics, evangelical, the harsh realities of African soil, race, sin, redemption, transformations, the carved-animal woman, true justice, a message concerning differences, to differentiate the voices*

BARBARA KINGSOLVER, born in 1955 and brought up in rural Kentucky, earned degrees in biology from DePauw University and the University of Arizona. She embarked on a journey that took her to different parts of the globe, including England, France, Africa, and South America.

Since 1985, Kingsolver has been a highly productive writer, enriching the literary landscape with a varied collection of works, spanning novels, short stories, essays, and poetry. Her most celebrated novel, *“The Poisonwood Bible,”* achieved global recognition and was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the Orange Prize.

Kingsolver's writing frequently explores themes concerning social and environmental issues, mirroring her education in biology and her deep connection to the natural world. In 2000, she was awarded the National Humanities Medal,

recognizing her substantial impact on the arts. Among her other notable works are “*Demon Copperhead*,” “*Unsheltered*,” and “*Prodigal Summer*.”

The author founded the Bellwether Prize for Fiction, aimed at fostering emerging literary talents, which was later revamped into the PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction.

Kingsolver’s novels have been translated into numerous languages and have been incorporated into curricula at high schools and colleges, solidifying her status as one of the most impactful writers of the XXth and XXIst centuries.

1. *Discuss the history of colonization of the African countries and the religious missionary practices within the colonization periods.*
2. *What is the relationship between colonialism, conquest, and religious expansion?*
3. *Think of the pitfalls of getting used to a vastly different environment? What are the possible complexities of the missionary experiences in Africa?*
4. *Reflect on the impact of religious fanaticism on family life.*

Barbara KINGSOLVER
THE POISONWOOD BIBLE

(Excerpt)

Book One

GENESIS

And God said unto them,
Be fruitful, and multiply,
and replenish the earth,
and subdue it: and have dominion
over the fish of the sea,
and over the fowl of the air,
and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

GENESIS 1:28

Orleanna Price SANDERLING ISLAND, GEORGIA

IMAGINE A RUIN so strange it must never have happened. First, picture the forest. I want you to be its conscience, the eyes in the trees. The trees are columns of slick, brindled bark like muscular animals overgrown beyond all reason. Every space is filled with life: delicate, poisonous frogs war-painted like skeletons, clutched in copulation, secreting their precious eggs onto dripping leaves. Vines strangling their own kin in the everlasting wrestle for sunlight. The breathing of monkeys. A glide of snake belly on branch. A single-file army of ants biting a mammoth tree into uniform grains and hauling it down to the dark for their ravenous queen. And, in reply, a choir of seedlings arching their necks out of rotted tree stumps, sucking life out of death. This forest eats itself and lives forever.

Away down below now, single file on the path, comes a woman with four girls in tow, all of them in shirtwaist dresses. Seen from above this way they are pale, doomed blossoms, bound to appeal to your sympathies. Be careful. Later on you'll have to decide what sympathy they deserve. The mother especially – watch how she leads them on, pale-eyed, deliberate. Her dark hair is tied in a ragged lace handkerchief, and her curved jawbone is lit with large, false-pearl earrings, as if these headlamps from another world might show the way. The daughters march behind her, four girls compressed in bodies as tight as bowstrings, each one tensed to fire off a woman's heart on a different path to glory or damnation. Even now they resist affinity like cats in a bag: two blondes – the one short and fierce, the other tall and imperious – flanked by matched brunettes like bookends, the forward twin leading hungrily while the rear one sweeps the ground in a rhythmic limp. But gamely enough they climb together over logs of rank decay that have fallen across the path. The mother waves a graceful hand in front of her as she leads the way, parting curtain after curtain of spiders' webs. She appears to be conducting a symphony. Behind them the curtain closes. The spiders return to their killing ways.

At the stream bank she sets out their drear picnic, which is only dense, crumbling bread daubed with crushed peanuts and slices of bitter plantain. After months of modest hunger the children now forget to complain about food. Silently they swallow, shake off the crumbs, and drift downstream for a swim in faster water. The mother is left alone in the cove of enormous trees at the edge of a pool. This place is as familiar to her now as a living room in the house of a life she never bargained for. She rests uneasily in the silence, watching ants boil darkly over the crumbs of what seemed, to begin with, an impossibly meager lunch. Always there is someone hungrier than her own children. She tucks her dress under her legs and inspects her poor, featherless feet in their grass nest at the water's edge – twin birds helpless to fly out of there, away from the disaster she knows is coming. She could lose everything: herself, or worse, her children. Worst of all: you, her only secret. Her favorite. How could a mother live with herself to blame?

She is inhumanly alone. And then, all at once, she isn't. A beautiful animal stands on the other side of the water. They look up from their lives, woman and animal, amazed to find themselves in the same place. He freezes, inspecting her with his black-tipped ears. His back is purplish brown in the dim light, sloping downward from the gentle hump of his shoulders. The forest's shadows fall into lines across his white-striped flanks. His stiff forelegs splay out to the sides like stilts, for he's been caught in the act of reaching down for water. Without taking his eyes from her, he twitches a little at the knee, then the shoulder, where a fly devils him. Finally he surrenders his surprise, looks away, and drinks. She can feel the touch of his long, curled tongue on the water's skin, as if he were lapping from her hand. His head bobs gently, nodding small, velvet horns lit white from behind like new leaves.

It lasted just a moment, whatever that is. One held breath? An ant's afternoon? It was brief, I can promise that much, for although it's been many years now since my children ruled my life, a mother recalls the measure of the silences. I never had more than five minutes' peace unbroken. I was that woman on the stream bank, of course.

Orleanna Price, Southern Baptist by marriage, mother of children living and dead. That one time and no other the okapi came to the stream, and I was the only one to see it

I didn't know any name for what I'd seen until some years afterward in Atlanta, when I attempted briefly to consecrate myself in the public library, believing every crack in my soul could be chinked with a book. I read that the male okapi is smaller than the female, and more shy, and that hardly anything else is known about them. For hundreds of years people in the Congo Valley spoke of this beautiful, strange beast. When European explorers got wind of it, they declared it legendary: a unicorn. Another fabulous tale from the dark domain of poison-tipped arrows and bone pierced lips. Then, in the 1920's when elsewhere in the world the menfolk took a break between wars to perfect the airplane and the automobile, a white man finally did set eyes on the okapi. I can picture him spying on it with binoculars, raising up the cross-haired rifle sight, taking it for his own. A family of them now reside in the New York Museum of Natural History, dead and stuffed, with standoffish glass eyes. And so the okapi is now by scientific account a real animal. Merely real, not legend. Some manner of beast, a horseish gazelle, relative of the giraffe.

Oh, but I know better and so do you. Those glassy museum stares have got nothing on you, my uncaptured favorite child, wild as the day is long. Your bright eyes bear down on me without cease, on behalf of the quick and the dead. Take your place, then. Look at what happened from every side and consider all the other ways it could have gone. Consider, even, an Africa unconquered altogether. Imagine those first Portuguese adventurers approaching the shore, spying on the jungle's edge through their fitted brass lenses. Imagine that by some miracle of dread or reverence they lowered their spyglasses, turned, set their riggings, sailed on. Imagine all who came after doing the same. What would that Africa be now? All I can think of is the other okapi, the one they used to believe in. A unicorn that could look you in the eye.

In the year of our Lord 1960, a monkey barreled through space in an American rocket; a Kennedy boy took the chair out from under a fatherly general named Ike; and the whole world turned on an axis called the Congo. The monkey sailed right overhead,

and on a more earthly plane men in locked rooms bargained for the Congo's treasure. But I was there. Right on the head of that pin.

I had washed up there on the riptide of my husband's confidence and the undertow of my children's needs. That's my excuse, yet none of them really needed me all that much. My firstborn and my baby both tried to shed me like a husk from the start, and the twins came with a fine interior sight with which they could simply look past me at everything more interesting. And my husband, why, hell hath no fury like a Baptist preacher. I married a man who could never love me, probably. It would have trespassed on his devotion to all mankind. I remained his wife because it was one thing I was able to do each day. My daughters would say: You see, Mother, you had no life of your own.

They have no idea. One has only a life of one's own.

I've seen things they'll never know about. I saw a family of weaver birds work together for months on a nest that became such a monstrous lump of sticks and progeny and nonsense that finally it brought their whole tree thundering down. I didn't speak of it to my husband or children, not ever. So you see. I have my own story, and increasingly in my old age it weighs on me. Now that every turn in the weather whistles an ache through my bones, I stir in bed and the memories rise out of me like a buzz of flies from a carcass. I crave to be rid of them, but find myself being careful, too, choosing which ones to let out into the light. I want you to find me innocent. As much as I've craved your lost, small body, I want you now to stop stroking my inner arms at night with your fingertips. Stop whispering. I'll live or die on the strength of your judgment, but first let me say who I am. Let me claim that Africa and I kept company for a while and then parted ways, as if we were both party to relations with a failed outcome. Or say I was afflicted with Africa like a bout of a rare disease, from which I have not managed a full recovery. Maybe I'll even confess the truth, that I rode in with the horsemen and beheld the apocalypse, but still I'll insist I was only a captive witness. What is the conqueror's wife, if not a conquest herself? For that matter, what is he? When he rides in to vanquish the untouched tribes, don't you think they fall down with

desire before those sky-colored eyes? And itch for a turn with those horses, and those guns? That's what we yell back at history, always, always. It wasn't just me; there were crimes strewn six ways to Sunday, and I had my own mouths to feed. I didn't know. I had no life of my own. And you'll say I did. You'll say I walked across Africa with my wrists unshackled, and now I am one more soul walking free in a white skin, wearing some thread of the stolen goods: cotton or diamonds, freedom at the very least, prosperity. Some of us know how we came by our fortune, and some of us don't, but we wear it all the same. There's only one question worth asking now: How do we aim to live with it?

I know how people are, with their habits of mind. Most will sail through from cradle to grave with a conscience clean as snow. It's easy to point at other men, conveniently dead, starting with the ones who first scooped up mud from riverbanks to catch the scent of a source. Why, Dr. Livingstone, I presume, wasn't he the rascal! He and all the profiteers who've since walked out on Africa as a husband quits a wife, leaving her with her naked body curled around the emptied-out mine of her womb. I know people. Most have no earthly notion of the price of a snow-white conscience.

I would be no different from the next one, if I hadn't paid my own little part in blood. I trod on Africa without a thought, straight from our family's divinely inspired beginning to our terrible end. In between, in the midst of all those steaming nights and days darkly colored, smelling of earth, I believe there lay some marrow of honest instruction. Sometimes I can nearly say what it was. If I could, I would fling it at others, I'm afraid, at risk to their ease. I'd slide this awful story off my shoulders, flatten it, sketch out our crimes like a failed battle plan and shake it in the faces of my neighbors, who are wary of me already. But Africa shifts under my hands, refusing to be party to failed relations. Refusing to be any place at all, or any thing but itself: the animal kingdom making hay in the kingdom of glory. So there it is, take your place. Leave nothing for a haunted old bat to use for disturbing the peace. Nothing, save for this life of her own.

We aimed for no more than to have dominion over every creature that moved upon the earth. And so it came to pass that we stepped down there on a place we believed unformed, where only darkness moved on the face of the waters. Now you laugh, day and night, while you gnaw on my bones. But what else could we have thought? Only that it began and ended with MS. What do we know, even now? Ask the children. Look at what they grew up to be. We can only speak of the things we carried with us, and the things we took away.

The Things We Carried

KILANGA, 1959

Leah Price

WE CAME FROM BETHLEHEM, Georgia, bearing Betty Crocker cake mixes into the jungle. My sisters and I were all counting on having one birthday apiece during our twelve-month mission. “And heaven knows,” our mother predicted, “they won’t have Betty Crocker in the Congo.”

“Where we are headed, there will be no buyers and sellers at all,” my father corrected. His tone implied that Mother failed to grasp our mission, and that her concern with Betty Crocker confederated her with the coinjingling sinners who vexed Jesus till he pitched a fit and threw them out of church. “Where we are headed,” he said, to make things perfectly clear, “not so much as a Piggly Wiggly.” Evidently Father saw this as a point in the Congo’s favor. I got the most spectacular chills, just from trying to imagine.

She wouldn’t go against him, of course. But once she understood there was no turning back, our mother went to laying out in the spare bedroom all the worldly things she thought we’d need in the Congo just to scrape by. “The bare minimum, for my children,” she’d declare under her breath, all the livelong day. In addition to the cake mixes, she piled up a dozen cans of Underwood deviled ham; Rachel’s ivory plastic

hand mirror with powdered-wig ladies on the back; a stainless-steel thimble; a good pair of scissors; a dozen number-2 pencils; a world of Band-Aids, Anacin. Absorbine Jr.; and a fever thermometer.

And now we are here, with all these colorful treasures safely transported and stowed against necessity. Our stores are still intact, save for the Anacin tablets taken by our mother and the thimble lost down the latrine hole by Ruth May. But already our supplies from home seem to represent a bygone world: they stand out like bright party favors here in our Congolese house, set against a backdrop of mostly all mud-colored things. When I stare at them with the rainy-season light in my eyes and Congo grit in my teeth, I can hardly recollect the place where such items were commonplace, merely a yellow pencil, merely a green bottle of aspirin among so many other green bottles upon a high shelf.

Mother tried to think of every contingency, including hunger and illness. (And Father does, in general, approve of contingencies. For it “was God who gave man alone the capacity of foresight.) She procured a good supply of antibiotic drugs from our granddad Dr. BudWharton, who has senile dementia and loves to walk outdoors naked but still can do two things perfectly: win at checkers and write out prescriptions. We also brought over a cast-iron frying pan, ten packets of baker’s yeast, pinking shears, the head of a hatchet, a fold-up army latrine spade, and all told a good deal more. This was the full measure of civilization’s evils we felt obliged to carry with us.

Getting here with even the bare minimum was a trial. Just when we considered ourselves fully prepared and were fixing to depart, lo and behold, we learned that the Pan American Airline would only allow forty-four pounds to be carried across the ocean. Forty-four pounds of luggage per person, and not one iota more. Why, we were dismayed by this bad news! Who’d have thought there would be limits on modern jet-age transport? When we added up all our forty-four pounds together, including Ruth May’s – luckily she counted as a whole person even though she’s small – we were sixty-one pounds over. Father surveyed our despair as if he’d expected it all along, and

left it up to wife and daughters to sort out, suggesting only that we consider the lilies of the field, which have no need of a hand mirror or aspirin tablets.

“I reckon the lilies need Bibles, though, and his darn old latrine spade,” Rachel muttered, as her beloved toiletry items got pitched out of the suitcase one by one. Rachel never does grasp scripture all that well.

But considering the lilies as we might, our trimming back got us nowhere close to our goal, even without Rachel’s beauty aids. We were nearly stumped. And then, hallelujah! At the last possible moment, saved. Through an oversight (or else probably, if you think about it, just plain politeness), they don’t weigh the passengers. The Southern Baptist Mission League gave us this hint, without coming right out and telling us to flout the law of the forty-four pounds, and from there we made our plan. We struck out for Africa carrying all our excess baggage on our bodies, under our clothes. Also, we had clothes under our clothes. My sisters and I left home wearing six pairs of underdrawers, two half-slips and camisoles; several dresses one on top of the other, with pedal pushers underneath; and outside of everything an all-weather coat. (The encyclopedia advised us to count on rain). The other goods, tools, cake-mix boxes and so forth were tucked out of sight in our pockets and under our waistbands, surrounding us in a clanking armor.

We wore our best dresses on the outside to make a good impression. Rachel wore her green linen Easter suit she was so vain of, and her long whitish hair pulled off her forehead with a wide pink elastic hairband. Rachel is fifteen – or, as she would put it, going on sixteen – and cares for naught but appearances. Her full Christian name is Rachel Rebekah, so she feels free to take after Rebekah, the virgin at the well, who is said in Genesis to be “a damsel very fair” and was offered marriage presents of golden earbobs right off the bat, when Abraham’s servant spied her fetching up the water. (Since she’s my elder by one year, she claims no relation to the Bible’s poor Rachel, Leah’s younger sister, who had to wait all those years to get married.) Sitting next to me on the plane, she kept batting her white-rabbit eyelashes and adjusting her bright pink hairband, trying to get me to notice she had secretly painted her fingernails

bubblegum pink to match. I glanced over at Father, who had the other window seat at the opposite end of our entire row of Prices. The sun was a blood-red ball hovering outside his window, inflaming his eyes as he kept up a lookout for Africa on the horizon. It was just lucky for Rachel he had so much else weighing on his mind. She'd been thrashed with the strap for nail polish, even at her age. But that is Rachel to a T, trying to work in just one last sin before leaving civilization. Rachel is worldly and tiresome in my opinion, so I stared out the window, where the view was better. Father feels makeup and nail polish are warning signals of prostitution, the same as pierced ears.

He was right about the lilies of the field, too. Somewhere along about the Atlantic Ocean, the six pairs of underwear and cake mixes all commenced to be a considerable cross to bear. Every time Rachel leaned over to dig in her purse she kept one hand on the chest of her linen jacket and it still made a small clinking noise. I forget now 'what kind of concealed household weapon she had in there. I was ignoring her, so she chattered mostly to Adah – who was ignoring her too, but since Adah never talks to anyone, it was less noticeable.

Rachel adores to poke fun at everything in Creation, but chiefly our family. "Hey, Ade!" she whispered at Adah. "What if we went on Art Linkletter's House Party now?"

In spite of myself, I laughed. Mr. Linkletter likes to surprise ladies by taking their purses and pulling out what all's inside for the television audience. They think it's very comical if he digs out a can opener or a picture of Herbert Hoover. Imagine if he shook us, and out fell pinking shears and a hatchet. The thought of it gave me nerves. Also, I felt claustrophobic and hot.

Finally, finally we lumbered like cattle off the plane and stepped down the stair ramp into the swelter of Leopoldville, and that is where our baby sister, Ruth May, pitched her blond curls forward and fainted on Mother.

She revived very promptly in the airport, which smelled of urine. I was excited and had to go to the bathroom but couldn't surmise where a girl would even begin to

look, in a place like this. Big palm-tree leaves waved in the bright light outside. Crowds of people rushed past one way and then the other. The airport police wore khaki shirts with extra metal buttons and, believe you me, guns.

Everywhere you looked, there were very tiny old dark ladies lugging entire baskets of things along the order of wilting greens. Chickens, also. Little regiments of children lurked by the doorways, apparently for the express purpose of accosting foreign missionaries. The minute they saw our white skin they'd rush at us, begging in French: "Cadeau, cadeau" I held up my two hands to illustrate the total and complete lack of gifts I had brought for the African children. Maybe people just hid behind a tree somewhere and squatted down, I was starting to think; maybe that's why the smell.

Just then a married couple of Baptists in tortoiseshell sunglasses came out of the crowd and shook our hands. They had the peculiar name of Underdown – Reverend and Mrs. Underdown. They'd come down to shepherd us through customs and speak French to the men in uniforms. Father made it clear we were completely self-reliant but appreciated their kindness all the same. He was so polite about it that the Underdowns didn't realize he was peeved. They carried on making a fuss as if we were all old friends and presented us with a gift of mosquito netting, just armloads of it, trailing on and on like an embarrassing bouquet from some junior-high boyfriend who liked you overly much.

As we stood there holding our netting and sweating through our complete wardrobes, they regaled us with information about our soon-to-be home, Kilanga. Oh, they had plenty to tell, since they and their boys had once lived there and started up the whole of it, school, church, and all. At one point in time Kilanga was a regular mission with four American families and a medical doctor who visited once a week. Now it had gone into a slump, they said. No more doctor, and the Underdowns themselves had had to move to Leopoldville to give their boys a shot at proper schooling – if, said Mrs. Underdown, you could even call it that. The other missionaries to Kilanga had long since expired their terms. So it was to be just the Price family and whatever help we could muster up. They warned us not to expect much. My heart pounded, for I expected

everything: jungle flowers, wild roaring beasts. God's Kingdom in its pure, unenlightened glory.

Then, while Father was smack in the middle of explaining something to the Underdowns, they suddenly hustled us onto a tiny airplane and abandoned us. It was only our family and the pilot, who was busy adjusting his earphones under his hat. He ignored us entirely, as if we were no more than ordinary cargo. There we sat, draped like tired bridesmaids with our yards of white veil, numbed by the airplane's horrible noise, skimming above the treetops. We were tuckered out, as my mother would say. "Plumb tuckered out," she would say. "Sugar, now don't you trip over that, you're tuckered out, it's plain to see." Mrs. Underdown had fussed and laughed over what she called our charming southern accent. She even tried to imitate the way we said "right now" and "bye-bye." ("Rot nail" she said. "Whah yay-es, the ayer-plane is leavin rot nail!" and "Bah-bah" – like a sheep!) She caused me to feel embarrassed over our simple expressions and drawn-out vowels, when I've never before considered myself to have any accent, though naturally I'm aware we do sound worlds different from the Yanks on the radio and TV. I had quite a lot to ponder as I sat on that airplane, and incidentally I still had to pee. But we were all dizzy and silent by that time, having grown accustomed to taking up no more space in a seat than was our honest due.

At long last we bumped to a landing in a field of tall yellow grass. We all jumped out of our seats, but Father, because of his imposing stature, had to kind of crouch over inside the plane instead of standing up straight. He pronounced a hasty benediction: "Heavenly Father please make me a powerful instrument of Thy perfect will here in the Belgian Congo. Amen."

"Amen!" we answered, and then he led us out through the oval doorway into the light.

We stood blinking for a moment, staring out through the dust at a hundred dark villagers, slender and silent, swaying faintly like trees. We'd left Georgia at the height of a peach-blossom summer and now stood in a bewildering dry, red fog that seemed

like no particular season you could put your finger on. In all our layers of clothing we must have resembled a family of Eskimos plopped down in a jungle.

But that was our burden, because there was so much we needed to bring here. Each one of us arrived with some extra responsibility biting into us under our garments: a claw hammer, a Baptist hymnal, each object of value replacing the weight freed up by some frivolous thing we'd found the strength to leave behind. Our journey was to be a great enterprise of balance. My father, of course, was bringing the Word of God – which fortunately weighs nothing at all.

Ruth May Price

GOD SAYS THE AFRICANS are the Tribes of Ham. Ham was the worst one of Noah's three boys: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Everybody comes down on their family tree from just those three, because God made a big flood and drowned out the sinners. But Shem, Ham, and Japheth got on the boat so they were A-okay.

Ham was the youngest one, like me, and he was bad. Sometimes I am bad, too. After they all got off the ark and let the animals go is when it happened. Ham found his father Noah laying around pig-naked drunk one day and he thought that was funny as all get-out. The other two brothers covered Noah up with a blanket, but Ham busted his britches laughing. When Noah woke up he got to hear the whole story from the tattletale brothers. So Noah cursed all Ham's children to be slaves for ever and ever. That's how come them to turn out dark.

Back home in Georgia they have their own school so they won't be a strutting into Rachel's and Leah and Adah's school. Leah and Adah are the gifted children, but they still have to go to the same school as everybody. But not the colored children. The man in church said they're different from us and needs ought to keep to their own. Jimmy Crow says that, and he makes the laws. They don't come in the White Castle restaurant where Mama takes us to get Cokes either, or the Zoo. Their day for the Zoo is Thursday. That's in the Bible.

Our village is going to have this many white people: me, Rachel, Leah, and Adah. Mama. Father. That is six people. Rachel is oldest, I am youngest. Leah and Adah are in between and they're twins, so maybe they are one person, but I think two, because Leah runs everywhere and climbs trees, but Adah can't, she is bad on one whole side and doesn't talk because she is brain-damaged and also hates us all. She reads books upside down. You are only supposed to hate the Devil, and love everybody else.

My name is Ruth May and I hate the Devil. For the longest time I used to think my name was Sugar. Mama always says that. Sugar, come here a minute. Sugar, now don't do that.

In Sunday school Rex Minton said we better not go to the Congo on account of the cannibal natives would boil us in a pot and eat us up. He said, I can talk like a native, listen here: Ugg-a bugga bugga lugga. He said that means, I'll have me a drumstick off'n that little one with the curly yellow hair. Our Sunday-school teacher Miss Bannie told him to hush up. But I tell you what, she didn't say one way or the other about them boiling us in a pot and eating us up. So I don't know.

Here are the other white people we had in Africa so far: Mister Axelroot that flies the plane. He has got the dirtiest hat you ever saw. He lives way on down by the airplane field in a shack by himself whenever he comes over here, and Mama says that's close enough quarters for him. Reverent and Misrus Underdown, who started the African children on going to church way back years ago. The Underdowns talk French to each other even though they are white people. I don't know why. They have their own two boys, the Underdown boys, that are big and go to school in Leopoldville. They felt sorry for us so they sent us comic books to take on the airplane with us. I got almost all of them to myself when Leah and them all went to sleep on the airplane. Donald Duck. Lone Ranger. And the fairy-tale ones, Cinderella and Briar Rose. I hid them in a place. Then I got to feeling bad and upchucked on the airplane, and it got all over a duffel bag and the Donald Duck. I put that one under the cushion so we don't have it anymore.

So this is who all will be in our village: the Price family, Lone Ranger, Cinderella, Briar Rose, and the Tribes of Ham.

Questions for discussion:

1. What significance does the title phrase, "*The Poisonwood Bible*," hold, especially concerning the lives of the main characters and the central themes of the novel? How pivotal are the circumstances surrounding the creation of this phrase?
2. Examine the epigraph of Book One and its purpose within the text.
3. What insights does the novel provide into the cultural, social, religious, and other distinctions between Africa and America? How are the diverse identities of the Congolese people and the newcomers depicted in the narrative?
4. The statement "*She is inhumanly alone*" pertains to the mother of the family. How is her loneliness demonstrated throughout the novel? What factors contribute to her profound sense of isolation? Why do her daughters express to her, "*you see, [...] you had no life of your own*"?
5. "*In the year of our Lord 1960, a monkey barreled through space in an American rocket*" – in what context is this phrase used? Which event does it allude to?
6. Trace the intertextual connections present in the excerpt and examine the Christian parallels within the text.
7. The sections of the novel are titled "*Book One*", "*Book Two*", "*Book Seven*" and so on, featuring the titles "*Reverlation*", "*Exodus*" – analyze the string of allusions.
8. "*I reckon the lilies need Bibles, though, and his darn old latrine spade,*" says Rachel. What does her statement suggest within the framework of colonization?
9. "*I was afflicted with Africa like a bout of a rare disease, from which I have not managed a full recovery*", remarked a character in the novel. Who made this observation? What is the rationale behind drawing such a comparison?
10. "*What is the conqueror's wife, if not a conquest herself*", says the character. What is the rationale behind her characterization of them as conquerors?

11. “*I trod on Africa without a thought, straight from our family’s divinely inspired beginning to our terrible end*” – to what does the protagonist allude?
12. Who is Leah Price, and what does her spiritual portrayal entail?
13. What does Ruth May Price assert about the Tribe of Ham, and whom does this term represent?
14. Examine the setting in the novel and the imagery it evokes.
15. Does the novel incorporate any symbolic elements? Explore the symbolism present, particularly in relation to the olfactory and auditory aspects of the text.
16. Provide a summary of the main concepts conveyed in the excerpt.
17. Examine the stylistic elements and language employed in the novel. Do instances of foreshadowing or flashbacks exist? If so, what role do they serve?

Writing task:

Read the text of the novel up to the end and write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Mom’s small victories in the novel; b) Nature as a character in the novel; c) Intertextual links in Kingsolver text; d) Biblical parallelism in the plot of “*The Poisonwood Bible*”.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *Barbara Kingsolver as a writer and thinker.*
2. *Religious colonialism and its waves within the global context. Religious missions.*
3. *Anglo-Saxon presence in Africa and its consequences.*
4. *The black world and blackness in American literature.*
5. *African society in contemporary American literature – the religious perspective.*

Recommended reading:

1. *The essays by George Orwell “Inside the Whale and other essays” (1957), “Selected Writings” (1958), “Shooting an Elephant”.*
2. *“The Far Pavilions” by M.M. Kaye.*
3. *“A Thousand Splendid Suns” by Khaled Hosseini.*
4. *“The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson.*
5. *“Paul’s Case” by Willa Cather.*
6. *“Khagam” by Satyajit Ray”*
7. *“The Betrayal” by Ahmed Essop.*

PACE 5

HISTORY AND SACREDNESS IN NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

“Those without heritage, history, and place are subject to exploitation, manipulation, and deception.”

Wayne Gerard Trotman

“Only to the white man was nature a wilderness and only to him was the land ‘infested’ with ‘wild’ animals and ‘savagely’ people. To us it was tame, Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery”.

Black Elk, Oglala Lakota Sioux

“Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to think and talk and act for myself, and I will obey every law, or submit to the penalty.”

Heinmot Tooyalaket (Chief Joseph), Nez Perce Leader

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.”

Chief Seattle, 1854

“All who have died are equal.”

Comanche People

Key terms: *Peace between nations, the souls of men, sacred ground, life as a circle, to live in harmony, wisdom, a handful of earth, existence, acknowledging the presence, beyond the arrogance of human rights, the Great Spirit, treating Earth, wilderness, possession as a disease, vulnerability, wealth*

DAVID GRANN, born on March 10, 1967, is an American journalist and author, currently serving as a staff writer for *The New Yorker*. He holds master’s degrees in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and in creative writing from Boston University. Following his graduation from Connecticut College in 1989, he was awarded a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship, during which he conducted research in Mexico, marking the beginning of his journalism career.

His debut book, *The Lost City of Z: A Tale of Deadly Obsession in the Amazon*, was released by Doubleday in February 2009. Following its initial week of publication, it entered *The New York Times* bestseller list at number 4 and eventually climbed to the top spot. Grann’s articles have been featured in various anthologies,

including *“What We Saw: The Events of September 11, 2001,”* *“The Best American Crime Writing of 2004 and 2005,”* and *“The Best American Sports Writing of 2003 and 2006.”* He has contributed to publications such as *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Weekly Standard*.

He recently authored *“The White Darkness”* and *“Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the F.B.I.”* which earned an Edgar Award, was a finalist for the National Book Award, and was recognized as one of the top books of 2017 by publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, and *Entertainment Weekly*.

Grann’s additional book, *“The Devil and Sherlock Holmes,”* compiles many of his stories from *The New Yorker*, covering a range of topics from the mysterious death of a prominent Sherlock Holmes expert to a Polish author who purportedly embedded clues to a real murder in his postmodern novel. One of the pieces in the collection, *“Trial by Fire,”* exposed how flawed scientific evidence led to the execution of a potentially innocent man in Texas. This story received both the George Polk Award and the Silver Gavel Award, and it was referenced by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer in his opinion on the constitutionality of the death penalty. Grann has been honored twice with the Sigma Delta Chi Award for excellence in journalism. His latest book, *“The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny, and Murder,”* was published in April 2023.

1. *Reflect on the Native American history. What do you know of the Osage tribe and their lifestyle? Have you ever heard of the Osage murders? Do you think their history should be taught at schools?*
2. *Discuss the reflection of Native Americans in American literature. What sort of national traits find the embodiment in such fiction?*
3. *What is non-fiction? What forms of non-fiction are you aware of?*
4. *What famous ethnic murders can you recollect?*
5. *Do you know anything from the history of F.B.I.?*

David GRANN

***KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON: THE OSAGE MURDERS AND THE
BIRTH OF THE F.B.I.***

(Excerpt)

CHRONICLE ONE

THE MARKED WOMAN

There had been no evil to mar that propitious night, because she had listened; there had been no voice of evil; no screech owl had quaveringly disturbed the stillness. She knew this because she had listened all night.

John Joseph Mathews, *Sundown*

1. THE VANISHING

In April, millions of tiny flowers spread over the blackjack hills and vast prairies in the Osage territory of Oklahoma. There are Johnnyjump-ups and spring beauties and little bluets. The Osage writer John Joseph Mathews observed that the galaxy of petals makes it look as if the “gods had left confetti.” In May, when coyotes howl beneath an unnervingly large moon, taller plants, such as spiderworts and black-eyed Susans, begin to creep over the tinier blooms, stealing their light and water. The necks of the smaller flowers break and their petals flutter away, and before long they are buried underground. This is why the Osage Indians refer to May as the time of the flower-killing moon.

On May 24, 1921, Mollie Burkhart, a resident of the Osage settlement town of Gray Horse, Oklahoma, began to fear that something had happened to one of her three sisters, Anna Brown. Thirty-four, and less than a year older than Mollie, Anna had disappeared three days earlier. She had often gone on “sprees,” as her family disparagingly called them: dancing and drinking with friends until dawn. But this time one night had passed, and then another, and Anna had not shown up on Mollie’s front

stoop as she usually did, with her long black hair slightly frayed and her dark eyes shining like glass. When Anna came inside, she liked to slip off her shoes, and Mollie missed the comforting sound of her moving, unhurried, through the house. Instead, there was a silence as still as the plains.

Mollie had already lost her sister Minnie nearly three years earlier. Her death had come with shocking speed, and though doctors had attributed it to a “peculiar wasting illness,” Mollie harbored doubts:

Minnie had been only twenty-seven and had always been in perfect health.

Like their parents, Mollie and her sisters had their names inscribed on the Osage Roll, which meant that they were among the registered members of the tribe. It also meant that they possessed a fortune. In the early 1870s, the Osage had been driven from their lands in Kansas onto a rocky, presumably worthless reservation in northeastern Oklahoma, only to discover, decades later, that this land was sitting above some of the largest oil deposits in the United States. To obtain that oil, prospectors had to pay the Osage for leases and royalties. In the early twentieth century, each person on the tribal roll began receiving a quarterly check. The amount was initially for only a few dollars, but over time, as more oil was tapped, the dividends grew into the hundreds, then the thousands. And virtually every year the payments increased, like the prairie creeks that joined to form the wide, muddy Cimarron, until the tribe members had collectively accumulated millions and millions of dollars. (In 1923 alone, the tribe took in more than \$30 million, the equivalent today of more than \$400 million.) The Osage were considered the wealthiest people per capita in the world. “Lo and behold!” the New York weekly *Outlook* exclaimed. “The Indian, instead of starving to death...enjoys a steady income that turns bankers green with envy.”

The public had become transfixed by the tribe’s prosperity, which belied the images of American Indians that could be traced back to the brutal first contact with whites – the original sin from which the country was born. Reporters tantalized their readers with stories about the “plutocratic Osage” and the “red millionaires,” with their brick-and-terra-cotta mansions and chandeliers, with their diamond rings and fur coats

and chauffeured cars. One writer marveled at Osage girls who attended the best boarding schools and wore sumptuous French clothing, as if “*une très jolie demoiselle* of the Paris boulevards had inadvertently strayed into this little reservation town.”

At the same time, reporters seized upon any signs of the traditional Osage way of life, which seemed to stir in the public’s mind visions of “wild” Indians. One article noted a “circle of expensive automobiles surrounding an open campfire, where the bronzed and brightly blanketed owners are cooking meat in the primitive style.” Another documented a party of Osage arriving at a ceremony for their dances in a private airplane – a scene that “outrivals the ability of the fictionist to portray.” Summing up the public’s attitude toward the Osage, the *Washington Star* said, “That lament, ‘Lo the poor Indian,’ might appropriately be revised to, ‘Ho, the rich redskin.’”

Gray Horse was one of the reservation’s older settlements. These outposts – including Fairfax, a larger, neighboring town of nearly fifteen hundred people, and Pawhuska, the Osage capital, with a population of more than six thousand – seemed like fevered visions. The streets clamored with cowboys, fortune seekers, bootleggers, soothsayers, medicine men, outlaws, U.S. marshals, New York financiers, and oil magnates. Automobiles sped along paved horse trails, the smell of fuel overwhelming the scent of the prairies. Juries of crows peered down from telephone wires. There were restaurants, advertised as cafés, and opera houses and polo grounds.

Although Mollie didn’t spend as lavishly as some of her neighbors did, she had built a beautiful, rambling wooden house in Gray Horse near her family’s old lodge of lashed poles, woven mats, and bark. She owned several cars and had a staff of servants – the Indians’ potlickers, as many settlers derided these migrant workers. The servants were often black or Mexican, and in the early 1920s a visitor to the reservation expressed contempt at the sight of “even whites” performing “all the menial tasks about the house to which no Osage will stoop.”



Mollie was one of the last people to see Anna before she vanished. That day, May 21, Mollie had risen close to dawn, a habit ingrained from when her father used

to pray every morning to the sun. She was accustomed to the chorus of meadowlarks and sandpipers and prairie chickens, now overlaid with the *pock-pocking* of drills pounding the earth. Unlike many of her friends, who shunned Osage clothing, Mollie wrapped an Indian blanket around her shoulders. She also didn't style her hair in a flapper bob, but instead let her long, black hair flow over her back, revealing her striking face, with its high cheekbones and big brown eyes.

Her husband, Ernest Burkhart, rose with her. A twenty-eight-year-old white man, he had the stock handsomeness of an extra in a Western picture show: short brown hair, slate-blue eyes, square chin. Only his nose disturbed the portrait; it looked as if it had taken a barroom punch or two. Growing up in Texas, the son of a poor cotton farmer, he'd been enchanted by tales of the Osage Hills – that vestige of the American frontier where cowboys and Indians were said to still roam. In 1912, at nineteen, he'd packed a bag, like Huck Finn lighting out for the Territory, and gone to live with his uncle, a domineering cattleman named William K. Hale, in Fairfax. “He was not the kind of a man to ask you to do something – he told you,” Ernest once said of Hale, who became his surrogate father. Though Ernest mostly ran errands for Hale, he sometimes worked as a livery driver, which is how he met Mollie, chauffeuring her around town.

Ernest had a tendency to drink moonshine and play Indian stud poker with men of ill repute, but beneath his roughness there seemed to be a tenderness and a trace of insecurity, and Mollie fell in love with him. Born a speaker of Osage, Mollie had learned some English in school; nevertheless, Ernest studied her native language until he could talk with her in it. She suffered from diabetes, and he cared for her when her joints ached and her stomach burned with hunger. After he heard that another man had affections for her, he muttered that he couldn't live without her.

It wasn't easy for them to marry. Ernest's roughneck friends ridiculed him for being a “squaw man.” And though Mollie's three sisters had wed white men, she felt a responsibility to have an arranged Osage marriage, the way her parents had. Still, Mollie, whose family practiced a mixture of Osage and Catholic beliefs, couldn't

understand why God would let her find love, only to then take it away from her. So, in 1917, she and Ernest exchanged rings, vowing to love each other till eternity.

By 1921, they had a daughter, Elizabeth, who was two years old, and a son, James, who was eight months old and nicknamed Cowboy. Mollie also tended to her aging mother, Lizzie, who had moved in to the house after Mollie's father passed away. Because of Mollie's diabetes, Lizzie once feared that she would die young, and beseeched her other children to take care of her. In truth, Mollie was the one who looked after all of them.

May 21 was supposed to be a delightful day for Mollie. She liked to entertain guests and was hosting a small luncheon. After getting dressed, she fed the children. Cowboy often had terrible earaches, and she'd blow in his ears until he stopped crying. Mollie kept her home in meticulous order, and she issued instructions to her servants as the house stirred, everyone bustling about – except Lizzie, who'd fallen ill and stayed in bed. Mollie asked Ernest to ring Anna and see if she'd come over to help tend to Lizzie for a change. Anna, as the oldest child in the family, held a special status in their mother's eyes, and even though Mollie took care of Lizzie, Anna, in spite of her tempestuousness, was the one her mother spoiled.

When Ernest told Anna that her mama needed her, she promised to take a taxi straight there, and she arrived shortly afterward, dressed in bright red shoes, a skirt, and a matching Indian blanket; in her hand was an alligator purse. Before entering, she'd hastily combed her windblown hair and powdered her face. Mollie noticed, however, that her gait was unsteady, her words slurred. Anna was drunk.

Mollie couldn't hide her displeasure. Some of the guests had already arrived. Among them were two of Ernest's brothers, Bryan and Horace Burkhart, who, lured by black gold, had moved to Osage County, often assisting Hale on his ranch. One of Ernest's aunts, who spewed racist notions about Indians, was also visiting, and the last thing Mollie needed was for Anna to stir up the old goat.

Anna slipped off her shoes and began to make a scene. She took a flask from her bag and opened it, releasing the pungent smell of bootleg whiskey. Insisting that she needed to drain the flask before the authorities caught her – it was a year into nationwide Prohibition – she offered the guests a swig of what she called the best white mule.

Mollie knew that Anna had been very troubled of late. She'd recently divorced her husband, a settler named Oda Brown, who owned a livery business. Since then, she'd spent more and more time in the reservation's tumultuous boomtowns, which had sprung up to house and entertain oil workers – towns like Whizbang, where, it was said, people whizzed all day and banged all night. "All the forces of dissipation and evil are here found," a U.S. government official reported. "Gambling, drinking, adultery, lying, thieving, murdering." Anna had become entranced by the places at the dark ends of the streets: the establishments that seemed proper on the exterior but contained hidden rooms filled with glittering bottles of moonshine. One of Anna's servants later told the authorities that Anna was someone who drank a lot of whiskey and had "very loose morals with white men."

At Mollie's house, Anna began to flirt with Ernest's younger brother, Bryan, whom she'd sometimes dated. He was more brooding than Ernest and had inscrutable yellow-flecked eyes and thinning hair that he wore slicked back. A lawman who knew him described him as a little roustabout. When Bryan asked one of the servants at the luncheon if she'd go to a dance with him that night, Anna said that if he fooled around with another woman, she'd kill him.

Meanwhile, Ernest's aunt was muttering, loud enough for all to hear, about how mortified she was that her nephew had married a redskin. It was easy for Mollie to subtly strike back because one of the servants attending to the aunt was white – a blunt reminder of the town's social order.

Anna continued raising Cain. She fought with the guests, fought with her mother, fought with Mollie. "She was drinking and quarreling," a servant later told authorities.

“I couldn’t understand her language, but they were quarreling.” The servant added, “They had an awful time with Anna, and I was afraid.”

That evening, Mollie planned to look after her mother, while Ernest took the guests into Fairfax, five miles to the northwest, to meet Hale and see *Bringing Up Father*, a touring musical about a poor Irish immigrant who wins a million-dollar sweepstakes and struggles to assimilate into high society. Bryan, who’d put on a cowboy hat, his catlike eyes peering out from under the brim, offered to drop Anna off at her house.

Before they left, Mollie washed Anna’s clothes, gave her some food to eat, and made sure that she’d sobered up enough that Mollie could glimpse her sister as her usual self, bright and charming. They lingered together, sharing a moment of calm and reconciliation. Then Anna said good-bye, a gold filling flashing through her smile.



With each passing night, Mollie grew more anxious. Bryan insisted that he’d taken Anna straight home and dropped her off before heading to the show. After the third night, Mollie, in her quiet but forceful way, pressed everyone into action. She dispatched Ernest to check on Anna’s house. Ernest jiggled the knob to her front door – it was locked. From the window, the rooms inside appeared dark and deserted.

Ernest stood there alone in the heat. A few days earlier, a cool rain shower had dusted the earth, but afterward the sun’s rays beat down mercilessly through the blackjack trees. This time of year, heat blurred the prairies and made the tall grass creak underfoot. In the distance, through the shimmering light, one could see the skeletal frames of derricks.

Anna’s head servant, who lived next door, came out, and Ernest asked her, “Do you know where Anna is?”

Before the shower, the servant said, she’d stopped by Anna’s house to close any open windows. “I thought the rain would blow in,” she explained. But the door was locked, and there was no sign of Anna. She was gone.

News of her absence coursed through the boomtowns, traveling from porch to porch, from store to store. Fueling the unease were reports that another Osage, Charles Whitehorn, had vanished a week before Anna had. Genial and witty, the thirty-year-old Whitehorn was married to a woman who was part white, part Cheyenne. A local newspaper noted that he was “popular among both the whites and the members of his own tribe.” On May 14, he’d left his home, in the southwestern part of the reservation, for Pawhuska. He never returned.

Still, there was reason for Mollie not to panic. It was conceivable that Anna had slipped out after Bryan had dropped her off and headed to Oklahoma City or across the border to incandescent Kansas City. Perhaps she was dancing in one of those jazz clubs she liked to visit, oblivious of the chaos she’d left trailing in her wake. And even if Anna had run into trouble, she knew how to protect herself: she often carried a small pistol in her alligator purse. She’ll be back home soon, Ernest reassured Mollie.

A week after Anna disappeared, an oil worker was on a hill a mile north of downtown Pawhuska when he noticed something poking out of the brush near the base of a derrick. The worker came closer. It was a rotting corpse; between the eyes were two bullet holes. The victim had been shot, execution-style.

It was hot and wet and loud on the hillside. Drills shook the earth as they bore through the limestone sediment; derricks swung their large clawing arms back and forth. Other people gathered around the body, which was so badly decomposed that it was impossible to identify. One of the pockets held a letter. Someone pulled it out, straightening the paper, and read it. The letter was addressed to Charles Whitehorn, and that’s how they first knew it was him.

Around the same time, a man was squirrel hunting by Three Mile Creek, near Fairfax, with his teenage son and a friend. While the two men were getting a drink of water from a creek, the boy spotted a squirrel and pulled the trigger. There was a burst of heat and light, and the boy watched as the squirrel was hit and began to tumble lifelessly over the edge of a ravine. He chased after it, making his way down a steep

wooded slope and into a gulch where the air was thicker and where he could hear the murmuring of the creek. He found the squirrel and picked it up. Then he screamed, “Oh Papa!” By the time his father reached him, the boy had crawled onto a rock.

He gestured toward the mossy edge of the creek and said, “A dead person.”

There was the bloated and decomposing body of what appeared to be an American Indian woman: she was on her back, with her hair twisted in the mud and her vacant eyes facing the sky. Worms were eating at the corpse.

The men and the boy hurried out of the ravine and raced on their horse-drawn wagon through the prairie, dust swirling around them. When they reached Fairfax’s main street, they couldn’t find any lawmen, so they stopped at the Big Hill Trading Company, a large general store that had an undertaking business as well. They told the proprietor, Scott Mathis, what had happened, and he alerted his undertaker, who went with several men to the creek. There they rolled the body onto a wagon seat and, with a rope, dragged it to the top of the ravine, then laid it inside a wooden box, in the shade of a blackjack tree. When the undertaker covered the bloated corpse with salt and ice, it began to shrink as if the last bit of life were leaking out. The undertaker tried to determine if the woman was Anna Brown, whom he’d known. “The body was decomposed and swollen almost to the point of bursting and very malodorous,” he later recalled, adding, “It was as black as a nigger.”

He and the other men couldn’t make an identification. But Mathis, who managed Anna’s financial affairs, contacted Mollie, and she led a grim procession toward the creek that included Ernest, Bryan, Mollie’s sister Rita, and Rita’s husband, Bill Smith. Many who knew Anna followed them, along with the morbidly curious. Kelsie Morrison, one of the county’s most notorious bootleggers and dope peddlers, came with his Osage wife.

Mollie and Rita arrived and stepped close to the body. The stench was overwhelming. Vultures circled obscenely in the sky. It was hard for Mollie and Rita to discern if the face was Anna’s – there was virtually nothing left of it—but they recognized her Indian blanket and the clothes that Mollie had washed for her. Then

Rita's husband, Bill, took a stick and pried open her mouth, and they could see Anna's gold fillings. "That is sure enough Anna," Bill said.

Rita began to weep, and her husband led her away. Eventually, Mollie mouthed the word "yes" – it was Anna. Mollie was the one in the family who always maintained her composure, and she now retreated from the creek with Ernest, leaving behind the first hint of the darkness that threatened to destroy not only her family but her tribe.

Questions for discussion:

1. Consider the symbolic significance of the title "*Flower Moon*" in relation to various cultural references associating May's full moon with blooming abundance during the onset of spring. Reflect on how this symbolism parallels the novel's setting and plot development?
2. Examine the epigraph preceding Chronicle one and its significance.
3. The author, David Grann, opens the book with a depiction of flowers covering the hills of Oklahoma, where the Osage Indian nation lived, and how these flowers wither and perish in May. How does this line establish the mood and introduce the topic that the rest of the book will explore?
4. Discuss the depiction of time and space in David Grann's text.
5. Early in the narrative, David Grann introduces Mollie Burkhart, whose family becomes the primary target of the Osage murders. How does Grann foreshadow the potential motives of the murderer in these initial stages?
6. Describe the characterizations of the three sisters – Mollie, Minnie, and Anna. Additionally, outline the portrayals of the male figures presented in the excerpt?
7. How does the text depict the Osage way of life and their cultural traditions?
8. Consider the characterization of Ernest Burkhart. What traits and qualities define his personality, and why are they significant? Why it "*wasn't easy for them [him and Mollie] to marry*"?
9. What illness afflicted Mollie?

10. Why was May 21 anticipated to be a joyful occasion for Mollie?

11. Provide a summary of the events depicted in Chronicle One.

Read the rest of the book by David Grann.

12. What initial impressions did you form about William Hale? How does Grann effectively portray his positive attributes and charm, alongside the darker aspects of his character? In what ways does Hale resemble contemporary figures who wield power and influence?

13. What was your reaction to the portrayal of law enforcement in America during the 1920s? What aspects of it were particularly startling or unexpected to you? How did the situation in Osage County contribute to the chaos? How did these circumstances impact the investigations into the deaths of Anna Brown and Charles Whitehorn?

14. How does Grann's depiction of the interaction between the United States government and Native Americans enhance your comprehension of the nation's history? How did governmental policies impact individuals such as Mollie and her family? What does Grann convey through his portrayal of Lizzie's passing: "*Lizzie's spirit had been claimed by Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior, and by Wah'Kon-Tah, the Great Mystery*"?

15. Grann characterizes the discovery of oil on Osage land as a "*cursed blessing*." In what ways do you perceive it as a blessing, and how does it also pose a curse?

16. Examine the factors that set the Osage apart from other Native American tribes, such as the initiatives undertaken by tribal leaders at the beginning of the century, the arrival of white settlers and oil prospectors, the allocation of headrights, and the implementation of the guardianship system.

17. What importance lies in the killings of Barney McBride, the oilman who sought assistance for the Osage in Washington, and W.W. Vaughan, the lawyer collaborating with private investigators on the murder cases?

18. Grann's portrayal sheds light on J. Edgar Hoover's character. It emphasizes certain traits and their potential implications for Hoover's future as the FBI director?

19. How reliable do you perceive the different figures of authority depicted in the book, involved in investigating the murders? These include William Hale, initially portrayed as a "*strong local supporter of law and order*," as well as the frontier law officers, the brothers who perform autopsies, the county sheriff, and later, the FBI.

20. As you approach the midpoint of the book, who do you think is accountable for the murders? What leads you to this conclusion?

21. The Osage "*headrights*," which involved the money received from mineral royalties by tribe members or their white guardians, quickly become a focal point of the narrative. Grann highlights that while some white guardians and administrators attempted to act in the tribe's best interests, many others exploited the system to defraud the very individuals they were supposed to safeguard. Who were the groups in society that exploited these guardianships, and what facilitated their ability to do so?

22. What factors motivated the FBI to investigate the Osage murders? What insights did you gain about the agency's origins?

23. Based on your current progress in the book, what reflections do you have on the significance of these murders in the context of America's history with indigenous communities?

24. How did J. Edgar Hoover attempt to shape the public image of the FBI during the resolution of the case? Which aspects of the FBI's investigation into the Osage Murders were omitted from the narrative?

25. How does Tom White blend characteristics of the Old West with those of the modern bureaucratic system Hoover is striving to establish? How do these traits influence his approach to investigating the murders? Considering the different perspectives on White, such as anecdotes from his upbringing and his tenure as a Texas

Ranger, how do these contribute to your perception of him? Would you characterize him as the central figure in the narrative?

26. How did the FBI investigation face challenges such as fabricated evidence, coerced testimony, and fake admissions to mislead the case? How did private investigators and informants hired outside the official channels contribute to uncovering the truth amidst these obstacles?

27. The crimes in Osage County involved complex layers of deceit and treachery. Apart from the direct perpetrators, who else either directly benefited from the crimes or silently condoned them? How did societal norms inadvertently foster the corruption that hindered the investigation?

28. How did innovative approaches to criminal investigation contribute to exposing the culprits? Beyond incorporating modern forensic techniques, how did Hoover leverage the case to overhaul the Bureau of Investigation, thereby bolstering his own reputation?

29. The remark made during Hale's trial, suggesting a broader question about whether killing an Osage person should be deemed murder or mere cruelty to animals, resonates beyond the immediate context due to its reflection on racial prejudice and the dehumanization of indigenous people?

30. One of the most disturbing elements in *"Killers of the Flower Moon"* is the intimate ties between the perpetrators and their victims, particularly evident in the case of Ernest Burkhart, who was married to Mollie and had children with her. Grann vividly portrays the horror of crimes committed within a family and a tight-knit community, highlighting the complexity of Burkhart's actions despite his marital and familial connections?

31. The evidence uncovered by Grann during his visit to Osage County in 2012 sheds light on the enduring impact of the "Reign of Terror"?

32. Grann seamlessly integrates the fast-paced elements of a true-life murder mystery with the comprehensive scope and detailed narrative of a historical account in *"Killers of the Flower Moon"*?

33. Why do you believe that the story of the Osage murders hasn't garnered the same level of attention as other American crimes and criminals from the early twentieth century, which are often portrayed in movies, books, and television shows?

34. Are there contemporary instances of racial prejudice and injustice reminiscent of those depicted in *"Killers of the Flower Moon"*? How has law enforcement's approach evolved? Have attitudes within the white community toward racial or religious discrimination shifted? And in what aspects have things remained unchanged?

35. Why do you think Grann opted to conclude the book with a quote from the Bible regarding Cain and Abel: *"The blood cries out from the ground."*

Writing task:

Read the text of the novel up to the end and write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Native Americans: giving and taking; b) Native vs Europeans: treaties and agreements, cruel laws; c) Native Americans: the epoch of reservations; d) Native American traditions and mythology; e) The sacred core of the Native American culture.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *David Grann – the creative path.*
2. *The history of the Native American people and the Osage Tribe in particular.*
3. *The history of F.B.I.*
4. *Famous ethnic murders and their reflection in fiction.*
5. *Non-fiction and its types.*

Recommended reading:

1. *"Love Medicine" by Louise Erdrich.*
2. *"House Made of Dawn" by N. Scott Momaday.*
3. *"Pushing the Bear" by Diane Glancy.*
4. *"Sundown" by John Joseph Mathews.*

PACE 6

**LATIN-AMERICAN LITERATURE: FEMALE PERSPECTIVE AND IDENTITY
ISSUES**

*“If there is no place for integration in your identity there’s no way there’ll be
integration in society.”*
Abhijit Naskar

“The question isn’t who is going to let me; it’s who is going to stop me”.
Ayn Rand.

*“Feminism isn’t about making women stronger. Women are already strong.
It’s about changing the way the world perceives that strength.”*
G.D. Anderson.

Key terms: *Identity and tradition, disconnection/Alienation, female sexuality and empowerment, love as power, Contesting cultural and gender stereotypes; history, myth, and narratives; Chicano, cultural cringe, machismo, malinchismo, multiculturalism*

SANDRA CISNEROS, born in 1954 in Chicago, is a Chicana writer known for her exploration of Chicana/o characters with multi-faceted cultural backgrounds. Alongside writers like Ana Castillo and Gloria Anzaldúa, she emerged in the 1980s as one of the first Chicana writers to publish her work. Her notable works include *“A House on Mango Street”* (1984), which won the Before Columbus American Book Award in 1985, and her collection *“Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories”* (1991), for which she received a Lannan Foundation Literary Award.

Cisneros’ second novel, *“Caramelo”* (2002), is a fictionalized account of her family, focusing on a journey from Chicago to Mexico and the protagonist’s coming-of-age. It was recognized as a notable book of the year by several major publications including the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle. *“Caramelo”* received the Premio Napoli award in 2005 and was shortlisted for the Dublin International IMPAC Award. Additionally, her book *“Have You Seen Marie?”* (2012) is an illustrated fable aimed at adults.

1. *What do you know of Mexican American society and Mexican culture in the USA? What identity struggles, do you think, they go through? How do they manifest / preserve their ethnicity on the new background?*

2. *Talk about Mexican religious system and female archetypes (especially a “good” female archetype in Mexico). Think of the Mexican Eve and La Virgen de Guadalupe. What are the famous mythical figures in Mexican literature?*

3. *What is the significance of female role models in literature?*

4. *Do men and women have the same or different status in relationships? Think about sexual freedom, a range of responsibilities, household duties, financial provision.*

5. *What do you know of machismo culture?*

Sandra CISNEROS

NEVER MARRY A MEXICAN

Never marry a Mexican, my ma said once and always. She said this because of my father. She said this though she was Mexican too. But she was born here in the U.S., and he was born there, and it's not the same, you know.

I'll never marry. Not any man. I've known men too intimately. I've witnessed their infidelities, and I've helped them to it. Unzipped and unhooked and agreed to clandestine maneuvers. I've been accomplice, committed premeditated crimes. I'm guilty of having caused deliberate pain to other women. I'm vindictive and cruel, and I'm capable of anything.

I admit, there was a time when all I wanted was to belong to a man. To wear that gold band on my left hand and be worn on his arm like an expensive jewel brilliant in the light of day. Not the sneaking around I did in different bars that all looked the same, red carpets with a black grill work design, flocked wallpaper, wooden wagon-wheel light fixtures with hurricane lampshades a sick amber color like the drinking glasses you get for free at gas stations.

Dark bars, dark restaurants then. And if not – my apartment, with his toothbrush firmly planted in the toothbrush holder like a flag on the North Pole. The bed so big because he never stayed the whole night. Of course not.

Borrowed. That's how I've had my men. Just the cream skimmed off the top. Just the sweetest part of the fruit, without the bitter skin that daily living with a spouse can rend. They've come to me when they wanted the sweet meat then.

So, no. I've never married and never will. Not because I couldn't, but because I'm too romantic for marriage. Marriage has failed me, you could say. Not a man exists who hasn't disappointed me, whom I could trust to love the way I've loved. It's because I believe too much in marriage that I don't. Better to not marry than live a lie.

Mexican men, forget it. For a long time the men clearing off the tables or chopping meat behind the butcher counter or driving the bus I rode to school every day, those weren't men. Not men I considered as potential lovers. Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Chilean, Colombian, Panamanian, Salvadorean, Bolivian, Honduran, Argentine, Dominican, Venezuelan, Guatemalan, Ecuadorean, Nicaraguan, Peruvian, Costa Rican, Paraguayan, Uruguayan, I don't care. I never saw them. My mother did this to me.

I guess she did it to spare me and Ximena the pain she went through. Having married a Mexican man at seventeen. Having had to put up with all the grief a Mexican family can put on a girl because she was from *el otro lado*, the other side, and my father had married down by marrying her. If he had married a white woman from *el otro lado*, that would've been different. That would've been marrying up, even if the white girl was poor. But what could be more ridiculous than a Mexican girl who couldn't even speak Spanish, who didn't know enough to set a separate plate for each course at dinner, nor how to fold cloth napkins, nor how to set the silverware.

In my ma's house the plates were always stacked in the center of the table, the knives and forks and spoons standing in a jar, help yourself. All the dishes chipped or cracked and nothing matched. And no tablecloth, ever. And newspapers set on the table whenever my grandpa sliced watermelons, and how embarrassed she would be when her boyfriend, my father, would come over and there were newspapers all over the kitchen floor and table. And my grandpa, big hardworking Mexican man, saying Come, come and eat, and slicing a big wedge of those dark green watermelons, a big slice, he

wasn't stingy with food. Never, even during the Depression. Come, come and eat, to whoever came knocking on the back door. Hobos sitting at the dinner table and the children staring and staring. Because my grandfather always made sure they never went without. Flour and rice, by the barrel and by the sack. Potatoes. Big bags of pinto beans. And watermelons, bought three or four at a time, rolled under his bed and brought out when you least expected. My grandpa had survived three wars, one Mexican, two American, and he knew what living without meant. He knew.

My father, on the other hand, did not. True, when he first came to this country he had worked shelling clams, washing dishes, planting hedges, sat on the back of the bus in Little Rock and had the bus driver shout, You – sit up here, and my father had shrugged sheepishly and said, No speak English.

But he was no economic refugee, no immigrant fleeing a war. My father ran away from home because he was afraid of facing his father after his first-year grades at the university proved he'd spent more time fooling around than studying. He left behind a house in Mexico City that was neither poor nor rich, but thought itself better than both. A boy who would get off a bus when he saw a girl he knew board if he didn't have the money to pay her fare. That was the world my father left behind.

I imagine my father in his *fanfarron* clothes, because that's what he was, a *fanfarron*. That's what my mother thought the moment she turned around to the voice that was asking her to dance. A big show-off, she'd say years later. Nothing but a big show-off. But she never said why she married him. My father in his shark-blue suits with the starched handkerchief in the breast pocket, his felt fedora, his tweed topcoat with the big shoulders, and heavy British wing tips with the pin-hole design on the heel and toe. Clothes that cost a lot. Expensive. That's what my father's things said. Calidad. Quahty.

My father must've found the U.S. Mexicans very strange, so foreign from what he knew at home in Mexico City where the servant served watermelon on a plate with silverware and a cloth napkin, or mangos with their own special prongs. Not like this,

eating with your legs wide open in the yard, or in the kitchen hunkered over newspapers. Come, come and eat. No, never like.

I make my living depends. Sometimes I work as a translator. Sometimes I get paid by the word and sometimes by the hour, depending on the job. I do this in the day, and at night I paint. I'd do anything in the day just so I can keep on painting.

I work as a substitute teacher, too, for the San Antonio Independent School District. And that's worse than translating those travel brochures with their tiny print, believe me. I can't stand kids. Not any age. But it pays the

Any way you look at it, what I do to make a living is a form of prostitution. People say, "A painter? How nice," and want to invite me to their parties, have me decorate the lawn like an exotic orchid for hire. But do they buy art?

I'm amphibious. I'm a person who doesn't belong to any class. The rich like to have me around because they envy my creativity; they know they can't buy that. The poor don't mind if I live in their neighborhood because they know I'm poor like they are, even if my education and the way I dress keeps us worlds apart. I don't belong to any class. Not to the poor, whose neighborhood I share. Not to the rich, who come to my exhibitions and buy my work. Not to the middle class from which my sister Ximena and I fled.

When I was young, when I first left home and rented that apartment with my sister and her kids right after her husband left, I thought it would be glamorous to be an artist. I wanted to be like Frida or Tina. I was ready to suffer with my camera and my paint brushes in that awful apartment we rented for \$50 each because it had high ceilings and those wonderful glass skylights that convinced us we had to have it. Never mind there was no sink in the bathroom, and a tub that looked like a sarcophagus, and floorboards that didn't meet, and a hallway to scare away the dead. But fourteen-foot ceilings was enough for us to write a check for the deposit right then and there. We thought it all romantic. You know the place, the one on Zarzamora on top of the barber shop with the Casasola prints of the Mexican Revolution. Neon BIRRIA

TEPATITLAN sign round the corner, two goats knocking their heads together, and all those Mexican bakeries. Las Brisas for *huevos rancheros* and *carnitas* and *barbacoa* on Sundays, and fresh fruit milk shakes, and mango *paletas*, and more signs in Spanish than in English. We thought it was great, great. The barrio looked cute in the daytime, like Sesame Street. Kids hopscotching on the sidewalk, blessed little boogers. And hardware stores that still sold ostrich- feather dusters, and whole families marching out of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on Sundays, girls in their swirly-whirly dresses and patent-leather shoes, boys in their dress Stacy's and shiny shirts.

But nights, that was nothing like what we knew up on the north side. Pistols going off like the wild, wild West, and me and Ximena and the kids huddled in one bed with the lights off listening to it all, saying. Go to sleep, babies, it's just firecrackers. But we knew better. Ximena would say, Clemencia, maybe we should go home.

And I'd say, Shit! Because she knew as well as I did there was no home to go home to. Not with our mother. Not with that man she married. After Daddy died, it was like we didn't matter. Like Ma was so busy feeling sorry for herself, I don't know. I'm not like Ximena. I still haven't worked it out after all this time, even though our mother's dead now. My half brothers living in that house that should've been ours, me and Ximena's. But that's – how do you say it? – water under the damn? I can't ever get the sayings right even though I was born in this country. We didn't say shit like that in our house.

Once Daddy was gone, it was like my ma didn't exist, like if she died, too. I used to have a little finch, twisted one of its tiny red legs between the bars of the cage once, who knows how. The leg just dried up and fell off. My bird lived a long time without it, just a little red stump of a leg. He was fine, really. My mother's memory is like that, like if something already dead dried up and fell off, and I stopped missing where she used to be. Like if I never had a mother. And I'm not ashamed to say it either. When she married that white man, and he and his boys moved into my father's house, it was as if she stopped being my mother. Like I never even had one.

Ma always sick and too busy worrying about her own life, she would've sold us to the Devil if she could. "Because I married so young, *mi'ja*," she'd say. "Because your father, he was so much older than me, and I never had a chance to be young. Honey, try to understand ..." Then I'd stop listening.

That man she met at work, Owen Lambert, the foreman at the photo-finishing plant, who she was seeing even while my father was sick. Even then. That's what I can't forgive.

When my father was coughing up blood and phlegm in the hospital, half his face frozen, and his tongue so fat he couldn't talk, he looked so small with all those tubes and plastic sacks dangling around him. But what I remember most is the smell, like death was already sitting on his chest. And I remember the doctor scraping the phlegm out of my father's mouth with a white washcloth, and my daddy gagging and I wanted to yell, Stop, you stop that, he's my daddy. Goddamn you. Make him live. Daddy, don't. Not yet, not yet, not yet. And how I couldn't hold myself up, I couldn't hold myself up. Like if they'd beaten me, or pulled my insides out through my nostrils, like if they'd stuffed me with cinnamon and cloves, and I just stood there dry-eyed next to Ximena and my mother, Ximena between us because I wouldn't let her stand next to me. Everyone repeating over and over the Ave Marias and Padre Nuestros. The priest sprinkling holy water, *mundo sin fin, amen*.

Drew, remember when you used to call me your Malinalli? It was a joke, a private game between us, because you looked like a Cortez with that beard of yours. My skin dark against yours. Beautiful, you said. You said I was beautiful, and when you said it. Drew, I was.

My Mahnalli, MaUnche, my courtesan, you said, and yanked my head back by the braid. Calling me that name in between little gulps of breath and the raw kisses you gave, laughing from that black beard of yours.

Before daybreak, you'd be gone, same as always, before I even knew it. And it was as if I'd imagined you, only the teeth marks on my belly and nipples proving me wrong.

Your skin pale, but your hair blacker than a pirate's. Mahnalli, you called me, remember? *Mi doradita*. I liked when you spoke to me in my language. I could love myself and think myself worth loving.

Your son. Does he know how much I had to do with his birth? I was the one who convinced you to let him be born. Did you tell him, while his mother lay on her back laboring his birth, I lay in his mother's bed making love to you.

You're nothing without me. I created you from spit and red dust. And I can snuff you between my finger and thumb if I want to. Blow you to kingdom come. You're just a smudge of paint I chose to birth on canvas. And when I made you over, you were no longer a part of her, you were all mine. The landscape of your body taut as a drum. The heart beneath that hide thrumming and thrumming. Not an inch did I give back.

I paint and repaint you the way I see fit, even now. After all these years. Did you know that? Little fool. You think I went hobbling along with my life, whimpering and whining like some twangy country-and-western when you went back to her. But I've been waiting. Making the world look at you from my eyes. And if that's not power, what is?

Nights I light all the candles in the house, the ones to La Virgen de Guadalupe, the ones to El Nino Fidencio, Don Pedrito Jaramillo, Santo Niiio de Atocha, Nuestra Senora de San Juan de los Lagos, and especially, Santa Lucia, with her beautiful eyes on a plate.

Your eyes are beautiful, you said. You said they were the darkest eyes you'd ever seen and kissed each one as if they were capable of miracles. And after you left, I wanted to scoop them out with a spoon, place them on a plate under these blue blue skies, food for the blackbirds.

The boy, your son. The one with the face of that redheaded woman who is your wife. The boy red-freckled like fish food floating on the skin of water. That boy.

I've been waiting patient as a spider all these years, since I was nineteen and he was just an idea hovering in his mother's head, and I'm the one that gave him permission and made it happen, see.

Because your father wanted to leave your mother and live with me. Your mother whining for a child, at least *that*. And he kept saying, Later, we'll see, later. But all along it was me he wanted to be with, it was me, he said.

I want to tell you this evenings when you come to see me. When you're full of talk about what kind of clothes you're going to buy, and what you used to be like when you started high school and what you're like now that you're almost finished. And how everyone knows you as a rocker, and your band, and your new red guitar that you just got because your mother gave you a choice, a guitar or a car, but you don't need a car, do you, because I drive you everywhere. You could be my son if you weren't so light-skinned.

This happened. A long time ago. Before you were born. When you were a moth inside your mother's heart, I was your father's student, yes, just like you're mine now. And your father painted and painted me, because he said, I was his *doradita*, all golden and sun-baked, and that's the kind of woman he likes best, the ones brown as river sand, yes. And he took me under his wing and in his bed, this man, this teacher, your father. I was honored that he'd done me the favor. I was that young.

All I know is I was sleeping with your father the night you were born. In the same bed where you were conceived. I was sleeping with your father and didn't give a damn about that woman, your mother. If she was a brown woman like me, I might've had a harder time living with myself, but since she's not, I don't care. I was there first, always. I've always been there, in the mirror, under his skin, in the blood, before you were born. And he's been here in my heart before I even knew him. Understand? He's always been here. Always. Dissolving like a hibiscus flower, exploding like a rope into dust. I don't care what's right anymore. I don't care about his wife. She's not *my* sister.

And it's not the last time I've slept with a man the night his wife is birthing a baby. Why do I do that, I wonder? Sleep with a man when his wife is giving life, being

suckled by a thing with its eyes still shut. Why do that? It's always given me a bit of crazy joy to be able to kill those women like that, without their knowing it. To know I've had their husbands when they were anchored in blue hospital rooms, their guts yanked inside out, the baby sucking their breasts while their husband sucked mine. All this while their ass stitches were still hurting.

Once, drunk on margaritas, I telephoned your father at four in the morning, woke the bitch up. Hello, she chirped. I want to talk to Drew. Just a moment, she said in her most polite drawing-room English. Just a moment. I laughed about that for weeks. What a stupid' ass to pass the phone over to the lug asleep beside her. Excuse me, honey, it's for you. When Drew mumbled hello I was laughing so hard I could hardly talk. Drew? That dumb bitch of a wife of yours, I said, and that's all I could manage. That stupid stupid stupid. No Mexican woman would react like that. Excuse me, honey. It cracked me up.

He's got the same kind of skin, the boy. All the blue veins pale and clear just like his mama. Skin like roses in December. Pretty boy. Little clone. Little cells split into you and you and you. Tell me, baby, which part of you is your mother. I try to imagine her lips, her jaw, her long long legs that wrapped themselves around this father who took me to his bed.

This happened. I'm asleep. Or pretend to be. You're watching me. Drew. I feel your weight when you sit on the corner of the bed, dressed and ready to go, but now you're just watching me sleep. Nothing. Not a word. Not a kiss. Just sitting. You're taking me in, under inspection. What do you think already?

I haven't stopped dreaming you. Did you know that? Do you think it's strange? I never tell, though. I keep it to myself like I do all the thoughts I think of you.

After all these years.

Looking at me. I don't want you taking me in while I'm asleep. I'll open my eyes and frighten you away.

There. What did I tell you? Drew? What is it? Nothing. I'd knew you'd say that.

Let's not talk. We're no good at it. With you I'm useless with words. As if somehow I had to learn to speak all over again, as if the words I needed haven't been invented yet. We're cowards. Come back to bed. At least there I feel I have you for a little. For a moment. For a catch of the breath. You let go. You ache and tug. You rip my skin.

You're almost not a man without your clothes. How do I explain it? You're so much a child in my bed. Nothing but a big boy who needs to be held. I won't let anyone hurt you. My pirate. My slender boy of a man.

After all these.

I didn't imagine it, did I? A Ganges, an eye of the storm. For a little. When we forgot ourselves, you tugged me, I leapt inside you and split you like an apple. Opened for the other to look and not give back. Something wrenched itself loose. Your body doesn't lie. It's not silent like you.

You're nude as a pearl. You've lost your train of smoke. You're tender as rain. If I'd put you in my mouth you'd dissolve like snow.

You were ashamed to be so naked. Pulled back. But I saw you for what you are, when you opened yourself for me. When you were careless and let yourself through. I caught that catch of the breath. I'm not crazy.

When you slept, you tugged me toward you. You sought me in the dark. I didn't sleep. Every cell, every follicle, every nerve, alert. Watching you sigh and roll and turn and hug me closer to you. I didn't sleep. I was taking *you* in that time.

Your mother? Only once. Years after your father and I stopped seeing each other. At an art exhibition. A show on the photographs of Eugene Atget. Those images, I could look at them for hours. I'd taken a group of students with me.

It was your father I saw first. And in that instant I felt as if everyone in the room, all the sepia-toned photographs, my students, the men in business suits, the high-heeled women, the security guards, everyone, could see me for what I was. I had to scurry out, lead my kids to another gallery, but some things destiny has cut out for you.

He caught up with us in the coat-check area, arm in arm with a redheaded Barbie doll in a fur coat. One of those scary Dallas types, hair yanked into a ponytail, big shiny face like the women behind the cosmetic counters at Neiman's. That's what I remember. She must've been with him all along, only I swear I never saw her until that second.

You could tell from a slight hesitancy, only slight because he's too suave to hesitate, that he was nervous. Then he's walking toward me, and I didn't know what to do, just stood there dazed like those animals crossing the road at night when the headlights stun them.

And I don't know why, but all of a sudden I looked at my shoes and felt ashamed at how old they looked. And he comes up to me, my love, your father, in that way of his with that grin that makes me want to beat him, makes me want to make love to him, and he says in the most sincere voice you ever heard, "Ah, Clemencia! This is Megan." No introduction could've been meaner. *This* is Megan. Just like that.

I grinned like an idiot and held out my paw – "Hello, Megan" – smiled too much the way you do when you can't stand someone. Then I got the hell out of there, chattering like a monkey all the ride back with my kids. When I got home I had to lie down with a cold washcloth on my forehead and the TV on. All I could hear throbbing under the washcloth in that deep part behind my eyes: *This* is Megan.

And that's how I fell asleep, with the TV on and every light in the house burning. When I woke up it was something like three in the morning. I shut the lights and TV and went to get some aspirin, and the cats, who'd been asleep with me on the couch, got up too and followed me into the bathroom as if they knew what's what. And then they followed me into bed, where they aren't allowed, but this time I just let them, fleas and all.

This happened, too. I swear I'm not making this up. It's all true. It was the last time I was going to be with your father. We had agreed. All for the best. Surely I could see that, couldn't I? My own good. A good sport. A young girl like me. Hadn't I understood... responsibilities. Besides, he could never marry me. You didn't think...? *Never marry a Mexican. Never marry a Mexican...* No, of course not. I see. I see.

We had the house to ourselves for a few days, who knows how. You and your mother had gone somewhere. Was it Christmas? I don't remember.

I remember the leaded-glass lamp with the milk glass above the dining-room table. I made a mental inventory of everything. The Egyptian lotus design on the hinges of the doors. The narrow, dark hall where your father and I had made love once. The four-clawed tub where he had washed my hair and rinsed it with a tin bowl. This window. That counter. The bedroom with its light in the morning, incredibly soft, like the light from a polished dime.

The house was immaculate, as always, not a stray hair anywhere, not a flake of dandruff or a crumpled towel. Even the roses on the dining-room table held their breath. A kind of airless cleanliness that always made me want to sneeze.

Why was I so curious about this woman he lived with? Every time I went to the bathroom, I found myself opening the medicine cabinet, looking at all the things that were hers. Her Estee Lauder lipsticks. Corals and pinks, of course. Her nail polishes – mauve was as brave as she could wear. Her cotton balls and blond hairpins. A pair of bone-colored sheepskin slippers, as clean as the day she'd bought them. On the door hook – a white robe with a made in ITALY label, and a silky nightshirt with pearl buttons. I touched the fabrics. *Calidad*. Quality.

I don't know how to explain what I did next. While your father was busy in the kitchen, I went over to where I'd left my backpack, and took out a bag of gummy bears I'd bought. And while he was banging pots, I went around the house and left a trail of them in places I was sure *she* would find them. One in her lucite makeup organizer. One stuffed inside each bottle of nail polish. I untwisted the expensive lipsticks to their

full length and smushed a bear on the top before recapping them. I even put a gummy bear in her diaphragm case in the very center of that luminescent rubber

Why bother? Drew could take the blame. Or he could say it was the cleaning woman's Mexican voodoo. I knew that, too. It didn't matter. I got a strange satisfaction wandering about the house leaving them in places only she would look.

And just as Drew was shouting, "Dinner!" I saw it on the desk. One of those wooden babushka dolls Drew had brought her from his trip to Russia. I know. He'd bought one just like it for me.

I just did what I did, uncapped the doll inside a doll inside a doll, until I got to the very center, the tiniest baby inside all the others, and this I replaced with a gummy bear. And then I put the back, just like I'd found them, one inside the other, inside the other. Except for the baby, which I put inside my pocket. All through dinner I kept reaching in the pocket of my jean jacket. When I touched it, it made me feel good.

On the way home, on the bridge over the *arroyo* on Guadalupe Street, I stopped the car, switched on the emergency blinkers, got out, and dropped the wooden toy into that muddy creek where winos piss and rats swim. The Barbie doll's toy stewing there in that muck. It gave me a feeling like nothing before and since.

Then I drove home and slept like the dead.

These mornings, I fix coffee for me, milk for the boy. I think of that woman, and I can't see a trace of my lover in this boy, as if she conceived him by immaculate conception.

I sleep with this boy, their son. To make the boy love me the way I love his father. To make him want me, hunger, twist in his sleep, as if he'd swallowed glass. I put him in my mouth. Here, little piece of my *corazon*. Boy with hard thighs and just a bit of down and a small hard downy ass like his father's, and that back like a valentine. Come here, *mi carinito*. Come to *mamita*. Here's a bit of toast.

I can tell from the way he looks at me, I have him in my power. Come, sparrow. I have the patience of eternity. Come to *mamita*. My stupid little bird. I don't move. I

don't startle him. I let him nibble. All, all for you. Rub his belly. Stroke him. Before I snap my teeth.

What is it inside me that makes me so crazy at 2 a.m.? I can't blame it on alcohol in my blood when there isn't any. It's something worse. Something that poisons the blood and tips me when the night swells and I feel as if the whole sky were leaning against my brain.

And if I killed someone on a night like this? And if it was me I killed instead, I'd be guilty of getting in the line of crossfire, innocent bystander, isn't it a shame. I'd be walking with my head full of images and my back to the guilty. Suicide? I couldn't say. I didn't see it.

Except it's not me who I want to kill. When the gravity of the planets is just right, it all tilts and upsets the visible balance. And that's when it wants to out from my eyes. That's when I get on the telephone, dangerous as a terrorist. There's nothing to do but let it come.

So. What do you think? Are you convinced now I'm as crazy as a tulip or a taxi? As vagrant as a cloud?

Sometimes the sky is so big and I feel so little at night. That's the problem with being cloud. The sky is so terribly big. Why is it worse at night, when I have such an urge to communicate and no language with which to form the words? Only colors. Pictures. And you know what I have to say isn't always pleasant.

Oh, love, there. I've gone and done it. What good is it? Good or bad, I've done what I had to do and needed to. And you've answered the phone, and startled me away like a bird. And now you're probably swearing under your breath and going back to sleep, with that wife beside you, warm, radiating her own heat, alive under the flannel and down and smelling a bit like milk and hand cream, and that smell familiar and dear to you, oh.

Human beings pass me on the street, and I want to reach out and strum them as if they were guitars. Sometimes all humanity strikes me as lovely. I just want to reach out and stroke someone, and say There, there, it's all right, honey. There, there, there.

Questions for discussion:

1. What does the title of Sandra Cisneros' story signify? Unveil the underlying message it carries.
2. The narrative commences with this initial passage: *“Never marry a Mexican, my ma said once and always. She said this because of my father. She said this though she was Mexican too. But she was born here in the U.S., and he was born there, and it’s not the same, you know.”* What disparities between America and Mexico become evident right away? Does it appear that, for Mexicans, being born in America is preferable to being born in Mexico? Or does it seem comparable? Do you find her mother’s guidance peculiar? What’s your rationale for this assessment?
3. Clemencia’s Mexican mother cautions her Mexican daughter against marrying a Mexican, aiming to spare her daughter from the suffering she herself endured. The narrator says, *“Having married a Mexican man at seventeen. Having had to put up with all the grief a Mexican family can put on a girl because she was from **el otro lado**, the other side, and my father had married down by marrying her. If he had married a white woman from **el otro lado**, that would’ve been different. That would’ve been marrying up, even if the white girl was poor. But what could be more ridiculous than a Mexican girl who couldn’t even speak Spanish, who didn’t know enough to set a separate plat for each course at dinner, nor how to fold cloth napkins, nor how to set the silverware.”* What ideas about Mexican versus white women does this communicate? The term *“el otro lado,”* or *“the other side,”* carries significant connotations in Mexican-American relations, often referring to the border between the United States and Mexico, as well as the cultural, social, and economic divides between the two countries. Clemencia’s mother appears to be caught between two cultures, as

evidenced by her advice to her daughter to avoid marrying a Mexican to prevent her from experiencing the same pain she did?

4. Clemencia depicts her father: *“When he first came to this country he had worked shelling clams, washing dishes, planting hedges, sat on the back of bus in Little Rock and had the bus driver shout, You – sit up here, and my father had shrugged sheepishly and said, No speak English.”* What stereotypes about Mexicans are evident in this passage? Why do you think Cisneros chose to include them? Little Rock holds historical significance for African Americans. Why do you think Cisneros chose to link the narrator's father's American experience with Rosa Parks?

5. She elaborates further on her father: *“But he was no economic refugee, no immigrant fleeing a war. My father ran away from home because he was afraid of facing his father after his first-year grades at the university proved he'd spent more time fooling around than studying.”* This portrayal of her father contradicts stereotypes about Mexicans by presenting him as a hardworking and resourceful individual. However, it also reinforces stereotypes by depicting him as someone who struggled with English and faced discrimination, aligning with some common perceptions of Mexican immigrants?

6. Clemencia's Mexican father passes away, and her mother remarries a white man. Clemencia expresses her dissatisfaction with her mother's choice, emphasizing the cultural gap between her mother's Mexican heritage and her stepfather's white background, *“Once Daddy was gone, it was like my ma didn't exist, like if she died, too. And I'm not ashamed to say it either. When she married that white man, and he and his boys moved into my father's house, it was as if she stopped being my mother. Like I never even had one.”* This passage illustrates the clash between two cultures as Clemencia's mother undergoes a significant transformation after marrying a white man, causing tension within the family. Clemencia's attitude toward whiteness reflects her perception of her mother's betrayal of their Mexican heritage. This further explores the theme of *“la llorona,”* the notion of a mother figure who betrays her

cultural roots, as Clemencia grapples with her mother's abandonment of their Mexican identity in favor of assimilating into white culture?

7. Clemencia engages in a romantic relationship with a man named Drew, despite his existing commitment to another woman: “*Drew, remember when you used to call me your Malinalli? It was a joke, a private game between us, because you looked like a Cortez with that beard of yours. My skin dark against yours. Beautiful, you said. You said I was beautiful, and when you said it, Drew, I was. My Malinalli, Malinche, my courtesan, you said. **Mi doradita.** I liked when you spoke to me in my language. I could love myself and think myself worth loving.*” Clemencia feels beautiful when a white man tells her so. When a white man compliments Clemencia, she feels beautiful, suggesting a dynamic where Mexican women may seek validation or affirmation from white men. This reflects back on Clemencia’s mother’s advice against marrying a Mexican, hinting at a perceived hierarchy of desirability. The analogy to Cortez adds a layer of historical and cultural complexity to the relationship, potentially implying power dynamics reminiscent of conquest. How does the analogy to Cortez color the relationship? Does Clemencia’s role as *la malinche* change your perception of her?

8. Clemencia shares with the son of Drew and Megan the story of her romantic involvement with Drew, his father: “*Once, drunk on margaritas, I telephoned your father at four in the morning, woke the bitch up. Hello, she chirped. I want to talk to Drew. Just a moment, she said in her most polite drawing-room English. Just a moment. I laughed about that for weeks. What a stupid ass to pass the phone over to the lug asleep beside her. Excuse me, honey, it’s for you. When Drew mumbled hello I was laughing so hard I could hardly talk. Drew? That dumb bitch of a wife of yours, I said, and that’s all I could manage. That stupid stupid stupid. No Mexican woman would react like that. Excuse me, honey. It cracked me up.*” This paragraph highlights differences in the expectations and experiences of Mexican and white American women, reflecting broader cultural disparities. If Drew were a Mexican man, would the dynamics have shifted due to shared cultural background and potentially different societal expectations?

9. Clemencia persists in her affair with Drew, despite his marital status and child. Eventually, they both acknowledge the necessity of ending their relationship. Clemencia reflects on this decision, recognizing that it's for the best, even though it may be difficult for her. She questions if she comprehends the situation, emphasizing the sacrifice she's making for her own well-being and portraying herself as compliant and youthful: "Hadn't I understood... responsibilities? *Never marry a Mexican. Never marry a Mexican...* No, of course not. I see. I see." This development alters the interpretation of the story's title and Clemencia's mother's initial advice. Initially, the title "*Never Marry a Mexican*" may have seemed like an admonition against marrying someone from the same cultural background, but now it takes on a deeper meaning, suggesting the challenges and complexities of navigating relationships across cultural divides. Clemencia's understanding of her identity as a Mexican woman in a predominantly white America is likely to deepen as she grapples with the consequences of her choices. Whether Clemencia identifies more as white or Mexican could depend on various factors, including her experiences, upbringing, and cultural influences. However, her connection to her Mexican heritage, as evidenced by her relationship with her family and her experiences with Drew and his family, suggests a strong identification with her Mexican roots. What are the elements of the plot in the story?

10. Discuss the historical and mythical female archetypes depicted in the text.

11. Cisneros juxtaposes her characters with mythical figures not only to prompt us to question the characters in relation to the myths but also to challenge conventional perceptions of the myths themselves. Do you believe Cisneros effectively dismantled stereotypical views of the female archetypes she alluded to? Did your perception of Clemencia become more positive or negative based on how Cisneros connected her narrator to these archetypes? Please elaborate.

12. Given Drew's name serves as a pun, implying the act of "drawing in," there may be deeper significance behind Clemencia's name, which translates to "mild, merciful." What do you think this implies about her character and her actions throughout the story.

13. Given the provided narrative about Malinalli's life, do you believe there were alternative choices she could have made? If so, what actions do you think she might have taken differently, and why? If not, explain your reasoning?

14. Given the suspicion among scholars that Malinalli's story might have been altered to fit a colonial narrative, let's examine the portrayal of Malinalli's reunion with her mother and stepfather, where she supposedly forgave them for their previous actions. Considering this scenario, argue for or against the plausibility of this account, using any available evidence from her narrative.

15. Does the text show any character development? Discuss any imagery used in the narrative.

16. How does conflict influence the narrative structure in the story?

17. Identify instances of symbolism in Sandra Cisneros' story?

18. Locate instances of foreshadowing and flashbacks within the text?

19. Identify instances of irony within the narrative?

20. Summarize the themes and issues explored in the text?

Some facts you might find amusing:

1) Women tend to exhibit greater biological resilience, possibly due to their distinct chromosomal makeup. Typically, they have a longer lifespan than men by about three to four years in the United States. This trend starts even before birth, with more male fetuses conceived than female ones. However, by the time of birth, the ratio evens out to about 105 males for every 100 females, as some male fetuses do not survive and result in spontaneous abortions.

2) Men are more prone to death from nearly all diseases except for three: benign tumors, disorders linked to female reproductive organs, and breast cancer.

3) Men possess a higher basal metabolism rate compared to women.

4) There are anatomical differences between the sexes: women typically have a shorter head, broader face, less prominent chin, shorter legs, and longer trunk compared to men. Additionally, the index finger of a woman's hand is usually longer than the third finger, whereas for men, it's the opposite. Boys generally retain their teeth for a longer period than girls.

5) Women possess larger stomachs, kidneys, livers, and appendices compared to men, while their lungs are relatively smaller.

6) Women's blood has a higher water content, with about 20 percent fewer red blood cells compared to men. This physiological difference makes women more prone to fatigue and fainting. Consequently, their overall physical resilience is more of a long-term consideration. For instance, when the work hours in British factories were extended from ten to twelve hours during wartime, incidents of accidents among women surged by 150 percent, while the accident rate among men remained relatively stable.

7) Men possess approximately 50 percent more physical strength than women in terms of raw power.

8) Women tend to have a faster heart rate compared to men, typically around 80 beats per minute compared to 72 in men. Additionally, women generally have lower blood pressure than men by about ten points, and while their blood pressure may vary more frequently, they are less prone to developing high blood pressure.

GLOSSARY:

Chicano/a = A person born in the United States with Mexican heritage.

Cultural Cringe = A deeply ingrained feeling of cultural inferiority within oneself.

Machismo = A cultural notion prevalent in Latin America that emphasizes patriarchal values and masculine pride.

Malinchismo = A form of cultural embarrassment or shame with culturally-specific connotations.

Machismo culture = A version of Latin American patriarchy that promotes masculine pride while magnifying traits associated with masculinity. Men who don't adhere to societal expectations regarding gender roles may face scrutiny for not meeting the standards of masculinity.

Mestizo/a = A person of mixed Indigenous and European heritage from Latin America.

Mexicana = The feminine form in Spanish of the term "Mexican."

Multiculturalism = Acknowledgment of unique cultural or ethnic identities within a community.

Pluriculturalism = The simultaneous presence of various cultural or ethnic identities within a society.

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Emotional intelligence, stress and gender; b) Why do wives donate more organs to their husbands?; c) Women and Paganism; d) Women and motherhood; e) Identity issues within first-, second- or third-generation migrants; f) Female archetypes and traditional gender roles.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

- 1) Cultural belief system and proverbs within the frame of women's rights (their temporal frame; the agents and the patients/beneficiaries involved in the activity; the activity itself (state, dynamic state, process or event));
- 2) National Women's History Museum.
- 3) Gender-sensitive glossary.
- 4) Latin immigration and national identity in North America.
- 5) Mexican mythology and the system of beliefs.
- 6) Cautionary tales and their messages.

Recommended reading:

- 1) "Hood Feminism" by Mikki Kendall
- 2) "Women, Race and Class" by Angela Y. Davis.
- 3) "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison.
- 4) Belinda Acosta's "Sisters, Strangers, and Starting Over".
- 5) "Dramas, Dramas, and Anna Ruiz" by Belinda Acosta.

PACE 7

ABOLITIONIST TEXTS WITHIN THE GENRE OF MAGIC REALISM

“A mother is always the beginning. She is how things begin.”

Amy Tan

“An immoral law makes it a man’s duty to break it every hazard”.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet, essayist, in speech in 1851 opposing the
Fugitive Slave Law

“When I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, ‘I am going to produce a work of art’. I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing”.

G. Orwell, “*Why I write*” (1946).

Key terms: *American Civil War, dysfunctional family, a malevolent spirit, the traumatic effects of slavery, temporal switches, flashbacks, the American Midwest, the trauma of the past, a recurring theme, an escaped slave, an example of magical realism, the ghost haunting the house, some form of exorcism, mentally unstable, reincarnation, the physical and mental trauma, an animalistic figure*

TONI MORRISON, born on February 18, 1931, in Lorain, Ohio, and passed away on August 5, 2019, in Bronx, New York, was an American author renowned for her exploration of the Black experience, especially the experiences of Black women within their communities. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993.

Morrison’s initial work, “*The Bluest Eye*” (1970), portrays the journey of a young Black girl who, oppressed by societal standards of beauty, yearns for blue eyes, delving into themes of identity and beauty standards. Following this, her second novel, “*Sula*” (1973), explores friendship dynamics and societal expectations within the Black community. “*Song of Solomon*” (1977), narrated by a man seeking his identity, gained Morrison national recognition. “*Tar Baby*” (1981), set in the Caribbean, examines issues of race, class, and gender conflicts.

Morrison’s highly praised novel “*Beloved*” (1987), a Pulitzer Prize winner, is inspired by the true account of a runaway slave who, facing recapture, decides to kill her own child to save her from a life of enslavement. The novel was adapted into a film in 1998, featuring Oprah Winfrey. Furthermore, Morrison penned the libretto for

“*Margaret Garner*” (2005), an opera based on the same narrative that influenced “*Beloved*”.

In 1992, Morrison published “*Jazz*,” a narrative set in Harlem during the 1920s, exploring themes of violence and passion. Her subsequent works included “*Paradise*” (1998), which offers a detailed portrayal of a Black utopian community in Oklahoma, and “*Love*” (2003), delving into the complexities of family dynamics and the spectrum of love. “*A Mercy*” (2008) addresses the issue of slavery in XVIIth-century America. “*Home*” (2012) follows the story of a Korean War veteran confronting racism upon his return home, ultimately overcoming apathy to save his sister. In “*God Help the Child*” (2015), Morrison examines the lasting effects of child abuse and neglect through the character of Bride, a dark-skinned Black woman born to light-skinned parents.

In 1992, Morrison published “*Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*,” a work of criticism exploring the portrayal of whiteness in literature. Collections of Morrison’s essays and speeches include “*What Moves at the Margin: Selected Nonfiction*” (2008, edited by Carolyn C. Denard) and “*The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations*” (2019). Morrison collaborated with her son, Slade Morrison, on several children’s books, such as the *Who’s Got Game?* series, “*The Book About Mean People*” (2002), and “*Please, Louise*” (2014). Additionally, she authored “*Remember*” (2004), which addresses the challenges faced by Black students during the integration of American public schools. Aimed at children, this book pairs archival photographs with speculative captions about the subjects’ thoughts, earning Morrison the Coretta Scott King Award in 2005.

Morrison’s novels revolve around the Black American experience, depicting characters grappling with their identities and cultural heritage in an unjust society. Her narratives are imbued with fantasy elements, characterized by a poetic prose style, and enriched with mythical themes, lending them depth and complexity. In recognition of her contributions, Morrison was honored as an officer of the French Legion of Honour in 2010 and received the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012. “*Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am*” (2019) is a documentary chronicling her remarkable life and career.

1. *Reflect on the history of black slavery in North America.*
2. *What do you know of the American Civil War and its consequences?*
3. *What influential abolitionist works of fiction have you read?*
4. *In what way is female slavery a double oppression?*
5. *Define the term “magic realism”.*

Toni MORRISON

BELOVED

(Excerpt)

ONE

124 was spiteful. Full of a baby's venom. The women in the house knew it and so did the children. For years each put up with the spite in his own way, but by 1873 Sethe and her daughter Denver were its only victims. The grandmother, Baby Suggs, was dead, and the sons, Howard and Buglar, had run away by the time they were thirteen years old – as soon as merely looking in a mirror shattered it (that was the signal for Buglar); as soon as two tiny hand prints appeared in the cake (that was it for Howard). Neither boy waited to see more; another kettleful of chickpeas smoking in a heap on the floor; soda crackers crumbled and strewn in a line next to the doorsill. Nor did they wait for one of the relief periods: the weeks, months even, when nothing was disturbed. No. Each one fled at once – the moment the house committed what was for him the one insult not to be borne or witnessed a second time. Within two months, in the dead of winter, leaving their grandmother, Baby Suggs; Sethe, their mother; and their little sister, Denver, all by themselves in the gray and white house on Bluestone Road. It didn't have a number then, because Cincinnati didn't stretch that far. In fact, Ohio had been calling itself a state only seventy years when first one brother and then the next stuffed quilt packing into his hat, snatched up his shoes, and crept away from the lively spite the house felt for them.

Baby Suggs didn't even raise her head. From her sickbed she heard them go but that wasn't the reason she lay still. It was a wonder to her that her grandsons had taken so long to realize that every house wasn't like the one on Bluestone Road. Suspended between the nastiness of life and the meanness of the dead, she couldn't get interested in leaving life or living it, let alone the fright of two creeping-off boys. Her past had been like her present – intolerable – and since she knew death was anything but forgetfulness, she used the little energy left her for pondering color.

“Bring a little lavender in, if you got any. Pink, if you don't.”

And Sethe would oblige her with anything from fabric to her own tongue. Winter in Ohio was especially rough if you had an appetite for color. Sky provided the only drama, and counting on a Cincinnati horizon for life's principal joy was reckless indeed. So Sethe and the girl Denver did what they could, and what the house permitted, for her. Together they waged a perfunctory battle against the outrageous behavior of that place; against turned-over slop jars, smacks on the behind, and gusts of sour air. For they understood the source of the outrage as well as they knew the source of light.

Baby Suggs died shortly after the brothers left, with no interest whatsoever in their leave-taking or hers, and right afterward Sethe and Denver decided to end the persecution by calling forth the ghost that tried them so. Perhaps a conversation, they thought, an exchange of views or something would help. So they held hands and said,

“Come on. Come on. You may as well just come on.” The sideboard took a step forward but nothing else did.

“Grandma Baby must be stopping it,” said Denver. She was ten and still mad at Baby Suggs for dying.

Sethe opened her eyes. “I doubt that,” she said.

“Then why don't it come?”

“You forgetting how little it is,” said her mother. “She wasn't even two years old when she died. Too little to understand. Too little to talk much even.”

“Maybe she don't want to understand,” said Denver.

“Maybe. But if she'd only come, I could make it clear to her.” Sethe released her daughter's hand and together they pushed the sideboard back against the wall. Outside a driver whipped his horse into the gallop local people felt necessary when they passed 124.

“For a baby she throws a powerful spell,” said Denver.

“No more powerful than the way I loved her,” Sethe answered and there it was again. The welcoming cool of unchiseled headstones; the one she selected to lean against on tiptoe, her knees wide open as any grave. Pink as a fingernail it was, and

sprinkled with glittering chips. Ten minutes, he said. You got ten minutes I'll do it for free.

Ten minutes for seven letters. With another ten could she have gotten "Dearly" too? She had not thought to ask him and it bothered her still that it might have been possible – that for twenty minutes, a half hour, say, she could have had the whole thing, every word she heard the preacher say at the funeral (and all there was to say, surely) engraved on her baby's headstone: Dearly Beloved. But what she got, settled for, was the one word that mattered. She thought it would be enough, rutting among the headstones with the engraver, his young son looking on, the anger in his face so old; the appetite in it quite new. That should certainly be enough. Enough to answer one more preacher, one more abolitionist and a town full of disgust.

Counting on the stillness of her own soul, she had forgotten the other one: the soul of her baby girl. Who would have thought that a little old baby could harbor so much rage? Rutting among the stones under the eyes of the engraver's son was not enough. Not only did she have to live out her years in a house palsied by the baby's fury at having its throat cut, but those ten minutes she spent pressed up against dawn-colored stone studded with star chips, her knees wide open as the grave, were longer than life, more alive, more pulsating than the baby blood that soaked her fingers like oil.

"We could move," she suggested once to her mother-in-law.

"What'd be the point?" asked Baby Suggs. "Not a house in the country ain't packed to its rafters with some dead Negro's grief. We lucky this ghost is a baby. My husband's spirit was to come back in here? or yours? Don't talk to me. You lucky. You got three left. Three pulling at your skirts and just one raising hell from the other side. Be thankful, why don't you? I had eight. Every one of them gone away from me. Four taken, four chased, and all, I expect, worrying somebody's house into evil." Baby Suggs rubbed her eyebrows. "My firstborn. All I can remember of her is how she loved the burned bottom of bread. Can you beat that? Eight children and that's all I remember."

“That’s all you let yourself remember,” Sethe had told her, but she was down to one herself – one alive, that is – the boys chased off by the dead one, and her memory of Buglar was fading fast. Howard at least had a head shape nobody could forget. As for the rest, she worked hard to remember as close to nothing as was safe. Unfortunately her brain was devious. She might be hurrying across a field, running practically, to get to the pump quickly and rinse the chamomile sap from her legs. Nothing else would be in her mind. The picture of the men coming to nurse her was as lifeless as the nerves in her back where the skin buckled like a washboard. Nor was there the faintest scent of ink or the cherry gum and oak bark from which it was made. Nothing. Just the breeze cooling her face as she rushed toward water. And then sopping the chamomile away with pump water and rags, her mind fixed on getting every last bit of sap off – on her carelessness in taking a shortcut across the field just to save a half mile, and not noticing how high the weeds had grown until the itching was all the way to her knees. Then something. The splash of water, the sight of her shoes and stockings awry on the path where she had flung them; or Here Boy lapping in the puddle near her feet, and suddenly there was Sweet Home rolling, rolling, rolling out before her eyes, and although there was not a leaf on that farm that did not make her want to scream, it rolled itself out before her in shameless beauty. It never looked as terrible as it was and it made her wonder if hell was a pretty place too. Fire and brimstone all right, but hidden in lacy groves. Boys hanging from the most beautiful sycamores in the world. It shamed her – remembering the wonderful soughing trees rather than the boys. Try as she might to make it otherwise, the sycamores beat out the children every time and she could not forgive her memory for that.

When the last of the chamomile was gone, she went around to the front of the house, collecting her shoes and stockings on the way. As if to punish her further for her terrible memory, sitting on the porch not forty feet away was Paul D, the last of the Sweet Home men. And although she could never mistake his face for another’s, she said, “Is that you?”

“What’s left.” He stood up and smiled. “How you been, girl, besides barefoot?”

When she laughed it came out loose and young. “Messed up my legs back yonder. Chamomile.”

He made a face as though tasting a teaspoon of something bitter. “I don’t want to even hear ’bout it. Always did hate that stuff.” Sethe balled up her stockings and jammed them into her pocket. “Come on in.”

“Porch is fine, Sethe. Cool out here.” He sat back down and looked at the meadow on the other side of the road, knowing the eagerness he felt would be in his eyes.

“Eighteen years,” she said softly.

“Eighteen,” he repeated. “And I swear I been walking every one of em. Mind if I join you?” He nodded toward her feet and began unlacing his shoes.

“You want to soak them? Let me get you a basin of water.” She moved closer to him to enter the house.

“No, uh uh. Can’t baby feet. A whole lot more tramping they got to do yet.”

“You can’t leave right away, Paul D. You got to stay awhile.”

“Well, long enough to see Baby Suggs, anyway. Where is she?”

“Dead.”

“Aw no. When?”

“Eight years now. Almost nine.”

“Was it hard? I hope she didn’t die hard.”

Sethe shook her head. “Soft as cream. Being alive was the hard part. Sorry you missed her though. Is that what you came by for?”

“That’s some of what I came for. The rest is you. But if all the truth be known, I go anywhere these days. Anywhere they let me sit down.”

“You looking good.”

“Devil’s confusion. He lets me look good long as I feel bad.” He looked at her and the word “bad” took on another meaning.

Sethe smiled. This is the way they were – had been. All of the Sweet Home men, before and after Halle, treated her to a mild brotherly flirtation, so subtle you had to scratch for it.

Except for a heap more hair and some waiting in his eyes, he looked the way he had in Kentucky. Peachstone skin; straightbacked. For a man with an immobile face it was amazing how ready it was to smile, or blaze or be sorry with you. As though all you had to do was get his attention and right away he produced the feeling you were feeling. With less than a blink, his face seemed to change – underneath it lay the activity.

“I wouldn’t have to ask about him, would I? You’d tell me if there was anything to tell, wouldn’t you?” Sethe looked down at her feet and saw again the sycamores.

“I’d tell you. Sure I’d tell you. I don’t know any more now than I did then.” Except for the churn, he thought, and you don’t need to know that. “You must think he’s still alive.”

“No. I think he’s dead. It’s not being sure that keeps him alive.”

“What did Baby Suggs think?”

“Same, but to listen to her, all her children is dead. Claimed she felt each one go the very day and hour.”

“When she say Halle went?”

“Eighteen fifty-five. The day my baby was born.”

“You had that baby, did you? Never thought you’d make it.” He chuckled. “Running off pregnant.”

“Had to. Couldn’t be no waiting.” She lowered her head and thought, as he did, how unlikely it was that she had made it. And if it hadn’t been for that girl looking for velvet, she never would have.

“All by yourself too.” He was proud of her and annoyed by her. Proud she had done it; annoyed that she had not needed Halle or him in the doing.

“Almost by myself. Not all by myself. A whitegirl helped me.”

“Then she helped herself too, God bless her.”

“You could stay the night, Paul D.”

“You don’t sound too steady in the offer.”

Sethe glanced beyond his shoulder toward the closed door. “Oh it’s truly meant. I just hope you’ll pardon my house. Come on in. Talk to Denver while I cook you something.”

Paul D tied his shoes together, hung them over his shoulder and followed her through the door straight into a pool of red and undulating light that locked him where he stood.

“You got company?” he whispered, frowning.

“Off and on,” said Sethe.

“Good God.” He backed out the door onto the porch. “What kind of evil you got in here?”

“It’s not evil, just sad. Come on. Just step through.”

He looked at her then, closely. Closer than he had when she first rounded the house on wet and shining legs, holding her shoes and stockings up in one hand, her skirts in the other. Halle’s girl – the one with iron eyes and backbone to match. He had never seen her hair in Kentucky. And though her face was eighteen years older than when last he saw her, it was softer now. Because of the hair. A face too still for comfort; irises the same color as her skin, which, in that still face, used to make him think of a mask with mercifully punched-out eyes. Halle’s woman. Pregnant every year including the year she sat by the fire telling him she was going to run. Her three children she had already packed into a wagonload of others in a caravan of Negroes crossing the river. They were to be left with Halle’s mother near Cincinnati. Even in that tiny shack, leaning so close to the fire you could smell the heat in her dress, her eyes did not pick up a flicker of light. They were like two wells into which he had trouble gazing. Even punched out they needed to be covered, lidded, marked with some sign to warn folks of what that emptiness held. So he looked instead at the fire while she told him, because her husband was not there for the telling. Mr. Garner was dead and his wife had a lump in her neck the size of a sweet potato and unable to speak to anyone. She leaned as

close to the fire as her pregnant belly allowed and told him, Paul D, the last of the Sweet Home men.

There had been six of them who belonged to the farm, Sethe the only female. Mrs. Garner, crying like a baby, had sold his brother to pay off the debts that surfaced the minute she was widowed. Then schoolteacher arrived to put things in order. But what he did broke three more Sweet Home men and punched the glittering iron out of Sethe's eyes, leaving two open wells that did not reflect firelight.

Now the iron was back but the face, softened by hair, made him trust her enough to step inside her door smack into a pool of pulsing red light.

She was right. It was sad. Walking through it, a wave of grief soaked him so thoroughly he wanted to cry. It seemed a long way to the normal light surrounding the table, but he made it – dry-eyed and lucky.

“You said she died soft. Soft as cream,” he reminded her.

“That's not Baby Suggs,” she said.

“Who then?”

“My daughter. The one I sent ahead with the boys.”

“She didn't live?”

“No. The one I was carrying when I run away is all I got left. Boys gone too. Both of em walked off just before Baby Suggs died.”

Paul D looked at the spot where the grief had soaked him. The red was gone but a kind of weeping clung to the air where it had been.

Probably best, he thought. If a Negro got legs he ought to use them. Sit down too long, somebody will figure out a way to tie them up. Still... if her boys were gone...

“No man? You here by yourself?” “Me and Denver,” she said.

“That all right by you?”

“That's all right by me.”

She saw his skepticism and went on. “I cook at a restaurant in town. And I sew a little on the sly.”

Paul D smiled then, remembering the bedding dress. Sethe was thirteen when she came to Sweet Home and already iron-eyed. She was a timely present for Mrs. Garner who had lost Baby Suggs to her husband's high principles. The five Sweet Home men looked at the new girl and decided to let her be. They were young and so sick with the absence of women they had taken to calves. Yet they let the iron-eyed girl be, so she could choose in spite of the fact that each one would have beaten the others to mush to have her. It took her a year to choose – a long, tough year of thrashing on pallets eaten up with dreams of her. A year of yearning, when rape seemed the solitary gift of life. The restraint they had exercised possible only because they were Sweet Home men – the ones Mr. Garner bragged about while other farmers shook their heads in warning at the phrase.

“Y'all got boys,” he told them. “Young boys, old boys, picky boys, stroppin boys. Now at Sweet Home, my niggers is men every one of em. Bought em thataway, raised em thataway. Men every one.”

“Beg to differ, Garner. Ain't no nigger men.”

“Not if you scared, they ain't.” Garner's smile was wide. “But if you a man yourself, you'll want your niggers to be men too.”

“I wouldn't have no nigger men round my wife.”

It was the reaction Garner loved and waited for. “Neither would I,” he said. “Neither would I,” and there was always a pause before the neighbor, or stranger, or peddler, or brother-in-law or whoever it was got the meaning. Then a fierce argument, sometimes a fight, and Garner came home bruised and pleased, having demonstrated one more time what a real Kentuckian was: one tough enough and smart enough to make and call his own niggers men.

And so they were: Paul D Garner, Paul F Garner, Paul A Garner, Halle Suggs and Sixo, the wild man. All in their twenties, minus women, fucking cows, dreaming of rape, thrashing on pallets, rubbing their thighs and waiting for the new girl – the one who took Baby Suggs' place after Halle bought her with five years of Sundays. Maybe that was why she chose him. A twenty-year-old man so in love with his mother he gave

up five years of Sabbaths just to see her sit down for a change was a serious recommendation.

She waited a year. And the Sweet Home men abused cows while they waited with her. She chose Halle and for their first bedding she sewed herself a dress on the sly.

“Won’t you stay on awhile? Can’t nobody catch up on eighteen years in a day.”

Out of the dimness of the room in which they sat, a white staircase climbed toward the blue-and-white wallpaper of the second floor. Paul D could see just the beginning of the paper; discreet flecks of yellow sprinkled among a blizzard of snowdrops all backed by blue. The luminous white of the railing and steps kept him glancing toward it. Every sense he had told him the air above the stairwell was charmed and very thin. But the girl who walked down out of that air was round and brown with the face of an alert doll.

Paul D looked at the girl and then at Sethe who smiled saying,

“Here she is my Denver. This is Paul D, honey, from Sweet Home.”

“Good morning, Mr. D.”

“Garner, baby. Paul D Garner.”

“Yes sir.”

“Glad to get a look at you. Last time I saw your mama, you were pushing out the front of her dress.”

“Still is,” Sethe smiled, “provided she can get in it.”

Denver stood on the bottom step and was suddenly hot and shy. It had been a long time since anybody (good-willed whitewoman, preacher, speaker or newspaperman) sat at their table, their sympathetic voices called liar by the revulsion in their eyes. For twelve years, long before Grandma Baby died, there had been no visitors of any sort and certainly no friends. No coloredpeople. Certainly no hazelnut man with too long hair and no notebook, no charcoal, no oranges, no questions. Someone her mother wanted to talk to and would even consider talking to while barefoot. Looking, in fact acting, like a girl instead of the quiet, queenly woman Denver

had known all her life. The one who never looked away, who when a man got stomped to death by a mare right in front of Sawyer's restaurant did not look away; and when a sow began eating her own litter did not look away then either. And when the baby's spirit picked up Here Boy and slammed him into the wall hard enough to break two of his legs and dislocate his eye, so hard he went into convulsions and chewed up his tongue, still her mother had not looked away. She had taken a hammer, knocked the dog unconscious, wiped away the blood and saliva, pushed his eye back in his head and set his leg bones. He recovered, mute and off-balance, more because of his untrustworthy eye than his bent legs, and winter, summer, drizzle or dry, nothing could persuade him to enter the house again.

Now here was this woman with the presence of mind to repair a dog gone savage with pain rocking her crossed ankles and looking away from her own daughter's body. As though the size of it was more than vision could bear. And neither she nor he had on shoes. Hot, shy, now Denver was lonely. All that leaving: first her brothers, then her grandmother – serious losses since there were no children willing to circle her in a game or hang by their knees from her porch railing. None of that had mattered as long as her mother did not look away as she was doing now, making Denver long, downright *long*, for a sign of spite from the baby ghost.

“She's a fine-looking young lady,” said Paul D. “Fine-looking.

Got her daddy's sweet face.”

“You know my father?”

“Knew him. Knew him well.”

“Did he, Ma'am?” Denver fought an urge to realign her affection. “Of course he knew your daddy. I told you, he's from Sweet Home.”

Denver sat down on the bottom step. There was nowhere else gracefully to go. They were a twosome, saying “Your daddy” and “Sweet Home” in a way that made it clear both belonged to them and not to her. That her own father's absence was not hers. Once the absence had belonged to Grandma Baby – a son, deeply mourned because he was the one who had bought her out of there. Then it was her mother's absent husband.

Now it was this hazelnut stranger's absent friend. Only those who knew him ("knew him well") could claim his absence for themselves. Just as only those who lived in Sweet Home could remember it, whisper it and glance sideways at one another while they did. Again she wished for the baby ghost – its anger thrilling her now where it used to wear her out. Wear her out.

"We have a ghost in here," she said, and it worked. They were not a twosome anymore. Her mother left off swinging her feet and being girlish. Memory of Sweet Home dropped away from the eyes of the man she was being girlish for. He looked quickly up the lightningwhite stairs behind her.

"So I hear," he said. "But sad, your mama said. Not evil."

"No sir," said Denver, "not evil. But not sad either."

"What then?"

"Rebuked. Lonely and rebuked."

"Is that right?" Paul D turned to Sethe.

"I don't know about lonely," said Denver's mother. "Mad, maybe, but I don't see how it could be lonely spending every minute with us like it does."

"Must be something you got it wants."

Sethe shrugged. "It's just a baby."

"My sister," said Denver. "She died in this house."

Paul D scratched the hair under his jaw. "Reminds me of that headless bride back behind Sweet Home. Remember that, Sethe?

Used to roam them woods regular."

"How could I forget? Worrisome..."

"How come everybody run off from Sweet Home can't stop talking about it? Look like if it was so sweet you would have stayed." "Girl, who you talking to?"

Paul D laughed. "True, true. She's right, Sethe. It wasn't sweet and it sure wasn't home." He shook his head.

"But it's where we were," said Sethe. "All together. Comes back whether we want it to or not." She shivered a little. A light ripple of skin on her arm, which she

caressed back into sleep. “Denver,” she said, “start up that stove. Can’t have a friend stop by and don’t feed him.”

“Don’t go to any trouble on my account,” Paul D said.

“Bread ain’t trouble. The rest I brought back from where I work. Least I can do, cooking from dawn to noon, is bring dinner home.

You got any objections to pike?”

“If he don’t object to me I don’t object to him.”

At it again, thought Denver. Her back to them, she jostled the kindlin and almost lost the fire. “Why don’t you spend the night, Mr. Garner? You and Ma’am can talk about Sweet Home all night long.”

Sethe took two swift steps to the stove, but before she could yank Denver’s collar, the girl leaned forward and began to cry.

“What is the matter with you? I never knew you to behave this way.”

“Leave her be,” said Paul D. “I’m a stranger to her.”

“That’s just it. She got no cause to act up with a stranger. Oh baby, what is it? Did something happen?”

But Denver was shaking now and sobbing so she could not speak. The tears she had not shed for nine years wetting her far too womanly breasts.

“I can’t no more. I can’t no more.”

“Can’t what? What can’t you?”

“I can’t live here. I don’t know where to go or what to do, but I can’t live here. Nobody speaks to us. Nobody comes by. Boys don’t like me. Girls don’t either.”

“Honey, honey.”

“What’s she talking ’bout nobody speaks to you?” asked Paul D.

“It’s the house. People don’t –”

“It’s not! It’s not the house. It’s us! And it’s you!”

“Denver!”

“Leave off, Sethe. It’s hard for a young girl living in a haunted house. That can’t be easy.”

“It’s easier than some other things.”

“Think, Sethe. I’m a grown man with nothing new left to see or do and I’m telling you it ain’t easy. Maybe you all ought to move.

Who owns this house?”

Over Denver’s shoulder Sethe shot Paul D a look of snow. “What you care?”

“They won’t let you leave?”

“No.”

“Sethe.”

“No moving. No leaving. It’s all right the way it is.”

“You going to tell me it’s all right with this child half out of her mind?”

Something in the house braced, and in the listening quiet that followed Sethe spoke.

“I got a tree on my back and a haint in my house, and nothing in between but the daughter I am holding in my arms. No more running – from nothing. I will never run from another thing on this earth. I took one journey and I paid for the ticket, but let me tell you something, Paul D Garner: it cost too much! Do you hear me? It cost too much. Now sit down and eat with us or leave us be.”

Paul D fished in his vest for a little pouch of tobacco – concentrating on its contents and the knot of its string while Sethe led Denver into the keeping room that opened off the large room he was sitting in. He had no smoking papers, so he fiddled with the pouch and listened through the open door to Sethe quieting her daughter. When she came back she avoided his look and went straight to a small table next to the stove. Her back was to him and he could see all the hair he wanted without the distraction of her face.

“What tree on your back?”

“Huh.” Sethe put a bowl on the table and reached under it for flour.

“What tree on your back? Is something growing on your back? I don’t see nothing growing on your back.”

“It’s there all the same.”

“Who told you that?”

“Whitegirl. That’s what she called it. I’ve never seen it and never will. But that’s what she said it looked like. A chokecherry tree. Trunk, branches, and even leaves. Tiny little chokecherry leaves. But that was eighteen years ago. Could have cherries too now for all I know.”

Sethe took a little spit from the tip of her tongue with her forefinger. Quickly, lightly she touched the stove. Then she trailed her fingers through the flour, parting, separating small hills and ridges of it, looking for mites. Finding none, she poured soda and salt into the crease of her folded hand and tossed both into the flour. Then she reached into a can and scooped half a handful of lard. Deftly she squeezed the flour through it, then with her left hand sprinkling water, she formed the dough.

“I had milk,” she said. “I was pregnant with Denver but I had milk for my baby girl. I hadn’t stopped nursing her when I sent her on ahead with Howard and Buglar.”

Now she rolled the dough out with a wooden pin. “Anybody could smell me long before he saw me. And when he saw me he’d see the drops of it on the front of my dress. Nothing I could do about that. All I knew was I had to get my milk to my baby girl. Nobody was going to nurse her like me. Nobody was going to get it to her fast enough, or take it away when she had enough and didn’t know it. Nobody knew that she couldn’t pass her air if you held her up on your shoulder, only if she was lying on my knees. Nobody knew that but me and nobody had her milk but me. I told that to the women in the wagon. Told them to put sugar water in cloth to suck from so when I got there in a few days she wouldn’t have forgot me. The milk would be there and I would be there with it.”

“Men don’t know nothing much,” said Paul D, tucking his pouch back into his vest pocket, “but they do know a suckling can’t be away from its mother for long.”

“Then they know what it’s like to send your children off when your breasts are full.”

“We was talking ’bout a tree, Sethe.”

“After I left you, those boys came in there and took my milk. That’s what they came in there for. Held me down and took it. I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn’t speak but her eyes rolled out tears. Them boys found out I told on em. Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grows there still.”

“They used cowhide on you?”

“And they took my milk.”

“They beat you and you was pregnant?”

“And they took my milk!”

The fat white circles of dough lined the pan in rows. Once more Sethe touched a wet forefinger to the stove. She opened the oven door and slid the pan of biscuits in. As she raised up from the heat she felt Paul D behind her and his hands under her breasts. She straightened up and knew, but could not feel, that his cheek was pressing into the branches of her chokecherry tree.

Not even trying, he had become the kind of man who could walk into a house and make the women cry. Because with him, in his presence, they could. There was something blessed in his manner. Women saw him and wanted to weep—to tell him that their chest hurt and their knees did too. Strong women and wise saw him and told him things they only told each other: that way past the Change of Life, desire in them had suddenly become enormous, greedy, more savage than when they were fifteen, and that it embarrassed them and made them sad; that secretly they longed to die – to be quit of it – that sleep was more precious to them than any waking day. Young girls sidled up to him to confess or describe how well-dressed the visitations were that had followed them straight from their dreams. Therefore, although he did not understand why this was so, he was not surprised when Denver dripped tears into the stovefire. Nor, fifteen minutes later, after telling him about her stolen milk, her mother wept as well. Behind her, bending down, his body an arc of kindness, he held her breasts in the palms of his hands. He rubbed his cheek on her back and learned that way her sorrow, the roots of it; its wide trunk and intricate branches. Raising his fingers to the hooks of

her dress, he knew without seeing them or hearing any sigh that the tears were coming fast. And when the top of her dress was around her hips and he saw the sculpture her back had become, like the decorative work of an ironsmith too passionate for display, he could think but not say, “Aw, Lord, girl.” And he would tolerate no peace until he had touched every ridge and leaf of it with his mouth, none of which Sethe could feel because her back skin had been dead for years. What she knew was that the responsibility for her breasts, at last, was in somebody else’s hands.

Would there be a little space, she wondered, a little time, some way to hold off eventfulness, to push busyness into the corners of the room and just stand there a minute or two, naked from shoulder blade to waist, relieved of the weight of her breasts, smelling the stolen milk again and the pleasure of baking bread? Maybe this one time she could stop dead still in the middle of a cooking meal – not even leave the stove – and feel the hurt her back ought to. Trust things and remember things because the last of the Sweet Home men was there to catch her if she sank?

The stove didn’t shudder as it adjusted to its heat. Denver wasn’t stirring in the next room. The pulse of red light hadn’t come back and Paul D had not trembled since 1856 and then for eighty-three days in a row. Locked up and chained down, his hands shook so bad he couldn’t smoke or even scratch properly. Now he was trembling again but in the legs this time. It took him a while to realize that his legs were not shaking because of worry, but because the floorboards were and the grinding, shoving floor was only part of it. The house itself was pitching. Sethe slid to the floor and struggled to get back into her dress. While down on all fours, as though she were holding her house down on the ground, Denver burst from the keeping room, terror in her eyes, a vague smile on her lips.

“God damn it! Hush up!” Paul D was shouting, falling, reaching for anchor. “Leave the place alone! Get the hell out!” A table rushed toward him and he grabbed its leg. Somehow he managed to stand at an angle and, holding the table by two legs, he bashed it about, wrecking everything, screaming back at the screaming house. “You want to fight, come on! God damn it! She got enough without you. She got enough!”

The quaking slowed to an occasional lurch, but Paul D did not stop whipping the table around until everything was rock quiet. Sweating and breathing hard, he leaned against the wall in the space the sideboard left. Sethe was still crouched next to the stove, clutching her salvaged shoes to her chest. The three of them, Sethe, Denver, and Paul D, breathed to the same beat, like one tired person. Another breathing was just as tired.

It was gone. Denver wandered through the silence to the stove. She ashed over the fire and pulled the pan of biscuits from the oven. The jelly cupboard was on its back, its contents lying in a heap in the corner of the bottom shelf. She took out a jar, and, looking around for a plate, found half of one by the door. These things she carried out to the porch steps, where she sat down.

The two of them had gone up there. Stepping lightly, easy-footed, they had climbed the white stairs, leaving her down below. She pried the wire from the top of the jar and then the lid. Under it was cloth and under that a thin cake of wax. She removed it all and coaxed the jelly onto one half of the half a plate. She took a biscuit and pulled off its black top. Smoke curled from the soft white insides.

She missed her brothers. Buglar and Howard would be twentytwo and twenty-three now. Although they had been polite to her during the quiet time and gave her the whole top of the bed, she remembered how it was before: the pleasure they had sitting clustered on the white stairs – she between the knees of Howard or Buglar – while they made up die-witch! stories with proven ways of killing her dead. And Baby Suggs telling her things in the keeping room. She smelled like bark in the day and leaves at night, for Denver would not sleep in her old room after her brothers ran away.

Now her mother was upstairs with the man who had gotten rid of the only other company she had. Denver dipped a bit of bread into the jelly. Slowly, methodically, miserably she ate it.

Questions for discussion:

1. Summarize chapter one's plot and dissect its arrangement. Explore the historical backdrop. Determine whether the narrative unfolds in the past, present, future, or a combination of these timelines?
2. Identify the setting of the excerpt and analyze the author's portrayal of the event's location. Highlight specific spatial indicators used in the description.
3. Examine the title of the novel and discuss its possible meanings or references?
4. Describe the types of characters introduced in the initial section of the book?
5. Identify the primary theme presented in the excerpt. How does the author convey this theme? Assess whether the author effectively communicates a specific message through the story. Additionally, discuss what insights into the author's perspective the theme provides?
6. Does the excerpt contain any philosophical elements or depth?
7. Does the narrator offer a straightforward retelling of events, or does he or she intentionally mislead the reader, making them unreliable?
8. What perspective does the novel adopt? Is the narrator a character within the story, or an unnamed observer?
9. Describe the intertextual or magical elements and references found in the excerpt.
10. Pinpoint symbols and imagery in the excerpt. Highlight any other literary devices employed by the author.
11. Describe the tone of the novel (whether it's light-hearted, dramatic, serious, etc.), as well as the mood and atmosphere created by the author.
12. Does the author employ any unconventional language or expressions? If so, what impact do they have?
13. Is there an item or element in the excerpt that holds particular significance or symbolism?

14. How would the excerpt change if the author employed a different writing style?

15. Summarize your interpretation of what the author was trying to say.

Read the rest of the novel and answer the questions that follow:

16. To what degree does slavery dehumanize individuals by depriving them of their identity, undermining their capacity to perceive themselves? Focus on Paul's struggle to differentiate between his own screams and those of others. Also, examine how other characters illustrate feelings of self-estrangement?

17. Examine the various functions of the community regarding the betrayal and safeguarding of 124 Bluestone Road. Consider the broader implication Morrison might be indicating about the nature of community.

18. Explore the symbolism of Beloved's arrival and presence. Delve into her actions and demeanor. Investigate the reasons behind her eventual disappearance and what motivates her departure. Additionally, discuss the significance of the novel's title being derived from her character?

19. Discuss Sethe's decision-making process when faced with the arrival of schoolteacher, who intends to take her children back to Sweet Home. Evaluate the justification for Sethe's actions and analyze whether they can be considered rational or irrational?

20. What prompted the protagonist to inscribe "*Beloved*" instead of "*Dearly beloved*" on her child's grave?

21. What is the significance of the narrator's warning at the end: "*this is not a story to pass on*"? Is the narrator correct in this assertion, or is there a reason to pass it on?

22. Morrison's sweeping narrative about the repercussions of slavery resembles a complex puzzle, blending various elements of time, space, and narration. The story unfolds through a non-linear structure, weaving together flashbacks, dream sequences, and internal reflections. By eschewing a traditional, linear plot, what does the novel achieve?

23. “*Beloved*” starts as a mischievous spirit, leaving handprints in flour, then evolves into a haunting figure, embodying both childlike innocence and adult desire for Sethe’s affection. Finally, she becomes a consuming force, draining Sethe’s vitality. What exactly is “*Beloved*”? Is she a tangible presence or a figment of the characters’ imagination?

24. Initially, Sethe seems to be the primary focus, but it’s her daughter Denver who undergoes the most significant transformation throughout the story. Denver matures and finds her independence as the narrative progresses. The circumstances surrounding her birth foreshadow her eventual destiny, shaping her journey towards self-discovery and resilience?

25. Denver, born in the liminal space between slavery and freedom, feels burdened by an unspoken debt due to her unique birth circumstances. By the conclusion of the novel, Denver fulfills the implicit obligation associated with her birth, symbolically settling the debt. Initially, she seeks solace in the isolation of the boxwood trees, but as the story progresses, she transforms into a confident young woman, waiting on the porch in her vibrant carnival attire for her prospective employer. This evolution demonstrates Denver’s journey towards independence and self-assurance, embodying the promise of her birth.

26. The theme of identity pervades the novel, particularly for those who were formerly enslaved. Many characters, including Baby Suggs and Stamp Paid, change their names as a means of asserting their agency and reclaiming their identities. Sethe herself adopts the name Lu during her escape from Sweet Home. Sethe’s quest for identity mirrors her battle to overcome *Beloved*’s haunting presence. Throughout the narrative, Sethe grapples with her past traumas and strives to reconcile her sense of self with the atrocities she endured. While she undergoes a tumultuous journey marked by guilt and anguish, Sethe ultimately achieves a semblance of self-understanding and acceptance, suggesting that she does find her true self amidst the turmoil?

27. Sethe is defined by many things during her lifetime: as help, as a dollar amount, as a mother, and later, as a pariah. When *Beloved* returns to her, Sethe

sacrifices herself once again, determined to prove herself a true mother. Ask yourself how and by whom Sethe is pulled back from the edge of sanity. Consider the potential of her final words “*Me? Me?*” as a declaration of self.

28. While Baby Suggs initially offers redemption and grace through her sermons in the Clearing, she dies feeling devoid of hope, finding solace only in the colors of a blanket. However, “*Beloved*” doesn’t conclude with hopelessness; instead, it brims with the promise of a brighter future. Sethe and Paul D ultimately find redemption through their acts of selflessness and resilience. Sethe’s sacrifice for her children and Paul D’s decision to confront his past enable them to transcend their traumas and move toward healing. Toni Morrison suggests that grace is not found solely through religious rituals or sermons but through acts of love, forgiveness, and perseverance. Redemption, she implies, is attainable through individual agency and the communal bonds forged in the face of adversity. What does Toni Morrison ultimately have to say about grace?

29. Baby Suggs implores her community to confront their past, no matter how painful, and to embrace their present circumstances. However, after the tragedy in the woodshed, Baby Suggs loses hope. In the final conversation between Paul D and Sethe, Paul D reflects on their shared history, acknowledging the hardships they endured as enslaved individuals. Despite their past traumas, Paul D emphasizes the resilience and strength they have gained over time, asserting, “*We got more yesterday than anybody.*” Determine how author Morrison plays this conversation off Baby Suggs’ advice in the Clearing about imagining your own sense of grace.

30. Analyze the evolution of characters over the course of the novel, if there is any. Assess your emotional response to the characters and consider whether their modes of communication provide insights into their personalities?

31. Assess the relevance and impact of any minor characters in the novel.

32. Identify the recurring themes present in the novel.

33. Identify instances of foreshadowing or flashbacks in the novel and discuss their purpose.

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Impact of slavery on identity: a character analysis; b) Motherhood and sacrifice: Exploring Sethe's Maternal Journey; c) The symbolism of the haunting presence in "*Beloved*"; d) Post-Civil War America in "*Beloved*" historical context and themes; e) Intergenerational trauma and its impact on the characters; f) Community and isolation: Denver's struggle in the novel; g) The role of colour and imagery in conveying themes and emotions.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. The account of black slavery in the USA
2. American Civil War: the historical context, social and political consequences;
3. Anti-Tom literature in the USA.
4. American influential abolitionist texts of different literary periods: themes and features.
5. "*Beloved*" - the history of creation. The personality of the author.
6. Magic realism and its features.

Recommended reading:

1. Harper Lee, "*To Kill a Mockingbird*" (1960).
2. Harriet Beecher Stowe, "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" (1852).
3. Alexander Blum, "*21st Century Slave*" (2016).

GLOSSARY:

Anti-Tom literature refers to a collection of XIXth-century literary works, primarily originating from Southern U.S. authors, crafted as responses to Harriet Beecher Stowe's "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*." Also known as plantation literature, these writings aimed to counter Stowe's portrayal of slavery's horrors by depicting it as a positive institution for African Americans. They sought to diminish the impact of Stowe's narrative by arguing that the portrayal of slavery's cruelty in her work was exaggerated and inaccurate.

The **Fugitive Slave Act**, passed by the 31st United States Congress on September 18, 1850, was a pivotal component of the Compromise of 1850, which aimed to balance the interests of Southern slavery proponents and Northern Free-Soilers. This law was highly contentious and exacerbated Northern concerns about the influence of pro-slavery forces. It mandated the return of escaped slaves to their enslavers upon capture, compelling officials and citizens of free states to assist in this process. The Act significantly intensified the nation's division over the slavery issue and was a contributing factor to the onset of the American Civil War.

Magical realism: is a literary style characterized by the incorporation of fantastical elements into an otherwise realistic narrative or setting.

PACE 8

PAKISTANI-AMERICAN LITERATURE TODAY: TEXTS BY THE AUTHORS OF MULTICULTURAL BACKGROUND

“It has always seemed to me that what I write about is humanity in extremis, pushed to the unendurable, and that it is important to tell people what really happens in wars.”

Marie Colvin, a war correspondent

“Terrorism isn’t insanity. It grows out of social conditions that are well known: poverty, social oppression, dictatorship, and a void of meaning in the lives of ordinary people”.

Deepak Chopra

“What is it that seduces some young people to terrorism? It simplifies things. The fanatic has no questions, only answers. Education is the way to eliminate terrorism”.

Elie Wiesel

Key terms: South Asia, a middle power nation, an ethically and linguistically diverse country, civilian government, ancient civilization, a wide variety of expressions of folk and traditional culture, the pre-Islamic period, disintegration, the concept of innocence

IKRAM BASRA is currently teaching playwriting and screenwriting at the University of Iowa. He graduated from the *Playwrights Workshop* there, in 2021. Before coming to Iowa, he was witness to the national life of Pakistan as a journalist, television producer, lyricist and poet. His poems have appeared in national journals and newspapers in Pakistan and India, broadcast on television in Pakistan and China, and translated from Urdu into Bengali, Oriya, Hindi, Nepali and English. In India, he wrote lyrics for Bollywood and studied screenwriting at Bollywood’s Whistling Woods Institute. In Pakistan, he was a producer for Pakistan Television, creating programming viewed across the country.

1. *What do you know of Pakistan as a site of several ancient cultures, its history and independence?*

2. *In what way does the colonial practices predetermine the bilingual status of the formerly colonized territories?*

3. *In your opinion, how might the religion, construction and development of Islamabad, literally ‘City of Islam’, predetermine the mood of the city and shape the mode of life of its people?*

4. *What do you know of the Taliban as a radical Islamist movement of the Sunni direction and its display in contemporary American literature?*

Ikram BASRA

THE JOB

(These events are true)

The Major was on a mission. He arrived to pick us up in Islamabad so distracted, he was driving the wrong direction on a one-way street. People saw the army jeep and moved out of the way.

“You are punctual like an army man,” he says.

I’m amused because it is almost by accident that I am on time. I’m always late. Though I’ve never missed a deadline.

At the airfield, a helicopter is waiting. The last time I travelled to Swat Valley, we went by car. I’ve never been in a helicopter. It’s very loud and the sides are open. Arshad, my camera man, instructs me on how to approach it, so I won’t get my head cut off.

Two soldiers are waiting in the back seat.

Arshad’s close to retirement, and he’s got a lot of gear, so we help him load. The Major climbs in next to the pilot, and we buckle into the back. I’m kind of excited as we go up about 200 feet. Then the pilot is talking to the Major across the front seat, and we’re back on the ground. A mechanic works on it for half an hour, and it occurs to me that helicopters crash all the time. We load back in, and we’re back in the air.

Out of Islamabad, we cross mountains to the west and travel along the Hindu Kush range. Swat is in the Switzerland of South Asia. Mountains and valleys, lush

green, so beautiful – your anxiety and restlessness just evaporate like something extra – God is so close.

We set down in Swat Valley in what used to be a school – now a base for anti-Taliban operations. I've here before, and I didn't want to come back after that time. Now, the government is moving locals into camps, and the Taliban is slaughtering them. Every day, they hang new bodies in the town square.

This time, I've been assigned by my employer, Pakistan Television, to supply news of the Army's activities – presented from a pro-Army perspective, for sure.

I work for the government channel. Government buildings and employees are priority targets for the Taliban. A government job is a way out of poverty, but people are quitting these jobs in fear for their lives. And here I am...

(pause)

Pakistan Television is viewed by the majority of Pakistan's 220 Million inhabitants. Most understand Urdu, the national language. Pakistan has 74 spoken languages – I spoke only Punjabi myself until I was 12. Five of Pakistan's languages are spoken by more than ten million people each, but there are only two national languages: Urdu and English. English because of our colonial history. Urdu because it is beautiful. Once I learned Urdu, I was in love with it. I studied in Urdu, got degrees in Urdu, now I write in Urdu. Here, they speak Pashto. They are Pashtun.

The lands of the Pashtun people were divided when the borders for Pakistan were drawn by the British in 1947. Across both sides of the Pak-Afghan border, the Pashtun people are one tribe and more loyal to one another than to their respective governments. But before 9/11, a militant Pashtun group was running Afghanistan-- the Taliban. When the United States attacked Afghanistan and overthrew the Taliban, Pashtun people on both sides of the border were angry – angry with the US for attacking them, and angry with Pakistan for allowing the Americans supply using their roads and air bases. After this, the Pak-Afghan border gave rise to two Taliban groups. The Afghani Taliban fighting the Americans and the new Afghan government, and the Pakistani Taliban fighting our army and the Pakistani people.

I will report from the heart of all this. I want to talk to both sides, hear what locals have to say. What this fight has cost them, what they hope for the future.

(brief pause)

The pilot puts us down in a schoolyard. The Taliban has destroyed most of the schools. This one is still standing. There are ten or so classrooms, and a large clearing around the building. It is all army now. Surrounded with rolls of barbed wire, convoys of trucks moving in and out, army personnel bustling through the camp, and reconnaissance choppers flying in and out.

Two of the classrooms have detainees – captured Taliban and some locals who appeared suspicious. One has the mess. Soldiers sleep in most of the others.

Arshad and I are safe in this place. Our Army hosts are not as safe. They go off on missions, and return in the evening. We eat together and play cricket, and in the afternoons, I send PTV another report while the Army editor looks on.

We'd been there almost two weeks, and we were leaving the next day, when I decided to look around.

That morning, I had slept well. I was playing an early game of cricket with the soldiers when a Captain who was on my team answers his phone and apologizes that he has to leave. We've talked a few times before, so he tells me he's going to be part of "a QRF". Quick Reaction Force, he says.

He leaves and I am wondering what's really going on here. I still don't know the real story. Was I a journalist or just putting out propaganda? What do the local people have to say about what's happening? I needed to know more than what was handed to me by the Army. I could tell the real story when I got back to Islamabad.

And the place was so beautiful. I wanted to see it.

Exotic birds chirped day and night, the air was filled with the fragrance of wildflowers, and I could see lush apple and peach orchards outside the barbed wire. Tall green mountains formed this valley, and they towered at the edges of the valley with such dignity, they were breathtaking really. I'd seen pictures of waterfalls in those

mountains. I could hear them in my imagination like music. I'd felt called to get beyond the camp every day since I'd been there.

But I had been warned that this was a war zone. The entire area was under curfew. Even locals weren't allowed to enter the area, and those who lived here were leaving.

And I was clean shaven. The Major said just buying a razor would risk my life and that of the guy who sold it to me. Why? *Here*, a good Muslim does not shave off his beard, and neither is anyone who helps someone to do this. The Taliban kills bad Muslims. In other words, you could be killed for anything here.

Still, I needed the story. I decided I'd stay close to camp. I would not go further than the nearest town. I'd just go find out what the locals thought without the Army editor there to filter everything. Every night, he stood over me as I filed my report, checking that I didn't add anything unfavorable.

Arshad was still asleep. I woke him to tell him I was going. He mumbled in his sleep and rolled over.

I needed to walk past the Brigadier's office. He was in charge here. He rarely came outside, but I did happen to meet him on an evening stroll. We talked and he invited me back to his office. I was surprised to see a pile of porn DVDs on the table. Junior officers and visiting press were not permitted such an indulgence where soldiers were dying. He excused himself to take a call from his wife, and I let myself out. I'd been seen coming from the Brigadier's office. For this reason, I am hoping they will allow me to pass through the gate.

I make small talk with the guards and tell them I'm going to look around for a piece that I'm working on. They can come with me if they want, but I won't go far so they don't need to, I tell them. And they let me pass!

I reach the road, and a small van, a local taxi, stops. It's full of locals, and I get in.

The people in the van look surprised to see me. We drive about ten minutes, and I see a man roasting corn at the side of the road and a guy with an apple cart. I ask the driver to stop and get off to ask them questions.

Now, I'm in the middle of nowhere. The apple seller looks at me with interest. I greet him politely and ask about things in the town. How is the conflict affecting him and his family? There's no one around to buy their corn and apples, do they always sell at this stop? They have little to say. The apple guy won't look me in the eye, and the corn seller is watching the two of us. Five minutes later, another taxi van arrives, and I take it.

There's no place to sit. One man is on the roof with his two kids. Another is hanging onto the side from the running board. I grab on and stand beside him. I note that he's wearing a shawl. Why is he wearing a shawl in this heat? Suicide bombers cover themselves with a loose jacket or a shawl. Shit.

The van is moving now, and I can't get off. I try to look at the man's face, but his head is turned away. *It's beautiful here*, something like this, I start a conversation. He's friendly. I finally ask him: "why are you wearing a shawl in this hot weather?"

He's trying to protect himself from the cold air, he tells me. The vans are so open, and it's cold when they are moving. He has high fever. He's on his way to the hospital.

I'm embarrassed I suspected him. Conditions here are so bad: A sick person has to hang from an open door to get to a hospital while their sons are busy fighting their own country's army. What a mess.

I'm deep in thought when the van slows, and I hear loud voices.

Four or five men are in the middle of the road with machine guns, waving at the van to stop. The van pulls to the side of the road, and they surround us. They're in traditional Pashtun shirts and caps. Their faces are covered, but I can see overgrown hair and long beards beneath.

They have ak47s.

One shouts at the driver in Pashto and pulls him out of the van. The people in the van whisper questions to one another, and the sick man beside me answers in Pashto. I understand one word: *Taliban*.

(pause)

They order us out of the van and line us up at the side of the road and search each person.

The people who live in Swat Valley are Pashtun. Blue and green-eyed, and very fair. More Russian or European than Indian. I'm from Punjab. We're tall and dark--Punjabis. It's obvious I don't belong here.

I'm not wearing a beard...

He gestures that I stay where I am. The other passengers get back in the van. Another man says something in Pashto. I don't understand what he's saying. He puts the barrel of his gun in my side and pushes me forward.

I work for the government.

Government employees are targets. I am here with the army, whose sole purpose in being here is to destroy the Taliban. I'm in trouble. What was I thinking?

(brief pause)

We climb the mountain.

I notice they lower their guns as we walk. Two are in front of me, three behind. These are rural people. We're following a path that was probably cut by goat herders.

We haven't walked 10 minutes before we reach a camp with another ten or so people. Their faces are covered, long beards still visible beneath. The younger ones have the traditional caps. One has a bandana over his nose and mouth. The older ones are wearing turbans.

They all have a gun in their hand.

They take me up a trail to a small clearing.

I try not to look up too often or look too closely. A plastic shopping bag is lying on the ground. It's red. The men in front of me are wearing traditional Peshawar slippers, a sandal with a square toe. A few are wearing sneakers. Most of their long shirts, *shalwars*, are white and fall just above their ankles.

One gestures for me to sit on a large rock, and he watches me. Another one turns to a shortwave radio. I think he's announcing my arrival.

The man watching me seems familiar, but I tell myself I'm just afraid. And I am very afraid. It comes in waves.

I know that guy selling apples tipped them off. I'm sure it was him, but I don't understand why. So, he can have these thugs keep his people in the stone ages?

I was foolish to get on the bus. I know this. I hope God will forgive my stupidity. Now I am just alive to die.

Will they pump me full of bullets like Musa. 32 bullets in the chest. Maybe they'll cut off my head and hang my body by my ankles in the town square.

(pause)

It would be better if my body reaches my family with the head. That might be a little less painful for them. Bathing and burying a complete dead body would probably be a little easier. If they send the head, people will know that it's me.

Will they return my body later? Probably. They're Muslims. What will the condition of the head be when my body arrives? It's important that they send the head. A person's character is on his face.

(pause)

That guy watching me looks like that mullah who taught my little brother and me the Quran when we were little. Look how proud he is. Hard.

I hated that mullah. My brother sat down to recite a Quran lesson one morning and knocked over a glass of milk. The mullah called me over to show me the spill. I told him I'd clean it up, but he shouted NO! and ordered me to slap my brother. I was confused. This was in the Quran? How could he ask me to slap my brother, he was 4 years old! What was the lesson in this?

The mullah was livid. He stood up. His jaw was clenched. "If *you* don't slap him, *I* will slap him really hard!"

I looked at my little brother. He was terrified, and I slapped him.

"Harder!" said the mullah.

(brief pause)

I slapped him again, harder. I slapped him so hard that his little green cap flew off his head, and he started to cry. I can see his little face now.

(brief pause)

After that, when the mullah asked me to get him water, I spit in it before I gave it to him. I wished for better revenge.

(brief pause)

Maybe I'm here because Allah didn't approve of me spitting in the water. The mullah was teaching the holy book. I should have been patient and not reacted.

I'm not reacting now. I'm sitting quietly on this rock.

(pause)

I've done some bad things in my life. I hope God will forgive my sins. I've sinned a lot.

I played a terrible prank on Uncle Aabid. He wasn't *really* our uncle; he was one of those family friend uncles. Fifty and never married. Always angry and fighting with someone. When we were on time for his chemistry lessons, he'd say "Don't you think I have better things to do? What are you doing here again?" If we were late, he'd scold us for being tardy. Some days, he kept us for hours. He pulled me off the cricket field in front of my friends and ordered me to go study. When my little brother and I went to the park with our new bat and ball, he ruined our fun. Go home and study! Uncle Aabid.

I did go home and saw a cousin's wedding invitation had come in the mail, And I got an idea. I opened my piggy bank, counted my savings--maybe 300 rupees. And I went to a print shop.

I take a bus to another town and order wedding invitations for Uncle Aabid... "I don't want the name of your shop on the card," I tell the shopkeeper, as I give him the details of Uncle Aabid's wedding. I supply the names of the groom's respected friends to present him. I give *my father's* name! Of course, my father would be included. I pick a card with two flowers on the front and words sure to cause a scandal: *Love Marriage*. In our village, people don't marry for love. The bride is *Princess Nilofar*.

200 invitations! One by one, I drop them in people's mailboxes late at night. I invite everyone, even people who aren't on speaking terms with Uncle. I mail some to his relatives that lived far away... and I distribute them in nearby villages. Everyone should be included in this joyous occasion...

News of Uncle's marriage spread like wildfire in the village. Some people thought it was a joke, a few of these were insulted on behalf of the clan, but most thought Ahmed was finally getting married.

Then Uncle Aabid saw an invitation. He was angry. He was so angry he went through the village waving a pistol, ready to shoot whoever had done this. He came to our house to talk to my father. His old friend advised him to go to the police. Maybe there were fingerprints on the cards, and the culprit could be identified. Uncle rejected this: He didn't want to involve police, he said. A formal record would compound his embarrassment.

I still have some invitations in an old book. Will my father find these after I die? Will he tell Aabid? I hope they can forgive me.

(pause)

Why am I preparing to die?

I should talk to them. Convince them to let me go. We're both Muslim. I want to understand their struggle. I am interested in their perspective.

I watch the man standing to my right at some distance. He's moving his fingers through his beard.

(pause)

I don't have a beard.

"*Assalamu alaikum,*" I say. *Peace be with you.*

I'm not here by choice, and I am sending a prayer of goodwill to a guy who has a gun, but what else can I say and be understood.

"*Wa-Alaikum-Salaam,*" he says. As we do.

His face is covered, and his voice is muffled.

“I’m a journalist,” I say. “I came to report on how things are here,” I say in Urdu. I don’t know if he understands. “I’m just trying to find out what’s going on. I’d like to know how you personally feel about it. Obviously, you could not be happy with the situation. Talk to me.”

I’m talking fast.

I don’t want to reveal that I work for the government channel.

(brief pause)

My work ID is in my pocket. They’ll shoot me when they find it...

I keep pushing. “Maybe I can help to improve...” the man puts his finger on his lips that I should be quiet, and shoves me backward.

The other men notice. Now, another man is coming down the mountain.

They stand up straighter.

This is the one who will order me dead.

I stare at the ground.

(pause)

Then I feel them relax., and I look up. He’s gone.

The mullah guy pulls a sachet of chewing tobacco from his pocket which makes his long shirt move, and I can see a gun tucked in his pants. He puts a wad of chewing tobacco in his mouth and throws the empty wrapper to the ground in front of me. It’s so light it floats around in the air like the shopping bag in ‘American Beauty.’ What a beautiful movie...

I wanted to write beautiful things. Beautiful things...

(pause)

(stage goes dark, lights up on speaker’s face. Speaker is in another place)

A king and a prince were in love with the same woman. The king could not marry her since he was already married. The prince wanted to marry her. The king could not allow his son to make a daughter-in-law of the woman he loved! And she was a courtesan. Such a marriage would disgrace the royal family. What could he do but have

her put to death? The prince was devastated at the news of her death and forsook his family and the kingdom to spend the rest of his life grieving in the forest.

Inspired by true events.

(pause)

(in a different voice)

“Come on, say something depressing again! I have complete faith in you and your work. The story has depth but...Why are you quiet?”

(cutting himself off with a normal voice)

“But, *what?* You think it’s against the tenets of Islam.”

(second voice)

“I don’t know it’s against the teachings of Islam. I do know writing such things won’t put bread on your family’s table or fix the leaking roof or pay for the lights.”

(normal voice)

I have spent my life in the forest, grieving my dead dream.

(brief pause)

My friend was my well-wisher, but he was not right.

(Directly to the audience)

I am going to write poetry and songs. Tell stories. I want to share the innocence of life that persists despite everything men do to destroy it.

(Pause. tone change)

There was an announcement in the mosque about Uncle Aabid’s wedding. The invitations had been a cruel hoax. There would be no marriage, and whoever was behind this mischief would be dealt with severely by the Council of Elders.

When Uncle Aabid’s would-be wedding day arrived, relatives arrived from distant villages with gifts and baskets of traditional sweets. There were no cell phones, so they didn’t call ahead and confirm. They didn’t know poor Uncle Aabid had been the victim of a cruel hoax. They were here for the wedding. The local people gathered outside Uncle Aabid’s house to watch the drama.

Uncle grew tired of trying to convince everyone that there was never going to be a marriage, and he started inviting them into the house. Before long, he was happily talking with the relatives he hadn't seen for a long time – even those he'd fought with. Then people from our village joined in, and there was a big party.

I'll write everything. I will write my life in episodes. I will not write about politics. I'll write about Ghalib.

(brief pause)

*haan wonahikhuda-parast jao wobevafasahi
jis ko ho deeno dil aziiz us kī galimainjaaeyekyu
qaid-e-hayato band-e-gham asl maindonoek hain
maut se pahle aadmi ghamse najaatpaaeyekyu*

Ghalib!

I wanted to write about Ghalib for his birthday. I was the person to do it. I've read almost every book that's been written about him. I copied the anthology of his poems into my notebooks. I admire him so much. I can recite at least 200 of his couplets from memory.

I started a loving tribute to the greatest of Urdu poets, and then the phone rang. Benazir Bhutto had been killed.

So, I Ghalib aside, and I wrote about her murder.

And there was more news. And more. We wrote about the assassination from every perspective. What did it mean for the country? For her family. Historically. The future. Morning became night. When I walked home, it was dawn.

(pause)

I passed the Marriott Hotel and smoked a cigarette with the guard. This was our routine. He'd smile and ask for a cigarette. I'd give him one, light it, and we'd chat. He liked the words *story* and *episode*, and he fit them in wherever he could. When his shift ended, he'd say "my episode is done." I stop and smoke but I'm in a hurry to get home and crash on the couch. That was December.

The following September, he asks for an update on Bhutto's assassination. Did her husband do it? The Taliban? He has stories of who had been to the hotel to secretly buy alcohol intended for non-Muslim tourists. He is eager to share this info, but I am in a hurry and too busy to chat this time.

(pause)

I'm a hundred yards down the block when a huge blast pushes me down. The ground, the trees, everything is shaking, and smoke rolls over me.

(pause)

I sit down at the side of the road. I am completely lost. Birds are flying in circles and shrieking. I can't figure out which direction the blast came from.

(brief pause)

Blood is streaming along the road.

Eventually, I stand up and follow it. I am heading back to the hotel.

I come to a huge pit where I'd just smoked a cigarette. 60ft long. 20 ft deep. Flames are shooting from the buildings. Burnt cars are everywhere.

There is no point in looking for him. His gate house is gone. Body parts are everywhere.

(pause)

The sirens are getting closer, and my phone vibrates in my pocket. It's my boss. He wants me to get a crew, go to the hotel, and cover what has since become known as "The Marriott Hotel Blast." Of course, I'm already here. I'm picking up debris and body parts.

This is happening to someone else.

The crew arrives and we go on air.

I go back to the newsroom and a whirlwind of activity. I don't write anything. Eventually, I go home. I buy sleeping pills on the way.

(pause)

(in journalist tone)

The latest of more than 40 suicide attacks this year, a truck full of explosives detonated at the gate of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. 54 martyred and 266 injured. May they rest in peace. The Taliban has taken credit. They targeted the hotel, they say, because foreigners stay there.

(tone change back)

Pieces of people are everywhere. The episode did not leave even a piece of my cigarette friend. Nothing could be identified.

(pause)

I go back to the station. I go home. I go to the station. Home, the station, home. The event is rehashed. There are tributes and official statements.

The Taliban has taken credit. Again.

I went to the office. I worked for a private channel then. Hamid Mir was sending me and my team to Swat Valley.

(long pause)

Maybe they know I've been here before. Maybe that's good.

(brief pause)

Maybe not.

Hamid Mir tells the truth. He's a journalism giant. He has many enemies. But everyone respects him. He is the only one to interview Bin Laden.

(long pause)

Bin Laden. That's how this started... September 11th.

On September 11, 2001, I was 17 years old. I didn't think about the world outside my country... international news. I was busy trying to control my moods. I was in love with a girl.

We were fifteen when I saw her the first time. Our schools were next to each other, but months could pass between glimpses of her.

In the village, boys and girls are not allowed to interact unless they are family. But I wanted so much to meet her, and my loyal friend Nadeem was my courier. When she wrote back, I was euphoric.

These feelings were dangerous. Young men are killed for less.

Young women who encourage young men are also killed.

I had never gotten a letter. Who would write to me? When I was small, I so wanted a letter, I sent one to myself from my grandmother's house. When we returned home that evening and no letter was waiting, I was disappointed.

Now, this beautiful girl was sending me letters. Real ones. Once a week, Nadeem delivered my letter to her and brought back one for me. Over a few years, we exchanged glances from afar at public gatherings. We were in love.

(pause)

Finally, we met at a wedding. In a restroom under a blossoming tree. And for the first time, I touched a girl. My hands felt what I had only imagined of her body. I smelled the fragrance of the blossoms... or was it her fragrance...

In that fragrance, there was no *us* and *them*. No *War on Terror*.

In those days, America was the place everyone wanted to go. It was modern and rich. Full of clever people and quality things.

When news of the Trade Towers reached my village, I was with my father. We learned as the world learned. We turned on our black and white TV and saw the second plane fly into the second tower.

How could this happen to the United States? The best place. The best country. America.

We watched people jump from buildings.

I couldn't sleep that night. Just *seeing* those people jump was more trauma than I'd ever experienced.

Not everyone mourned for the Americans. They are the ally of Israel. Friends of the enemy are enemies. In remote Pakistan, Bin Laden was celebrated. In *my* Pakistan, terrorism was always wrong.

At 17, my life was sheep and goats, forbidden love, and dreams of writing great literature. Bin Laden launched an attack on the United States. Bush said that if we didn't support their war with Afghanistan, he would bomb Pakistan back to the stone

ages. So, we supported their war, and our country went to war with itself. I became a journalist.

(brief pause)

And there were *so many* bombings in Islamabad.

(pause)

After the Marriot Hotel bombing, Mir sent me and my team to Swat.

I had lunch with Musa Kahn, our Swat correspondent who was visiting Islamabad. He was returning to Swat before us and he would help us when we got there.

I ask him everything I can think of. He tells me the area is so destabilized there is no government. The only authority is the Taliban – and they demand fealty. Personally, he hopes Pakistan will negotiate a settlement, but he’s a realist. He seems like he has seen a lot. He’s hardened, but he tells me he’s afraid. The Taliban does not tolerate neutrality.

My team arrives in Swat a few days later. Musa Khan is scheduled to meet us for the evening broadcast, but he is murdered in the afternoon. He is butchered, actually.

(pause)

We prepare an alternate program.

We paste together profiles of local people and focus on a young girl who insists on going to school under any circumstances. Only education can improve this horrid situation, she says. She’ll come for an interview.

In the hotel lobby, I meet the girl and her father. She’s about 10 years old. Her father seems nervous. She asks what she should say in the interview. I tell her to stick to what happened, share her experience. Her feelings. She wants the exact words she should say. She’ll memorize them, she says. I tell her just to speak from the heart. Honesty and innocence are strength. Tell us what it was like for you and your friends when the Taliban came.

She's ten-years-old, and she does a great interview. Her first. When she's 15, the Taliban shoot her in the face and the world comes to know her as *Malala*.

That day, the crew were exchanging heavy glances instead of giving her their full attention. They were thinking about Musa Khan. We all were. Another journalist murdered.

(brief pause)

After the interview, I go to a market to get some fruit. It's busy with people buying and selling. I pay for some apples, and when I look up, I meet the eyes of a man who doesn't think I belong there. His face has no emotion, but his eyes are hard with hatred.

I am a target.

I take my apples back to the hotel. I stay the night, but I don't sleep. There is gunfire outside the hotel, and I keep seeing that face.

The next day, we finish the assignment, and I quit my job.

I am going crazy, so I go home to the village. The sheep and goats, and memories of a time before all this. But I am not the same.

Nadeem comes to see me, and I avoid him. My first and closest friend comes to see me, and I avoid him.

Nadeem's father died when he was small, so they lived with his uncle who drove a tractor on a rich landowner's farm. I wanted more for Nadeem than this, and I begged my father to help. My father was influential at my school, and soon, Nadeem was my classmate. We were in the same class for the next few years, until the rules for advancing to the next grade became stricter. By then, Nadeem was done with school and under pressure to provide for himself and his mother. When we were ten, he went to work with his uncle.

(brief pause)

But our friendship didn't change. At the end of the day, he waited for me outside the school. We would walk home through the orchards-- mangos, oranges, or guavas. I sang the latest movie songs for him. He loved music. He'd hear his uncle sing while

they were on the tractor, and he'd sing those songs for me. He imitated the voices of famous singers. He was a great dancer.

He made kites for my little brother, we played cricket, and hit targets with slingshots. I trusted him with everything, even my first love.

That day I touched a woman for the first time, I went straight to Nadeem with the details. I wasn't allowed out after sunset, but that night I was with Nadeem until late, going over and over every detail of that beautiful and momentous afternoon. And he listened.

This is who Nadeem was to me.

But when I came back from Swat and he came to see me, I had nothing to offer. He told me some guys were harassing him, they said he couldn't walk on their street, and I told him to ignore them. I should have been angry, but I was dead inside. I felt nothing.

I stayed at home, withdrawn, depressed. He came to check on me, and I avoided him.

Then, one day, my cousin came to tell me that Nadeem had been hurt. The guys who'd been bullying him, had beaten him, badly. And I felt something. Rage.

My cousin and I pick up a friend, and the three of us head off on a motorcycle to find the guy who beat up Nadeem.

We found him.

I was insane. I wanted to hurt him, and we did. We beat him, we threw him in a dried creek bed, and we didn't stop. We left him there and for me, the matter was over.

Then the guy comes to my house with his father. His father wants to see my father. He lifts his son's shirt to show my father his injuries. My father is horrified. His back looks like a map of some congested city. There are deep marks where I hit him with a cable. I defend myself, and my father summons Nadeem. Nadeem tells my father how he has been bullied and beaten, and it's clear that the guy with fresh bruises was the one to start it. He apologizes to Nadeem, and my father is satisfied.

I go to bed thinking about those bruises. How did I do that? I had become an animal.

The next day, I move to Lahore. I had been happy there once when I was a student. But this time, I don't see my friends. I take a room in a run-down building and stay there. I read poetry. Sometimes, I go to the market and buy food, but I hurry back to the room where more days pass.

In the world, I am a ghost.

I see other ghosts when I go out for food. It isn't just me. In a shop and waiting to pay, I see a teenager in front of me buy cookies. He opens the packet and pulls out a slip of paper with something written on it. He tears it in half and throws it in the trash. He turns to leave, and I see deep sadness in his eyes. Defeat.

When I am at the register, I pull his torn paper from the trash. "You will travel to many places," it says. A fortune that could not have been intended for a young man with a Pakistani passport.

In my room in Lahore, there was a window where the sun came in, and I could hear the pigeons cooing outside. I started bringing food for them when I'd got food for myself. I couldn't reach their nest at the top of the window, so I left the food on the ledge. At first, I just heard the pair of pigeons cooing and the food went untouched.

Then, one day, I returned to my room and the pigeons were inside.

(brief pause)

I stood at the door and watched them for a long time. This might have been the first time they'd been inside. They were looking at each thing with so much interest, hopping to the next thing. I wanted to introduce myself to them, but I was afraid they'd fly away. Very quietly, I filled a bowl with water and put it on the floor and slid it closer to them. Some water spilled on the floor, and they drank from the spill. I dropped a little more water on the floor. Again, they ignored the bowl and drank from the floor.

In time we become friends. When I sat down to eat, I put food on the windowsill. They'd come, and we ate together.

Those were days of a blank mind. I was carefree. I didn't see a newspaper or check my email for almost a month.

Sometimes I was still asleep at lunch time, and one of the pigeons would peck at my feet or pull at the sheet to wake me. We became so friendly that they would sit on my arm and my shoulder without any fear.

One day, I put food on the windowsill, but the pigeons never came. The next day I still didn't see them. Every day, I put food on the sill and waited, but I never saw my pigeons again.

(pause)

I was done with news. I get a job with an entertainment channel. I'll write uplifting things, I decide.

But there are five or six terror attacks every day, and people are not interested in entertainment, and before I've worked there a month, the entertainment channel becomes a news channel. And again, I am surrounded by news of bomb blast after bomb blast.

I find the courage to resign, and my brother calls me.

Nadeem is dead.

(pause)

An accident, he says. I get off the phone to take it in. *Nadeem is dead.*

(pause)

(actor struggling to believe it)

He fell from the tractor and hit his head on a rock.

(pause)

I go home.

I go to his house and his mother hugs me and sobs in my arms. There is Nadeem's dead body. I can't cry. We prepare his body, and I see a star-shaped scar on his back. There are many scars, but this one came from a deep wound. A beating. They used something that penetrated the skin, really deep.

As we lower his body into the grave, I am glad I went after that bully. My beloved Nadeem.

After the burial, I sit with his mother for a while at their home. Alone in his room, I retrieve my old love letters hidden in his wall clock. My conspirator in all things. Nadeem is dead.

A production house offers me a gig on a documentary on American drone attacks and the bomb blasts in Pakistan. It is not something I want to do, but they are paying well. I need money, and I need to stop thinking about Nadeem.

I take a bus to Peshawar – where there is a bomb blast almost every day. I'll collect some visuals and short interviews of victims' families. There won't be the stress of deadlines. I won't need to rush to a bomb site before the ambulances arrive. I might like this gig.

I stay in Peshawar. To that point, the area has been attacked by drones more than 350 times, killing 4,000 people. The local people are outraged by these attacks. They blame America, but they also blame the Pakistani government that allows the Americans to attack them.

America armed the Mujahadeen to fight the Russians in Afghanistan. During that war, the fighters were called *Mujahadeen* or Islamic warriors. Now that they are resisting Americans, these same people are called *terrorists*.

They have a point. They also have a taste for blood.

Hundreds of suicide bombers have already killed 21,000 civilians. 21,000! Trying to stop these attacks, over 15,000 Pakistani soldiers have died. No one knows how many people have gone missing.

The drone attacks continue.

They are attacking Islamic schools.

A local father who has just lost 8 children in an attack cannot understand how the U.S. could do this. I tell him that they say they are attacking madrasas because they train kids to become terrorists. "If I wanted my children to be trained as terrorists," he said, "I would have sent one or two, not all of my children."

Eighty-two children died here. They were 8-12 years old.

I go to the school and ask the cameraman to set up while I take some notes. A wall is open, and a gust of wind blows my papers from my hand. I pick them up from the floor, and one sheet has a child's bloody finger stuck to it.

(pause briefly)

It's a very small finger. Blood has clotted and dried on the end of it. It's really small. And a little curved like one would turn a finger to intertwine with someone else's finger.

Maybe he was holding on to someone by his little finger when the bomb exploded. Maybe it was his mother bringing his older brother to school. Or his father. They would have been blown up with him. Maybe his finger slipped away from them. Maybe they lost their grip in the blast. Or just after, when they were dead.

I drop it.

I look down where it lies on the ground. The blood dried dark. Such a little finger. So tiny it was overlooked when people picked up body parts.

(pause)

The producer for the documentary is married, but she's developed some crush on me. I am not in a state of mind to indulge such things, and we have an argument.

At our last meeting, instead of paying me, she gives me five poems that she has written about the scar on my forehead. She uses the information I provided and leaves my name off the credits.

For some time, I see that scar in the mirror and remember not getting paid for what was dangerous and tedious work. Then, I remember Musa Kahn, and I tell myself I am lucky to be alive.

(pause)

I returned to Islamabad to join the government TV channel as a producer/reporter. It seemed like a safe job, and the government provides scholarships for extended studies. Then I started the job, they reviewed my experience, and they sent me back to the war zone. I'm assigned to the army. We stay in a school. They feed

me stories. We play some cricket, and I decide to get outside of the camp and see for myself.

Why did I do this?

(pause)

Maybe they're not going to kill me.

(brief pause)

Of course, they are going to kill me.

Think what they did to *Sadiq*! My friend, an Intelligence Officer, told me his colleague Sadiq called with the location of a Taliban guy and went there to wait, so the guy couldn't get away. When my friend arrived with other intelligence to make the arrest, they found Sadiq's dead body in the front seat of his car. He was soaked in blood and his brain was in his lap. They took the body away by ambulance, and my friend cleaned up the car. He said driving back to the base, he kept seeing Sadiq with brain in his lap. He didn't even blink until the sun was directly in his eyes. That's when he realized he was alive, he said, and he pulled down the sun visor. A piece of Sadiq's brain dropped onto him.

I know they are going to kill me. These people are animals.

When they killed Sadiq, the Americans he worked with raised \$50,000 dollars for his pregnant wife. \$50,000!

Who will raise money for my family?

(Pause)

A slim man comes down the mountain and calls one of the guys watching me. They all stand to the side and the slim man delivers some message. They do this-- relay messages. They don't use cell phones. Phones can be traced.

His face isn't covered. I figure it's over soon.

He has a small head and a narrow face. Like the people at Shah Dola's shrine. I've seen them begging in Gujrat. They're innocent people. Maybe he won't kill me.

(brief pause)

The man with the small head talks to another Taliban and comes over to me.

He speaks in Urdu.

“What’s your name?” he says.

“Ikram.”

“Full name.”

“Nemat Ullah,” I say.

I don’t usually use my middle name. There’s a terrorist named Ehsan Ullah... Bait Ullah, Fazal Ullah, a bunch of them... but just then, I’m glad to have it. Ullah means *Allah’s kindness*. Not that I imagine my faith is going to spare me. They kill Muslims every day... I’m beardless. I work for the government.

“What do you do?” he says.

“I work in television. I’m a journalist. I want to show the lives of ordinary people here, and the problems they face.”

(gruff voice)

“Just answer the question,” he cuts me off.

I stop. He goes back to the other man, and they talk some more in Pashto. He comes back.

(In his gruff voice)

“Sit down facing the mountain!” he says.

“I’m just a tv reporter,” I say quickly, “not even a serious journalist. I’m just here, so I can get paid for my job.”

What can I say? He is going to shoot me in the back of the head. *What can I say?*

“Yeah,” he says, almost politely.

Maybe it’s not easy to shoot a guy whose name is *Allah’s Peace*.

They kill Muslims every day. They hang their bodies in the square.

“Yeah,” he says. “Don’t be afraid. Just do as you’re told.”

I do as he says. I sit back down on the same rock, this time facing the mountain.

I wonder if they will hang my body near camp.

The mountain is a short distance ahead. There are trees. Small rocks and stones are a few feet just ahead of me.

(same voice, a little louder)

“Close your eyes” he says.

I close my eyes, and I see the rocks ahead of me. I see my brain exploding onto the rocks. It’s everywhere.

I’m trying to breathe, so I don’t panic. I’m breathing fast. They can probably hear it.

I want to open my eyes... *Don’t open them!* Open them, and it will trigger the shot...

Allah!

Rocks and pieces of my brain splattered, small rocks, so small you can’t see..., big pieces between the rocks, small pieces, blood, so much, every stone covered...

I am so far from home.

(Silence)

There is complete silence all around. No wind. No birds.

(pause)

I am alive and there is no sound at all.

(brief pause)

I hear voices in the distance, and I open my eyes. I am alone.

They have moved on to the next mountain. I’m all alone.

(pause briefly)

I get up and start quickly down the mountain. The red plastic shopping bag is stuck to my shoe. I don’t stop to remove it. I scramble down the mountain until I reach the road, and I start running.

(pause)

I don’t stop running until I reach the camp.

I get back to the room, and Arshad is still asleep. I sit on the chair near the bed and put my phone on the side table.

The Major comes to announce lunch, and I join him. Plates of food are put in front of us. Beef brain curry is the dish of the day. Seriously. Beef brain. I run to the bathroom and throw up. Many times.

I decide I will file another Army PR report in the afternoon. I want to talk about my experience, but where to begin? I don't know what it means, and I don't want to tell them I left the camp.

I come back from a trip to the bathroom and see people leaving their plates. Something is happening outside.

I follow the others to an ambulance parked in the yard. A soldier has come back on a stretcher. Taliban have cut off his head. There is no way to know who it is. I am asking the soldiers beside me. "A captain," one says. "QRF." *Quick Reaction Force*. The Captain from the morning cricket has come back on a stretcher.

(pause)

I file a report for the evening news about the Captain.

(pause)

A few days later, it's over. I'm back in Islamabad, and the Army sends a letter to my channel. The person sent to cover Swat operations was perfect, it says. Send him again next time.

My boss puts the letter on the table in front of me. Good job, he says.

I am a journalist, and I have a career.

"You don't look happy." He looks confused. "Such letters are helpful for promotions."

"Sure," I say.

But I am not going back there. I am going to write poems, and lyrics. Stories and stage plays.

[Project a list of innocent people to honor with this play. Those who died before and those who have died since.

In memory of many innocent people:

The children killed by an American drone in Fata

The 137 children killed by Pakistani Taliban at Army Public School

List to be added – it will be long]

*(The monologue about the author's days in Pakistan is available on
<https://youtu.be/gLdpYPx6SeQ?si=o5LyOpdB0TouSz3D>)*

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the genre of the work by the Pakistani-American writer Ikram Basra?
2. Analyze the composition of the text (form, construction of the work): exposition, setting, culmination, denouement.
3. What is the time and space (setting)? What sort of portrait of Pakistan does the author provide?
4. Single out the stylistic devices used to display the beauty of Pakistan as a land-source of the narrator?
5. Analyze the image system represented in the text. Comment on the portraits of the Pakistani society: the local people – how do the artistic details disclose their characters' and the inner world? Does the narrator differ from the locals? How can the appearance serve as a sign of the spiritual gap between the characters?
6. What kind of postcolonial features are manifested in the depicted Pakistani society, shaping it (consider the language, religion, inner and outer military forces, traditions, international ties, job options, outfit).
7. Discuss the pictures of terrorism displayed in the text. What is the author's position towards the Taliban and their activity? Why do the government employees become the targets for Taliban?
8. What is the significance hidden behind the images of Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, bombings of the capital, the Twin Towers' destruction, the statistics of the killed ones?
9. Talk about the concept of innocence raised in the text.
10. What are the 'lessons of Quran' represented in the text? Do they speak for the narrator's religious status?
11. Find some memorable quotes that represents the main ideas of Basra's work.

12. What is the concept of love in the text? What does the following sentence stand for: “In that fragrance, there was no *us* and *them*. No *War on Terror*”?

13. Comment on the following quote: “...*“Ikram.” // “Full name.” // “Nemat Ullah,” I say. // I don’t usually use my middle name. There’s a terrorist named Ehsan Ullah... Bait Ullah, Fazal Ullah, a bunch of them... but just then, I’m glad to have it. Ullah means Allah’s kindness. Not that I imagine my faith is going to spare me. They kill Muslims every day... I’m beardless. I work for the government”*”.

14. What is the message of the final line in the text: “*But I am not going back there. I am going to write poems, and lyrics. Stories and stage plays*”?

15. Analyze verbal instrumentation of the text, rhythm, intonation. Talk about sound system, olfactory and colours in the work.

16. What is the ideological orientation of the work, its pathos?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) The spirit of terrorism in the world’s sensitive zones and its types and consequences; b) War journalism as a chronicle of the lost future; c) The psychological context of the former Anglo-Saxon colonies; d) The concept of “love” in a Muslim society.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *Pakistan: the stages of development (Indus Valley Civilization, Vedic period, Classical period, Islamic conquest, Colonial period, Pakistan Movement, Independence and Modern Pakistan).*
2. *Military tension and civic-military relation in different periods. The Taliban as a radical Islamist movement of the Sunni direction.*
3. *The “Pakistan Declaration” (titled “Now or Never; Are We to Live or Perish Forever?”), a pamphlet written and published by Choudhry Rahmat Ali, on 28 January 1933.*
4. *The Muslim League and its functions.*
5. *Pakistani literary traditions.*

Recommended reading:

1. *Aatish Ali Taseer, a memoir-part travelogue “Stranger to History: A Son's Journey Through Islamic Lands” (2009).*
2. *Fatimah Asghar, “After” (2015), “If They Come for Us” (2018), “When We Were Sisters”, (2022).*
3. *Kamila Shamsie, a novel “A God in Every Stone” (2014).*
4. *Rafia Zakaria, “The Upstairs Wife: An Intimate History of Pakistan” (2016).*

PACE 9

CHARACTERS IN THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

*“Where do we go from a world of insanity?
Somewhere on the other side of pain”.*

Tomas Eliot.

*“Country roads, take me home
To the place I belong,
West Virginia, Mountain Momma,
Take me home, country roads”.*

John Denver.

“Something ancient in my soul”.

Breece D’J. Pancake

Key terms: *West Virginia, an all-embracing code of values, a restless spirit, compassionate vision of people, judgmental quality, rural change and isolation, melancholic humor, identifying with place over people, to feel an irreconcilable detachment with, anxious and irritated, stores old hurts and his fantasies, unfulfilled anticipation, the blood history, a powerful sense of things*

BREECE D’J PANCAKE was an esteemed American author whose literary prowess has drawn comparisons to renowned twentieth-century writers like William Faulkner, James Joyce, Flannery O’Connor, and Samuel Beckett. His collection of short fiction is regarded as a masterpiece in American literature. His debut story, *“Trilobites,”* was published in *The Atlantic* in 1977, which inadvertently led to the adoption of the middle initials *“D’J”* due to a misinterpretation of his middle name *“Dexter”* and the name *“John,”* which he embraced after converting to Catholicism in his mid-twenties. Tragically, Pancake passed away on April 8, 1979, from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The concise anthology of short stories that Pancake left behind earned a Pulitzer Prize nomination and was recognized as an American Library Association Notable Book for 1983. In correspondence with author John Casey, who served as Pancake’s friend and university professor, Kurt Vonnegut penned a letter: *“I give you my word of honor that he is merely the best writer, the most sincere writer I’ve ever read. What I suspect is that it hurt too much, was no fun at all to be that good. You and I will never know.”*

1. *What does the term a “Lost Generation” mean?*

2. *How do you understand the word “kinship”? What is the significance of “home” for a person? Why do young people escape from home? What makes them behave in asocial way?*

3. *What do you know of the American small-town-society? What sort of life, do you think, they have? What problems do they have to tackle? What are the details of a common chronotope of a small American town, located deep in the country? Is it easy or difficult to break with the traditional mode of life endemic for some area?*

4. *What are trilobites? Why were trilobites unique?*

Breece Dexter (D’J) PANCAKE

TRILOBITES

“I see a concrete patch in the street. It’s shaped like Florida, and I recollect what I wrote in Ginny’s yearbook: ‘We will live on mangoes and love.’”

B. D’J. Pancake

DECEMBER 1977 ISSUE

I open the truck’s door, step onto the brick side street. I look at Company Hill again, all sort of worn down and round. A long time ago it was real craggy, and stood like an island in the Teays River. It took over a million years to make that smooth little hill, and I’ve looked all over it for trilobites. I think how it has always been there and always will be, least for as long as it matters. The air is smoky with summertime. A bunch of starlings swim over me. I was born in this country and I have never very much wanted to leave. I remember Pop’s dead eyes looking at me. They were real dry, and that took something out of me. I shut the door, head for the café.

I see a concrete patch in the street. It’s shaped like Florida, and I recollect what I wrote in Ginny’s yearbook: “We will live on mangoes and love.” And she up and left without me – two years she’s been down there without me. She sends me postcards

with alligator wrestlers and flamingos on the front. She never asks me any questions. I feel like a real fool for what I wrote, and go into the café.

The place is empty, and I rest in the cooled air. Tinker Reilly's little sister pours my coffee. She has good hips. They are kind of like Ginny's and they slope nice curves to her legs. Hips and legs like that climb steps into airplanes. She goes to the counter end and scoffs down the rest of her sundae. I smile at her, but she's jailbait. Jailbait and black snakes are two things I won't touch with a window pole. One time I used an old black snake for a bullwhip, snapped the sucker's head off, and Pop beat hell out of me with it. I think how Pop could make me pretty mad sometimes. I grin.

I think about last night when Ginny called. Her old man drove her down from the airport in Charleston. She was already bored. Can we get together? Sure. Maybe do some brew? Sure. Same old Colly. Same old Ginny. She talked through her beak. I wanted to tell her Pop had died, and Mom was on the warpath to sell the farm, but Ginny was talking through her beak. It gave me the creeps.

Just like the cups give me the creeps. I look at the cups hanging on pegs by the storefront. They're decal-named and covered with grease and dust. There's four of them, and one is Pop's, but that isn't what gives me the creeps. The cleanest one is Jim's. It's clean because he still uses it, but it hangs there with the rest. Through the window, I can see him crossing the street. His joints are cemented with arthritis. I think of how long it'll be before I croak, but Jim is old, and it gives me the creeps to see his cup hanging up there. I go to the door to help him in.

He says, "Tell the truth, now," and his old paw pinches my arm.

I say, "Can't do her." I help him to his stool.

I pull this globby rock from my pocket, and slap it on the counter in front of Jim. He turns it with his drawn hand, examines it. "Gastropod," he says. "Probably Permian. You buy again." I can't win with him. He knows them all.

"I still can't find a trilobite," I say.

"There are a few," he says. "Not many. Most of the outcrops around here are too late for them."

The girl brings Jim's coffee in his cup, and we watch her pump back to the kitchen. Good hips.

"You see that?" He jerks his head toward her.

I say, "Moundsville Molasses." I can spot jailbait by a mile.

"Hell, girl's age never stopped your dad and me in Michigan."

"Tell the truth."

"Sure. You got to time it so you nail the first freight out when your pants are up."

I look at the windowsill. It is speckled with the crisp skeletons of flies. "Why'd you and Pop leave Michigan?"

The crinkles around Jim's eyes go slack. He says, "The war," and sips his coffee.

I say, "He never made it back there."

"Me either – always wanted to – there or Germany – just to look around."

"Yeah, he promised to show me where you all buried that silverware and stuff during the war."

He says, "On the Elbe. Probably plowed up by now."

My eye socket reflects in my coffee, steam curls around my face, and I feel a headache coming on. I look up to ask Tinker's sister for an aspirin, but she is giggling in the kitchen.

"That's where he got that wound," Jim says. "Got it on the Elbe. He was out a long time. Cold, Jesus, it was cold. I had him for dead, but he came to. Says, 'I been all over the world'; says, 'China's so pretty, Jim.'"

"Dreaming?"

"I don't know. I quit worrying about that stuff years ago."

Tinker's sister comes up with her coffeepot to make us for a tip. I ask her for an aspirin, and see she's got a pimple on her collarbone. I don't remember seeing pictures of China. I watch little sister's hips.

"Trent still wanting your place for that housing project?"

“Sure,” I say. “Mom’ll probably sell it, too. I can’t run the place like Pop did. Cane looks bad as hell.” I drain off my cup. I’m tired of talking about the farm. “Going out with Ginny tonight,” I say.

“Give her that for me,” he says. He takes a poke at my whang. I don't like it when he talks about her like that. He sees I don't like it, and his grin slips. “Found a lot of gas for her old man. One hell of a guy before his wife pulled out.”

I wheel on my stool, clap his weak old shoulder. I think of Pop, and try to joke. “You stink so bad the undertaker’s following you.”

He laughs. “You were the ugliest baby ever born, you know that?”

I grin, and start out the door. I can hear him shout to little sister: “Come on over here, honey, I got a joke for you.”

* * *

The sky has a film. Its heat burns through the salt on my skin, draws it tight. I start the truck, drive west along the highway built on the dry bed of the Teays. There’s wide bottoms, and the hills on either side have yellowy billows the sun can’t burn off. I pass an iron sign put up by the WPA: “Surveyed by George Washington, the Teays River Pike.” I see fields and cattle where buildings stand, picture them from some long-off time.

I turn off the main road to our house. Clouds make the sunshine blink light and dark in the yard. I look again at the spot of ground where Pop fell. He had lain spread-eagled in the thick grass after a sliver of metal from his old wound passed to his brain. I remember thinking how beaten his face looked with prints in it from the grass.

I reach the high barn, and start my tractor, then drive to the knob at the end of our land and stop. I sit there, smoke, look again at the cane. The rows curve tight, but around them is a sort of scar of clay, and the leaves have a purplish blight. I don’t wonder about the blight. I know the cane is too far gone to worry about the blight. Far off, somebody chops wood, and the ax-bites echo back to me. The hillsides are baked here and have heat-ghosts. Our cattle move to the wind gap, and birds hide in caps of trees where we never cut the timber for pasture. I look at the wrinkly old boundary

post. Pop set it when the hobo and soldier days were over. It is a locust-tree post, and will be there a long time. A few dead morning glories cling to it.

“I’m just not no good at it,” I say. “It just don’t do to work your ass off at something you’re not no good at.”

The chopping stops. I listen to the beat of grasshopper wings, and strain to spot blight on the far side of the bottoms.

I say, “Yessir, Colly, you couldn’t grow pole beans in a pile of horseshit.”

I squash my cigarette against the floor plate. I don’t want a fire. I press the starter, and bump around the fields, then down to the ford of the drying creek, and up the other side. Turkle fall from logs into stagnant pools. I stop my machine. The cane here is just as bad. I rub a sunburn into the back of my neck.

I say, “Shot to hell, Gin. Can’t do nothing right.”

I lean back, try to forget these fields and flanking hills. A long time before me or these tools, the Teays flowed here. I can almost feel the cold waters and the tickling the trilobites make when they crawl. All the water from the old mountains flowed west. But the land lifted. I have only the bottoms and stone animals I collect. I blink and breathe. My father is a khaki cloud in the canebrakes, and Ginny is no more to me than the bitter smell in the blackberry briars up on the ridge.

I take up my sack and gaff for a turkle. Some quick chubs flash under the bank. In the moss-dapples, I see rings spread where a turkle ducked under. This sucker is mine. The pool smells like rot, and the sun is a hardish brown.

I wade in. He goes for the roots of a log. I shove around, and feel my gaff twitch. This is a smart turkle, but still a sucker. I bet he could pull liver off a hook for the rest of his days, but he is a sucker for the roots that hold him while I work my gaff. I pull him up, and see he is a snapper. He’s got his stubby neck curved round, biting at the gaff. I lay him on the sand, and take out Pop’s knife. I step on the shell, and press hard. That fat neck gets skinny quick, and sticks way out. A little blood oozes from the gaff wound into the grit, but when I slice, a puddle forms.

A voice says, “Get a dragon, Colly?”

I shiver a little, and look up. It's only the loansman standing on the creekbank in his tan suit. His face is splotched pink, and the sun is turning his glasses black.

"I crave them now and again," I say. I go on slitting gristle, skinning back the shell.

"Aw, your daddy loved turtle meat," the guy says.

I listen to scratching cane leaves in the late sun. I dump the tripe into the pool, bag the rest, and head up the ford. I say, "What can I do for you?"

This guy starts up: "I saw you from the road—just came down to see about my offer." "I told you yesterday, Mr. Trent. It ain't mine to sell." I tone it down. I don't want hard feelings. "You got to talk to Mom."

Blood drips from the poke to the dust. It makes dark paste. Trent pockets his hands, looks over the cane. A cloud blocks the sun, and my crop glows greenish in the shade.

"This is about the last real farm left around here," Trent says.

"Blight'll get what the dry left," I say. I shift the sack to my free hand. I see I'm giving in. I'm letting this guy go and push me around.

"How's your mother getting along?" he says. I see no eyes behind his smoky glasses.

"Pretty good," I say. "She's wanting to move to Akron." I swing the sack a little toward Ohio, and spray some blood on Trent's pants. "Sorry," I say.

"It'll come out," he says, but I hope not. I grin and watch the turtle's mouth gape on the sand. "Well, why Akron?" he says. "Family there?"

I nod. "Hers," I say "She'll take you up on the offer." This hot shadow saps me, and my voice is a whisper. I throw the sack to the floor plate, climb up to grind the starter. I feel better in a way I've never known. The hot metal seat burns through my jeans.

"Saw Ginny at the post office," this guy shouts. "She sure is a pretty."

I wave, almost smile, as I gear to lumber up the dirt road. I pass Trent's dusty Lincoln, move away from my bitten cane. It can go now; the stale seed, the drought,

the blight – it can go when she signs the papers. I know I will always be to blame, but it can't just be my fault. "What about you?" I say. "Your side hurt all that morning, but you wouldn't see no doctor. Nosir, you had to see that your dumb boy got the crop put proper in the ground." I shut my trap to keep from talking like a fool.

* * *

I stop my tractor on the terraced road to the barn, and look back across the cane to the creekbed. Yesterday, Trent said the bottoms would be filled with dirt. That will put the houses above flood, but it'll raise the flood line. Under all those houses, my turkles will turn to stone. Our Herefords make rusty patches on the hill. I see Pop's grave, and wonder if the new high waters will get over it.

I watch the cattle play. A rain must be coming. A rain is always coming when cattle play. Sometimes they play for snow, but mostly it is rain. After Pop whipped the daylights out of me with that black snake, he hung it on a fence. But it didn't rain. The cattle weren't playing, and it didn't rain, but I kept my mouth shut. The snake was bad enough, I didn't want the belt too.

I look a long time at that hill. My first time with Ginny was in the tree-cap of that hill. I think of how close we could be then, and maybe even now, I don't know. I'd like to go with Ginny, fluff her hair in any other field. But I can see her in the post office. I bet she was sending postcards to some guy in Florida.

I drive on to the barn, stop under the shed. I wipe sweat from my face with my sleeve, and see how the seams have slipped from my shoulders. If I sit rigid, I can fill them again. The turkle is moving in the sack, and it gives me the creeps to hear his shell clinking against the gaff. I take the poke to the spigot to clean the game. Pop always liked turkle in a mulligan. He talked a lot about mulligan and the jungles just an hour before I found him.

I wonder what it will be like when Ginny comes by. I hope she's not talking through her beak. Maybe she'll take me to her house this time. If her momma had been anybody but Pop's cousin, her old man would let me go to her house. Screw him. But

I can talk to Ginny. I wonder if she remembers the plans we made for the farm. And we wanted kids. She always nagged about a peacock. I will get her one.

I smile as I dump the sack into the rusty sink, but the barn smell – the hay, the cattle, the gasoline – it reminds me. Me and Pop built this barn. I look at every nail with the same dull pain.

I clean the meat, and lay it out on a piece of cloth torn from an old bed sheet. I fold the corners, walk to the house.

The air is hot, but it sort of churns, and the set screens in the kitchen window rattle. From inside, I can hear Mom and Trent talking on the front porch, and I leave the window up. It is the same come-on he gave me yesterday, and I bet Mom is eating it up. She probably thinks about tea parties with her cousins in Akron. She never listens to what anybody says. She just says all right to anything anybody but me or Pop ever said. She even voted for Hoover before they got married. I throw the turkle meat into a skillet, get a beer. Trent softens her up with me; I prick my ears.

“I would wager on Colly’s agreement,” he says. I can still hear a hill twang in his voice.

“I told him Sam’d put him on at Goodrich,” she says. “They’d teach him a trade.”

“And there are a good many young people in Akron. You know he’d be happier.” I think how his voice sounds like a damn TV. “Well, he’s awful good to keep me company. Don’t go out none since Ginny took off to that college.”

I lean against the sink, rub my hands across my face. The smell of turkle has soaked between my fingers. It’s the same smell as the pools.

Through the door to the living room, I see the rock case Pop built for me. The white labels show up behind the dark gloss of glass. Ginny helped me find over half of those. If I did study in a college, I could come back and take Jim’s place at the gas wells. I like to hold little stones that lived so long ago. But geology doesn’t mean lick to me. I can’t even find a trilobite.

I stir the meat, listen for noise or talk on the porch, but there is none. I look out. A lightning flash peels shadows from the yard, and leaves a dark strip under the eave of the barn. I feel a scum on my skin in the still air. I take my supper to the porch.

I look down the valley to where bison used to graze before the first rails were put down. Now those rails are covered with a highway, and cars rush back and forth in the wind. I watch Trent's car back out, heading east into town. I'm afraid to ask right off if he got what he wanted.

I stick my plate under Mom's nose, but she waves it off. I sit in Pop's old rocker, watch the storm come. Dust devils puff around on the berm, and maple sprigs land in the yard with their white bellies up. Across the road, our windbreak bends, rows of cedars furling every which way at once.

"Coming a big one?" I say.

Mom says nothing and fans herself with the funeral home fan. The wind layers her hair, but she keeps that cardboard picture of Jesus bobbing like crazy. Her face changes. I know what she thinks. She thinks how she isn't the girl in the picture on the mantel. She isn't standing with Pop's garrison cap cocked on her head.

"I wish you'd of come out while he's here," she says. She stares across the road to the windbreak.

"I heard him yesterday," I say.

"It ain't that at all," she says, and I watch her brow come down a little. "It's like when Jim called us askin' if we wanted some beans an' I had to tell him to leave 'em in the truck at church. I swan how folks talk when men come 'round a widow."

I know Jim talks like a dumb old fart, but it isn't like he'd rape her or anything. I don't want to argue with her. "Well," I say, "who owns this place?"

"We still do. Don't have to sign nothin' till tomorrow."

She quits bobbing Jesus to look at me. She starts up: "You'll like Akron. Law, I bet Marcy's youngest girl'd love to meet you. She's a regular rock hound too. 'Sides, your father always said we'd move there when you got big enough to run the farm."

I know she has to say it. I just keep my mouth shut. The rain comes, ringing the roof tin. I watch the high wind snap branches from the trees. Pale splinters of light shoot down behind the far hills. We are just brushed by this storm.

* * *

Ginny's sports car hisses east on the road, honking as it passes, but I know she will be back.

"Just like her momma," Mom says, "racin' the devil for the beer joints."

"She never knew her momma," I say. I set my plate on the floor. I'm glad Ginny thought to honk.

"What if I's to run off with some foreman from the wells?"

"You wouldn't do that, Mom."

"That's right," she says, and watches the cars roll by. "Shot her in Chicago. Shot hisself too."

I look beyond the hills and time. There is red hair clouding the pillow, blood-splattered by the slug. Another body lies rumped and warm at the bed foot.

"Folks said he done it cause she wouldn't marry him. Found two weddin' bands in his pocket. Feisty little I-taliun."

I see police and reporters in the tiny room. Mumbles spill into the hallway, but nobody really looks at the dead woman's face.

"Well," Mom says, "at least they was still wearin' their clothes."

The rain slows, and for a long time I sit watching the blue chicory swaying beside the road. I think of all the people I know who left these hills. Only Jim and Pop came back to the land, worked it.

"Lookee at the willow wisps." Mom points to the hills.

The rain trickles, and as it seeps in to cool the ground, a fog rises. The fog curls little ghosts into the branches and gullies. The sun tries to sift through this mist, but is only a tarnished brown splotch in the pinkish sky. Wherever the fog is, the light is a burnished orange.

"Can't recall the name Pop gave it," I say.

The colors shift, trade tones.

"He had some funny names all right. Called a tomcat a 'pussy scat.'"

I think back. "Cornflakes were 'pone-rakes,' and a chicken was a 'sick-un.'"

We laugh.

“Well,” she says, “he’ll always be a part of us.”

The glommy paint on the chair arm packs under my fingernails. I think how she could foul up a free lunch.

I stand up to go in, but I hold the screen, look for something to say.

“I ain’t going to live in Akron,” I say.

“An’ just where you gonna live, Mister?”

“I don’t know.”

She starts up with her fan again.

“Me and Ginny’s going low-riding,” I say.

She won’t look at me. “Get in early. Mr. Trent don’t keep no late hours for no beer drinkers.”

The house is quiet, and I can hear her out there sniffing. But what to hell can I do about it? I hurry to wash the smell of turkle from my hands. I shake all over while the water flows down. I talked back. I’ve never talked back. I’m scared, but I stop shaking. Ginny can’t see me shaking. I just walk out to the road without ever looking back to the porch.

I climb in the car, let Ginny kiss my cheek. She looks different. I’ve never seen these clothes, and she wears too much jewelry.

“You look great,” she says. “Haven’t changed a bit.”

We drive west along the Pike.

“Where we going?”

She says, “Let’s park for old times’ sake. How’s the depot?”

I say, “Sure.” I reach back for a can of Falls City. “You let your hair grow.”

“You like?”

“Um, yeah.”

We drive. I look at the tinged fog, the colors changing hue.

She says, “Sort of an eerie evening, huh?” It all comes from her beak.

“Pop always called it a fool’s fire or something.”

We pull in beside the old depot. It's mostly boarded up. We drink, watch the colors slip to gray dusk in the sky.

"You ever look in your yearbook?" I gulp down the rest of my City.

She goes crazy laughing. "You know," she says, "I don't even know where I put that thing."

I feel way too mean to say anything. I look across the railroad to a field sown in timothy. There are wells there, pumps to suck the ancient gases. The gas burns blue, and I wonder if the ancient sun was blue. The tracks run on till they're a dot in the brown haze. They give off clicks from their switches. Some tankers wait on the spur. Their wheels are rusting to the tracks. I wonder what to hell I ever wanted with trilobites.

"Big night in Rock Camp," I say. I watch Ginny drink. Her skin is so white it glows yellowish, and the last light makes sparks in her red hair.

She says, "Daddy would raise hell. *Me* this close to the wells."

"You're a big girl now. C'mon, let's walk."

We get out, and she up and grabs my arm. Her fingers feel like ribbons on the veins of my hand.

"How long you in for?" I say.

"Just a week here, then a week with Daddy in New York. I can't wait to get back. It's great."

"You got a guy?"

She looks at me with this funny smile of hers. "Yeah, I got a guy. He's doing plankton research."

Ever since I talked back, I've been afraid, but now I hurt again. We come to the tankers, and she takes hold on a ladder, steps up.

"This right?" She looks funny, all crouched in like she's just nailed a drag on the fly. I laugh.

"Nail the end nearest the engine. If you slip, you get throwed clear. Way you are a drag on the fly'd suck you under. 'Sides, nobody'd ride a tanker."

She steps down, but doesn't take my hand. "He taught you everything. What killed him?"

"Little shell fragment. Been in him since the war. Got in his blood ..." I snap my fingers. I want to talk, but the picture won't become words. I see myself scattered, every cell miles from the others. I pull them back and kneel in the dark grass. I roll the body faceup, and look in the eyes a long time before I shut them. "You never talk about your momma," I say.

She says, "I don't want to," and goes running to an open window in the depot. She peeks in, turns to me. "Can we go in?"

"Why? Nothing in there but old freight scales."

"Because it's spooky and neat and I want to." She runs back, kisses me on the cheek. "I'm bored with this glum look. Smile!"

I give up, and walk to the depot. I drag a rotten bench under the broken window, and climb in. I take Ginny's hand to help her. A blade of glass slices her forearm. The cut path is shallow, but I take off my T-shirt to wrap it. The blood blots purple on the cloth.

"Hurt?"

"Not really."

I watch a mud dauber land on the glass blade. Its metal-blue wings flick as it walks the edge. It sucks what the glass has scraped from her skin. I hear them working in the walls.

Ginny is at the other window, and she peers through a knothole in the plywood.

I say, "See that light green spot on the second hill?"

"Yeah."

"That's the copper on your-all's roof."

She turns, stares at me.

"I come here lots," I say. I breathe the musty air. I turn away from her, and look out the window to Company Hill, but I can feel her stare. Company Hill looks bigger in the dusk, and I think of all the hills around town I've never set foot on. Ginny comes

up behind me, and there's a glass-crunch with her steps. The hurt arm goes around me, the tiny spot of blood cold against my back.

"What is it, Colly? Why can't we have any fun?"

"When I was a young punk, I tried to run away from home. I was walking through this meadow on the other side of the Hill, and this shadow passed over me. I honest to god thought it was a pterodactyl. It was a damned airplane. I was so damn mad, I came home." I peel chips of paint from the window frame, wait for her to talk. She leans against me, and I kiss her real deep. Her waist bunches in my hands. The skin of her neck is almost too white in the faded evening. I know she doesn't understand.

I slide her to the floor. Her scent rises to me, and I shove crates aside to make room. I don't wait. She isn't making love, she's getting laid. All right, I think, all right. Get laid. I pull her pants around her ankles, rut her. I think of Tinker's sister. Ginny isn't here. Tinker's sister is under me. A wash of blue light passes over me. I open my eyes to the floor, smell that tang of rain-wet wood. Black snakes. It was the only time he had to whip me.

"Let me go with you," I say. I want to be sorry, but I can't.

"Colly, please ..." She shoves me back. Her head is rolling in splinters of paint and glass.

I look a long time at the hollow shadows hiding her eyes. She is somebody I met a long time ago. I can't remember her name for a minute, then it comes back to me. I sit against the wall and my spine aches. I listen to the mud daubers building nests, and trace a finger along her throat.

She says, "I want to go. My arm hurts." Her voice comes from someplace deep in her chest.

We climb out. A yellow light burns on the crossties, and the switches click. Far away, I hear a train. She gives me my shirt, and gets in her car. I stand there looking at the blood spots on the cloth. I feel old as hell. When I look up, her taillights are reddish blurs in the fog.

I walk around to the platform, slump on the bench. The evening cools my eyelids. I think of how that one time was the only airplane that ever passed over me.

I picture my father – a young hobo with the Michigan sunset making him squint, the lake behind him. His face is hard from all the days and places he fought to live in, and of a sudden, I know his mistake was coming back here to set that locust-tree post on the knob.

“Ever notice how only blue lightning bugs come out after a rain? Green ones almost never do.”

I hear the train coming. She is highballing all right. No stiffs in that blind baggage.

“Well, you know the Teays must of been a big river. Just stand on Company Hill, and look across the bottoms. You’ll see.”

My skin is heavy with her noise. Her light cuts a wide slice in the fog. No stiff in his right mind could try this one on the fly. She's hell-bent for election.

“Jim said it flowed west by northwest – all the way up to the old St. Lawrence Drain. Had garfish – ten, maybe twenty foot long. Said they’re still in there.”

Good old Jim’ll probably croak on a lie like that. I watch her beat by. A worn-out tie belches mud with her weight. She’s just too fast to jump. Plain and simple.

I get up. I’ll spend tonight at home. I’ve got eyes to shut in Michigan – maybe even Germany or China, I don’t know yet. I walk, but I’m not scared. I feel my fear moving away in rings through time for a million years.

(Source: *The Atlantic* [Electronic resource]. – Electronic text data. Regime of access: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1977/12/trilobites/376288/>, free (date of the application: 10.10.2023). – Header from the screen)

Questions for discussion:

1. Talk about the significance of the title in the story. What does the concept “*trilobites*” stand for in this very context?
2. What is the genre of the work by Breece D’J Pancake?
3. Identify the theme and the main conflict. What are the problems raised in the text?

4. Talk about the composition of the text and its form (exposition, setting, culmination, denouement).

5. Reflect on the setting of the story. Talk about the artistic techniques: portrait, scenery, interior, psychologism.

6. Analyze the figurative and imagery system. What artistic details can be singled out? What is their role in the characterization of the characters?

7. In what way is American folk culture of the XXth century depicted in the story?

8. In his stories Breece D’J Pancake raises questions about the ways in which we develop and deal with distance in our lives – distance from the work we do, from people we love, and from the places in which we live. What are the distances portrayed in “*Trilobites*”?

9. Two years earlier from the events depicted at the moment of narration, Colly had written in the girl's yearbook, “We will live on mangoes and love”; now the grownup Ginny's mind is elsewhere and, though she is happy to have sex with him and generally pass the time, she neither shares, nor understands, Colly's love. Find the examples in the text that prove their alienation.

10. At the story's climax, Colly's bitterness overcomes him, as he and Ginny have sex in a ruined depot building. What does the description of their intimacy speak for?

11. As the story continues, the narrator shows concern for the various people he meets, but is unable to get truly close to them. What makes this connection impossible?

12. This sense of history and baffled love are Pancake trademarks of the author's style. What are the roles of love and history in “*Trilobites*”?

13. In what way does Pancake juxtaposes shifting human relationships with imposing natural landscapes?

14. In his other story “*A Room Forever*” Pancake contrasts the narrator's transitory life with the steadiness of the river on which he works: “*But on the river it's*

always the same. Tomorrow starts another month on the river, then a month on land – only the tales we tell will change.” What does water symbolize in “*Trilobites*”? Reflect on the concept of stagnancy in the story.

15. Analyze the female characters in the text. Identify their function.

16. Recurring images of death and decay create powerful effects in “*Trilobites*.” After references in the title and several early paragraphs to dead marine creatures, Pancake presents a graphic picture of Colly’s killing a turtle. Reflect on the significance of the episode.

17. What role does the toponymy play in the short story?

18. What is the role of the end and the beginning of the work? Talk about the first paragraph of the short story. What does it set up? What kind of emotional atmosphere does it create? How does the beginning of the work prepare for the perception of the whole text?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Compare the peculiarity of depiction of the topic of love in two stories by Breece Pancake “*A Room Forever*” and “*Trilobites*”; b) The religious issues in the story “*The Mark*” by Pancake; c) The issue of loneliness in “*Time and Again*” by Pancake. d) Your topic choice related to the legacy by Pancake.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *The biography of Breece D’J Pancake and his creative path.*
2. *American literature of Pancake’s life period – themes, problems, representatives.*
3. *The “Lost Generation” – the history of the term. The representatives.*
4. *Social issues in American literature of the second half of the XXth century.*
5. *Social issues in American literature today.*

Recommended reading:

1. *“The Catcher in the Rye” by J.D. Salinger.*
2. *“A Room Forever” by B.D. Pancake.*
3. *“Hollow” by B.D. Pancake.*
4. *“The Mark” by B.D. Pancake.*
5. *“Time and Again” by B.D. Pancake.*
6. *“First Day of Winter” by B.D. Pancake.*
7. *“The Honored Dead” by B.D. Pancake.*

PACE 10

**“WHAT IS A WOMAN?”: AFGHANI-AMERICAN LITERATURE ON GENDER
ISSUES**

*“Like a compass needle that points north, a man’s accusing finger always finds
a woman. Always.”*

Khaled Hosseini, *“A Thousand Splendid Suns”*, (2007).

*“They made me invisible, shrouded and non-being
A shadow, no existence, made silent and unseeing
Denied of freedom, confined to my cage
Tell me how to handle my anger and my rage?”*

Zieba Shorish-Shamley about the Taliban, from *“Look into my World”*
published on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of
Human Rights

The Taliban in Their Own Words:

*“It's like having a flower, or a rose. You water it and keep it at home for
yourself, to look at it and smell it. It [a woman] is not supposed to be taken out of the
house to be smelled”.*

Syed Ghaisuddin, Taliban Minister of Education, when asked why women
needed to be confined at home

Key terms: *The issue of dominance, misogyny, invisibility, victimization, spousal abuse, symptoms of abuse, radical transformation, male gaze, the role of religion, absolute control over, violence, the male-dominated culture, a burqa*

KHALED HOSSEINI, born on March 4, 1965, in Kabul, Afghanistan, migrated to Paris in 1976 and later settled in California, USA, in 1980. He emerged as an Afghan-American novelist, gaining prominence for his vivid portrayals of Afghanistan in novels like *“The Kite Runner”* (2003), *“A Thousand Splendid Suns”* (2007), and *“And the Mountains Echoed”* (2013). Hosseini attended Santa Clara University, where he pursued biology, and later enrolled in medical school at the University of California, San Diego, in 1989, earning his medical degree. After completing his residency at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, he practiced as an internist from 1996 to 2004. Today, Khaled Hosseini stands as one of the most acclaimed and bestselling authors globally, with his books published in over seventy countries and selling more than 40 million copies worldwide.

In 2006, Khaled Hosseini was designated as a Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency. Following a trip to Afghanistan with UNHCR, he founded The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, aimed at offering humanitarian aid to the Afghan people. Currently, he resides in Northern California with his wife and two children.

1. *What is meant by gender? What is the difference between gender equality, gender equality and women's empowerment? Is gender equality a concern for men?*
2. *What most men expect to be a role of a woman nowadays? Has the role been revisited in comparison with the XXth century?*
3. *Why do the actions for women rights have different impacts on different countries? Define national and regional anti-violence strategies against women.*
4. *Spiritual Feminism – what is it?*
5. *How much does equitable female representation influence democratic governance?*
6. *Description of personality traits between men and women: universal or not?*
7. *What is the role of women in national revolutions?*
8. *What do you know of Afghanistan – its cultural and religious background?*
9. *What, do you think, is the position of women in Afghanistan?*
10. *Make a list of what you learn from current news stories about the war in Afghanistan, the political situation there and other issues confronting its people. Discuss how the situation is changing for people – is it improving or getting worse? What are the problems facing the nation?*

Khaled HOSSEINI

A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

(Excerpts from the novel)

PART ONE

1.

Mariam was five years old the first time she heard the word *harami*.

It happened on a Thursday. It must have, because Mariam remembered that she had been restless and preoccupied that day, the way she was only on Thursdays, the day when Jalil visited her at the *kolba*. To pass the time until the moment that she would see him at last, crossing the knee-high grass in the clearing and waving, Mariam had climbed a chair and taken down her mother's Chinese tea set. The tea set was the sole relic that Mariam's mother, Nana, had of her own mother, who had died when Nana was two. Nana cherished each blue-and-white porcelain piece, the graceful curve of the pot's spout, the hand-painted finches and chrysanthemums, the dragon on the sugar bowl, meant to ward off evil.

It was this last piece that slipped from Mariam's fingers, that fell to the wooden floor boards of the *kolba* and shattered.

When Nana saw the bowl, her face flushed red and her upper lip shivered, and her eyes, both the lazy one and the good, settled on Mariam in a flat, unblinking way. Nana looked so mad that Mariam feared the *jinn* would enter her mother's body again. But the *jinn* didn't come, not that time. Instead, Nana grabbed Mariam by the wrists, pulled her close, and, through gritted teeth, said, "You are a clumsy little *harami*. This is my reward for everything I've endured. An heirloom-breaking, clumsy little *harami*."

At the time, Mariam did not understand. She did not know what this word *harami* – bastard – meant. Nor was she old enough to appreciate the injustice, to see that it is the creators of the *harami* who are culpable, not the *harami*, whose only sin is being born. Mariam *did* surmise, by the way Nana said the word, that it was an ugly, loathsome thing to be a *harami*, like an insect, like the scurrying cockroaches Nana was always cursing and sweeping out of the *kolba*.

Later, when she was older, Mariam did understand. It was the way Nana uttered the word not so much saying it as spitting it at her that made Mariam feel the full sting of it. She understood then what Nana meant, that a *harami* was an unwanted thing; that she, Mariam, was an illegitimate person who would never have legitimate claim to the things otherpeople had, things such as love, family, home, acceptance.

Jalil never called Mariam this name. Jalil said she was his little flower. He was fond of sitting her on his lap and telling her stories, like the time he told her that Herat, the city where Mariam was born, in 1959, had once been the cradle of Persian culture, the home of writers, painters, and Sufis.

“You couldn't stretch a leg here without poking a poet in the ass,” he laughed.

Jalil told her the story of Queen Gauhar Shad, who had raised the famous minarets as her loving ode to Herat back in the fifteenth century. He described to her the green wheat fields of Herat, the orchards, the vines pregnant with plump grapes, the city's crowded, vaulted bazaars.

“There is a pistachio tree,” Jalil said one day, “and beneath it, Mariam jo, is buried none other than the great poet Jami.” He leaned in and whispered, “Jami lived over five hundred years ago. He did. I took you there once, to the tree. You were little. You wouldn't remember.”

It was true. Mariam didn't remember. And though she would live the first fifteen years of her life within walking distance of Herat, Mariam would never see this storied tree. She would never see the famous minarets up close, and she would never pick fruit from Herat's orchards or stroll in its fields of wheat. But whenever Jalil talked like this, Mariam would listen with enchantment. She would admire Jalil for his vast and worldly knowledge. She would quiver with pride to have a father who knew such things.

“What rich lies!” Nana said after Jalil left. “Rich man telling rich lies. He never took you to any tree. And don't let him charm you. He betrayed us, your beloved father. He cast us out. He cast us out of his big fancy house like we were nothing to him. He did it happily.”

Mariam would listen dutifully to this. She never dared say to Nana how much she disliked her talking this way about Jalil. The truth was that around Jalil, Mariam did not feel at all like a *harami*. For an hour or two every Thursday, when Jalil came to see her, all smiles and gifts and endearments, Mariam felt deserving of all the beauty and bounty that life had to give. And, for this, Mariam loved Jalil.

Even if she had to share him.

Jalil had three wives and nine children, nine legitimate children, all of whom were strangers to Mariam. He was one of Herat's wealthiest men. He owned a cinema, which Mariam had never seen, but at her insistence Jalil had described it to her, and so she knew that the facade was made of blue-and-tan terra-cotta tiles, that it had private balcony seats and a trellised ceiling. Double swinging doors opened into a tiled lobby, where posters of Hindi films were encased in glass displays. On Tuesdays, Jalil said one day, kids got free ice cream at the concession stand.

Nana smiled demurely when he said this. She waited until he had left the *kolba*, before snickering and saying, “The children of strangers get ice cream. What do you get, Mariam? Stories of ice cream.”

In addition to the cinema, Jalil owned land in Karokh, land in Farah, three carpet stores, a clothing shop, and a black 1956 Buick Roadmaster. He was one of Herat's best-connected men, friend of the mayor and the provincial governor. He had a cook, a driver, and three housekeepers.

Nana had been one of the housekeepers. Until her belly began to swell.

When that happened, Nana said, the collective gasp of Jalil's family sucked the air out of Herat. His in laws swore blood would flow. The wives demanded that he throw her out. Nana's own father, who was a lowly stone carver in the nearby village of Gul Daman, disowned her. Disgraced, he packed his things and boarded a bus to Bran, never to be seen or heard from again.

"Sometimes," Nana said early one morning, as she was feeding the chickens outside the *kolba*, "I wish my father had had the stomach to sharpen one of his knives and do the honorable thing. It might have been better for me." She tossed another handful of seeds into the coop, paused, and looked at Mariam. "Better for you too, maybe. It would have spared you the grief of knowing that you are what you are. But he was a coward, my father. He didn't have the *dil*, the heart, for it."

Jalil didn't have the *dil* either, Nana said, to do the honorable thing. To stand up to his family, to his wives and in-laws, and accept responsibility for what he had done. Instead, behind closed doors, a face saving deal had quickly been struck. The next day, he had made her gather her few things from the servants' quarters, where she'd been living, and sent her off.

"You know what he told his wives by way of defense? That I *forced* myself on him. That it was my fault. *Didi*? You see? This is what it means to be a woman in this world."

Nana put down the bowl of chicken feed. She lifted Mariam's chin with a finger. "Look at me, Mariam."

Reluctantly, Mariam did.

Nana said, "Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: Like a compass needle that points north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman. Always. You remember that, Mariam."

2.

Jalil and his wives, I was a pokeroot. A mugwort. You too. And you weren't evenborn yet."

"What's a mugwort?" Mariam asked

"A weed," Nana said. "Something you rip out and toss aside."

Mariam frowned internally. Jalil didn't treat her as a weed. He never had. But Mariam thought it wise to suppress this protest.

"Unlike weeds, I had to be replanted, you see, given food and water. On account of you. That was the deal Jalil made with his family."

Nana said she had refused to live in Herat.

"For what? To watch him drive his *kinchini* wives around town all day?"

She said she wouldn't live in her father's empty house either, in the village of Gul Daman, which sat on a steep hill two kilometers north of Herat. She said she wanted to live somewhere removed, detached, where neighbors wouldn't stare at her belly, point at her, snicker, or, worse yet, assault her with insincere kindnesses.

"And, believe me," Nana said, "it was a relief to your father having me out of sight. It suited him just fine."

It was Muhsin, Jalil's eldest son by his first wife, Khadija, who suggested the clearing. It was on the outskirts of Gul Daman. To get to it, one took a rutted, uphill dirt track that branched off the main road between Herat and Gul Daman. The track was flanked on either side by knee high grass and speckles of white and bright yellow

flowers. The track snaked uphill and led to a flat field where poplars and cottonwoods soared and wild bushes grew in clusters. From up there, one could make out the tips of the rusted blades of Gul Daman's windmill, on the left, and, on the right, all of Herat spread below. The path ended perpendicular to a wide, trout-filled stream, which rolled down from the Safid-koh mountains surrounding Gul Daman. Two hundred yards upstream, toward the mountains, there was a circular grove of weeping willow trees. In the center, in the shade of the willows, was the clearing.

Jalil went there to have a look. When he came back, Nana said, he sounded like a warden bragging about the clean walls and shiny floors of his prison.

“And so, your father built us this rathole.”

Nana had almost married once, when she was fifteen. The suitor had been a boy from Shindand, a young parakeet seller. Mariam knew the story from Nana herself, and, though Nana dismissed the episode, Mariam could tell by the wistful light in her eyes that she had been happy. Perhaps for the only time in her life, during those days leading up to her wedding, Nana had been genuinely happy.

As Nana told the story, Mariam sat on her lap and pictured her mother being fitted for a wedding dress. She imagined her on horseback, smiling shyly behind a veiled green gown, her palms painted red with henna, her hair parted with silver dust, the braids held together by tree sap. She saw musicians blowing the *shahnai* flute and banging on *dohol* drums, street children hooting and giving chase.

Then, a week before the wedding date, a *jinn* had entered Nana's body. This required no description to Mariam. She had witnessed it enough times with her own eyes: Nana collapsing suddenly, her body tightening, becoming rigid, her eyes rolling back, her arms and legs shaking as if something were throttling her from the inside, the froth at the corners of her mouth, white, sometimes pink with blood. Then the drowsiness, the frightening disorientation, the incoherent mumbling.

When the news reached Shindand, the parakeet seller's family called off the wedding. "They got spooked" was how Nana put it.

The wedding dress was stashed away. After that, there were no more suitors.

In the clearing, Jalil and two of his sons, Farhad and Muhsin, built the small *kolba* where Mariam would live the first fifteen years of her life. They raised it with sun dried bricks and plastered it with mud and handfuls of straw. It had two sleeping cots, a wooden table, two straight backed chairs, a window, and shelves nailed to the walls where Nana placed clay pots and her beloved Chinese tea set. Jalil put in a new cast iron stove for the winter and stacked logs of chopped wood behind the *kolba*. He added a tandoor outside for making bread and a chicken coop with a fence around it. He brought a few sheep, built them a feeding trough. He had Farhad and Muhsin dig a deep hole a hundred yards outside the circle of willows and built an outhouse over it.

Jalil could have hired laborers to build the *kolba*. Nana said, but he didn't. "His idea of penance."

In Nana's account of the day that she gave birth to Mariam, no one came to help. It happened on a damp, overcast day in the spring of 1959, she said, the twenty sixth year of King Zahir Shah's mostly uneventful forty year reign. She said that Jalil hadn't bothered to summon a doctor, or even a midwife, even though he knew that *the jinn* might enter her body and cause her to have one of her fits in the act of delivering. She lay all alone on the *kolba*'s floor, a knife by her side, sweat drenching her body.

"When the pain got bad, I'd bite on a pillow and scream into it until I was hoarse. And still no one came to wipe my face or give me a drink of water. And you, Mariam jo, you were in no rush. Almost two days you made me lay on that cold, hard floor. I didn't eat or sleep, all I did was push and pray that you would come out."

"I'm sorry, Nana."

“I cut the cord between us myself. That's why I had a knife.” “I'm sorry.”

Nana always gave a slow, burdened smile here, one of lingering recrimination or reluctant forgiveness, Mariam could never tell. It did not occur to young Mariam to ponder the unfairness of apologizing for the manner of her own birth.

By the time it *did* occur to her, around the time she turned ten, Mariam no longer believed this story of her birth. She believed Jalil's version, that though he'd been away he'd arranged for Nana to be taken to a hospital in Herat where she had been tended to by a doctor. She had lain on a clean, proper bed in a well lit room. Jalil shook his head with sadness when Mariam told him about the knife.

Mariam also came to doubt that she had made her mother suffer for two full days.

“They told me it was all over within under an hour,” Jalil said. “You were a good daughter, Mariam jo. Even in birth you were a good daughter.”

“He wasn't even there!” Nana spat. “He was in Takht-e-Safar, horseback riding with his precious friends.”

When they informed him that he had a new daughter, Nana said, Jalil had shrugged, kept brushing his horse's mane, and stayed in Takht-e-Safar another two weeks.

“The truth is, he didn't even hold you until you were a month old. And then only to look down once, comment on your longish face, and hand you back to me.”

Mariam came to disbelieve this part of the story as well. Yes, Jalil admitted, he had been horseback riding in Takht-e-Safar, but, when they gave him the news, he had not shrugged. He had hopped on the saddle and ridden back to Herat. He had bounced

her in his arms, run his thumb over her flaky eyebrows, and hummed a lullaby. Mariam did not picture Jalil saying that her face was long, though it was true that it was long.

Nana said she was the one who'd picked the name Mariam because it had been the name of her mother. Jalil said he chose the name because Mariam, the tuberose, was a lovely flower.

“Your favorite?” Mariam asked. “Well, one of,” he said and smiled.

PART THREE

36.

LAILA

As daylight steadily bleached darkness from the sky that spring morning of 1994, Laila became certain that Rasheed knew. That, any moment now, he would drag her out of bed and ask whether she'd really taken him for such a *khar*, such a donkey, that he wouldn't find out. But *azan* rang out, and then the morning sun was falling flat on the rooftops and the roosters were crowing and nothing out of the ordinary happened.

She could hear him now in the bathroom, the tapping of his razor against the edge of the basin. Then downstairs, moving about, heating tea. The keys jingled. Now he was crossing the yard, walking his bicycle.

Laila peered through a crack in the living room curtains. She watched him pedal away, a big man on a small bicycle, the morning sun glaring off the handlebars.

“Laila?”

Mariam was in the doorway. Laila could tell that she hadn't slept either. She wondered if Mariam too had been seized all night by bouts of euphoria and attacks of mouth drying anxiety.

“We'll leave in half an hour,” Laila said.

In the backseat of the taxi, they did not speak. Aziza sat on Mariam's lap, clutching her doll, looking with wide-eyed puzzlement at the city speeding by.

"*Ona!*" she cried, pointing to a group of little girls skipping rope. "Mayam! *Ona!*" Everywhere she looked, Laila saw Rasheed. She spotted him coming out of barbershops with windows the color of coal dust, from tiny booths that sold partridges, from battered, open-fronted stores packed with old tires piled from floor to ceiling.

She sank lower in her seat.

Beside her, Mariam was muttering a prayer. Laila wished she could see her face, but Mariam was in burqa they both wore and all she could see was the glitter of her eyes through the grid.

This was Laila's first time out of the house in weeks, discounting the short trip to the pawnshop the day before where she had pushed her wedding ring across a glass counter, where she'd walked out thrilled by the finality of it, knowing there was no going back.

All around her now, Laila saw the consequences of the recent fighting whose sounds she'd heard from the house. Homes that lay in roofless ruins of brick and jagged stone, gouged buildings with fallen beams poking through the holes, the charred, mangled husks of cars, upended, sometimes stacked on top of each other, walls pocked by holes of every conceivable caliber, shattered glass everywhere. She saw a funeral procession marching toward a mosque, a black-clad old woman at the rear tearing at her hair. They passed a cemetery littered with rock-piled graves and ragged *shaheed* flags fluttering in the breeze.

Laila reached across the suitcase, wrapped her fingers around the softness of her daughter's arm.

At the Lahore Gate bus station, near Pol Mahmood Khan in East Kabul, a row of buses sat idling along the curbside. Men in turbans were busy heaving bundles and crates onto bus tops, securing suitcases down with ropes. Inside the station, men stood

in a long line at the ticket booth. Burqa clad women stood in groups and chatted, their belongings piled at their feet. Babies were bounced, children scolded for straying too far.

Mujahideen militiamen patrolled the station and the curbside, barking curt orders here and there. They wore boots, *pakols*, dusty green fatigues. They all carried Kalashnikovs.

Laila felt watched. She looked no one in the face, but she felt as though every person in this place knew, that they were looking on with disapproval at what she and Mariam were doing.

“Do you see anybody?” Laila asked.

Mariam shifted Aziza in her arms. “I'm looking.”

This, Laila had known, would be the first risky part, finding a man suitable to pose with them as a family member. The freedoms and opportunities that women had enjoyed between 1978 and 1992 were a thing of the past now Laila could still remember Babi saying of those years of communist rule, *It's a good time to be a woman in Afghanistan, Laila* Since the Mujahideen takeover in April 1992, Afghanistan's name had been changed to the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The Supreme Court under Rabbani was filled now with hard liner mullahs who did away with the communist era decrees that empowered women and instead passed rulings based on Shari'a, strict Islamic laws that ordered women to cover, forbade their travel without a male relative, punished adultery with stoning. Even if the actual enforcement of these laws was sporadic at best. *But they'd enforce them on us more*, Laila had said to Mariam, *if they weren't so busy killing each other. And us.*

The second risky part of this trip would come when they actually arrived in Pakistan. Already burdened with nearly two million Afghan refugees, Pakistan had closed its borders to Afghans in January of that year. Laila had heard that only those with visas would be admitted. But the border was porous always had been and Laila knew that thousands of Afghans were still crossing into Pakistan either with bribes or

by proving humanitarian grounds and there were always smugglers who could be hired. *We'll find a way when we get there*, she'd told Mariam.

"How about him?" Mariam said, motioning with her chin. "He doesn't look trustworthy."

"And him?"

"Too old. And he's traveling with two other men."

Eventually, Laila found him sitting outside on a park bench, with a veiled woman at his side and a little boy in a skullcap, roughly Aziza's age, bouncing on his knees. He was tall and slender, bearded, wearing an open collared shirt and a modest gray coat with missing buttons.

"Wait here," she said to Mariam. Walking away, she again heard Mariam muttering a prayer.

When Laila approached the young man, he looked up, shielded the sun from his eyes with a hand.

"Forgive me, brother, but are you going to Peshawar?"

"Yes," he said, squinting.

"I wonder if you can help us. Can you do us a favor?"

He passed the boy to his wife. He and Laila stepped away. "What is it, *hamshira*?"

She was encouraged to see that he had soft eyes, a kind face.

She told him the story that she and Mariam had agreed on. She was a *biwa*, she said, a widow. She and her mother and daughter had no one left in Kabul. They were going to Peshawar to stay with her uncle.

"You want to come with my family," the young man said

"I know it's *zahmat* for you. But you look like a decent brother, and I"

"Don't worry, *hamshira* I understand. It's no trouble. Let me go and buy your tickets." "Thank you, brother. This is *sawab*, a good deed. God will remember."

She fished the envelope from her pocket beneath the burqa and passed it to him. In it was eleven hundred afghanis, or about half of the money she'd stashed over the past year plus the sale of the ring. He slipped the envelope in his trouser pocket.

“Wait here.”

She watched him enter the station. He returned half an hour later.

“It's best I hold on to your tickets,” he said. “The bus leaves in one hour, at eleven. We'll allboard together. My name is Wakil. If they ask and they shouldn't I'll tell them you're my cousin.”

Laila gave him their names, and he said he would remember. “Stay close,” he said.

They sat on the bench adjacent to Wakil and his family's. It was a sunny, warm morning, the sky streaked only by a few wispy clouds hovering in the distance over the hills. Mariam began feeding Aziza a few of the crackers she'd remembered to bring in their rush to pack. She offered one to Laila.

“I'll throw up,” Laila laughed. “I'm too excited.”

“Me too.”

“Thank you, Mariam.”

“For what?”

“For this. For coming with us,” Laila said. “I don't think I could do this alone.”

“You won't have to.”

“We're going to be all right, aren't we, Mariam, where we're going?”

Mariam's hand slid across the bench and closed over hers. “The Koran says Allah is the East and the West, therefore wherever you turn there is Allah's purpose.”

“*Bov!*” Aziza cried, pointing to a bus. “Mayam, *bov*”

“I see it, Aziza jo,” Mariam said. “That's right, *bov*. Soon we're all going to ride on a *bov*. Oh, the things you're going to see.”

Laila smiled. She watched a carpenter in his shop across the street sawing wood, sending chips flying. She watched the cars bolting past, their windows coated with soot and grime. She watched the buses growling idly at the curb, with peacocks, lions, rising suns, and glittery swords painted on their sides.

In the warmth of the morning sun, Laila felt giddy and bold. She had another of those little sparks of euphoria, and when a stray dog with yellow eyes limped by, Laila leaned forward and pet its back.

A few minutes before eleven, a man with a bullhorn called for all passengers to Peshawar to begin boarding. The bus doors opened with a violent hydraulic hiss. A parade of travelers rushed toward it, scampering past each other to squeeze through.

Wakil motioned toward Laila as he picked up his son. "We're going," Laila said.

Wakil led the way. As they approached the bus, Laila saw faces appear in the windows, noses and palms pressed to the glass. All around them, farewells were yelled.

A young militia soldier was checking tickets at the bus door.

"*Bov!*" Aziza cried.

Wakil handed tickets to the soldier, who tore them in half and handed them back. Wakil let his wife board first. Laila saw a look pass between Wakil and the militiaman. Wakil, perched on the first step of the bus, leaned down and said something in his ear. The militiaman nodded.

Laila's heart plummeted.

"You two, with the child, step aside," the soldier said.

Laila pretended not to hear. She went to climb the steps, but he grabbed her by the shoulder and roughly pulled her out of the line. "You too," he called to Mariam. "Hurry up! You're holding up the line."

"What's the problem, brother?" Laila said through numb lips. "We have tickets. Didn't my cousin hand them to you?"

He made a *Shh* motion with his finger and spoke in a low voice to another guard. The second guard, a rotund fellow with a scar down his right cheek, nodded.

“Follow me,” this one said to Laila.

“We have to board this bus,” Laila cried, aware that her voice was shaking. “We havetickets. Why are you doing this?”

“You're not going to get on this bus. You might as well accept that. You will follow me. Unless you want your little girl to see you dragged.”

As they were led to a truck, Laila looked over her shoulder and spotted Wakil's boy at therear of the bus. The boy saw her too and waved happily.

At the police station at Torabaz Khan Intersection, they were made to sit apart, onopposite ends of a long, crowded corridor, between them a desk, behind which a man smoked one cigarette after another and clacked occasionally on a typewriter. Three hours passed this way. Aziza tottered from Laila to Mariam, then back. She played with a paper clip that the man at the desk gave her. She finished the crackers. Eventually, she fell asleep in Mariam's lap.

At around three o'clock, Laila was taken to an interview room. Mariam was made to wait with Aziza in the corridor.

The man sitting on the other side of the desk in the interview room was in his thirties and wore civilian clothes black suit, tie, black loafers. He had a neatly trimmed beard, short hair, and eyebrows that met. He stared at Laila, bouncing a pencil by the eraser end on the desk.

“We know,” he began, clearing his throat and politely covering his mouth with a fist, “thatyou have already told one lie today, *kamshira* The young man at the station was not your cousin. He told us as much himself. The question is whether you will tell more lies today. Personally, I advise you against it.”

“We were going to stay with my uncle,” Laila said “That's the truth.”

The policeman nodded. “The *hamshira* in the corridor, she's your mother?”

“Yes.”

“She has a Herati accent. You don't.”

“She was raised in Herat, I was born here in Kabul.”

“Of course. And you are widowed? You said you were. My condolences. And this uncle, this *kaka*, where does he live?”

“In Peshawar.”

“Yes, you said that.” He licked the point of his pencil and poised it over a blank sheet of paper. “But where in Peshawar? Which neighborhood, please? Street name, sector number.”

Laila tried to push back the bubble of panic that was coming up her chest. She gave him the name of the only street she knew in Peshawar she'd heard it mentioned once, at the party Mammy had thrown when the Mujahideen had first come to Kabul “Jamrud Road.”

“Oh, yes. Same street as the Pearl Continental Hotel. He might have mentioned it.”

Laila seized this opportunity and said he had.

“That very same street, yes.”

“Except the hotel is on Khyber Road.”

Laila could hear Aziza crying in the corridor. “My daughter's frightened. May I get her, brother?”

“I prefer ‘Officer.’ And you'll be with her shortly. Do you have a telephone number for this uncle?”

‘I do. I did. I...’ Even with the burqa between them, Laila was not buffered from his penetrating eyes. ‘I'm so upset, I seem to have forgotten it.’

He sighed through his nose. He asked for the uncle's name, his wife's name. How many children did he have? What were their names? Where did he work? How old was he? His questions left Laila flustered.

He put down his pencil, laced his fingers together, and leaned forward the way parents do when they want to convey something to a toddler. ‘You do realize, *hamshira*, that it is a crime for a woman to run away. We see a lot of it. Women

traveling alone, claiming their husbands have died. Sometimes they're telling the truth, most times not. You can be imprisoned for running away, I assume you understand that, *nay?*”

“Let us go, Officer...” She read the name on his lapel tag. “Officer Rahman. Honor the meaning of your name and show compassion. What does it matter to you to let a mere two women go? What's the harm in releasing us? We are not criminals.”

“I can't.”

“I beg you, please.”

“It's a matter of *qanoon*, *hamshira*, a matter of law,” Rahman said, injecting his voice with a grave, self-important tone. “It is my responsibility, you see, to maintain order.”

In spite of her distraught state, Laila almost laughed. She was stunned that he'd used that word in the face of all that the Mujahideen factions had done—the murders, the lootings, the rapes, the tortures, the executions, the bombings, the tens of thousands of rockets they had fired at each other, heedless of all the innocent people who would die in the cross fire. *Order*. But she bit her tongue.

“If you send us back,” she said instead, slowly, “there is no saying what he will do to us.” She could see the effort it took him to keep his eyes from shifting. “What a man does in his home is his business.”

“What about the law, *then*, Officer Rahman?” Tears of rage stung her eyes. “Will you bethere to maintain order?”

“As a matter of policy, we do not interfere with private family matters, *hamshira*”

“Of course you don't. When it benefits the man. And isn't this a 'private family matter,' as you say? Isn't it?”

He pushed back from his desk and stood up, straightened his jacket. “I believe this interview is finished. I must say, *hamshira*, that you have made a very poor case for yourself. Very poor indeed. Now, if you would wait outside I will have a few words with your...whoever she is.”

Laila began to protest, then to yell, and he had to summon the help of two more men to have her dragged out of his office.

Mariam's interview lasted only a few minutes. When she came out, she looked shaken. "He asked so many questions," she said. "I'm sorry, Laila jo. I am not smart like you. He asked so many questions, I didn't know the answers. I'm sorry."

"It's not your fault, Mariam," Laila said weakly. "It's mine. It's all my fault. Everything is my fault."

It was past six o'clock when the police car pulled up in front of the house. Laila and Mariam were made to wait in the backseat, guarded by a Mujahid soldier in the passenger seat. The driver was the one who got out of the car, who knocked on the door, who spoke to Rasheed. It was he who motioned for them to come.

"Welcome home," the man in the front seat said, lighting a cigarette.

"You," he said to Mariam. "You wait here." Mariam quietly took a seat on the couch. "You two, upstairs."

Rasheed grabbed Laila by the elbow and pushed her up the steps. He was still wearing the shoes he wore to work, hadn't yet changed to his flip flops, taken off his watch, hadn't even shed his coat yet. Laila pictured him as he must have been an hour, or maybe minutes, earlier, rushing from one room to another, slamming doors, furious and incredulous, cursing under his breath.

At the top of the stairs, Laila turned to him.

"She didn't want to do it," she said. "I made her do it. She didn't want to go".

Laila didn't see the punch coming. One moment she was talking and the next she was on all fours, wide eyed and red faced, trying to draw a breath. It was as if a car had hit her at full speed, in the tender place between the lower tip of the breastbone and the belly button. She realized she had dropped Aziza, that Aziza was screaming. She tried to breathe again and could only make a husky, choking sound. Dribble hung from her mouth.

Then she was being dragged by the hair. She saw Aziza lifted, saw her sandals slip off, her tiny feet kicking. Hair was ripped from Laila's scalp, and her eyes watered with pain. She saw his foot kick open the door to Mariam's room, saw Aziza flung onto the bed. He let go of Laila's hair, and she felt the toe of his shoe connect with her left buttock. She howled with pain as he slammed the door shut. A key rattled in the lock.

Aziza was still screaming. Laila lay curled up on the floor, gasping. She pushed herself upon her hands, crawled to where Aziza lay on the bed. She reached for her daughter.

Downstairs, the beating began. To Laila, the sounds she heard were those of a methodical, familiar proceeding. There was no cursing, no screaming, no pleading, no surprised yelps, only the systematic business of beating and being beaten, the *thump, thump* of something solid repeatedly striking flesh, something, someone, hitting a wall with a thud, cloth ripping. Now and then, Laila heard running footsteps, a wordless chase, furniture turning over, glass shattering, then the thumping once more.

Laila took Aziza in her arms. A warmth spread down the front of her dress when Aziza's bladder let go.

Downstairs, the running and chasing finally stopped. There was a sound now like a wooden club repeatedly slapping a side of beef.

Laila rocked Aziza until the sounds stopped, and, when she heard the screen door creak open and slam shut, she lowered Aziza to the ground and peeked out the window. She saw Rasheed leading Mariam across the yard by the nape of her neck. Mariam was barefoot and doubled over. There was blood on his hands, blood on Mariam's face, her hair, down her neck and back. Her shirt had been ripped down the front.

"I'm so sorry, Mariam," Laila cried into the glass.

She watched him shove Mariam into the toolshed. He went in, came out with a hammer and several long planks of wood. He shut the double doors to the shed, took a key from his pocket, worked the padlock. He tested the doors, then went around the back of the shed and fetched a ladder.

A few minutes later, his face was in Laila's window, nails tucked in the corner of his mouth. His hair was disheveled. There was a swath of blood on his brow. At the sight of him, Aziza shrieked and buried her face in Laila's armpit.

Rasheed began nailing boards across the window.

The dark was total, impenetrable and constant, without layer or texture. Rasheed had filled the cracks between the boards with something, put a large and immovable object at the foot of the door so no light came from under it. Something had been stuffed in the keyhole.

Laila found it impossible to tell the passage of time with her eyes, so she did it with her good ear. *Azan* and crowing roosters signaled morning. The sounds of plates clanking in the kitchen downstairs, the radio playing, meant evening.

The first day, they groped and fumbled for each other in the dark. Laila couldn't see Aziza when she cried, when she went crawling.

"*Aishee*," Aziza mewled. "*Aishee*."

"Soon." Laila kissed her daughter, aiming for the forehead, finding the crown of her head instead. "We'll have milk soon. You just be patient. Be a good, patient little girl for Mammy, and I'll get you some *aishee*."

Laila sang her a few songs.

Azan rang out a second time and still Rasheed had not given them any food, and, worse, no water. That day, a thick, suffocating heat fell on them. The room turned into a pressure cooker. Laila dragged a dry tongue over her lips, thinking of the well outside, the water cold and fresh. Aziza kept crying, and Laila noticed with alarm that when she wiped her cheeks her hands came back dry. She stripped the clothes off Aziza, tried to find something to fan her with, settled for blowing on her until she became light headed. Soon, Aziza stopped crawling around. She slipped in and out of sleep.

Several times that day, Laila banged her fists against the walls, used up her energy screaming for help, hoping that a neighbor would hear. But no one came, and

her shrieking only frightened Aziza, who began to cry again, a weak, croaking sound. Laila slid to the ground. She thought guiltily of Mariam, beaten and bloodied, locked in this heat in the toolshed.

Laila fell asleep at some point, her body baking in the heat. She had a dream that she and Aziza had run into Tariq. He was across a crowded street from them, beneath the awning of a tailor's shop. He was sitting on his haunches and sampling from a crate of figs. *That's your father*, Laila said. *That man there, you see him? He's your real baba*. She called his name, but the street noise drowned her voice, and Tariq didn't hear.

She woke up to the whistling of rockets streaking overhead. Somewhere, the sky she couldn't see erupted with blasts and the long, frantic hammering of machine gun fire. Laila closed her eyes. She woke again to Rasheed's heavy footsteps in the hallway. She dragged herself to the door, slapped her palms against it.

"Just one glass, Rasheed. Not for me. Do it for her. You don't want her blood on your hands." He walked past. She began to plead with him. She begged for forgiveness, made promises. She cursed him. His door closed. The radio came on.

The muezzin called *azan* a third time. Again the heat. Aziza became even more listless. She stopped crying, stopped moving altogether.

Laila put her ear over Aziza's mouth, dreading each time that she would not hear the shallow whooshing of breath. Even this simple act of lifting herself made her head swim. She fell asleep, had dreams she could not remember. When she woke up, she checked on Aziza, felt the parched cracks of her lips, the faint pulse at her neck, lay down again. They would die here, of that Laila was sure now, but what she really dreaded was that she would outlast Aziza, who was young and brittle. How much more could Aziza take? Aziza would die in this heat, and Laila would have to lie beside her stiffening little body and wait for her own death. Again she fell asleep. Woke up. Fell asleep. The line between dream and wakefulness blurred.

It wasn't roosters or *azan* that woke her up again but the sound of something heavy being dragged. She heard a rattling Suddenly, the room was flooded with light. Her eyesscreamed in protest. Laila raised her head, winced, and shielded her eyes. Through the cracks between her fingers, she saw a big, blurry silhouette standing in a rectangle of light. The silhouette moved. Now there was a shape crouching beside her, looming over her, anda voice by her ear.

“You try this again and I will find you. I swear on the Prophet's name that I will find you. And, when I do, there isn't a court in this godforsaken country that will hold me accountable for what I will do. To Mariam first, then to her, and you last. I'll make you watch. You understand me? *I'll make you watch.*”

And, with that, he left the room. But not before delivering a kick to the flank that would have Laila pissing blood for days.

37.

MARIAM

SEPTEMBER 1996

Two and a half years later, Mariam awoke on the morning of September 27 to the sounds of shouting and whistling, firecrackers and music. She ran to the living room, found Laila already at the window, Aziza mounted on her shoulders. Laila turned and smiled.

“The Taliban are here,” she said.

Mariam had first heard of the Taliban two years before, in October 1994, when Rasheed had brought home news that they had overthrown the warlords in Kandahar and taken the city. They were a guerrilla force, he said, made up of young Pashtun men whose families had fled to Pakistan during the war against the Soviets. Most of them had been raised some even born in refugee camps along the Pakistani border, and in Pakistani madrasas, where they were schooled in *Shari'a* by mullahs. Their leader was a mysterious, illiterate, one eyed recluse named Mullah Omar, who, Rasheed said with some amusement, called himself *Ameer ul Mumineeny* Leader of the Faithful.

“It's true that these boys have no *risha*, no roots,” Rasheed said, addressing neither Mariam nor Laila. Ever since the failed escape, two and a half years ago, Mariam knew that she and Laila had become one and the same being to him, equally wretched, equally deserving of his distrust, his disdain and disregard. When he spoke, Mariam had the sense that he was having a conversation with himself, or with some invisible presence in the room, who, unlike her and Laila, was worthy of his opinions.

“They may have no past,” he said, smoking and looking up at the ceiling. “They may know nothing of the world or this country's history. Yes. And, compared to them, Mariam here might as well be a university professor. Ha! All true. But look around you. What do you see? Corrupt, greedy Mujahideen commanders, armed to the teeth, rich off heroin, declaring jihad on one another and killing everyone in between that's what. At least the Taliban are pure and incorruptible. At least they're decent Muslim boys. *Wallah*, when they come, they will clean up this place. They'll bring peace and order. People won't get shot anymore going out for milk. No more rockets! Think of it.”

For two years now, the Taliban had been making their way toward Kabul, taking cities from the Mujahideen, ending factional war wherever they'd settled. They had captured the Hazara commander Abdul Ali Mazari and executed him. For months, they'd settled in the southern outskirts of Kabul, firing on the city, exchanging rockets with Ahmad Shah Massoud. Earlier in that September of 1996, they had captured the cities of Jalalabad and Sarobi.

The Taliban had one thing the Mujahideen did not, Rasheed said. They were united. “Let them come,” he said. “I, for one, will shower them with rose petals.”

They went out that day, the four of them, Rasheed leading them from one bus to the next, to greet their new world, their new leaders. In every battered neighborhood, Mariam found people materializing from the rubble and moving into the streets. She saw an old woman wasting handfuls of rice, tossing it at passersby, a drooping, toothless smile on her face. Two men were hugging by the remains of a gutted building,

in the sky above them the whistle, hiss, and pop of a few firecrackers set off by boys perched on rooftops. The national anthem played on cassette decks, competing with the honking of cars.

“Look, Mayam!” Aziza pointed to a group of boys running down Jadeh Maywand. They were pounding their fists into the air and dragging rusty cans tied to strings. They were yelling that Massoud and Rabbani had withdrawn from Kabul.

Everywhere, there were shouts: *Ailah u akbar!*

Mariam saw a bedsheet hanging from a window on Jadeh Maywand. On it, someone had painted three words in big, black letters: zendabaad taliban! Long live the Taliban!

As they walked the streets, Mariam spotted more signs painted on windows, nailed to doors, billowing from car antennas that proclaimed the same.

Mariam saw her first of the Taliban later that day, at Pashtunistan Square, with Rasheed, Laila, and Aziza. A melee of people had gathered there. Mariam saw people craning their necks, people crowded around the blue fountain in the center of the square, people perched on its dry bed. They were trying to get a view of the end of the square, near the old Khyber Restaurant.

Rasheed used his size to push and shove past the onlookers, and led them to where someone was speaking through a loudspeaker.

When Aziza saw, she let out a shriek and buried her face in Mariam's burqa.

The loudspeaker voice belonged to a slender, bearded young man who wore a black turban. He was standing on some sort of makeshift scaffolding. In his free hand, he held a rocket launcher. Beside him, two bloodied men hung from ropes tied to traffic light posts. Their clothes had been shredded. Their bloated faces had turned purple blue.

“I know him,” Mariam said, “the one on the left.”

A young woman in front of Mariam turned around and said it was Najibullah. The other man was his brother. Mariam remembered Najibullah's plump, mustachioed face, beaming from billboards and storefront windows during the Soviet years.

She would later hear that the Taliban had dragged Najibullah from his sanctuary at the UN headquarters near Darulaman Palace. That they had tortured him for hours, then tied his legs to a truck and dragged his lifeless body through the streets.

“He killed many, many Muslims!” the young Talib was shouting through the loudspeaker. He spoke Farsi with a Pashto accent, then would switch to Pashto. He punctuated his words by pointing to the corpses with his weapon. “His crimes are known to everybody. He was a communist and *akqfir* This is what we do with infidels who commit crimes against Islam!” Rasheed was smirking.

In Mariam's arms, Aziza began to cry.

The following day, Kabul was overrun by trucks. In Khair khana, in Shar-e-Nau, in Karteh Parwan, in Wazir Akbar Khan and Taimani, red Toyota trucks weaved through the streets. Armed bearded men in black turbans sat in their beds. From each truck, a loudspeaker blared announcements, first in Farsi, then Pashto. The same message played from loudspeakers perched atop mosques, and on the radio, which was now known as the Voice of *Short 'a*. The message was also written in flyers, tossed into the streets. Mariam found one in the yard.

Our watan is now known as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. These are the laws that we will enforce and you will obey:

All citizens must pray five times a day. If it is prayer time and you are caught doing something other, you will be beaten.

All men will grow their beards. The correct length is at least one clenched fist beneath the chin. If you do not abide by this, you will be beaten.

All boys will wear turbans. Boys in grade one through six will wear black turbans, higher grades will wear white. All boys will wear Islamic clothes. Shirt collars will be buttoned.

Singing is forbidden.

Dancing is forbidden.

Playing cards, playing chess, gambling, and kiteflying are forbidden. Writing books, watching films, and painting pictures are forbidden. If you keep parakeets, you will be beaten. Your birds will be killed.

If you steal, your hand will be cut off at the wrist. If you steal again, your foot will be cutoff.

If you are not Muslim, do not worship where you can be seen by Muslims. If you do, you will be beaten and imprisoned. If you are caught trying to convert a Muslim to your faith, you will be executed.

Attention women:

You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander aimlessly about the streets. If you go outside, you must be accompanied by a mahram, a malerelative. If you are caught alone on the street, you will be beaten and sent home.

You will not, under any circumstance, show your face. You will cover with burqa when outside. If you do not, you will be severely beaten.

Cosmetics are forbidden. Jewelry is forbidden.

You will not wear charming clothes. You will not speak unless spoken to. You will not make eye contact with men.

You will not laugh in public. If you do, you will be beaten. You will not paint your nails. If you do, you will lose a finger.

Girls are forbidden from attending school All schools for girls will be closed immediately. Women are forbidden from working.

If you are found guilty of adultery, you will be stoned to death Listen. Listen well. Obey. Allah u akbar.

Rasheed turned off the radio. They were sitting on the living room floor, eating dinner less than a week after they'd seen Najibullah's corpse hanging by a rope.

“They can't make half the population stay home and do nothing,” Laila said.

“Why not?” Rasheed said. For once, Mariam agreed with him. He'd done the same to her and Laila, in effect, had he not? Surely Laila saw that.

“This isn't some village. This is *Kabul*. Women here used to practice law and medicine; they held office in the government”

Rasheed grinned. “Spoken like the arrogant daughter of a poetry reading university man that you are. How urbane, how Tajik, of you. You think this is some new, radical idea the Taliban are bringing? Have you ever lived outside of your precious little shell in Kabul, my *gull*? Ever cared to visit the *real* Afghanistan, the south, the east, along the tribal border with Pakistan? No? I have. And I can tell you that there are many places in this country that have always lived this way, or close enough anyhow. Not that you would know.”

“I refuse to believe it,” Laila said “They're not serious.”

“What the Taliban did to Najibullah looked serious to me,” Rasheed said. “Wouldn't you agree?”

“He was a communist! He was the head of the Secret Police.” Rasheed laughed.

Mariam heard the answer in his laugh: that in the eyes of the Taliban, being a communist and the leader of the dreaded KHAD made Najibullah only *slightly* more contemptible than a woman.

39.

MARIAM

SEPTEMBER 1997

“This hospital no longer treats women,” the guard barked. He was standing at the top of the stairs, looking down icily on the crowd gathered in front of Malalai Hospital.

A loud groan rose from the crowd.

“But this is a women's hospital!” a woman shouted behind Mariam. Cries of approval followed this.

Mariam shifted Aziza from one arm to the other. With her free arm, she supported Laila, who was moaning, and had her own arm flung around Rasheed's neck.

“Not anymore,” the Talib said.

“My wife is having a baby!” a heavyset man yelled. “Would you have her give birth here on the street, brother?”

Mariam had heard the announcement, in January of that year, that men and women would be seen in different hospitals, that all female staff would be discharged from Kabul's hospitals and sent to work in one central facility. No one had believed it, and the Taliban hadn't enforced the policy. Until now.

“What about Ali Abaci Hospital?” another man cried. The guard shook his head.

“Wazir Akbar Khan?” “Men only,” he said.

“What are we supposed to do?”

“Go to Rabia Balkhi,” the guard said.

A young woman pushed forward, said she had already been there. They had no clean water, she said, no oxygen, no medications, no electricity. “There is nothing there.”

“That's where you go,” the guard said.

There were more groans and cries, an insult or two. Someone threw a rock.

The Talib lifted his Kalashnikov and fired rounds into the air. Another Talib behind him brandished a whip.

The crowd dispersed quickly.

The waiting room at Rabia Balkhi was teeming with women in burqas and their children. The air stank of sweat and unwashed bodies, of feet, urine, cigarette smoke, and antiseptic. Beneath the idle ceiling fan, children chased each other, hopping over the stretched out legs of dozing fathers.

Mariam helped Laila sit against a wall from which patches of plaster shaped like foreign countries had slid off. Laila rocked back and forth, hands pressing against her belly.

“I’ll get you seen, Laila jo. I promise.” “Be quick,” said Rasheed.

Before the registration window was a horde of women, shoving and pushing against each other. Some were still holding their babies. Some broke from the mass and charged the double doors that led to the treatment rooms. An armed Talib guard blocked their way, sent them back.

Mariam waded in. She dug in her heels and burrowed against the elbows, hips, and shoulder blades of strangers. Someone elbowed her in the ribs, and she elbowed back. A hand made a desperate grab at her face. She swatted it away. To propel herself forward, Mariam clawed at necks, at arms and elbows, at hair, and, when a woman nearby hissed, Mariam hissed back.

Mariam saw now the sacrifices a mother made. Decency was but one. She thought truefully of Nana, of the sacrifices that she too had made. Nana, who could have given her away, or tossed her in a ditch somewhere and run. But she hadn’t. Instead, Nana had endured the shame of bearing a *harami*, had shaped her life around the thankless task of raising Mariam and, in her own way, of loving her. And, in the end, Mariam had chosen Jalil over her. As she fought her way with impudent resolve to the front of the melee, Mariam wished she had been a better daughter to Nana. She wished she’d understood then what she understood now about motherhood. She found herself face to face with a nurse, who was covered head to toe in a dirty gray burqa. The nurse was talking to a young woman, whose burqa headpiece had soaked through with a patch of matted blood. “My daughter’s water broke and the baby won’t come,” Mariam called.

“I’m talking to her!” the bloodied young woman cried. “Wait your turn!”

The whole mass of them swayed side to side, like the tall grass around the *kolba* when the breeze swept across the clearing. A woman behind Mariam was yelling that

her girl had broken her elbow falling from a tree. Another woman cried that she was passing bloody stools.

“Does she have a fever?” the nurse asked. It took Mariam a moment to realize she was being spoken to.

“No,” Mariam said. Bleeding?

“No.”

“Where is she?”

Over the covered heads, Mariam pointed to where Laila was sitting with Rasheed. “We'll get to her,” the nurse said

“How long?” Mariam cried Someone had grabbed her by the shoulders and was pulling her back.

“I don't know,” the nurse said. She said they had only two doctors and both were operating at the moment.

“She's in pain,” Mariam said.

“Me too!” the woman with the bloodied scalp cried. “Wait your turn!”

Mariam was being dragged back. Her view of the nurse was blocked now by shoulders and the backs of heads. She smelled a baby's milky burp.

“Take her for a walk,” the nurse yelled. “And wait.”

It was dark outside when a nurse finally called them in. The delivery room had eight beds, on which women moaned and twisted tended to by fully covered nurses. Two of the women were in the act of delivering. There were no curtains between the beds. Laila was given a bed at the far end, beneath a window that someone had painted black. There was a sink nearby, cracked and dry, and a string over the sink from which hung stained surgical gloves. In the middle of the room Mariam saw an aluminum table. The top shelf had a soot colored blanket on it; the bottom shelf was empty.

One of the women saw Mariam looking.

“They put the live ones on the top,” she said tiredly.

The doctor, in a dark blue burqa, was a small, harried woman with birdlike movements. Everything she said came out sounding impatient, urgent.

“First baby.” She said it like that, not as a question but as a statement. “Second,” Mariam said.

Laila let out a cry and rolled on her side. Her fingers closed against Mariam's. “Any problems with the first delivery?”

“No.”

“You're the mother?” “Yes,” Mariam said.

The doctor lifted the lower half of her burqa and produced a metallic, cone shaped instrument. She raised Laila's burqa and placed the wide end of the instrument on her belly, the narrow end to her own ear. She listened for almost a minute, switched spots, listened again, switched spots again. “I have to feel the baby now, *hamshira*”.

She put on one of the gloves hung by a clothespin over the sink. She pushed on Laila's belly with one hand and slid the other inside. Laila whimpered. When the doctor was done, she gave the glove to a nurse, who rinsed it and pinned it back on the string.

“Your daughter needs a caesarian. Do you know what that is? We have to open her womb and take the baby out, because it is in the breech position.”

“I don't understand,” Mariam said.

The doctor said the baby was positioned so it wouldn't come out on its own. “And too much time has passed as is. We need to go to the operating room now.”

Laila gave a grimacing nod, and her head drooped to one side.

“There *is* something I have to tell you,” the doctor said. She moved closer to Mariam, leaned in, and spoke in a lower, more confidential tone. There was a hint of embarrassment in her voice now.

“What is she saying?” Laila groaned. “Is something wrong with the baby?” “But how will she stand it?” Mariam said.

The doctor must have heard accusation in this question, judging by the defensive shift in her tone.

“You think I want it this way?” she said. “What do you want me to do? They won't give me what I need. I have no X ray either, no suction, no oxygen, not even simple antibiotics. When NGOs offer money, the Taliban turn them away. Or they funnel the money to the places that cater to men.”

“But, Doctor sahib, isn't there something you can give her?” Mariam asked.

“What's going on?” Laila moaned.

“You can buy the medicine yourself, but”

“Write the name,” Mariam said. “You write it down and I'll get it.”

Beneath the burqa, the doctor shook her head curtly. “There is no time,” she said. “For one thing, none of the nearby pharmacies have it. So you'd have to fight through traffic from one place to the next, maybe all the way across town, with little likelihood that you'd ever find it. It's almost eight thirty now, so you'll probably get arrested for breaking curfew. Even if you find the medicine, chances are you can't afford it. Or you'll find yourself in a bidding war with someone just as desperate. There is no time. This baby needs to come out now.”

“Tell me what's going on!” Laila said. She had propped herself up on her elbows. The doctor took a breath, then told Laila that the hospital had no anesthetic. “But if we delay, you will lose your baby.”

“Then cut me open,” Laila said. She dropped back on the bed and drew up her knees. “Cut me open and give me my baby.”

Inside the old, dingy operating room, Laila lay on a gurney bed as the doctor scrubbed her hands in a basin. Laila was shivering. She drew in air through her teeth every time the nurse wiped her belly with a cloth soaked in a yellow brown liquid. Another nurse stood at the door. She kept cracking it open to take a peek outside.

The doctor was out of her burqa now, and Mariam saw that she had a crest of silvery hair, heavy lidded eyes, and little pouches of fatigue at the corners of her mouth.

“They want us to operate in burqa,” the doctor explained, motioning with her head to the nurse at the door. “She keeps watch. She sees them coming; I cover.”

She said this in a pragmatic, almost indifferent, tone, and Mariam understood that this was a woman far past outrage. Here was a woman, she thought, who had understood that she was lucky to even be working, that there was always something, something else, that they could take away.

There were two vertical, metallic rods on either side of Laila's shoulders. With clothespins, the nurse who'd cleansed Laila's belly pinned a sheet to them. It formed a curtain between Laila and the doctor.

Mariam positioned herself behind the crown of Laila's head and lowered her face so their cheeks touched. She could feel Laila's teeth rattling. Their hands locked together.

Through the curtain, Mariam saw the doctor's shadow move to Laila's left, the nurse to the right. Laila's lips had stretched all the way back. Spit bubbles formed and popped on the surface of her clenched teeth. She made quick, little hissing sounds.

The doctor said, "Take heart, little sister." She bent over Laila.

Laila's eyes snapped open. Then her mouth opened. She held like this, held, held, shivering, the cords in her neck stretched, sweat dripping from her face, her fingers crushing Mariam's.

Mariam would always admire Laila for how much time passed before she screamed.

Questions for discussion:

1. "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" sources its title from the poem "*Kabul*" by the XIIIVth century Persian poet Saib-e-Tabrizi, translated by Dr. Josephine Barry Davis. Study the poem and make a list of images the author uses to praise the city of Kabul:

*"Ah! How beautiful is Kabul encircled by her arid mountains
And Rose, of the trails of thorns she envies
Her gusts of powdered soil, slightly sting my eyes*

But I love her, for knowing and loving are born of this same dust

My song exalts her dazzling tulips

And at the beauty of her trees, I blush

How sparkling the water flows from Pul-I-Mastaaan!

May Allah protect such beauty from the evil eye of man!

Khizr chose the path to Kabul in order to reach Paradise

For her mountains brought him close to the delights of heaven

From the fort with sprawling walls, A Dragon of protection

Each stone is there more precious than the treasure of Shayagan

Every street of Kabul is enthralling to the eye

Through the bazaars, caravans of Egypt pass

One could not count the moons that shimmer on her roofs

And the thousand splendid suns that hide behind her walls

Her laughter of mornings has the gaiety of flowers

Her nights of darkness, the reflections of lustrous hair

Her melodious nightingales, with passion sing their songs

Ardent tunes, as leaves enflamed, cascading from their throats

And I, I sing in the gardens of Jahanara, of Sharbara

And even the trumpets of heaven envy their green pastures”.

2. The story begins with Mariam’s mother expressing frustration with a curse word when Mariam accidentally breaks a cherished heirloom. Mariam’s recollection of this moment hints at her perception of herself and her connection with her mother. It implies a tense and strained relationship, perhaps marked by high expectations and

disappointment. This opening sets a tone of familial tension and foreshadows the themes of conflict and emotional complexity that will unfold throughout the novel?

3. Drawing from Nana's and Mariam's experiences, one can deduce the challenges faced by women in Afghanistan during the 1960s. Nana's forbidding of Mariam to attend school reflects societal norms and constraints imposed on women at that time. Nana's goal, while protective, may not be entirely realistic given the societal limitations on women's education and autonomy during that period?

4. Analyze time and setting in the novel. Investigate the background information – sound system, odours, colour symbolism, if there is any.

5. Jalil, Mariam's father, exhibits a multifaceted persona. Despite his affection for his daughter, his actions often fall short of recognizing her fully. He demonstrates his love through occasional gestures of kindness and provision, yet simultaneously fails to acknowledge Mariam as his legitimate daughter by keeping her at arm's length from his family. His treatment of Mariam reflects a blend of paternal affection tinged with societal pressures and personal limitations?

6. Nana employs the metaphor of a weed to describe their social and marital status? What is implied by it?

7. What does the description of Mariam's birth disclose about Nana, her character and Jalil's attitude?

8. What role does cinema play in the narrative?

9. What implications arise from the portrayal of Mariam, Laila, and Aziza regarding the psychological atmosphere within Rasheed's family?

10. What insights do the travel restrictions imposed on women reveal about Afghan society?

11. What prompts the young man to betray Mariam and Laila when they seek his assistance in leaving Kabul?

12. How has the breakdown of societal norms due to the war contributed to Rasheed's increasing cruelty towards Mariam and Laila?

13. What regulations are enforced by the Taliban, and how does their presence impact daily life in Kabul?
14. What insights do the conditions within hospitals and the treatment of women therein provide regarding the societal hierarchy?
15. Describe the outfit of the doctor performing the operation? What does it symbolize?
16. How does the scene of cesarean section disclose the female characters?
17. Summing up the gist of the excerpts represented, can you conclude what are the authors messages?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Man's inhumanity to man; b) Systematic victimization of women by patriarchal institutions and resistance to victimization; c) Spousal abuse; d) Power of education and education for women in the patriarchal societies; e) Corrupting influence of absolute power; f) The Prophet's women in Islam; g) Domestic violence and victim-blaming views.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *Afghanistan though a historical paradigm.*
2. *The images of Afghanistan in the English-language literature of different literary periods.*
3. *Wars in Afghanistan within the diachronic perspective.*
4. *Contemporary Afghani-American authors and the topics they bring to the public eye.*
5. *Sexual violence as a form of gender-based violence.*

Recommended reading:

1. *"Hard Damage" (2019), poetry by Aria Aber.*
2. *Mir Tamim Ansary's "West of Kabul, East of New York" (2003), "The Widow's Husband" (2009), "Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World Through Islamic Eyes" (2009), "Games Without Rules: the Often Interrupted History of Afghanistan" (2012).*
3. *Fariba Nawa's "Opium Nation" (2011).*

GENDER IN A DRAMATIC CONFLICT

“I think what makes people fascinating is conflict, it’s drama, it’s the human condition. Nobody wants to watch perfection.”

Nicolas Cage

“Gender is who you are, and sexuality is who you want.”

C.N. Lester, *“Trans Like Me: A Journey for All of Us”*

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.”

E.E. Cummings

“The only queer people are those who don’t love anybody.”

Rita Mae Brown

Key terms: *The trauma of the AIDS crisis figures, rippling effects on younger men, passion, betrayal, addiction, politics, sex, metropolitan gay life, gay history, a contemporary portrait of New York gay community, three generations, political activism, to forge a future, class divide, generational divide, to navigate the world, lyricism and revealing, imitation of an action, dialogue-driven scenes*

MATTHEW LOPEZ is an American playwright, director, and screenwriter acclaimed for works like *“The Whipping Man,”* which has seen numerous productions worldwide after premiering at Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ, and later debuting at the Manhattan Theatre Club in New York. His play *“Somewhere”* has been staged at esteemed venues such as the Old Globe, TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, and Hartford Stage Company, where *“Reverberation”* premiered in 2015. *“The Legend of Georgia McBride”* premiered at the Denver Theatre Center for the Performing Arts, while *“The Sentinels”* debuted in London at Headlong Theatre Company in 2011. Matthew currently has new play commissions from The Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Hartford Stage, and South Coast Rep. He also served as a staff writer on HBO’s *“The Newsroom”*.

Described as a groundbreaking work, *“The Inheritance”* debuted at The Old Vic in London before making its Broadway premiere in 2019. The play delves into the experiences of gay men in the XXIst century, grappling with their identities and the legacy of those who paved the way before them. Inspired by E.M. Forster’s novel *“Howards End”* from 1910, it centers on the relationship between Eric Glass and Toby Darling, exploring Toby’s journey as a burgeoning writer and Eric’s newfound connection with his neighbor Walter. Set in contemporary New York, the play navigates themes of love and loss in the aftermath of the AIDS crisis. Its London

production garnered critical acclaim, earning four Olivier Awards, including Best New Play, before heading to Broadway, where it closed prematurely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. *What is the mainstream vector of development of dramatic texts in the USA – topics, conflicts, motifs?*
2. *Who are the most prominent figures in the contemporary American dramaturgy?*
3. *Have you got a favorite playwright? What exactly resonates you in their works?*
4. *Reflect on the classification of dramatic texts and their features. What is the difference between plays, productions and performances?*

Matthew LOPEZ

THE INHERITANCE

inspired by the novel “Howards End” by E.M. FORSTER

(Excerpt)

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The Inheritance was originally commissioned by Hartford Stage (Darko Tresnjak, Artistic Director; Michael Stotts, Managing Director). The world premiere was performed in London at the Young Vic, Part One on 2 March 2018, and Part Two on 9 March 2018. The cast, in alphabetical order, was as follows:

Young Man 7 / Jasper Hugo Bolton

Young Man 5 / Charles / Peter / Agent Robert Boulter **Young Man 10 / Toby Darling**
 Andrew Burnap

Young Man 3 / Young Henry / Tucker Hubert Burton **Henry Wilcox** John Benjamin
 Hickey

Morgan / Walter Paul Hilton

Young Man 1 / Adam / Leo Samuel H. Levine **Boy** Sam Lockhart, Joshua De La Warr

Young Man 6 / Tristan Syrus Lowe

Young Man 2 / Jason 2 / Other Agent Michael MarcusMargaret Vanessa Redgrave

Young Man 9 / Eric Glass Kyle Soller

Young Man 4 / Young Walter / Clinic Worker Luke Thallon **Young Man 8 / Jason 1 / Paul / Doorman** Michael Walters

Direction Stephen Daldry *Design* Bob Crowley *Light* Jon Clark

Sound Paul Arditti and Chris Reid *Music* Paul Englishby

UK Casting Julia Horan CDG

US Casting Jordan Thaler CSA and Heidi Griffiths CSA *Associate Director* Justin Martin

Dramaturg Elizabeth Williamson

Characters

E. M. Forster ('Morgan')

Eric Glass

Toby Darling

Walter Poole

Adam McDowell

Henry Wilcox Leo

Margaret

Young Man 1

Young Man 2

Young Man 3

Young Man 4

Young Man 5

Young Man 6

Young Man 7

Young Man 8

Young Man 9

Young Man 10

Tristan Jasper

Jason 1

Jason 2

Charles Wilcox

Paul Wilcox

Tucker

Toby's Agent

Clinic Worker

Doorman

Toby's Other Agent

Prologue

A cozy room. A handful of Young Men sitting around writing. Some with pencils on paper, some on laptops, a few on typewriters. Off to the side, apart from the group, one lone young man sits. We shall call him Young Man 1.

Young Man 1 He has a story to tell – it is banging around inside him, aching to come out. But how does he begin? He opens his favorite novel, hoping to find inspiration in its first familiar sentence. And in reading those words, he finds himself once again in the gentle, reassuring presence of their author.

An older man enters. He is E. M. Forster. We, like all his intimates, shall call him Morgan.

Morgan I hope I'm not disturbing you

Young Man 2	}	No, please!
Young Man 6		Join us!
Young Man 5		You're not disturbing us at all.
Young Man 7		We could use the distraction.

They groan in frustration

Young Man 2 } It's going terribly.
 Young Man 3 } I hate everything I've written today.
 Young Man 4 } I'm a total fraud.
 Young Man 5 } Others have said this better than I ever will.

Young Man 6 } I have nothing original to say.
 Young Man 7 } All my work is derivative.
 Young Man 8 } My characters won't do what I want them to.
 Young Man 9 } I've been writing this same sentence for seven hours.

Young Man 10 I think I'm a fucking genius.

Morgan (to Young Man 1) Why aren't you writing?

Young Man 1 I don't know how to start. I thought that maybe I'd read a little and see how others begin their stories.

Morgan You have stumbled across the writer's most valuable tool: procrastination.

What is your story about?

Young Man 1 Me. My friends. The men I've loved. And those I've lost.

Morgan Goodness me. Friendship, love, and loss. Sounds like you're off to a very good start.

Young Man 1 But the thing is I'm not! My ideas refuse to become words.

Morgan Yes, I understand. All your ideas are at the starting post, ready to run. And yet they all must pass through a keyhole in order to begin the race.

Young Man 1 I picked up one of your books –

Morgan Which one? Ah, *Howards End*.

Young Man 1 'One may as well begin with Helen's letters to her sister.' God, what a great first sentence! So dashed off, as if to suggest it doesn't really matter how you start.

Morgan Perhaps it doesn't.

Young Man 1 I keep returning to this book again and again.

Morgan Tell me: what is it about the novel that speaks to you? What do you find in its pages?

Young Man 2 Guidance?

Young Man 8 Compassion.

Young Man 4 Wisdom.

Young Man 5 I love its humanity.

Young Man 7 Its honesty.

Young Man 1 It comforts me.

Young Man 10 Not for me. I mean, it's a great book, don't get me wrong. And the movie's good. But, I mean, the world is so different now. I can't identify with it at all.

Young Man 9 It's been a hundred years.

Young Man 7 The world has changed so much.

Young Man 3 Our lives are nothing like the people in your book.

Morgan How can that be true? Hearts still love, don't they? And break. Hope, fear, jealousy, desire. Your lives may be different. But the feelings are the same. The difference is merely setting, context, costumes. But those are just details.

Young Man 1 All I have are the details.

Morgan Why do you need to tell your story?

Young Man 1 To understand it. To understand myself.

Morgan That's a story I'd like to hear.

Young Man 1 Will you help me tell my story? Our story?

Young Man 7 Who we are.

Young Man 6 How we got here.

Young Man 4 And what we mean to each other.

The Lads encourage him.

Morgan I would be delighted.

So, to begin: who does your story start with?

Young Man 1 Toby.

Morgan One may as well begin with Toby's ... what?

Young Man 1 Voicemails.

Morgan One may as well begin with Toby's voicemails –

Young Man 1 – to his boyfriend.

Act One

Summer 2015–Summer 2016

SCENE ONE

1. A Party at the Hamptons

Young Man 10 becomes Toby Darling.

Beep.

Toby You are going to *die* when I tell you what you're missing. Call me back.

Beep. Toby's a little drunk.

Where are you? You can't be asleep already. You are missing the most *exquisite* party, holy shit! Call me when you get this. God, I love the Hamptons!

Beep. Toby's drunker.

Okay. So. First of all this house is *gorgeous*. It's this sleek, modernist saltbox, all concrete and glass with a massive infinity pool that stretches out to the ocean. And all of it so tastefully decorated, you would *die*.

Young Man 1 And its owner, Henry Wilcox?

Toby Oh, Henry Wilcox! You were right: Henry Wilcox is really kinda dreamy. I want to be him when I grow up. He's wearing the most magnificent suit, which was made by this Savile Row-trained tailor on the Upper West Side, kinda near us, actually. So when I asked him for the guy's information, Henry says:

Young Man 1 'Oh Toby, he's way out of your price range.'

Toby Which is such a dick thing to say and yet coming from the mouth of Henry Wilcox, I was simply *dazzled*.

Oh! And we played football today. Tackle, not touch. Can you imagine me playing football? Well, I didn't. But I could have if I wanted and that's the point.

Young Man 1 And Henry's partner Walter?

Toby Walter has this sort of, I don't know, this ghost-like spirit about him. Like a sheer curtain in front of an open window. He's like Valium. I love him.

Holy shit, Meryl Streep is here! Eric, this party is ridiculous. Call me back!

Beep. Toby's drunker.

Toby Walter just said I could stay the whole weekend! Pack a bag and get your ass on a train first thing tomorrow morning. You are going to love it here!

Young Man 1 New York City is a Darwinian experiment. Every summer, waves of college graduates wash up on its shores to begin the struggle toward success and achievement.

Young Man 5 They are young, ambitious, intelligent and driven –

Young Man 8 Also helps if they're attractive.

Young Man 6 – each convinced they have the talents and abilities not just to survive in the city –

Young Man 2 – but also to thrive.

Young Man 1 Toby Darling and his partner Eric Glass were two such strivers.

Morgan Let's have a look at them.

Right. So ... neither were all that young anymore –

Toby Hey!

Morgan – nor particularly brilliant –

Eric Wait a second.

Morgan – or successful.

Toby Oh come on!

Morgan And yet, through no enterprise of their own, they were the inhabitants of an enormous three-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment with a terrace that overlooked the park on the fifteenth floor of an elegant pre-war building on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Young Man 9 becomes Eric Glass.

Morgan Eric Glass was packing a bag just as Toby walked into the apartment –

Young Man 1 Hungover and miserable.

2. Eric and Toby's Apartment

Toby Hey.

Eric Toby? I was just about to head to Penn Station.

Toby Didn't you get to my voicemail?

Eric You left two dozen.

Toby The one from early this morning.

Eric No, I guess I / didn't –

Young Man 2 Hey, it's me.

Young Man 3 It's early.

Young Man 4 Like, maybe six?

Young Man 5 Look, change of plans.

Young Man 6 I'm taking the first train back.

Young Man 7 And please delete all my messages from last night.

Young Man 8 I wish I'd never come.

Eric What happened?

Toby I am so humiliated. I can never show my face there again. I'm going to end my days as a Walmart cashier –

Young Man 1 – in Alabama.

Eric Just tell me, babe.

Toby I threw up.

Eric Oh. That's not so bad. On the train?

Toby At the party.

Eric Oh. Well ... like ... on the lawn / or –?

Toby On their sofa.

Eric Oh.

Toby And their dog.

Which was sitting in Meryl Streep's lap.

Eric Oh Toby...

Toby I am beyond mortified. My career has ended before it's begun.

Eric Your career is not over.

Toby Eric, Alec Baldwin and Mariska Hargitay watched me projectile vomit over THE MOST TRANSCENDENT AND CELEBRATED ACTOR OF ALL TIME!

Eric Toby ...

Toby You've seen *Sophie's Choice*! Do you know how many emails are likely being fired off between New York and Los Angeles *this very minute*? The blacklist resurrected, party of one. I am so humiliated.

Eric Okay. Do you think you may be overstating your stature just a / tiny bit?

Toby Hardly the point of my story, Eric.

Eric So what happened then?

Toby Everyone fled the room like I had Ebola. Meryl Streep just sat there, covered in vomit. The dog, it ... Oh God, the dog started...

Eric Just tell me –

Toby It started licking it off her face. Are you laughing?

Eric Not *at* you.

Toby Thank *God* for Walter, who acted as if this sort of thing happens *all the time* in East Hampton. He helped the most nominated actor in Oscar history up and out of the room. Then he brought me a ginger ale and helped me up to my room. But not before Elton John tried to twelve-step me. I woke up around five and Ubered over to the train station before the sun came up.

Eric You left without saying goodbye?

Toby Well, I wasn't going to stick around for breakfast!

Eric grabs his phone.

What are you doing?

Eric I'm calling / them.

Toby No, please!

Eric We can't just say nothing.

Toby Yes, we can! I promise they'll forget all about us by next week.

Eric I don't want them to forget about us. I like Henry and Walter.

Toby Well, I promise you they don't like us anymore. Just please let it be.

Eric puts his phone away.

God, I'm such a mess.

Eric You've puked all over this city and lived to show your face again.

Toby But never in the Hamptons. Everyone at that party was so cool and unaffected, like they belonged there.

Eric They *did* belong there. Maybe someday we'll have money and we'll belong there, too. Or maybe that's just not us.

Toby It *has* to be us. You didn't see that house, Eric.

(Then, truly bummed.) Aw. You didn't see that house. I'm sorry I ruined our beach vacation.

Eric It was a plan for all of a minute. I barely had time to cancel anything. In fact, I was planning to noodle around the Whitney with Tristan. Maybe go to Film Forum. You wanna come?

Toby I'm so hungover, babe. I just wanna fall asleep and wake up in my forties.

Eric Oh, Toby.

Go to sleep. I'll be home to make you dinner.

Toby Call me before you head to the movies. I might just rally.

Morgan What does Eric do now?

Young Man 1 I think he calls Walter anyway.

Morgan And who is Walter?

Young Man 1 You are.

Morgan becomes Walter Poole.

Walter Hello?

Eric Hi, Walter? It's Eric Glass.

Walter Well, hello Eric Glass. I wondered if I might hear from you today.

Eric Yeah. So listen, about last night, Toby feels just awful.

Walter Judging from the number of martinis Toby had, I'm not surprised.

Eric Listen, are you sure there isn't there something we can do? I can send a check / or maybe call a –

Walter What you can do is to put it out of your mind.

Eric Well ... I'll try.

Walter Now if you'll excuse me, the steam cleaners have just arrived. Totally unrelated to the events of last night I assure you. So nice to hear from you, Eric.

Walter hangs up, becomes Morgan again.

Morgan Eric Glass opened his home regularly to his friends. He cooked elaborate dinners for great numbers of the fascinating people he collected over the years, listening to their stories, rarely offering his own in return.

Young Man 1 And so it was, on Friday, October 9, 2015 that Eric Glass opened his home to his friends to celebrate his thirty-third birthday. He served dinner, poured wine, and played for them a piece of music that had recently captured his ear.

End of Scene One.

SCENE TWO

October 9, 2015. Eric's thirty-third birthday.

1. Eric and Toby's Apartment

Eric and Toby with a group of four other young men. Ravel's String Quartet in F Major plays.

Eric Toby and I heard a group from Juilliard playing this piece today at the Strand.

Tristan Who's it by?

Eric Ravel.

Jason 2 I don't really know Ravel. What's he done?

Jason 1 What do you mean, 'done', babe?

Eric 'Bolero'.

Jason 2 Which one's that?

Eric has to start dah-dah-dahing 'Bolero'.

Jason 2 Oh right! Torvill and Dean. And he wrote this?

Eric Yes.

Tristan It's so captivating.

Eric Isn't it?

Jason 2 I think I once heard this in a movie.

Jasper Yeah, me too. *Atonement*, maybe?

Jason 2 Or *English Patient*? Something English.

Jason 1 Maybe *The Talented Mr Ripley*?

Jason 2 Oooh! We should totally watch that again.

Eric Here, let me skip to the second movement.

He skips ahead in the piece.

Isn't that nice? I love all that plucking.

Toby Eric's into hard-core plucking.

Tristan It sounds like the bubbles in a glass of champagne.

Eric Yeah, I hear that.

Jason 2 Or a bumblebee racing around a meadow.

Eric Yeah, I hear that too. All right, I'm gonna check on dinner.

Young Man 1 Excuse me.

Eric Hey, babe, can you open another bottle of wine?

Toby Absolutely.

Young Man 1 Um, excuse me?

Tristan What are you making? It smells so good.

Eric I got this enormous leg of lamb at Dickson's.

Young Man 1 enters, carrying a bag from the Strand.

Young Man 1 Excuse me. I'm so sorry to interrupt your party. Do you remember me?

Eric No.

Young Man 1 I was sitting next to you today at the Strand. Do you remember me?

Eric Sorry ...

Young Man 1 When they were playing that music? Do you remember me?

Eric Umm ...

Toby Oh yeah, the twink who asked us what piece they were playing.

Young Man 1 Yes.

Jason 2 It's Ravel.

Eric And now you're here.

Young Man 1 Yes.

Toby Why are you here?

Young Man 1 It's, um, my bag.

Toby The bag in your hands?

Young Man 1 No, that bag over there.

He points to another Strand bag on the floor.

I think you took my bag.

Toby What?

Young Man 1 Accidentally. We both had our bags on the floor and when you left, I think you may have grabbed mine. Accidentally.

Eric Oh my God, we are so sorry. Toby, you did it again!

Jason 1 'Again'? You mean he's done this before?

Eric Constantly! He's always taking things that don't belong to him. Scarves, gloves, umbrellas.

Jasper Virginity.

Eric Seriously baby, you're becoming a real kleptomaniac.

Toby I didn't even notice.

Eric We are so sorry about that.

Young Man 1 You're Toby Darling, right? You wrote the book *Loved Boy*?

Jasper Oh wow, that just happened.

Tristan Toby, you just got recognized.

Jason 1 } That's pretty cool.
Jason 2 } You're famous!

Jasper What else has he got?

Young Man 1 Oh, well, I—

Eric Toby's book has quite a following among gay teenaged boys.

Jason 2 You're a teen idol!

Toby Is that how you recognized me? You read my book, it changed your life, you saw me in the bookstore and so you followed me home for an autograph, making up a story about switched bags?

Young Man 1 Actually, you left your wallet in the bag. Also ...

Young Man 1 removes five copies of the same book from the bag he brought in.

Jason 1 Is that your book, Toby?

Jasper You bought six copies of your own book?

Toby Yeah, laugh it up, guys. If you must know, I promised the ladies on the ninth floor that I would bring them each a signed copy for their book club.

Eric Have you read Toby's book?

Young Man 1 No, but I do know people who are obsessed with it.

Eric Obsessed? Wow, baby, did you hear that?

Jason 2 grabs Young Man 1's bag.

Jason 2 So what books did *you* get?

Young Man 1 Oh, I'm—

Jason 2 A Cavafy collection.

Eric Ooh, which translation?

Jason 2 Mendelsohn.

Eric } The best.

Jason 1 } I've been meaning to get that. Let me see.

Jasper What else has he got?

Jason 2 *Library. Giovanni's Room. Call Me By Your Name. The Swimming-Pool*

Jason 1 I'm sensing a theme here.

Toby You're buying all these queer books, why didn't you buy mine?

Tristan Because you'd already bought every copy in the store, Toby.

Jason 2 You should turn it into a movie, Toby.

Jason 1 Yes! It would make a great movie!

Toby Eventually, yeah. I've actually started adapting it as a play.

Jason 2 } Oh cool, how exciting!

Jason 1 } I could totally see it as a play.

Toby (to *Young Man 1*) Take a copy.

Young Man 1 You don't have to / give me –

Toby Do you plan to read it or are you just going to throw it on a shelf?

Young Man 1 No, I'll read it.

Toby Then it's your book.

Young Man 1 Thank you. I should let you get back to your / party.

Eric No, stay.

Jason 2 It's Eric's birthday!

Young Man 1 Happy birthday.

Eric Thank you. Are you hungry? I made tons of food.

Young Man 1 Oh, I couldn't –

Tristan Eric is an amazing cook.

Eric Or maybe a glass of wine? We were just listening to the piece they were playing at the Strand.

Young Man 1 Oh God, I really loved that piece.

Eric Yeah, me too. It's beautiful, isn't it?

Young Man 1 Yeah. It, um ... it yearns.

Eric Yes, it does! That is the perfect word. I think it's about mourning.

Young Man 1 Oh, interesting.

Eric You don't agree?

Young Man 1 I think ... I think maybe it's about unrequited love.

Eric Really? How?

Young Man 1 It's romantic but in a way that feels unresolved.

Jason 2 Huh. Funny, I don't hear that at all.

Young Man 1 Maybe I'm wrong

Toby Don't let them bully you.

Young Man 1 Okay. Well, in the first movement, the phrases are legato, rising and falling, like breath – no – like a sigh. I imagine someone looking at photos of someone they've loved for a long time. There's sadness in the music. Then the second movement starts with plucking instead of bowing. It's summery and fresh. It makes me think of a butterfly flitting through a meadow.

Jason 2 I said a bumblebee.

Young Man 1 But then, halfway through the second movement, the sadness returns, as if our character suddenly sees the object of their desire in the flesh. That painful, yearning feeling that comes when you want someone so badly and you know you can never have them. Then the last movement is really agitated, like a raging fire that completely consumes the person. Burned alive by their own desire.

They all look at Young Man 1.

Toby A raging fire? You got all that from listening to it once at a bookstore?

Young Man 1 That's just the way my brain works.

Eric You're not drinking your wine.

Young Man 1 Oh, I don't / really –

Eric Do you want something else?

Toby Maybe something stronger?

Young Man 1 Oh, no / I –

Eric I could make you a cocktail.

Toby Eric makes a mean Manhattan.

Jason 2 Ooh, I want a Manhattan

Tristan Yeah, me too.

Toby Eric, you have been commissioned to make Manhattans.

Eric Yes! On it!

Tristan (*to Young Man 1*) You're gonna be crawling home, I promise.

Toby So what's your story, kid?

Jason 1 } Are you in school?

Jason 2 } How old are you?

Tristan } Where are you from?

Jasper } Do you have a boyfriend?

All eyes on Young Man 1.

Young Man 1 I should probably go.

A great protest from the Lads.

Eric Oh no, stay. Please.

Toby They're harmless, don't mind them.

Eric We've got tons of food, lots of good wine.

Young Man 1 No, I should go. Thank you, though.

Eric Will you come back, then? Now that you know where we live?

Young Man 1 Thank you. Thanks.

He grabs his bag, exits. Eric looks at his friends.

Eric You are all just the worst.

Tristan Don't look at me.

Jasper We just asked him about himself.

Eric You couldn't have made him feel just a little more welcome? Did you hear how he talked about that piece of music? And we chased him away.

Toby So look him up on Facebook.

Eric Yes! Good idea, Toby. What was his name?

They all stare at each other blankly.

We didn't think to ask him his name.

Toby Who wants a Manhattan?

2. *Eric Interlude*

Morgan Eric Glass did not keep many secrets. But there was one truth he kept to himself, even from Toby.

Eric What truth is that?

Morgan Eric Glass did not believe he was special. He was not as brilliant or as accomplished as his friends. He thought of himself – in all things and in all ways – as painfully ordinary.

Eric Eric had taken the first job he was offered out of college, working for his friend Jasper, whose brilliance he glimpsed from their earliest days as classmates at Yale.

Jasper Jasper started his own company at the age of twenty-one, working as a social justice entrepreneur. Eric was his first employee.

Eric He met Tristan his first year after college. They went on three dates and decided –

Tristan – they were each other’s best friend. Tristan is a physician.

Eric He works in the emergency room at NYU Medical Center.

Eric met Jason while working as volunteers on the Kerry campaign in 2004.

Jason 2 We lost that election. But the friendship remains. Jason is a lawyer.

Jason 1 And his –

Jason 2 And his boyfriend, also named Jason, is a lawyer at the same firm.

Jason 1 Fine. But one thing, though –

Young Man 2 slips a ring on to Young Man 8’s finger.

They’re not boyfriends. They’re married.

Morgan To each other?

Jason 1 Yes, of course.

Morgan Are all of you married?

Tristan Find me a man who is worth a damn and I will marry the son of a bitch.

Morgan What about Jasper?

Jasper Jasper is not the marrying kind.

Morgan Why not?

Young Man 6 Jasper dates young guys.

Young Man 4 Like, just out of college young.

Jasper Jasper doesn’t like complicated men.

Morgan Are Eric and Toby married?

Young Man 1 Not yet.

Young Man 3 I have a question:

Morgan Yes?

Young Man 3 How can he afford such a nice apartment?

Young Man 7 Yeah, I was wondering that too.

Morgan In order to understand who Eric Glass is, one first has to understand the significance of his family's apartment on the Upper West Side.

Young Man 1 Eric's grandfather, Nathan, was a veteran of the Tenth Armored Division, which helped liberate Dachau. His grandmother, Miriam, a refugee from Germany.

Morgan In the fall of 1947, they signed the lease on a rent-controlled apartment on West End Avenue. This was back when middle-class families could afford such places.

Eric This apartment became the first place Eric's grandmother felt safe in the world. She raised her family here in this apartment. Voted in every election at the public school around the corner. She watched John Kennedy's death, Richard Nixon's resignation, and Barack Obama's election from the living room of this apartment. It was in this apartment that Miriam Glass became an American.

Young Man 1 After her death in December 2008, Eric took up residence in the apartment in order to continue the family's claim on the cherished dwelling. He met

Toby Darling a week later.

Toby Toby Darling entered Eric's life like a typhoon.

Young Man 1 The two instantly fell in love and Toby moved in four months later.

Eric For Eric, it was everything he'd ever wanted in a relationship.

Toby For Toby, it was ...

Young Man 1 For Toby, it was a home that was safe and stable and loving.

Morgan Toby inspired Eric. Eric protected Toby.

Toby Toby fucked the living daylights out of Eric.

Eric Eric and Toby had really great sex.

Morgan Thank you, gentlemen. Now that we know what Eric cares about most, we must give him something to fight against. A few days before Christmas that year, Eric receives a call from his father informing him that the building's management company has finally decided to begin eviction proceedings against the Glass family.

Eric No, please not that.

Young Man 1 They're hiring a lawyer and planning to fight it.

Morgan But it is possible that 2016 could be Eric's last year living in his family's cherished home.

Eric Not my home, my grandparents' home.

Morgan What would Eric do after receiving such news?

Eric He would want to be comforted by Toby.

Morgan Is Toby particularly good at providing comfort?

Eric Well ...

Young Man 1 No.

Morgan So what could Toby do that would make Eric feel better right now?

Young Man 1 He could fuck the living daylights out of Eric.

Eric Toby is very good at that.

Morgan Yes, but so soon in the story?

The Lads insist: definitely, yes.

Questions for discussion:

1. Recap the key points voiced in the excerpt of the play.
2. Examine the importance of the title of the play.
3. Consider the backstory of the plot and its connections to other texts.
4. Who is the target audience of the play?
5. Analyze the introduction – its structure and the hook. Where the story begins? What atmosphere is being created from the outset and how this is achieved?
6. What themes are manifested in the excerpt (political, social, historical)?

7. Analyze the setting and the figurative language in the text. What is social and historical context?
8. Symbolism, motifs, extended metaphors in the text of the play.
9. Specific language used – tone, dialect, colloquialism, accent.
10. What sort of characters are introduced in the excerpt? How are they portrayed? What do you think is their role in the play? Talk about the names used in the play.

Read the play up to the end and answer the following questions:

11. Examine the overall plot structure of the play, including its setting, historical, cultural, and social context. Discuss how the play begins and ends, considering its entrance and exit points.
12. What is the subject matter of the full play?
13. Reflect on characterization. Stock and unconventional characters.
14. Discuss the language of the play, its imagery, symbolism, irony, entrance and exit.
15. Analyze dialogues – soliloquies, monologues, stichomythic conversations, stage directions, dramatic dashes, italics, capitals, different language use, song etc.
16. What are the themes and messages? What is revealed of the ‘hidden’ storyline in initial lines.
17. Talk about the sequencing of events and cross-cutting – linear, chronological, parallel, flashbacks, flash forwards (foreshadowing). Play-within-a-play or metatheatre – does it apply here?
18. How does the playwright use dramatic irony?
19. What is the possible usage of stagecraft?
20. What makes the play powerful and dramatic?

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) “*The Inheritance*” and the 1910 novel “*Howards End*” by E.M. Forster as its inspiration; b) The reflection of the AIDS

crisis in the play; c) Generation crisis in the play; d) Gender issues and socio-political hostility in the play; e) Time and setting in the play by Matthew Lopez.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *The development of drama in the USA.*
2. *The prevailing themes in contemporary American drama.*
3. *Contemporaneous works of theater (plays written or produced by other artists at roughly the same time). Gender issues. The leading authors.*
4. *Matthew Lopez – the personality of the author.*
5. *“The Inheritance” – its background and allusions.*

Recommended reading:

1. *“Howards End” (1910) by E.M. Forster.*
2. *“Significant Other” (2015) by Joshua Harmon.*
3. *“The Humans” (2015) by Stephen Karam.*
4. *“Eclipsed” (2009) by Danai Gurira.*
5. *“The Boys in the Band” (1968) by Mart Crowley.*
6. *“Time Stands Still” (2009) by Donald Margulies.*
7. *“Peter and the Star Catcher” (2011) by Rick Elice.*
8. *“American Son” (2019) by Christopher Demon-Brown.*

PACE 11

GREEN POETRY AND THE PROBLEMS IT RAISES

“I could not be a poet without the natural world. Someone else could. But not me. For me, the door to the woods is the door to the temple.”

Mary Oliver

“Our concepts of nature are relative, historically determined. The nature poem is affected by ideology, by literary convention as well as social and cultural ideas...The term nature is itself contested now because it seems to assume an oversimplified relationship between the human and the environment. “Nature” has been the site of so many different naïve symbolisms, such as purity, escape, and savagery. That’s why poets and critics often refer to green poetry or environmental poetry, which presupposes a complicated interconnection between nature and humankind.”

Edward Hirsch, *A Poet’s Glossary*

[Nature poetry] *“often meditates on an encounter between the human subject and something in the other-than-human world that reveals an aspect of the meaning of life.”*

Mary Oliver

*“I want to tell the world
there is a bird in every part of your body.”*

Sneha Subramanian Kanta

Key terms: *Earth day, a style of poetry, ecopoetry, nature and humankind, the emerging environmental crisis, the integrity of the other-than-human world, a biocentric approach, transcendental and romantic, human injustice, activism-based poetry, damage and degradation, urban imagining, pastoral tradition/mode, environmentally-driven*

1. Define the term “ecopoetry”. What do you know about the pastoral traditions that shaped this style of poetry?
2. Share your view on the history of the ecopoetic movement and its prerequisites.
3. What’s your vision of the more traditional nature poems? In what way had the transcendental and romantic poetry shaped ecopoetry?

4. *What sort of environmental issues, in your opinion, have changed the mind of the poetry?*

ENVIRONMENTAL POETRY delves into themes of human injustice and the degradation of the natural world, often carrying political or activist undertones. It has emerged from the environmental movement of the 1960s, influenced by figures like Rachel Carson, and aligns with movements for economic, social, racial, and gender justice. This genre of poetry reflects the environmental crisis and explores the intricate connections between humans and the natural world through language. It serves as a witness to environmental devastation, urban decay, and societal issues, presenting a diverse range of perspectives and forms. Eco-poetry is categorized into three main groups: Nature Poetry, Environmental Poetry, and Ecological Poetry.

THE ECOPOETRY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE XXTH-XXIST CENTURIES

LUCILLE CLIFTON, born in 1936 in DePew, New York, attended Howard University. She gained recognition as a poet when Langston Hughes discovered her work and included it in his anthology *"The Poetry of the Negro"* (1970). In 2007, she received the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize. Clifton made history as the first author to have two poetry books selected as finalists for the Pulitzer Prize: *"Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir, 1969-1980"* (1987) and *"Next: New Poems"* (1987). Her collection *"Two-Headed Woman"* (1980) was also nominated for a Pulitzer and won the Juniper Prize from the University of Massachusetts. She served as Maryland's poet laureate from 1974 to 1985 and won the esteemed National Book Award for *"Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems, 1988-2000"*. Additionally, Clifton authored several children's books aimed at helping young readers understand African-American heritage and the world around them, including *"All Us Come Cross the Water"* (1973), *"Everett Anderson's Goodbye"* (1984), and contributions to the *"Oxford Companion to African American Literature"*.

Clifton's debut poetry collection, *"Good Times"* (1969), earned recognition as one of the top ten books of the year by the New York Times. Her follow-up, *"Good News about the Earth: New Poems"* (1972), reflects shifts in social and political dynamics within the African-American community. With *"An Ordinary Woman"* (1974), her third poetry compilation, Clifton shifted away from explicit exploration of racial themes, delving instead into her roles as a woman and poet. This collection was later incorporated into *"Good Woman: Poems and a Memoir: 1969-1980"*, which, along with *"Next: New Poems"* (1987), received Pulitzer Prize nominations. In *"Quilting: Poems 1987-1990"* (1991), Clifton focused on women's history.

In *"Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems, 1988-2000"* (2000), Clifton explores the resilience of women in coping with health challenges, family disruptions,

and historical calamities. “*Mercy*” (2004), her 12th poetry collection, delves into themes of mother-daughter relationships, terrorism, discrimination, and individual faith. In her subsequent work, “*Voices*” (2008), Clifton incorporates concise verses that anthropomorphize objects alongside poems addressing more conventional subjects.

Lucille CLIFTON

grief

begin with the pain
of the grass
that bore the weight
of adam,
his broken rib mending
into eve,

imagine
the original bleeding,
adam moaning
and the lamentation of grass.

from that garden,
through fields of lost
and found, to now, to here,
to grief for the upright
animal, to grief for the
horizontal world.

pause then for the human
animal in its coat
of many colors. pause

for the myth of america.
 pause for the myth
 of america.

and pause for the girl
 with twelve fingers
 who never learned to cry enough
 for anything that mattered,

not enough for the fear,
 not enough for the loss,
 not enough for the history,
 not enough
 for the disregarded planet.
 not enough for the grass.

then end in the garden of regret
 with time's bell tolling grief
 and pain,
 grief for the grass
 that is older than adam,
 grief for what is born human,
 grief for what is not.

the killing of the trees

the third went down
 with a sound almost like flaking,
 a soft swish as the left leaves

fluttered themselves and died.
 three of them, four, then five
 stiffening in the snow
 as if this hill were Wounded Knee
 as if the slim feathered branches
 were bonnets of war
 as if the pale man seated
 high in the bulldozer nest
 his blonde mustache ice-matted
 was Pahuska come again but stronger now,
 his long hair wild and unrelenting.

remember the photograph,
 the old warrior, his stiffened arm
 raised as if in blessing,
 his frozen eyes open,
 his bark skin brown and not so much
 wrinkled as circled with age,
 and the snow everywhere still falling,
 covering his one good leg.
 remember his name was Spotted Tail
 or Hump or Red Cloud or Geronimo
 or none of these or all of these.
 he was a chief. he was a tree
 falling the way a chief falls,
 straight, eyes open, arms reaching
 for his mother ground.

so i have come to live

among the men who kill the trees,
 a subdivision, new,
 in southern Maryland.
 I have brought my witness eye with me
 and my two wild hands,
 the left one sister to the fists
 pushing the bulldozer against the old oak,
 the angry right, brown and hard and spotted
 as bark. we come in peace,
 but this morning
 ponies circle what is left of life
 and whales and continents and children and ozone
 and trees huddle in a camp weeping
 outside my window and i can see it all
 with that one good eye.

Questions for discussion:

1. Analyze the themes and imagery of both poems.
2. Reflect on the graphic shape of the poems (consider missing: capitalization, punctuation, long and plentiful lines, etc.).
3. Think of the Biblical images in the text. What is their symbolic or intertextual value?
4. What is implied by the phrase “the myth of america” in the poem “*grief*”?
5. What is meant by the girl “with twelve figures”?
6. What is the sound and rhythm of the both poems?
7. What purpose do the numbers serve in the second stanza?
8. Reflect on the colour symbolism in “*the killing of the trees*”.
9. Examine the role and significance of place names and personal names within the second poem.

10. What is the context and the structure of the poems?
11. Determine the stylistic devices in both texts.
12. Examine the atmosphere conveyed in both texts. Identify the literary techniques employed by the author to effectively communicate her intended message?

ANTHONY SEIDMAN is a poet and translator based in Los Angeles. He spent several years living in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, where he began translating poets from the border region. Currently, he splits his time between Los Angeles and Mexicali, Mexico. Seidman has authored works such as *“I Will Not Be a Butcher for the Wealthy”* and *“A Sleepless Man Sits Up in Bed.”* He has also translated works from Spanish, including *“Smooth Talking Dog”* by Roberto Castillo Udiarte and *“Luna Park”* by Luis Cardoza y Aragon. Seidman’s writings, including poetry, articles, fiction, and translations, have been featured in publications like *Huizache*, *Newsweek en espanol*, *Poetry International*, *World Literature Today*, *Poets and Writers*, *Ambit*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, and *The Ecopoetry Anthology*, *Assymetries: Contemporary Peruvian Poetry*, *The California Prose Directory*, and *Ni Una Mas: Poemas por Ciudad Juarez*.

Anthony SEIDMAN

RUNOFF

There are pollutants above this dog, above us all, and brush fires on the San Fernando foothills; crows perch on telephone cables, crows my dog hears cawing, crows who know the vacant lots where bones of murder victims sink among jimson weed, grass, and the narrow tunnels leading to the ant queen’s den and the sinews of this desert. As always, night arrives: this dog looks up, and only a grey darkness, like that of dishwater, night pressing through smog, through clumps of weed and burr, coagulant of night, dulling the heat the way salt and fats slow the nervous ticking of circulation. Dog thinks summer will never end; an ecstasy of sniffing and dozing, and men who sit on the sidewalk drinking beer, sowing the pavement with peanut shells. This dog has fangs chiseled for meat, and irises that dilate; but, at last, night swells, overflows, a sewage-tide of shadow, and both dog and poet will witness hillside and

hearth washing away, the way a red taillight throbs in rainfall, diminishes in size, then turns onto a darker street where one can only hear the roar, decrescendo, of the engine.

A DOG'S POETRY

My dog can't decipher Wang Wei with his titles encapsulating the river, willows, the long white beards that smell of autumn, and twilights like water kept in a metal pitcher, water turning ochre. And so I read to my dog of the river, the horse whinnying, and the friends saying farewell, but I am a voice reading in an apartment where the hum of air conditioning replaces wind unleashing the plum blossoms. Long ago, Wang Wei, aged yet drunk and desiring a courtesan with her finger-drums and jade brocade, read some of his lines for her scarlet lips, narrow slippers, and hair the color of a crow. Yet the hands of a swordsman who dealt her the gift of a ripe mandrake burned in her thoughts as she feigned interest in Wang Wei's moonlight and discarded silk fan. My dog twists from my recitation, falls back asleep, and in his dream bounds after a squirrel who scampers up a trunk to a bough where the oranges, like that courtesan's breasts, are pendant, ripe, and forbidden.

Questions for discussion:

1. Analyze the titles, themes, and imagery in both poems.
2. Reflect on the graphic shape of the poems and the function of stylistic devices applied.
3. What is the setting of the poems? Tell about the concepts of time and space in two poetic texts. What is the significance of nature and street description?
4. Discuss the symbolism and intertextual structures within the texts.
5. Think of the colour, sound, and odor in the author's texts.
6. What is the function of the proper names in Seidman's works?
7. Why does the author dwell on dog-imagery?
8. Summarize the author's message.

9. Determine who the narrator is and the point of view the stories are told.
10. Study the language in the poem.

SUSAN STEWART, born on March 15, 1952, is an American poet and literary critic. She obtained her BA from Dickinson College, MA from Johns Hopkins University, and PhD in folklore from the University of Pennsylvania. Stewart has authored several poetry collections, including *“Cinder: New and Selected Poems”* (2017), *“Red Rover”* (2008), *“The Forest”* (1995), and *“Columbarium”* (2003), which won the National Book Critics Circle Award. Additionally, she has translated works such as *“Love Lessons: Selected Poems of Alda Merini”* (2009) and co-translated, with Sara Teardo, *“The Reprisal”* (2013) by Laudomia Bonanni. Stewart also collaborated with Patrizio Ceccagnoli on the translation of Milo De Angelis’s *“Theme of Farewell an After-Poems”* (2013). Her other translation projects include working with Wesley Smith on *“Andromache”* (2001) by Euripides and with Brunella Antomarini on *“Scipione: Poems and Prose”* (2001).

Stewart has authored several books that delve into various aspects of form, culture, aesthetics, representation, and poetry. These include *“Crimes of Writing”* (1991), *“On Longing”* (1993), *“Poetry and the Fate of the Senses”* (2002), which earned both the Christian Gauss and Truman Capote awards for literary criticism in 2002, *“The Open Studio”* (2005), *“The Poet’s Freedom: A Notebook on Making”* (2011), and *“The Ruins Lesson: Meaning and Material in Western Culture”* (2020). Additionally, she has collaborated with artists and composers such as Ann Hamilton and composer James Primosch.

The author has been honored with a *MacArthur Fellowship*, fellowships from the *Pew Charitable Trusts*, the *Guggenheim Foundation*, and the *American Academy in Berlin*, as well as two grants from the NEA. She has also received a *Lila Wallace Individual Writer’s Award* and an *Academy Award in Literature* from the *American Academy of Arts and Letters*. From 2005 to 2011, she held the position of Chancellor at the *Academy of American Poets*.

Susan STEWART

THE FOREST

You should lie down now and remember the forest,
 for it is disappearing –
 no, the truth is it is gone now
 and so what details you can bring back
 might have a kind of life.

Not the one you had hoped for, but a life
 – you should lie down now and remember the forest –
 nonetheless, you might call it “in the forest,”
no the truth is, it is gone now,
 starting somewhere near the beginning, that edge,

Or instead the first layer, the place you remember
 (not the one you had hoped for, but a life)
 as if it were firm, underfoot, for that place is a sea,
 nonetheless, you might call it “in the forest,”
 which we can never drift above, we were there or we were not,

No surface, skimming. And blank in life, too,
 or instead the first layer, the place you remember,
 as layers fold in time, black humus there,
 as if it were firm, underfoot, for that place is a sea,
 like a light left hand descending, always on the same keys.

The flecked birds of the forest sing behind and before
 no surface, skimming. And blank in life, too,
 sing without a music where there cannot be an order,
 as layers fold in time, black humus there,
 where wide swatches of light slice between gray trunks,

Where the air has a texture of drying moss,
 the flecked birds of the forest sing behind and before:
 a musk from the mushrooms and scalloped molds.
 They sing without a music where there cannot be an order,
 though high in the dry leaves something does fall,

Nothing comes down to us here.

Where the air has a texture of drying moss,
 in that place where I was raised) the forest was tangled,
 a musk from the mushrooms and scalloped molds,
 tangled with brambles, soft-starred and moving, ferns

And the marred twines of cinquefoil, false strawberry, sumac –
 nothing comes down to us here,
stained. A low branch swinging above a brook
 in that place where I was raised, the forest was tangled,
 and a cave just the width of shoulder blades.

You can understand what I am doing when I think of the entry –
 and the marred twines of cinquefoil, false strawberry, sumac –
 as a kind of limit. Sometimes I imagine us walking there
 (...pokeberry, *stained*. A low branch swinging above a brook)
 in a place that is something like a forest.

But perhaps the other kind, where the ground is covered
 (you can understand what I am doing when I think of the entry)
 by pliant green needles, there below the piney fronds,
 a kind of limit. Sometimes I imagine us walking there.
 And quickening below lie the sharp brown blades,

The disfiguring blackness, then the bulbed phosphorescence of the roots.
 But perhaps the other kind, where the ground is covered,
 so strangely alike and yet singular, too, below
 the pliant green needles, the piney fronds.

Once we were lost in the forest, *so strangely alike and yet singular, too*,

but the truth is, it is, lost to us now.

Questions for discussion:

1. Consider the theme and the figurative language in the poem by Susan Stewart helming to convey the central idea.
2. Susan Stewart and Lucille Clifton both use trees images in their works. Is the effect the same or different? Do their messages coincide?
3. What is “*disappearing*” in the poem? Why is “*the truth is it is gone now*”?
4. Discuss the setting and imagery in the poem.
5. What is the poem’s structure and melody?
6. Think of colour symbolism, olfactory and sound system in the poem.
7. Who, do you think, is the narrator? What are their feelings?
8. Discover the context of the poem (historical, physical, cultural, situational).
9. Map out the rhyme scheme. What is the meter of the poetry? What types of meter used in poetry do you know of?
10. Paraphrase the author’s message in a summary.

GLOSSARY:

Various forms of context in writing serve to enhance a reader's comprehension of the content. Here are several illustrations:

Historical context: involves detailing the time frame and the events occurring during that period, which can elucidate the prevailing sentiment of the era, establishing the ambiance for a written work and fostering an appreciation of the societal norms of the time. It offers audiences insight into the prevailing mood and behavior of people during that historical epoch, including aspects such as fashion trends and the vernacular peculiar to that period.

Physical context: refers to the characteristics of a location, which can significantly shape the progression of a plot and the evolution of characters. The environmental conditions impact the behavior of specific characters and contribute to the audience's perception and comprehension of them.

Cultural context: encompasses various aspects such as beliefs, religion, marriage, food, and clothing, all of which may be necessary to comprehend an author's narrative fully. These elements provide insights into the societal backdrop against which the story unfolds and aid in the audience's understanding of the characters and their actions.

Situational context: refers to the circumstances or conditions surrounding an event, explaining the reasons behind why it occurs.

Writing task:

Write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Urban -scapes and their reflection in ecological fiction; b) Environmentally-driven American poetry of today – the major themes and images; c) Rural scapes and the peculiarities of their embodiment in the contemporary American ecological texts; d) The graphic patterns in ecological poetry of today.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *Ecofiction. The history of development. The brightest representatives.*
2. *American ecopoetry of today.*
3. *Pastoral fiction as a prerequisite to ecofiction.*
4. *English-language romanticists as the predecessors of ecopoetry.*
5. *Ecological problems of the XXIst century and their reflection in ecofiction.*

Recommended reading:

1. *The Ecopoetry Anthology (2013), edited by Fisher-Wirth, A., Street L.-G. Trinity University Press, San-Antonio, Texas.*
2. *“Forty Signs of Rain” by Kim Stanley Robinson.*
3. *“Little Fish” by Casey Plett.*

PACE 12

CYBER-LITERATURE: ORIGINS AND UTOPIAN IMPULSE

“The coming era of Artificial Intelligence will not be the era of war, but be the era of deep compassion, non-violence, and love.”

Amit Ray

“AI is a mirror, reflecting not only our intellect, but our values and fears.”

Ravi Narayanan, VP of Insights and Analytics, Nisum

“I believe AI is going to change the world more than anything in the history of humanity. More than electricity.”

Kai-Fu Lee, AI Expert, Chairman & CEO of Sinovation Ventures, Author of ‘AI Superpowers’ and ‘AI 2041’

“I visualize a time when we will be to robots what dogs are to humans, and I’m rooting for the machines.”

Claude Shannon

The cyborg would not recognize the garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust.

Donna J. Haraway

Isaac Asimov’s “Three Laws of Robotics”:

1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the first or Second Law

Key terms: *Data network, disrespectful of national borders, disillusionment, cyberpunk, the virtual reality, cybernetics, the human computer, AI, projection of oneself, marginalized, things to cherish, utopian impulse, the density of information, cultural references, black magic, megacorporations, the fragility of the human mind and body, control over decision-making, cyber world, dualism*

WILLIAM FORD GIBSON, born on March 17, 1948, is an American-Canadian writer and essayist known for his contributions to the speculative fiction genre, particularly as a pioneer of cyberpunk. He began his writing career in the late

1970s, producing noir-style, near-future narratives that delved into the impact of technology, cybernetics, and computer networks on human society – a blend of gritty urban life and advanced technology. His early works helped shape the imagery and themes associated with the information age, predating the widespread use of the Internet in the 1990s. Gibson is credited with coining the term “cyberspace” to describe the interconnected digital realm in his short story “*Burning Chrome*” (1982), a concept he further popularized in his acclaimed debut novel “*Neuromancer*” (1984).

Following the narrative of “*Neuromancer*,” Gibson continued his exploration of the dystopian world with two additional novels: “*Count Zero*” in 1986 and “*Mona Lisa Overdrive*” in 1988, thereby concluding the dystopian Sprawl trilogy. Subsequently, he joined forces with Bruce Sterling to co-author the alternate history novel titled “*The Difference Engine*” in 1990, a significant contribution to the genre of steampunk science fiction.

During the 1990s, Gibson penned the “*Bridge*” trilogy, a series of novels delving into the social changes occurring in near-future urban settings, examining postindustrial society and the impacts of late capitalism. Following the onset of the new millennium and the aftermath of 9/11, Gibson shifted towards a series of novels marked by increasing realism. These included “*Pattern Recognition*” (2003), “*Spook Country*” (2007), and “*Zero History*” (2010), all set in a contemporary world. His more recent works, “*The Peripheral*” (2014) and “*Agency*” (2020), revisited a more explicit exploration of technology and traditional science fiction themes.

(Sources: Britannica online: William Gibson [Electronic resource]. – Electronic text data. – Regime of access: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Gibson-American-Canadian-author>, free (date of the application: 05.11.2023). – Header from the screen).

1. Give the definition to the terms ‘utopia’ and ‘dystopia’. Think of the powerful examples of utopias and dystopias in the English-language literature.
2. Define the term ‘cyber-punk’. What are the sources for it?
3. What issues are linked to AI and what do you know about the idea of transhumanism?
4. The virtual reality – a great good or a great evil?
5. Do you have a negative reaction when you hear the word “hacker”? Do you think that hacking can be a tool used for the greater good, at times?
6. Life in cyberspace is a future of the humanity or the end of the humankind?

William GIBSON
NEUROMANCER
(Excerpt)

ONE

THE SKY ABOVE the port was the color of television, tuned to a dead channel.

“It’s not like I’m using,” Case heard someone say, as he shouldered his way through the crowd around the door of the Chat. “It’s like my body’s developed this massive drug deficiency.” It was a Sprawl voice and a Sprawl joke. The Chatsubo was a bar for professional expatriates; you could drink there for a week and never hear two words in Japanese.

Ratz was tending bar, his prosthetic arm jerking monotonously as he filled a tray of glasses with draft Kirin. He saw Case and smiled, his teeth a webwork of East European steel and brown decay. Case found a place at the bar, between the unlikely tan on one of Lonny Zone’s whores and the crisp naval uniform of a tall African whose cheekbones were ridged with precise rows of tribal scars. “Wage was in here early, with two joeboys,” Ratz said, shoving a draft across the bar with his good hand. “Maybe some business with you, Case?”

Case shrugged. The girl to his right giggled and nudged him.

The bartender’s smile widened. His ugliness was the stuff of legend. In an age of affordable beauty, there was something heraldic about his lack of it. The antique arm whined as he reached for another mug. It was a Russian military prosthesis, a seven-function force-feedback manipulator, cased in grubby pink plastic. “You are too much the artiste, Herr Case.” Ratz grunted; the sound served him as laughter. He scratched his overhang of white-shirted belly with the pink claw. “You are the artiste of the slightly funny deal.”

“Sure,” Case said, and sipped his beer. “Somebody’s gotta be funny around here. Sure the fuck isn’t you.”

The whore’s giggle went up an octave.

“Isn’t you either, sister. So you vanish, okay? Zone, he’s a close personal friend of mine.”

She looked Case in the eye and made the softest possible spitting sound, her lips barely moving. But she left.

“Jesus,” Case said, “what kinda creepjoint you running here? Man can’t have a drink.”

“Ha,” Ratz said, swabbing the scarred wood with a rag. “Zone shows a percentage. You I let work here for entertainment value.”

As Case was picking up his beer, one of those strange instants of silence descended, as though a hundred unrelated conversations had simultaneously arrived at the same pause. Then the whore’s giggle rang out, tinged with a certain hysteria.

Ratz grunted. “An angel passed.”

“The Chinese,” bellowed a drunken Australian, “Chinese bloody invented nerve-splicing. Give me the mainland for a nerve job any day. Fix you right, mate...”

“Now that,” Case said to his glass, all his bitterness suddenly rising in him like bile, “that is so much bullshit.”

THE JAPANESE HAD already forgotten more neurosurgery than the Chinese had ever known. The black clinics of Chiba were the cutting edge, whole bodies of technique supplanted monthly, and still they couldn’t repair the damage he’d suffered in that Memphis hotel.

A year here and he still dreamed of cyberspace, hope fading nightly. All the speed he took, all the turns he’d taken and the corners he’d cut in Night City, and still he’d see the matrix in his sleep, bright lattices of logic unfolding across that colorless void... The Sprawl was a long strange way home over the Pacific now, and he was no console man, no cyberspace cowboy. Just another hustler, trying to make it through. But the dreams came on in the Japanese night like livewire voodoo, and he’d cry for it, cry in his sleep, and wake alone in the dark, curled in his capsule in some coffin hotel, his hands clawed into the bedslab, temperfoam bunched between his fingers, trying to reach the console that wasn’t there.

“I SAW YOUR girl last night,” Ratz said, passing Case his second Kirin.

“I don’t have one,” he said, and drank. “Miss Linda Lee.”

Case shook his head.

“No girl? Nothing? Only biz, friend artiste? Dedication to commerce?” The bartender’s small brown eyes were nested deep in wrinkled flesh. “I think I liked you better, with her. You laughed more. Now, some night, you get maybe too artistic; you wind up in the clinic tanks, spare parts.”

“You’re breaking my heart, Ratz.” He finished his beer, paid and left, high narrow shoulders hunched beneath the rain-stained khaki nylon of his windbreaker. Threading his way through the Ninsei crowds, he could smell his own stale sweat.

CASE WAS TWENTY-FOUR. At twenty-two, he’d been a cowboy, a rustler, one of the best in the Sprawl. He’d been trained by the best, by McCoy Pauley and Bobby Quine, legends in the biz. He’d operated on an almost permanent adrenaline high, a byproduct of youth and proficiency, jacked into a custom cyberspace deck that projected his disembodied consciousness into the consensual hallucination that was the matrix. A thief, he’d worked for other, wealthier thieves, employers who provided the exotic software required to penetrate the bright walls of corporate systems, opening windows into rich fields of data.

He’d made the classic mistake, the one he’d sworn he’d never make. He stole from his employers. He kept something for himself and tried to move it through a fence in Amsterdam. He still wasn’t sure how he’d been discovered, not that it mattered now. He’d expected to die, then, but they only smiled. Of course he was welcome, they told him, welcome to the money. And he was going to need it. Because – still smiling – they were going to make sure he never worked again.

They damaged his nervous system with a wartime Russian mycotoxin.

Strapped to a bed in a Memphis hotel, his talent burning out micron by micron, he hallucinated for thirty hours.

The damage was minute, subtle, and utterly effective.

For Case, who'd lived for the bodiless exultation of cyberspace, it was the Fall. In the bars he'd frequented as a cowboy hotshot, the elite stance involved a certain relaxed contempt for the flesh. The body was meat. Case fell into the prison of his own flesh.

HIS TOTAL ASSETS were quickly converted to new Yen, a fat sheaf of the old paper currency that circulated endlessly through the closed circuit of the world's black markets like the seashells of the Trobriand islanders. It was difficult to transact legitimate business with cash in the Sprawl; in Japan, it was already illegal.

In Japan, he'd known with a clenched and absolute certainty, he'd find his cure. In Chiba. Either in a registered clinic or in the shadowland of black medicine. Synonymous with implants, nerve-splicing, and microbionics, Chiba was a magnet for the Sprawl's techno-criminal subcultures.

In Chiba, he'd watched his New Yen vanish in a two-month round of examinations and consultations. The men in the black clinics, his last hope, had admired the expertise with which he'd been maimed, and then slowly shaken their heads.

Now he slept in the cheapest coffins, the ones nearest the port, beneath the quartz-halogen floods that lit the docks all night like vast stages; where you couldn't see the lights of Tokyo for the glare of the television sky, not even the towering hologram logo of the Fuji Electric Company, and Tokyo Bay was a black expanse where gulls wheeled above drifting shoals of white styrofoam. Behind the port lay the city, factory domes dominated by the vast cubes of corporate arcologies. Port and city were divided by a narrow borderland of older streets, an area with no official name. Night City, with Ninsei its heart. By day, the bars down Ninsei were shuttered and featureless, the neon dead, the holograms inert, waiting, under the poisoned silver sky.

TWO BLOCKS WEST of the Chat, in a teashop called the Jarre de Thé, Case washed down the night's first pill with a double espresso. It was a flat pink octagon, a potent species of Brazilian dex he bought from one of Zone's girls.

The Jarre was walled with mirrors, each panel framed in red neon.

At first, finding himself alone in Chiba, with little money and less hope of finding a cure, he'd gone into a kind of terminal overdrive, hustling fresh capital with a cold intensity that had seemed to belong to someone else. In the first month, he'd killed two men and a woman over sums that a year before would have seemed ludicrous. Ninsei wore him down until the street itself came to seem the externalization of some death wish, some secret poison he hadn't known he carried.

Night City was like a deranged experiment in social Darwinism, designed by a bored researcher who kept one thumb permanently on the fast-forward button. Stop hustling and you sank without a trace, but move a little too swiftly and you'd break the fragile surface tension of the black market; either way, you were gone, with nothing left of you but some vague memory in the mind of a fixture like Ratz, though heart or lungs or kidneys might survive in the service of some stranger with New Yen for the clinic tanks.

Biz here was a constant subliminal hum, and death the accepted punishment for laziness, carelessness, lack of grace, the failure to heed the demands of an intricate protocol.

Alone at a table in the Jarre de Thé, with the octagon coming on, pinheads of sweat starting from his palms, suddenly aware of each tingling hair on his arms and chest, Case knew that at some point he'd started to play a game with himself, a very ancient one that has no name, a final solitaire. He no longer carried a weapon, no longer took the basic precautions. He ran the fastest, loosest deals on the street, and he had a reputation for being able to get whatever you wanted. A part of him knew that the arc of his self-destruction was glaringly obvious to his customers, who grew steadily fewer, but that same part of him basked in the knowledge that it was only a matter of time. And that was the part of him, smug in its expectation of death, that most hated the thought of Linda Lee.

He'd found her, one rainy night, in an arcade.

Under bright ghosts burning through a blue haze of cigarette smoke, holograms of Wizard's Castle, Tank War Europa, the New York skyline... And now he

remembered her that way, her face bathed in restless laser light, features reduced to a code: her cheekbones flaring scarlet as Wizard's Castle burned, forehead drenched with azure when Munich fell to the Tank War, mouth touched with hot gold as a gliding cursor struck sparks from the wall of a skyscraper canyon. He was riding high that night, with a brick of Wage's ketamine on its way to Yokohama and the money already in his pocket. He'd come in out of the warm rain that sizzled across the Ninsei pavement and somehow she'd been singled out for him, one face out of the dozens who stood at the consoles, lost in the game she played. The expression on her face, then, had been the one he'd seen, hours later, on her sleeping face in a portside coffin, her upper lip like the line children draw to represent a bird in flight.

Crossing the arcade to stand beside her, high on the deal he'd made, he saw her glance up. Gray eyes rimmed with smudged black paintstick. Eyes of some animal pinned in the headlights of an oncoming vehicle.

Their night together stretching into a morning, into tickets at the hoverport and his first trip across the Bay. The rain kept up, falling along Harajuku, beading on her plastic jacket, the children of Tokyo trooping past the famous boutiques in white loafers and clingwrap capes, until she'd stood with him in the midnight clatter of a pachinko parlor and held his hand like a child.

It took a month for the gestalt of drugs and tension he moved through to turn those perpetually startled eyes into wells of reflexive need. He'd watched her personality fragment, calving like an iceberg, splinters drifting away, and finally he'd seen the raw need, the hungry armature of addiction. He'd watched her track the next hit with a concentration that reminded him of the mantises they sold in stalls along Shiga, beside tanks of blue mutant carp and crickets caged in bamboo.

He stared at the black ring of grounds in his empty cup. It was vibrating with the speed he'd taken. The brown laminate of the tabletop was dull with a patina of tiny scratches. With the dex mounting through his spine he saw the countless random impacts required to create a surface like that. The Jarre was decorated in a dated, nameless style from the previous century, an uneasy blend of Japanese traditional and

pale Milanese plastics, but everything seemed to wear a subtle film, as though the bad nerves of a million customers had somehow attacked the mirrors and the once glossy plastics, leaving each surface fogged with something that could never be wiped away.

“Hey. Case, good buddy...”

He looked up, met gray eyes ringed with paintstick. She was wearing faded French orbital fatigues and new white sneakers.

“I been lookin’ for you, man.” She took a seat opposite him, her elbows on the table. The sleeves of the blue zipsuit had been ripped out at the shoulders; he automatically checked her arms for signs of derms or the needle. “Want a cigarette?”

She dug a crumpled pack of Yeheyuan filters from an ankle pocket and offered him one. He took it, let her light it with a red plastic tube. “You sleepin’ okay, Case? You look tired.” Her accent put her south along the Sprawl, toward Atlanta. The skin below her eyes was pale and unhealthylooking, but the flesh was still smooth and firm. She was twenty. New lines of pain were starting to etch themselves permanently at the corners of her mouth. Her dark hair was drawn back, held by a band of printed silk. The pattern might have represented microcircuits, or a city map.

“Not if I remember to take my pills,” he said, as a tangible wave of longing hit him, lust and loneliness riding in on the wavelength of amphetamine. He remembered the smell of her skin in the overheated darkness of a coffin near the port, her fingers locked across the small of his back.

All the meat, he thought, and all it wants.

“Wage,” she said, narrowing her eyes. “He wants to see you with a hole in your face.” She lit her own cigarette.

“Who says? Ratz? You been talking to Ratz?”

“No. Mona. Her new squeeze is one of Wage’s boys.”

“I don’t owe him enough. He does me, he’s out the money anyway.” He shrugged.

“Too many people owe him now, Case. Maybe you get to be the example. You seriously better watch it.”

“Sure. How about you, Linda? You got anywhere to sleep?”

“Sleep.” She shook her head. “Sure, Case.” She shivered, hunched forward over the table. Her face was filmed with sweat.

“Here,” he said, and dug in the pocket of his windbreaker, coming up with a crumpled fifty. He smoothed it automatically, under the table, folded it in quarters, and passed it to her.

“You need that, honey. You better give it to Wage.” There was something in the gray eyes now that he couldn’t read, something he’d never seen there before.

“I owe Wage a lot more than that. Take it. I got more coming,” he lied, as he watched his New Yen vanish into a zippered pocket. “You get your money, Case, you find Wage quick.” “I’ll see you, Linda,” he said, getting up.

“Sure.” A millimeter of white showed beneath each of her pupils.

Sanpaku. “You watch your back, man.” He nodded, anxious to be gone.

He looked back as the plastic door swung shut behind him, saw her eyes reflected in a cage of red neon.

FRIDAY NIGHT ON Ninsei.

He passed yakitori stands and massage parlors, a franchised coffee shop called Beautiful Girl, the electronic thunder of an arcade. He stepped out of the way to let a dark-suited sarariman by, spotting the MitsubishiGenentech logo tattooed across the back of the man’s right hand.

Was it authentic? If that’s for real, he thought, he’s in for trouble. If it wasn’t, served him right. M-G employees above a certain level were implanted with advanced microprocessors that monitored mutagen levels in the bloodstream. Gear like that would get you rolled in Night City, rolled straight into a black clinic.

The sarariman had been Japanese, but the Ninsei crowd was a gaijin crowd. Groups of sailors up from the port, tense solitary tourists hunting pleasures no guidebook listed, Sprawl heavies showing off grafts and implants, and a dozen distinct species of hustler, all swarming the street in an intricate dance of desire and commerce.

There were countless theories explaining why Chiba City tolerated the Ninsei enclave, but Case tended toward the idea that the Yakuza might be preserving the place as a kind of historical park, a reminder of humble origins. But he also saw a certain sense in the notion that burgeoning technologies require outlaw zones, that Night City wasn't there for its inhabitants, but as a deliberately unsupervised playground for technology itself.

Was Linda right, he wondered, staring up at the lights? Would Wage have him killed to make an example? It didn't make much sense, but then Wage dealt primarily in proscribed biologicals, and they said you had to be crazy to do that.

But Linda said Wage wanted him dead. Case's primary insight into the dynamics of street dealing was that neither the buyer nor the seller really needed him. A middleman's business is to make himself a necessary evil. The dubious niche Case had carved for himself in the criminal ecology of Night City had been cut out with lies, scooped out a night at a time with betrayal. Now, sensing that its walls were starting to crumble, he felt the edge of a strange euphoria.

The week before, he'd delayed transfer of a synthetic glandular extract, retailing it for a wider margin than usual. He knew Wage hadn't liked that. Wage was his primary supplier, nine years in Chiba and one of the few gaijin dealers who'd managed to forge links with the rigidly stratified criminal establishment beyond Night City's borders. Genetic materials and hormones trickled down to Ninsei along an intricate ladder of fronts and blinds. Somehow Wage had managed to trace something back, once, and now he enjoyed steady connections in a dozen cities.

Case found himself staring through a shop window. The place sold small bright objects to the sailors. Watches, flickknives, lighters, pocket VTRs, simstim decks, weighted manriki chains, and shuriken. The shuriken had always fascinated him, steel stars with knife-sharp points. Some were chromed, others black, others treated with a rainbow surface like oil on water. But the chrome stars held his gaze. They were mounted against scarlet ultrasuede with nearly invisible loops of nylon fishline, their centers stamped with dragons or yinyang symbols. They caught the street's neon and

twisted it, and it came to Case that these were the stars under which he voyaged, his destiny spelled out in a constellation of cheap chrome.

“Julie,” he said to his stars. “Time to see old Julie. He’ll know.”

JULIUS DEANE WAS one hundred and thirty-five years old, his metabolism assiduously warped by a weekly fortune in serums and hormones. His primary hedge against aging was a yearly pilgrimage to Tokyo, where genetic surgeons reset the code of his DNA, a procedure unavailable in Chiba. Then he’d fly to Hongkong and order the year’s suits and shirts. Sexless and inhumanly patient, his primary gratification seemed to lie in his devotion to esoteric forms of tailor-worship. Case had never seen him wear the same suit twice, although his wardrobe seemed to consist entirely of meticulous reconstructions of garments of the previous century. He affected prescription lenses, framed in spidery gold, ground from thin slabs of pink synthetic quartz and beveled like the mirrors in a Victorian dollhouse.

His offices were located in a warehouse behind Ninsei, part of which seemed to have been sparsely decorated, years before, with a random collection of European furniture, as though Deane had once intended to use the place as his home. Neo-Aztec bookcases gathered dust against one wall of the room where Case waited. A pair of bulbous Disney-styled table lamps perched awkwardly on a low Kandinsky-look coffee table in scarletlacquered steel. A Dali clock hung on the wall between the bookcases, its distorted face sagging to the bare concrete floor. Its hands were holograms that altered to match the convolutions of the face as they rotated, but it never told the correct time. The room was stacked with white fiberglass shipping modules that gave off the tang of preserved ginger.

“You seem to be clean, old son,” said Deane’s disembodied voice. “Do come in.”

Magnetic bolts thudded out of position around the massive imitationrosewood door to the left of the bookcases. JULIUS DEANE IMPORT EXPORT was lettered across the plastic in peeling self-adhesive capitals. If the furniture scattered in Deane’s

makeshift foyer suggested the end of the past century, the office itself seemed to belong to its start.

Deane's seamless pink face regarded Case from a pool of light cast by an ancient brass lamp with a rectangular shade of dark green glass. The importer was securely fenced behind a vast desk of painted steel, flanked on either side by tall, drawered cabinets made of some sort of pale wood. The sort of thing, Case supposed, that had once been used to store written records of some kind. The desktop was littered with cassettes, scrolls of yellowed printout, and various parts of some sort of clockwork typewriter, a machine Deane never seemed to get around to reassembling.

"What brings you around, boyo?" Deane asked, offering Case a narrow bonbon wrapped in blue-and-white checked paper. "Try one. Ting Ting Djahe, the very best." Case refused the ginger, took a seat in a yawning wooden swivel chair, and ran a thumb down the faded seam of one black jeans-leg. "Julie, I hear Wage wants to kill me."

"Ah. Well then. And where did you hear this, if I may?"

"People."

"People," Deane said, around a ginger bonbon. "What sort of people? Friends?" Case nodded.

"Not always that easy to know who your friends are, is it?"

"I do owe him a little money, Deane. He say anything to you?"

"Haven't been in touch, of late." Then he sighed. "If I *did* know, of course, I might not be in a position to tell you. Things being what they are, you understand."

"Things?"

"He's an important connection, Case."

"Yeah. He want to kill me, Julie?"

"Not that I know of." Deane shrugged. They might have been discussing the price of ginger. "If it proves to be an unfounded rumor, old son, you come back in a week or so and I'll let you in on a little something out of Singapore."

"Out of the Nan Hai Hotel, Bencoolen Street?"

“Loose lips, old son!” Deane grinned. The steel desk was jammed with a fortune in debugging gear.

“Be seeing you, Julie. I’ll say hello to Wage.”

Deane’s fingers came up to brush the perfect knot in his pale silk tie.

HE WAS LESS than a block from Deane’s office when it hit, the sudden cellular awareness that someone was on his ass, and very close.

The cultivation of a certain tame paranoia was something Case took for granted. The trick lay in not letting it get out of control. But that could be quite a trick, behind a stack of octagons. He fought the adrenaline surge and composed his narrow features in a mask of bored vacancy, pretending to let the crowd carry him along. When he saw a darkened display window, he managed to pause by it. The place was a surgical boutique, closed for renovations. With his hands in the pockets of his jacket, he stared through the glass at a flat lozenge of vatgrown flesh that lay on a carved pedestal of imitation jade. The color of its skin reminded him of Zone’s whores; it was tattooed with a luminous digital display wired to a subcutaneous chip. Why bother with the surgery, he found himself thinking, while sweat coursed down his ribs, when you could just carry the thing around in your pocket?

Without moving his head, he raised his eyes and studied the reflection of the passing crowd.

There.

Behind sailors in short-sleeved khaki. Dark hair, mirrored glasses, dark clothing, slender...

And gone.

Then Case was running, bent low, dodging between bodies.

“RENT ME A gun, Shin?”

The boy smiled. “Two hour.” They stood together in the smell of fresh raw seafood at the rear of a Shiga sushi stall. “You come back, two hour.”

“I need one now, man. Got anything right now?”

Shin rummaged behind empty two-liter cans that had once been filled with powdered horseradish. He produced a slender package wrapped in gray plastic. “Taser. One hour, twenty New Yen. Thirty deposit.”

“Shit. I don’t need that. I need a gun. Like I maybe wanna shoot somebody, understand?”

The waiter shrugged, replacing the taser behind the horseradish cans. “Two hour.”

HE WENT INTO the shop without bothering to glance at the display of shuriken. He’d never thrown one in his life.

He bought two packs of Yeheyuans with a Mitsubishi Bank chip that gave his name as Charles Derek May. It beat Truman Starr, the best he’d been able to do for a passport.

The Japanese woman behind the terminal looked like she had a few years on old Deane, none of them with the benefit of science. He took his slender roll of New Yen out of his pocket and showed it to her. “I want to buy a weapon.”

She gestured in the direction of a case filled with knives.

“No,” he said, “I don’t like knives.”

She brought an oblong box from beneath the counter. The lid was yellow cardboard, stamped with a crude image of a coiled cobra with a swollen hood. Inside were eight identical tissue-wrapped cylinders. He watched while mottled brown fingers stripped the paper from one. She held the thing up for him to examine, a dull steel tube with a leather thong at one end and a small bronze pyramid at the other. She gripped the tube with one hand, the pyramid between her other thumb and forefinger, and pulled. Three oiled, telescoping segments of tightly wound coilspring slid out and locked. “Cobra,” she said.

BEYOND THE NEON shudder of Ninsei, the sky was that mean shade of gray. The air had gotten worse; it seemed to have teeth tonight, and half the crowd wore filtration masks. Case had spent ten minutes in a urinal, trying to discover a convenient way to conceal his cobra; finally he’d settled for tucking the handle into the waistband

of his jeans, with the tube slanting across his stomach. The pyramidal striking tip rode between his ribcage and the lining of his windbreaker. The thing felt like it might clatter to the pavement with his next step, but it made him feel better.

The Chat wasn't really a dealing bar, but on weeknights it attracted a related clientele. Fridays and Saturdays were different. The regulars were still there, most of them, but they faded behind an influx of sailors and the specialists who preyed on them. As Case pushed through the doors, he looked for Ratz, but the bartender wasn't in sight. Lonny Zone, the bar's resident pimp, was observing with glazed fatherly interest as one of his girls went to work on a young sailor. Zone was addicted to a brand of hypnotic the Japanese called Cloud Dancers. Catching the pimp's eye, Case beckoned him to the bar. Zone came drifting through the crowd in slow motion, his long face slack and placid.

"You seen Wage tonight, Lonny?"

Zone regarded him with his usual calm. He shook his head.

"You sure, man?"

"Maybe in the Namban. Maybe two hours ago."

"Got some joeboys with him? One of 'em thin, dark hair, maybe a black jacket?"

"No," Zone said at last, his smooth forehead creased to indicate the effort it cost him to recall so much pointless detail. "Big boys. Graftees." Zone's eyes showed very little white and less iris; under the drooping lids, his pupils were dilated and enormous. He stared into Case's face for a long time, then lowered his gaze. He saw the bulge of the steel whip. "Cobra," he said, and raised an eyebrow. "You wanna fuck somebody up?" "See you, Lonny." Case left the bar.

HIS TAIL WAS back. He was sure of it. He felt a stab of elation, the octagons and adrenaline mingling with something else. You're enjoying this, he thought; you're crazy.

Because, in some weird and very approximate way, it was like a run in the matrix. Get just wasted enough, find yourself in some desperate but strangely arbitrary kind of trouble, and it was possible to see Ninsei as a field of data, the way the matrix

had once reminded him of proteins linking to distinguish cell specialties. Then you could throw yourself into a highspeed drift and skid, totally engaged but set apart from it all, and all around you the dance of biz, information interacting, data made flesh in the mazes of the black market...

Go it, Case, he told himself. Suck 'em in. Last thing they'll expect. He was half a block from the games arcade where he'd first met Linda Lee.

He bolted across Ninsei, scattering a pack of strolling sailors. One of them screamed after him in Spanish. Then he was through the entrance, the sound crashing over him like surf, subsonics throbbing in the pit of his stomach. Someone scored a ten-megaton hit on Tank War Europa, a simulated airburst drowning the arcade in white sound as a lurid hologram fireball mushroomed overhead. He cut to the right and loped up a flight of unpainted chipboard stairs. He'd come here once with Wage, to discuss a deal in proscribed hormonal triggers with a man called Matsuga. He remembered the hallway, its stained matting, the row of identical doors leading to tiny office cubicles. One door was open now. A Japanese girl in a sleeveless black t-shirt glanced up from a white terminal, behind her head a travel poster of Greece, Aegean blue splashed with streamlined ideograms.

"Get your security up here," Case told her.

Then he sprinted down the corridor, out of her sight. The last two doors were closed and, he assumed, locked. He spun and slammed the sole of his nylon running shoe into the blue-lacquered composition door at the far end. It popped, cheap hardware falling from the splintered frame. Darkness there, the white curve of a terminal housing. Then he was on the door to its right, both hands around the transparent plastic knob, leaning in with everything he had. Something snapped, and he was inside. This was where he and Wage had met with Matsuga, but whatever front company Matsuga had operated was long gone. No terminal, nothing. Light from the alley behind the arcade, filtering in through sootblown plastic. He made out a snakelike loop of fiberoptics protruding from a wall socket, a pile of discarded food containers, and the bladeless nacelle of an electric fan.

The window was a single pane of cheap plastic. He shrugged out of his jacket, bundled it around his right hand, and punched. It split, requiring two more blows to free it from the frame. Over the muted chaos of the games, an alarm began to cycle, triggered either by the broken window or by the girl at the head of the corridor.

Case turned, pulled his jacket on, and flicked the cobra to full extension.

With the door closed, he was counting on his tail to assume he'd gone through the one he'd kicked half off its hinges. The cobra's bronze pyramid began to bob gently, the spring-steel shaft amplifying his pulse.

Nothing happened. There was only the surging of the alarm, the crashing of the games, his heart hammering. When the fear came, it was like some half-forgotten friend. Not the cold, rapid mechanism of the dexparanoia, but simple animal fear. He'd lived for so long on a constant edge of anxiety that he'd almost forgotten what real fear was.

This cubicle was the sort of place where people died. He might die here. They might have guns...

A crash, from the far end of the corridor. A man's voice, shouting something in Japanese. A scream, shrill terror. Another crash.

And footsteps, unhurried, coming closer.

Passing his closed door. Pausing for the space of three rapid beats of his heart. And returning. One, two, three. A bootheel scraped the matting.

The last of his octagon-induced bravado collapsed. He snapped the cobra into its handle and scrambled for the window, blind with fear, his nerves screaming. He was up, out, and falling, all before he was conscious of what he'd done. The impact with pavement drove dull rods of pain through his shins.

A narrow wedge of light from a half-open service hatch framed a heap of discarded fiberoptics and the chassis of a junked console. He'd fallen face forward on a slab of soggy chipboard; he rolled over, into the shadow of the console. The cubicle's window was a square of faint light. The alarm still oscillated, louder here, the rear wall dulling the roar of the games.

A head appeared, framed in the window, backlit by the fluorescents in the corridor, then vanished. It returned, but he still couldn't read the features. Glint of silver across the eyes. "Shit," someone said, a woman, in the accent of the northern Sprawl.

The head was gone. Case lay under the console for a long count of twenty, then stood up. The steel cobra was still in his hand, and it took him a few seconds to remember what it was. He limped away down the alley, nursing his left ankle.

SHIN'S PISTOL WAS a fifty-year-old Vietnamese imitation of a South American copy of a Walther PPK, double-action on the first shot, with a very rough pull. It was chambered for .22 long rifle, and Case would've preferred lead azide explosives to the simple Chinese hollowpoints Shin had sold him. Still, it was a handgun and nine rounds of ammunition, and as he made his way down Shiga from the sushi stall he cradled it in his jacket pocket. The grips were bright red plastic molded in a raised dragon motif, something to run your thumb across in the dark. He'd consigned the cobra to a dump canister on Ninsei and dry-swallowed another octagon.

The pill lit his circuits and he rode the rush down Shiga to Ninsei, then over to Baiitsu. His tail, he'd decided, was gone, and that was fine. He had calls to make, biz to transact, and it wouldn't wait. A block down Baiitsu, toward the port, stood a featureless ten-story office building in ugly yellow brick. Its windows were dark now, but a faint glow from the roof was visible if you craned your neck. An unlit neon sign near the main entrance offered CHEAP HOTEL under a cluster of ideograms. If the place had another name, Case didn't know it; it was always referred to as Cheap Hotel. You reached it through an alley off Baiitsu, where an elevator waited at the foot of a transparent shaft. The elevator, like Cheap Hotel, was an afterthought, lashed to the building with bamboo and epoxy. Case climbed into the plastic cage and used his key, an unmarked length of rigid magnetic tape.

Case had rented a coffin here, on a weekly basis, since he'd arrived in Chiba, but he'd never slept in Cheap Hotel. He slept in cheaper places.

The elevator smelled of perfume and cigarettes; the sides of the cage were scratched and thumb-smudged. As it passed the fifth floor, he saw the lights of Ninsei.

He drummed his fingers against the pistolgrip as the cage slowed with a gradual hiss. As always, it came to a full stop with a violent jolt, but he was ready for it. He stepped out into the courtyard that served the place as some combination of lobby and lawn.

Centered in the square carpet of green plastic turf, a Japanese teenager sat behind a C-shaped console, reading a textbook. The white fiberglass coffins were racked in a framework of industrial scaffolding. Six tiers of coffins, ten coffins on a side. Case nodded in the boy's direction and limped across the plastic grass to the nearest ladder. The compound was roofed with cheap laminated matting that rattled in a strong wind and leaked when it rained, but the coffins were reasonably difficult to open without a key.

The expansion-grate catwalk vibrated with his weight as he edged his way along the third tier to Number 92. The coffins were three meters long, the oval hatches a meter wide and just under a meter and a half tall. He fed his key into the slot and waited for verification from the house computer. Magnetic bolts thudded reassuringly and the hatch rose vertically with a creak of springs. Fluorescents flickered on as he crawled in, pulling the hatch shut behind him and slapping the panel that activated the manual latch.

There was nothing in Number 92 but a standard Hitachi pocket computer and a small white styrofoam cooler chest. The cooler contained the remains of three ten-kilo slabs of dry ice, carefully wrapped in paper to delay evaporation, and a spun aluminum lab flask. Crouching on the brown temperfoam slab that was both floor and bed, Case took Shin's .22 from his pocket and put it on top of the cooler. Then he took off his jacket. The coffin's terminal was molded into one concave wall, opposite a panel listing house rules in seven languages. Case took the pink handset from its cradle and punched a Hongkong number from memory. He let it ring five times, then hung up. His buyer for the three megabytes of hot RAM in the Hitachi wasn't taking calls.

He punched a Tokyo number in Shinjuku.

A woman answered, something in Japanese.

"Snake Man there?"

“Very good to hear from you,” said Snake Man, coming in on an extension. “I’ve been expecting your call.”

“I got the music you wanted.” Glancing at the cooler.

“I’m very glad to hear that. We have a cash flow problem. Can you front?”

“Oh, man, I really need the money bad...” Snake Man hung up.

“You shit,” Case said to the humming receiver. He stared at the cheap little pistol.

“Iffy,” he said, “it’s all looking very iffy tonight.”

CASE WALKED INTO the Chat an hour before dawn, both hands in the pockets of his jacket; one held the rented pistol, the other the aluminum flask.

Ratz was at a rear table, drinking Apollonaris water from a beer pitcher, his hundred and twenty kilos of doughy flesh tilted against the wall on a creaking chair. A Brazilian kid called Kurt was on the bar, tending a thin crowd of mostly silent drunks. Ratz’s plastic arm buzzed as he raised the pitcher and drank. His shaven head was filmed with sweat. “You look bad, friend artiste,” he said, flashing the wet ruin of his teeth.

“I’m doing just fine,” said Case, and grinned like a skull. “Super fine.” He sagged into the chair opposite Ratz, hands still in his pockets.

“And you wander back and forth in this portable bombshelter built of booze and ups, sure. Proof against the grosser emotions, yes?” “Why don’t you get off my case, Ratz? You seen Wage?”

“Proof against fear and being alone,” the bartender continued. “Listen to the fear. Maybe it’s your friend.”

“You hear anything about a fight in the arcade tonight, Ratz?

Somebody hurt?”

“Crazy cut a security man.” He shrugged. “A girl, they say.”

“I gotta talk to Wage, Ratz, I....”

“Ah.” Ratz’s mouth narrowed, compressed into a single line. He was looking past Case, toward the entrance. “I think you are about to.”

Case had a sudden flash of the shuriken in their window. The speed sang in his head. The pistol in his hand was slippery with sweat.

“Herr Wage,” Ratz said, slowly extending his pink manipulator as if he expected it to be shaken. “How great a pleasure. Too seldom do you honor us.”

Case turned his head and looked up into Wage’s face. It was a tanned and forgettable mask. The eyes were vatgrown sea-green Nikon transplants. Wage wore a suit of gunmetal silk and a simple bracelet of platinum on either wrist. He was flanked by his joeboys, nearly identical young men, their arms and shoulders bulging with grafted muscle.

“How you doing, Case?”

“Gentlemen,” said Ratz, picking up the table’s heaped ashtray in his pink plastic claw, “I want no trouble here.” The ashtray was made of thick, shatterproof plastic, and advertised Tsingtao beer. Ratz crushed it smoothly, butts and shards of green plastic cascading onto the tabletop. “You understand?”

“Hey, sweetheart,” said one of the joeboys, “you wanna try that thing on me?”

“Don’t bother aiming for the legs, Kurt,” Ratz said, his tone conversational. Case glanced across the room and saw the Brazilian standing on the bar, aiming a Smith & Wesson riot gun at the trio. The thing’s barrel, made of paper-thin alloy wrapped with a kilometer of glass filament, was wide enough to swallow a fist. The skeletal magazine revealed five fat orange cartridges, subsonic sandbag jellies.

“Technically nonlethal,” said Ratz.

“Hey, Ratz,” Case said, “I owe you one.”

The bartender shrugged. “Nothing, you owe me. These,” and he glowered at Wage and the joeboys, “should know better. You don’t take anybody off in the Chatsubo.”

Wage coughed. “So who’s talking about taking anybody off? We just wanna talk business. Case and me, we work together.”

Case pulled the .22 out of his pocket and levelled it at Wage's crotch. "I hear you wanna do me." Ratz's pink claw closed around the pistol and Case let his hand go limp.

"Look, Case, you tell me what the fuck is going on with you, you wig or something? What's this shit I'm trying to kill you?" Wage turned to the boy on his left. "You two go back to the Namban. Wait for me."

Case watched as they crossed the bar, which was now entirely deserted except for Kurt and a drunken sailor in khakis, who was curled at the foot of a barstool. The barrel of the Smith & Wesson tracked the two to the door, then swung back to cover Wage. The magazine of Case's pistol clattered on the table. Ratz held the gun in his claw and pumped the round out of the chamber.

"Who told you I was going to hit you, Case?" Wage asked.

Linda.

"Who told you, man? Somebody trying to set you up?" The sailor moaned and vomited explosively.

"Get him out of here," Ratz called to Kurt, who was sitting on the edge of the bar now, the Smith & Wesson across his lap, lighting a cigarette.

Case felt the weight of the night come down on him like a bag of wet sand settling behind his eyes. He took the flask out of his pocket and handed it to Wage. "All I got. Pituitaries. Get you five hundred if you move it fast. Had the rest of my roll in some RAM, but that's gone by now."

"You okay, Case?" The flask had already vanished behind a gunmetal lapel. "I mean, fine, this'll square us, but you look bad. Like hammered shit.

You better go somewhere and sleep."

"Yeah." He stood up and felt the Chat sway around him. "Well, I had this fifty, but I gave it to somebody." He giggled. He picked up the .22's magazine and the one loose cartridge and dropped them into one pocket, then put the pistol in the other. "I gotta see Shin, get my deposit back."

“Go home,” said Ratz, shifting on the creaking chair with something like embarrassment. “Artiste. Go home.”

He felt them watching as he crossed the room and shouldered his way past the plastic doors.

“BITCH,” HE SAID to the rose tint over Shiga. Down on Ninsei the holograms were vanishing like ghosts, and most of the neon was already cold and dead. He sipped thick black coffee from a street vendor’s foam thimble and watched the sun come up. “You fly away, honey. Towns like this are for people who like the way down.” But that wasn’t it, really, and he was finding it increasingly hard to maintain the sense of betrayal. She just wanted a ticket home, and the RAM in his Hitachi would buy it for her, if she could find the right fence. And that business with the fifty; she’d almost turned it down, knowing she was about to rip him for the rest of what he had.

When he climbed out of the elevator, the same boy was on the desk. Different textbook. “Good buddy,” Case called across the plastic turf, “you don’t need to tell me. I know already. Pretty lady came to visit, said she had my key. Nice little tip for you, say fifty New ones?” The boy put down his book. “Woman,” Case said, and drew a line across his forehead with his thumb. “Silk.” He smiled broadly. The boy smiled back, nodded. “Thanks, asshole,” Case said.

On the catwalk, he had trouble with the lock. She’d messed it up somehow when she’d fiddled it, he thought. Beginner. He knew where to rent a blackbox that would open anything in Cheap Hotel. Fluorescents came on as he crawled in.

“Close the hatch real slow, friend. You still got that Saturday night special you rented from the waiter?”

She sat with her back to the wall, at the far end of the coffin. She had her knees up, resting her wrists on them; the pepperbox muzzle of a flechette pistol emerged from her hands.

“That you in the arcade?” He pulled the hatch down. “Where’s Linda?”

“Hit that latch switch.” He did.

“That your girl? Linda?” He nodded.

“She’s gone. Took your Hitachi. Real nervous kid. What about the gun, man?” She wore mirrored glasses. Her clothes were black, the heels of black boots deep in the temperfoam.

“I took it back to Shin, got my deposit. Sold his bullets back to him for half what I paid. You want the money?”

“No.”

“Want some dry ice? All I got, right now.”

“What got into you tonight? Why’d you pull that scene at the arcade? I had to mess up this rentacop came after me with nunchucks.”

“Linda said you were gonna kill me.”

“Linda said? I never saw her before I came up here.”

“You aren’t with Wage?”

She shook her head. He realized that the glasses were surgically inset, sealing her sockets. The silver lenses seemed to grow from smooth pale skin above her cheekbones, framed by dark hair cut in a rough shag. The fingers curled around the fletcher were slender, white, tipped with polished burgundy. The nails looked artificial. “I think you screwed up, Case. I showed up and you just fit me right into your reality picture.”

“So what do you want, lady?” He sagged back against the hatch.

“You. One live body, brains still somewhat intact. Molly, Case. My name’s Molly. I’m collecting you for the man I work for. Just wants to talk, is all. Nobody wants to hurt you.”

“That’s good.”

“ ’Cept I do hurt people sometimes, Case. I guess it’s just the way I’m wired.” She wore tight black gloveleather jeans and a bulky black jacket cut from some matte fabric that seemed to absorb light. “If I put this dartgun away, will you be easy, Case? You look like you like to take stupid chances.”

“Hey, I’m very easy. I’m a pushover, no problem.”

“That’s fine, man.” The fletcher vanished into the black jacket. “Because you try to fuck around with me, you’ll be taking one of the stupidest chances of your whole life.”

She held out her hands, palms up, the white fingers slightly spread, and with a barely audible click, ten double-edged, four centimeter scalpel blades slid from their housings beneath the burgundy nails.

She smiled. The blades slowly withdrew.

Questions for discussion:

1. Reflect on the novel’s title and its meaningfulness.
 2. Analyze the setting, represented in the excerpt. Can you identify the time of the events suggested by the plot?
 3. Describe the depicted society and its issues.
 4. Talk about the density of information from the very outset of the novel.
 5. Identify the genre of the work.
 6. Talk about the style, the language, the stylistic devices represented in the text. Does the author use any unusual words or phrases? What effects do they produce?
 7. How does the stark contrast between the sleek, high-tech future setting of “*Neuromancer*” and its gritty, criminal underworld tone contribute to your interpretation of the novel?
 8. Analyze the gallery of the characters and the system of images represented in the excerpt.
 9. What is the composition of chapter one?
 10. What artistic details do you find meaningful for the plotline?
 11. Are there any intertextual ties manifested in the first chapter?
- Read the rest of the novel and answer the questions below:*
12. Does Molly exhibit characteristics of a strong female character beyond her physical prowess displayed in the novel? Explain your perspective on whether her strength extends beyond her physical abilities.

13. “*Power, in Case’s world, meant corporate power*”. What does this detail reveal about Case’s world and his character? Does it offer insight into other characters or the setting in the story?
14. Did Wintermute assist Corto by substituting Armitage in his role? Did this action harm Corto, or was it a mixture of both? How can you discern the impact of Wintermute’s actions on Corto?
15. Molly describes the process of obtaining her modifications but doesn’t delve into the reasons behind them. Considering what she’s shared about her history and character traits, why do you think she chose to undergo these modifications?
16. What could be the reason behind Dixie Flatline’s desire to be deleted once the job concludes?
17. Does “*Neuromancer*” feature an antagonist? If it does, who or what fulfills that role, and what are the reasons behind it? If it doesn’t, what is the rationale for the absence of an antagonist?
18. In what ways does the author generate sympathy for the drug-using criminal Case among readers?
19. Why does certain technology depicted in “*Neuromancer*” appear outdated now, while other technological elements still maintain their futuristic significance?
20. Select a character and explore how their identity evolves or undergoes alterations throughout the narrative.
21. Ultimately, who gains from Wintermute’s mission being accomplished?
22. What does the book suggest about the connection between humanity and technology? If humans are the creators of technology, does that mean that all technological developments reflect aspects of human nature?
23. Was Armitage truly responsible for implanting toxin sacs in Case’s system, or was the mere suggestion enough to achieve the desired effect?
24. Who benefits the most from the partnership-within-the-team arrangement, Molly or Case?

25. What are the attractive aspects of the book that intrigued the public imagination in the late 1980s?
26. Explain the core beliefs of the Tessier-Ashpool family.
27. What are the primary themes explored in the novel? What is the central idea conveyed by the author?
28. Summarize the plot. What are the instances of foreshadowing or flashbacks in the novel?
29. Think about the symbolism, represented in the text, olfactory, color and sound system.
30. Reflect on the architectonics of the artistic world created by the author.

Writing task:

Read the text of the novel up to the end and write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) What qualities make Case an example of an “antihero”? What is an example of Case acting in a way that exemplifies his role as an “antihero”? b) How do Case's feelings toward Linda Lee transform over the course of the novel? Is this transformation foreshadowed in any way throughout the first few scenes? c) How do *Neuromancer* and *Wintermute* differ? What do these differences suggest about the potential for AI to possess free will? d) How does “*Neuromancer's*” style – its way of describing the setting or its characters, the imagery it uses – reflect the novel’s themes? e) How does “*Neuromancer*” exemplify the “cyberpunk” genre?

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. The origins of cyber literature.
2. Cyber reality in contemporary American literature.
3. The evolution of robots in American fiction.
4. Hypertext fiction
5. Animated poetry.
6. Computer generated fiction.
7. Online fiction.
8. Contemporary e-lit texts.

Recommended reading:

1. “*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*” (1968) by Philip K. Dick.
2. “*Gravity's Rainbow*” (1973) by Thomas Pynchon.
3. “*Chronopolis and other Stories*” (1971) by J.G. Ballard.
4. “*Compassion Circuit*” (1954) by John Wyndham.

THE DEPICTION OF THE FUTURE IN SCIENCE FICTION

“If science fiction is the mythology of modern technology, then its myth is tragic”.

Ursula K. Le Guin

“Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards”. Søren Kierkegaard

“The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create.”
Leonard I. Sweet

“You know how sometimes you tell yourself that you have a choice, but really you don't have a choice? Just because there are alternatives doesn't mean they apply to you”.

Rick Yancey, *The 5th Wave*

Key terms: *Science fiction, social science fiction, cyberprep, future history, Walt Disney world, adhococracy, old-fashioned animatronic robots, the synthetic memory, lethal injection, incarnation, virtualization, cranial interface, the scarcity of morality in the world, the cure for death, to realize boyhood dream, immersive direct-to-brain interfaces, a war of ever-shifting reputations*

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Cory Efram Doctorow was born on July 17, 1971, in Toronto, Ontario. He later moved to London, where he served as the European Affairs Coordinator for the *Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)* for four years. During his time there, he played a key role in founding the Open Rights Group. In January 2006, Doctorow decided to focus on writing full-time and left his position at the *EFF*, though he remained a Fellow of the organization for a period after stepping down from his staff role.

In 2009, Doctorow was appointed as the inaugural Independent Studies Scholar in Virtual Residence at the University of Waterloo in Ontario. He had previously been a student in the program in 1993-94 but did not finish his thesis at that time. Additionally, he served as a Visiting Professor at the Open University in the United Kingdom from September 2009 to August 2010. In recognition of his contributions, Doctorow received an honorary doctorate from The Open University in 2012.

In 2015, Doctorow made the decision to depart from London and relocate to Los Angeles, citing disillusionment with what he perceived as London's decline following the election of a Conservative government in Britain.

Doctorow's debut novel, *Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom*, hit the shelves in January 2003. It marked a pioneering move as the first novel to be published under a Creative Commons license, enabling readers to freely distribute the electronic version provided they didn't profit from it or create derivative works. The novel received a Nebula Award nomination and clinched the Locus Award for Best First Novel in 2004. Additionally, a semi-sequel short story titled *Truncat* was released in August 2003.

In June 2005, Doctorow published *Someone Comes to Town, Someone Leaves Town*, which was selected as the inaugural book for the Sci-Fi Channel's book club, Sci-Fi Essentials. His short story collection *A Place So Foreign and Eight More* was also released in 2004, winning the Sunburst Award. *Makers*, another of his novels, hit the shelves in October 2009. Following this, in February 2013, Doctorow unveiled *Homeland*, the sequel to his acclaimed novel *Little Brother*, which went on to secure the 2014 Prometheus Award. *Walkaway* came out in 2017. Then, in March 2019, Doctorow introduced *Radicalized*, a collection featuring four distinct science-fiction novellas exploring potential near-future scenarios in America. *Attack Surface*, a standalone novel for adults set in the *Little Brother* universe, was published on October 13, 2020. His most recent novel, *Red Team Blues*, a financial thriller centered on cybersecurity, was released in April 2023, featuring a character named Martin Hench, who is expected to reappear in future Doctorow works.

1. *What life will be like in the XXIInd century? What social structure will probably dominate? What social issues can you predict in the future society?*
2. *What do you know about Walt Disney World and its history / traditions?*
3. *Do you think that the cure for death will ever be invented? What are the positives and negatives of such invention? What things would you have learnt / tried in case of several-centuries-long life?*
4. *What age difference is appropriate within a couple? Are there any constraints?*

Cory DOCTOROW

DOWN AND OUT IN THE MAGIC KINGDOM

(Excerpt)

Prologue

I lived long enough to see the cure for death; to see the rise of the Bitchun Society, to learn ten languages; to compose three symphonies; to realize my boyhood dream of taking up residence in Disney World; to see the death of the workplace and of work.

I never thought I'd live to see the day when Keep A-Movin' Dan would decide to deadhead until the heat death of the Universe.

Dan was in his second or third blush of youth when I first met him, sometime late-XXI. He was a rangy cowpoke, apparent 25 or so, all rawhide squint-lines and sunburned neck, boots worn thin and infinitely comfortable. I was in the middle of my Chem thesis, my fourth Doctorate, and he was taking a break from Saving the World, chilling on campus in Toronto and core-dumping for some poor Anthro major. We hooked up at the Grad Students' Union – the GSU, or Gazoo for those who knew – on a busy Friday night, spring-ish. I was fighting a coralslow battle for a stool at the scratched bar, inching my way closer every time the press of bodies shifted, and he had one of the few seats, surrounded by a litter of cigarette junk and empties, clearly encamped.

Some duration into my foray, he cocked his head at me and raised a sun-bleached eyebrow. “You get any closer, son, and we're going to have to get a pre-nup.”

I was apparent forty or so, and I thought about bridling at being called son, but I looked into his eyes and decided that he had enough realtime that he could call me son anytime he wanted. I backed off a little and apologized.

He struck a cig and blew a pungent, strong plume over the bartender's head. “Don't worry about it. I'm probably a little over accustomed to personal space.”

I couldn't remember the last time I'd heard anyone on-world talk about personal space. With the mortality rate at zero and the birth-rate at non-zero, the world was inexorably accreting a dense carpet of people, even with the migratory and deadhead drains on the population. "You've been jaunting?" I asked – his eyes were too sharp for him to have missed an instant's experience to deadheading.

He chuckled. "No sir, not me. I'm into the kind of macho shitheadery that you only come across on-world. Jaunting's for play; I need work."

The bar-glass tinkled a counterpoint.

I took a moment to conjure a HUD with his Whuffie score on it. I had to resize the window – he had too many zeroes to fit on my standard display. I tried to act cool, but he caught the upwards flick of my eyes and then their involuntary widening. He tried a little aw-shucksery, gave it up and let a prideful grin show.

"I try not to pay it much mind. Some people, they get overly grateful." He must've seen my eyes flick up again, to pull his Whuffie history.

"Wait, don't go doing that – I'll tell you about it, you really got to know.

"Damn, you know, it's so easy to get used to life without hyperlinks. You'd think you'd really miss 'em, but you don't."

And it clicked for me. He was a missionary – one of those fringedwellers who act as emissary from the Bitchun Society to the benighted corners of the world where, for whatever reasons, they want to die, starve, and choke on petrochem waste. It's amazing that these communities survive more than a generation; in the Bitchun Society proper, we usually outlive our detractors. The missionaries don't have such a high success rate – you have to be awfully convincing to get through to a culture that's already successfully resisted nearly a century's worth of propaganda – but when you convert a whole village, you accrue all the Whuffie they have to give. More often, missionaries end up getting refreshed from a backup after they aren't heard from for a decade or so. I'd never met one in the flesh before.

"How many successful missions have you had?" I asked.

“Figured it out, huh? I’ve just come off my fifth in twenty years – counterrevolutionaries hidden out in the old Cheyenne Mountain NORAD site, still there a generation later.” He sandpapered his whiskers with his fingertips. “Their parents went to ground after their life’s savings vanished, and they had no use for tech any more advanced than a rifle. Plenty of those, though.”

He spun a fascinating yarn then, how he slowly gained the acceptance of the mountain-dwellers, and then their trust, and then betrayed it in subtle, beneficent ways: introducing Free Energy to their greenhouses, then a gengineered crop or two, then curing a couple deaths, slowly inching them toward the Bitchun Society, until they couldn’t remember why they hadn’t wanted to be a part of it from the start. Now they were mostly off-world, exploring toy frontiers with unlimited energy and unlimited supplies and deadheading through the dull times en route.

“I guess it’d be too much of a shock for them to stay on-world. They think of us as the enemy, you know – they had all kinds of plans drawn up for when we invaded them and took them away; hollow suicide teeth, booby-traps, fall-back-and-rendezvous points for the survivors. They just can’t get over hating us, even though we don’t even know they exist. Off-world, they can pretend that they’re still living rough and hard.” He rubbed his chin again, his hard calluses grating over his whiskers. “But for me, the real rough life is right here, on-world. The little enclaves, each one is like an alternate history of humanity – what if we’d taken the Free Energy, but not deadheading? What if we’d taken deadheading, but only for the critically ill, not for people who didn’t want to be bored on long bus-rides? Or no hyperlinks, no ad-hocracy, no Whuffie? Each one is different and wonderful.”

I have a stupid habit of arguing for the sake of, and I found myself saying, “Wonderful? Oh sure, nothing finer than, oh, let’s see, dying, starving, freezing, broiling, killing, cruelty and ignorance and pain and misery. I know I sure miss it.”

Keep A-Movin’ Dan snorted. “You think a junkie misses sobriety?”

I knocked on the bar. “Hello! There aren’t any junkies anymore!”

He struck another cig. “But you know what a junkie is, right? Junkies don’t miss sobriety, because they don’t remember how sharp everything was, how the pain made the joy sweeter. We can’t remember what it was like to work to earn our keep; to worry that there might not be enough, that we might get sick or get hit by a bus. We don’t remember what it was like to take chances, and we sure as shit don’t remember what it felt like to have them pay off.”

He had a point. Here I was, only in my second or third adulthood, and already ready to toss it all in and do something, anything, else. He had a point – but I wasn’t about to admit it. “So you say. I say, I take a chance when I strike up a conversation in a bar, when I fall in love... And what about the deadheads? Two people I know, they just went deadhead for ten thousand years! Tell me that’s not taking a chance!” Truth be told, almost everyone I’d known in my eighty-some years were deadheading or jaunting or just gone. Lonely days, then.

“Brother, that’s committing half-assed suicide. The way we’re going, they’ll be lucky if someone doesn’t just switch ’em off when it comes time to reanimate. In case you haven’t noticed, it’s getting a little crowded around here.”

I made pish-tosh sounds and wiped off my forehead with a bar-napkin – the Gazoo was beastly hot on summer nights. “Uh-huh, just like the world was getting a little crowded a hundred years ago, before Free Energy. Like it was getting too greenhousey, too nukey, too hot or too cold. We fixed it then, we’ll fix it again when the time comes. I’m gonna be here in ten thousand years, you damn betcha, but I think I’ll do it the long way around.”

He cocked his head again, and gave it some thought. If it had been any of the other grad students, I’d have assumed he was grepping for some bolstering factoids to support his next sally. But with him, I just knew he was thinking about it, the old-fashioned way.

“I think that if I’m still here in ten thousand years, I’m going to be crazy as hell. Ten thousand years, pal! Ten thousand years ago, the state-of-the-art was a goat. You really think you’re going to be anything recognizably human in a hundred centuries?”

Me, I'm not interested in being a post-person. I'm going to wake up one day, and I'm going to say, 'Well, I guess I've seen about enough,' and that'll be my last day."

I had seen where he was going with this, and I had stopped paying attention while I readied my response. I probably should have paid more attention. "But why? Why not just deadhead for a few centuries, see if there's anything that takes your fancy, and if not, back to sleep for a few more? Why do anything so final?"

He embarrassed me by making a show of thinking it over again, making me feel like I was just a half-pissed glib poltroon. "I suppose it's because nothing else is. I've always known that someday, I was going to stop moving, stop seeking, stop kicking, and have done with it. There'll come a day when I don't have anything left to do, except stop."

On campus, they called him Keep-A-Movin' Dan, because of his cowboy vibe and because of his lifestyle, and he somehow grew to take over every conversation I had for the next six months. I pinged his Whuffie a few times, and noticed that it was climbing steadily upward as he accumulated more esteem from the people he met.

I'd pretty much pissed away most of my Whuffie – all the savings from the symphonies and the first three theses – drinking myself stupid at the Gazoo, hogging library terminals, pestering profs, until I'd expended all the respect anyone had ever afforded me. All except Dan, who, for some reason, stood me to regular beers and meals and movies.

I got to feeling like I was someone special – not everyone had a chum as exotic as Keep-A-Movin' Dan, the legendary missionary who visited the only places left that were closed to the Bitchun Society. I can't say for sure why he hung around with me. He mentioned once or twice that he'd liked my symphonies, and he'd read my Ergonomics thesis on applying theme-park crowd-control techniques in urban settings, and liked what I had to say there. But I think it came down to us having a good time needling each other.

I'd talk to him about the vast carpet of the future unrolling before us, of the certainty that we would encounter alien intelligences some day, of the unimaginable

frontiers open to each of us. He'd tell me that deadheading was a strong indicator that one's personal reservoir of introspection and creativity was dry; and that without struggle, there is no real victory.

This was a good fight, one we could have a thousand times without resolving. I'd get him to concede that Whuffie recaptured the true essence of money: in the old days, if you were broke but respected, you wouldn't starve; contrariwise, if you were rich and hated, no sum could buy you security and peace. By measuring the thing that money really represented – your personal capital with your friends and neighbors – you more accurately gauged your success.

And then he'd lead me down a subtle, carefully baited trail that led to my allowing that while, yes, we might someday encounter alien species with wild and fabulous ways, that right now, there was a slightly depressing homogeneity to the world.

On a fine spring day, I defended my thesis to two embodied humans and one prof whose body was out for an overhaul, whose consciousness was present via speakerphone from the computer where it was resting. They all liked it. I collected my sheepskin and went out hunting for Dan in the sweet, flower-stinking streets.

He'd gone. The Anthro major he'd been torturing with his war-stories said that they'd wrapped up that morning, and he'd headed to the walled city of Tijuana, to take his shot with the descendants of a platoon of US Marines who'd settled there and cut themselves off from the Bitchun Society.

So I went to Disney World.

In deference to Dan, I took the flight in realtime, in the minuscule cabin reserved for those of us who stubbornly refused to be frozen and stacked like cordwood for the two hour flight. I was the only one taking the trip in realtime, but a flight attendant dutifully served me a urinesample-sized orange juice and a rubbery, pungent, cheese omelet. I stared out the windows at the infinite clouds while the autopilot banked around the turbulence, and wondered when I'd see Dan next.

CHAPTER 1

My girlfriend was 15 percent of my age, and I was old-fashioned enough that it bugged me. Her name was Lil, and she was second-generation Disney World, her parents being among the original ad-hocracy that took over the management of Liberty Square and Tom Sawyer Island. She was, quite literally, raised in Walt Disney World and it showed.

It showed. She was neat and efficient in her every little thing, from her shining red hair to her careful accounting of each gear and cog in the animatronics that were in her charge. Her folks were in canopic jars in Kissimmee, deadheading for a few centuries.

On a muggy Wednesday, we dangled our feet over the edge of the

Liberty Belle's riverboat pier, watching the listless Confederate flag over Fort Langhorn on Tom Sawyer Island by moonlight. The Magic Kingdom was all closed up and every last guest had been chased out the gate underneath the Main Street train station, and we were able to breathe a heavy sigh of relief, shuck parts of our costumes, and relax together while the cicadas sang.

I was more than a century old, but there was still a kind of magic in having my arm around the warm, fine shoulders of a girl by moonlight, hidden from the hustle of the cleaning teams by the turnstiles, breathing the warm, moist air. Lil plumped her head against my shoulder and gave me a butterfly kiss under my jaw.

"Her name was McGill," I sang, gently.

"But she called herself Lil," she sang, warm breath on my collarbones.

"And everyone knew her as Nancy," I sang.

I'd been startled to know that she knew the Beatles. They'd been old news in my youth, after all. But her parents had given her a thorough – if eclectic – education.

"Want to do a walk-through?" she asked. It was one of her favorite duties, exploring every inch of the rides in her care with the lights on, after the horde of tourists had gone. We both liked to see the underpinnings of the magic. Maybe that was why I kept picking at the relationship.

“I’m a little pooped. Let’s sit a while longer, if you don’t mind.”

She heaved a dramatic sigh. “Oh, all right. Old man.” She reached up and gently tweaked my nipple, and I gave a satisfying little jump. I think the age difference bothered her, too, though she teased me for letting it get to me.

“I think I’ll be able to manage a totter through the Haunted Mansion, if you just give me a moment to rest my bursitis.” I felt her smile against my shirt. She loved the Mansion; loved to turn on the ballroom ghosts and dance their waltz with them on the dusty floor, loved to try and stare down the marble busts in the library that followed your gaze as you passed.

I liked it too, but I really liked just sitting there with her, watching the water and the trees. I was just getting ready to go when I heard a soft ping inside my cochlea. “Damn,” I said. “I’ve got a call.” “Tell them you’re busy,” she said.

“I will,” I said, and answered the call subvocally. “Julius here.”

“Hi, Julius. It’s Dan. You got a minute?”

I knew a thousand Dans, but I recognized the voice immediately, though it’d been ten years since we last got drunk at the Gazoo together. I muted the subvocal and said, “Lil, I’ve got to take this. Do you mind?”

“Oh, no, not at all,” she sarcased at me. She sat up and pulled out her crack pipe and lit up.

“Dan,” I subvocalized, “long time no speak.”

“Yeah, buddy, it sure has been,” he said, and his voice cracked on a sob.

I turned and gave Lil such a look, she dropped her pipe. “How can I help?” she said, softly but swiftly. I waved her off and switched the phone to full-vocal mode. My voice sounded unnaturally loud in the cricket-punctuated calm.

“Where you at, Dan?” I asked.

“Down here, in Orlando. I’m stuck out on Pleasure Island.”

“All right,” I said. “Meet me at, uh, the Adventurer’s Club, upstairs on the couch by the door. I’ll be there in – ” I shot a look at Lil, who knew the castmember-only roads better than I. She flashed ten fingers at me. “Ten minutes.”

“Okay,” he said. “Sorry.” He had his voice back under control. I switched off.

“What’s up?” Lil asked.

“I’m not sure. An old friend is in town. He sounds like he’s got a problem.”

Lil pointed a finger at me and made a trigger-squeezing gesture. “There,” she said. “I’ve just dumped the best route to Pleasure Island to your public directory. Keep me in the loop, okay?”

I set off for the utilidor entrance near the Hall of Presidents and booted down the stairs to the hum of the underground tunnel-system. I took the slidewalk to cast parking and zipped my little cart out to Pleasure Island.

I found Dan sitting on the L-shaped couch underneath rows of fakedup trophy shots with humorous captions. Downstairs, castmembers were working the animatronic masks and idols, chattering with the guests.

Dan was apparent fifty plus, a little paunchy and stubbled. He had raccoon-mask bags under his eyes and he slumped listlessly. As I approached, I pinged his Whuffie and was startled to see that it had dropped to nearly zero.

“Jesus,” I said, as I sat down next to him. “You look like hell, Dan.”

He nodded. “Appearances can be deceptive,” he said. “But in this case, they’re bang-on.”

“You want to talk about it?” I asked.

“Somewhere else, huh? I hear they ring in the New Year every night at midnight; I think that’d be a little too much for me right now.”

I led him out to my cart and cruised back to the place I shared with Lil, out in Kissimmee. He smoked eight cigarettes on the twenty minute ride, hammering one after another into his mouth, filling my runabout with stinging clouds. I kept glancing at him in the rear-view. He had his eyes closed, and in repose he looked dead. I could hardly believe that this was my vibrant action-hero pal of yore.

Surreptitiously, I called Lil’s phone. “I’m bringing him home,” I subvocalized. “He’s in rough shape. Not sure what it’s all about.”

“I’ll make up the couch,” she said. “And get some coffee together. Love you.”

“Back atcha, kid,” I said.

As we approached the tacky little swaybacked ranch-house, he opened his eyes. “You’re a pal, Jules.” I waved him off. “No, really. I tried to think of who I could call, and you were the only one. I’ve missed you, bud.”

“Lil said she’d put some coffee on,” I said. “You sound like you need it.”

Lil was waiting on the sofa, a folded blanket and an extra pillow on the side table, a pot of coffee and some Disneyland Beijing mugs beside them. She stood and extended her hand. “I’m Lil,” she said.

“Dan,” he said. “It’s a pleasure.”

I knew she was pinging his Whuffie and I caught her look of surprised disapproval. Us oldsters who predate Whuffie know that it’s important; but to the kids, it’s the world. Someone without any is automatically suspect. I watched her recover quickly, smile, and surreptitiously wipe her hand on her jeans. “Coffee?” she said.

“Oh, yeah,” Dan said, and slumped on the sofa.

She poured him a cup and set it on a coaster on the coffee table. “I’ll let you boys catch up, then,” she said, and started for the bedroom.

“No,” Dan said. “Wait. If you don’t mind. I think it’d help if I could talk to someone... younger, too.”

She set her face in the look of chirpy helpfulness that all the secondgen castmembers have at their instant disposal and settled into an armchair. She pulled out her pipe and lit a rock. I went through my crack period before she was born, just after they made it decaf, and I always felt old when I saw her and her friends light up. Dan surprised me by holding out a hand to her and taking the pipe. He toked heavily, then passed it back.

Dan closed his eyes again, then ground his fists into them, sipped his coffee. It was clear he was trying to figure out where to start.

“I believed that I was braver than I really am, is what it boils down to,” he said.

“Who doesn’t?” I said.

“I really thought I could do it. I knew that someday I’d run out of things to do, things to see. I knew that I’d finish some day. You remember, we used to argue about it. I swore I’d be done, and that would be the end of it. And now I am. There isn’t a single place left on world that isn’t part of the Bitchun Society. There isn’t a single thing left that I want any part of.”

“So deadhead for a few centuries,” I said. “Put the decision off.”

“No!” he shouted, startling both of us. “I’m done. It’s over.” “So do it,” Lil said.

“I can’t,” he sobbed, and buried his face in his hands. He cried like a baby, in great, snoring sobs that shook his whole body. Lil went into the kitchen and got some tissue, and passed it to me. I sat alongside him and awkwardly patted his back.

“Jesus,” he said, into his palms. “Jesus.” “Dan?” I said, quietly.

He sat up and took the tissue, wiped off his face and hands. “Thanks,” he said. “I’ve tried to make a go of it, really I have. I’ve spent the last eight years in Istanbul, writing papers on my missions, about the communities. I did some followup studies, interviews. No one was interested. Not even me. I smoked a lot of hash. It didn’t help. So, one morning I woke up and went to the bazaar and said good bye to the friends I’d made there. Then I went to a pharmacy and had the man make me up a lethal injection. He wished me good luck and I went back to my rooms. I sat there with the hypo all afternoon, then I decided to sleep on it, and I got up the next morning and did it all over again. I looked inside myself, and I saw that I didn’t have the guts. I just didn’t have the guts. I’ve stared down the barrels of a hundred guns, had a thousand knives pressed up against my throat, but I didn’t have the guts to press that button.”

“You were too late,” Lil said.

We both turned to look at her.

“You were a decade too late. Look at you. You’re pathetic. If you killed yourself right now, you’d just be a washed-up loser who couldn’t hack it. If you’d done it ten years earlier, you would’ve been going out on top – a champion, retiring permanently.” She set her mug down with a harder-than-necessary clunk.

Sometimes, Lil and I are right on the same wavelength. Sometimes, it's like she's on a different planet. All I could do was sit there, horrified, and she was happy to discuss the timing of my pal's suicide.

But she was right. Dan nodded heavily, and I saw that he knew it, too.

"A day late and a dollar short," he sighed.

"Well, don't just sit there," she said. "You know what you've got to do."

"What?" I said, involuntarily irritated by her tone.

She looked at me like I was being deliberately stupid. "He's got to get back on top. Cleaned up, dried out, into some productive work. Get that

Whuffie up, too. Then he can kill himself with dignity."

It was the stupidest thing I'd ever heard. Dan, though, was cocking an eyebrow at her and thinking hard. "How old did you say you were?" he asked.

"Twenty-three," she said.

"Wish I'd had your smarts at twenty-three," he said, and heaved a sigh, straightening up. "Can I stay here while I get the job done?"

I looked askance at Lil, who considered for a moment, then nodded.

"Sure, pal, sure," I said. I clapped him on the shoulder. "You look beat."

"Beat doesn't begin to cover it," he said.

"Good night, then," I said.

CHAPTER 2

Ad-hocracy works well, for the most part. Lil's folks had taken over the running of Liberty Square with a group of other interested, compatible souls. They did a fine job, racked up gobs of Whuffie, and anyone who came around and tried to take it over would be so reviled by the guests they wouldn't find a pot to piss in. Or they'd have such a wicked, radical approach that they'd ouster Lil's parents and their pals, and do a better job.

It can break down, though. There were pretenders to the throne – a group who'd worked with the original ad-hocracy and then had moved off to other pursuits – some

of them had gone to school, some of them had made movies, written books, or gone off to Disneyland Beijing to help start things up. A few had deadheaded for a couple decades.

They came back to Liberty Square with a message: update the attractions. The Liberty Square ad-hocs were the staunchest conservatives in the Magic Kingdom, preserving the wheezing technology in the face of a Park that changed almost daily. The newcomer/old-timers were on-side with the rest of the Park, had their support, and looked like they might make a successful go of it.

So it fell to Lil to make sure that there were no bugs in the meager attractions of Liberty Square: the Hall of the Presidents, the Liberty Belle riverboat, and the glorious Haunted Mansion, arguably the coolest attraction to come from the fevered minds of the old-time Disney Imagineers.

I caught her backstage at the Hall of the Presidents, tinkering with Lincoln II, the backup animatronic. Lil tried to keep two of everything running at speed, just in case. She could swap out a dead bot for a backup in five minutes flat, which is all that crowd-control would permit.

It had been two weeks since Dan's arrival, and though I'd barely seen him in that time, his presence was vivid in our lives. Our little ranchhouse had a new smell, not unpleasant, of rejuve and hope and loss, something barely noticeable over the tropical flowers nodding in front of our porch. My phone rang three or four times a day, Dan checking in from his rounds of the Park, seeking out some way to accumulate personal capital. His excitement and dedication to the task were inspiring, pulling me into his over-the-top-and-damn-the-torpedoes mode of being.

"You just missed Dan," she said. She had her head in Lincoln's chest, working with an autosolder and a magnifier. Bent over, red hair tied back in a neat bun, sweat sheening her wiry freckled arms, smelling of girl-sweat and machine lubricant, she made me wish there were a mattress somewhere backstage. I settled for patting her behind affectionately, and she wriggled appreciatively. "He's looking better."

His rejuve had taken him back to apparent 25, the way I remembered him. He was rawboned and leathery, but still had the defeated stoop that had startled me when I saw him at the Adventurer's Club. "What did he want?"

“He’s been hanging out with Debra – he wanted to make sure I knew what she’s up to.”

Debra was one of the old guard, a former comrade of Lil’s parents. She’d spent a decade in Disneyland Beijing, coding sim-rides. If she had her way, we’d tear down every marvelous rube goldberg in the Park and replace them with pristine white sim boxes on giant, articulated servos.

The problem was that she was really good at coding sims. Her Great Movie Ride rehab at MGM was breathtaking – the Star Wars sequence had already inspired a hundred fan-sites that fielded millions of hits.

She’d leveraged her success into a deal with the Adventureland adhoc to rehab the Pirates of the Caribbean, and their backstage areas were piled high with reference: treasure chests and cutlasses and bowsprits. It was terrifying to walk through; the Pirates was the last ride Walt personally supervised, and we’d thought it was sacrosanct. But Debra had built a Pirates sim in Beijing, based on Chend I Sao, the XIXth century Chinese pirate queen, which was credited with rescuing the Park from obscurity and ruin. The Florida iteration would incorporate the best aspects of its Chinese cousin – the AI-driven sims that communicated with each other and with the guests, greeting them by name each time they rode and spinning age-appropriate tales of piracy on the high seas; the spectacular fly-through of the aquatic necropolis of rotting junks on the sea-floor; the thrilling pitch and yaw of the sim as it weathered a violent, breath-taking storm – but with Western themes: wafts of Jamaican pepper sauce crackling through the air; liquid Afro-Caribbean accents; and swordfights conducted in the manner of the pirates who plied the blue waters of the New World. Identical sims would stack like cordwood in the space currently occupied by the bulky ride-apparatus and dioramas, quintupling capacity and halving load-time.

“So, what’s she up to?”

Lil extracted herself from the Rail-Splitter’s mechanical guts and made a comical moue of worry. “She’s rehabbing the Pirates – and doing an incredible job. They’re

ahead of schedule, they've got good net-buzz, the focus groups are cumming themselves." The comedy went out of her expression, baring genuine worry.

She turned away and closed up Honest Abe, then fired her finger at him. Smoothly, he began to run through his spiel, silent but for the soft hum and whine of his servos. Lil mimed twiddling a knob and his audiotrack kicked in low: "All the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined could not, by force, make a track on the Blue Ridge, nor take a drink from the Ohio. If destruction be our lot, then we ourselves must be its author – and its finisher." She mimed turning down the gain and he fell silent again.

"You said it, Mr. President," she said, and fired her finger at him again, powering him down. She bent and adjusted his hand-sewn period topcoat, then carefully wound and set the turnip-watch in his vestpocket.

I put my arm around her shoulders. "You're doing all you can – and it's good work," I said. I'd fallen into the easy castmember mode of speaking, voicing bland affirmations. Hearing the words, I felt a flush of embarrassment. I pulled her into a long, hard hug and fumbled for better reassurance. Finding no words that would do, I gave her a final squeeze and let her go.

She looked at me sidelong and nodded her head. "It'll be fine, of course," she said. "I mean, the worst possible scenario is that Debra will do her job very, very well, and make things even better than they are now. That's not so bad."

This was a 180-degree reversal of her position on the subject the last time we'd talked, but you don't live more than a century without learning when to point out that sort of thing and when not to.

My cochlea struck twelve noon and a HUD appeared with my weekly backup reminder. Lil was maneuvering Ben Franklin II out of his niche. I waved good-bye at her back and walked away, to an uplink terminal.

Once I was close enough for secure broadband communications, I got ready to back up. My cochlea chimed again and I answered it.

“Yes,” I subvocalized, impatiently. I hated getting distracted from a backup – one of my enduring fears was that I’d forget the backup altogether and leave myself vulnerable for an entire week until the next reminder. I’d lost the knack of getting into habits in my adolescence, giving in completely to machine-generated reminders over conscious choice.

“It’s Dan.” I heard the sound of the Park in full swing behind him – children’s laughter; bright, recorded animatronic spiels; the tromp of thousands of feet. “Can you meet me at the Tiki Room? It’s pretty important.”

“Can it wait for fifteen?” I asked.

“Sure – see you in fifteen.”

I rung off and initiated the backup. A status-bar zipped across a HUD, dumping the parts of my memory that were purely digital; then it finished and started in on organic memory. My eyes rolled back in my head and my life flashed before my eyes.

Questions for discussion:

1. Examine the importance of the novel’s title.
2. Reflect on the setting and the general mood of the novel? What was the campus called like?
3. What sort of characters does the reader meet in the excerpt? Who are they? Reconstruct their portrait?
4. Give a brief outline of the plot. What artistic features allow the author to achieve the needed effect / atmosphere?
5. Reflect on the verbal representation in the text, rhythm and intonation. Does the author use any unusual words or phrases? What effects do they produce?
6. What themes were raised in the prologue and the first two chapters?
7. Who is the narrator in the story? Analyze the personality of the narrator.
8. Identify the genre of work.
9. Talk about symbolism and cultural realias in the text.

10. Are there any examples of foreshadowing or flashbacks?

Read the rest of the novel and answer the questions that follow:

11. Do you believe a form of social currency, akin to Whuffie, based on one's reputation and level of approval from others, could be effective?

12. Who among you has visited Disney World or Disneyland? Did the portrayal of the Magic Kingdom in the book resonate with your own experiences?

13. Is this novel considered a satire? If it is, what aspects of society or culture is it satirizing?

14. Do you think the concept of being able to revert to a previous backup to erase a negative period in your life, as depicted in the near future setting of the novel, is a beneficial idea?

15. If given the option in this era to select our “*apparent*” age, what age would you opt for yourself? How might societal dynamics change if we were unable to make assumptions about people based on their perceived age?

16. Were there any unexpected twists in the plot, or did you find it predictable? Examine the elements of fiction that contributed to your perception.

17. Did any passages or scenes stand out to you, or did you have any favorite moments? Were there any surprises that caught your attention?

18. What are your thoughts on the conclusion of the book?

19. Do you think this story would translate well into a film?

20. Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or share?

Writing task:

Read the text of the novel up to the end and write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Cyborgs and artificial intelligence in contemporary American literature; b) The concept of the future in the legacy by Cori Efram Doctorow; c) The worlds by Cori Doctorow.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. Cory Doctorow – the personality of the writer, his roots and creative genius.
2. Sci-fi – forms and features.
3. Cyberpunk as a literary genre.

4. American science fiction of today: worlds, concepts, problematics.
5. Walt Disney World – the history of creation. Its place in American culture.

Recommended reading:

1. “*No Maps for These Territories*”, non-fiction by William Gibson.
2. “*The Peripheral*” by William Gibson.
3. “*Altered Carbon*” by K. Morgan.
4. “*Future Home of the Living God*” by Louise Erdrich.

GLOSSARY:

Adhocracy, as a concept, refers to a dynamic and informal organizational structure characterized by its flexibility and adaptability. It operates without a rigid hierarchy and instead relies on specialized multidisciplinary teams organized by function. This stands in contrast to bureaucratic structures. The term was introduced by Warren Bennis in his 1968 book “*The Temporary Society*” and gained wider recognition when popularized by Alvin Toffler in his 1970 work “*Future Shock*”. Since then, it has been frequently used in organizational management theory, especially in discussions about online organizations. Scholars like Henry Mintzberg have further elaborated on the concept.

Biopunk is a subgenre that explores themes related to synthetic biology and biotechnology, including bionanotechnology and biorobotics. It often highlights the potential risks associated with genetic engineering and enhancement. In essence, biopunk literature delves into the speculative repercussions of the biotechnology revolution, particularly concerning unintended consequences arising from the discovery of recombinant DNA, typically set in the near future.

Cyber noir refers to narratives within the noir genre that are situated in a cyberpunk environment.

Cyberprep describes a societal framework reminiscent of cyberpunk but with a utopian trajectory, characterized by equitable laws and the absence of dominant corporate entities. This society places significant emphasis on leisure, utilizing advanced body modifications for recreational activities, pleasure, and personal enhancement. The term combines “*cyber-*” denoting cybernetics, and “*preppy*,” symbolizing the style's neat appearance akin to preppy attire.

Nanopunk explores worlds where the theoretical potentials of nanotechnology come to fruition, featuring concepts like Drexlerian ‘dry’ nano-assemblers and nanites. It's a burgeoning subgenre, albeit less prevalent compared to other offshoots of cyberpunk. Similar to biopunk, which delves into biotechnology such as bionanotechnology and biorobotics, nanopunk emphasizes nanotechnology. However, it shares a common ground with biopunk in that both often depict a coexistence of *bio-*, nanotechnologies, and cyberware, in contrast to traditional cyberpunk settings that typically emphasize mechanical cyberware, sometimes even banning genetic engineering and nanotechnologies outright. Linda Nagata’s “*Tech Heaven*” (1995) is one of the earliest works exploring the healing potentials of nanotechnology in nanopunk.

Postcyberpunk encompasses more recent cyberpunk narratives that explore diverse interpretations of the genre. Frequently, these narratives maintain key futuristic elements like human enhancement, widespread digital networks, and advanced technology, but they deviate from the traditional dystopian framework. However, as with any genre in science fiction, the definitions and limits of postcyberpunk are likely to be flexible or unclear.

Steampunk, among the most recognizable subgenres, is often described as a form of “technological fantasy.” Other subgenres within this category may also blend elements of science fantasy and historical fantasy.

PACE 13

**ST. AUGUSTINE'S CITY OF GOD AS A CANVAS
FOR AN IMPRESSIONISTIC PORTRAIT OF MAN'S FRAIL MORAL NATURE
AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF REDEMPTION**

"The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place, but a state of mind".
John Burroughs

"Cities were always like people, showing their varying personalities."
Roman Payne

*"Do not ghettoize society by putting people into legal categories of gender,
race, ethnicity, language, or other such characteristics".*
Preston Manning

Key terms: Postmodernism, metafiction, religious questioning, Holocaust, a stolen cross, an Episcopalian priest, a spiritual detective, Experimental Judaism, an anti-Semitic gesture, a ghetto archive, the Nazis, war criminals, original sin, the nature of evil, alternative voices, the validity of religion, epic barbarism, post-Roman cultural memory, the philosophy of compassion, alter-egos

E.L. DOCTOROW (January 6, 1931 – July 21, 2015) was an American novelist celebrated for his adept manipulation of conventional literary genres. His debut novel, *"Welcome to Hard Times"* (1960; adapted into a film in 1967), presents a philosophical twist on the western genre. His subsequent work, *"Big As Life"* (1966), employs science fiction to delve into human reactions to crises. Doctorow's inclination toward incorporating historical figures into his narratives was evident early on in *"The Book of Daniel"* (1971; adapted into a film in 1983), which fictionalizes the story of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's espionage trial in 1953. In *"Ragtime"* (1975; adapted into a film in 1981), Doctorow blends historical figures with characters symbolizing the evolving social dynamics of early XXth-century America.

Doctorow then explored the setting of the Great Depression and its aftermath in the novels *"Loon Lake"* (1980), *"World's Fair"* (1985), and *"Billy Bathgate"* (1989; adapted into a film in 1991). *"The Waterworks"* (1994) delves into life in XIXth-century New York. *"City of God"* (2000) presents what appears to be a writer's journal entries, branching into various narratives including a detective story and a Holocaust narrative. *"The March"* (2005) depicts a fictionalized account of Union general William Tecumseh Sherman's destructive march through Georgia during the American Civil War, aimed at crippling the Confederate economy. Doctorow then focused on

lesser-known historical figures in *“Homer and Langley”* (2009), which mythologizes the lives of the Collyer brothers, reclusive eccentrics whose deaths in 1947 uncovered a disturbing accumulation of oddities and refuse in their Harlem brownstone. *“Andrew’s Brain”* (2014) features a cognitive scientist engaging in discussions about personal losses and the nature of consciousness with a psychiatrist.

Doctorow’s essays were compiled into various volumes, such as *“Reporting the Universe”* (2003) and *“Creationists: Selected Essays, 1993–2006”* (2006), which examines the creative process in both literature and science. He also authored the play *“Drinks Before Dinner”* (first staged in 1978) and released collections of short stories including *“Lives of the Poets”* (1984), *“Sweet Land Stories”* (2004), and *“All the Time in the World”* (2011).

1. *What is the history of the world according to Judo-Christian tradition? What do you know of the alternative universal histories?*
2. *What types of the city represented in literature do you know of: a city-cave, a garden-city, a sun-city, etc.*
3. *Define the term “postmodernism”. What are the postmodern features? Reflect on the term “metafiction”.*
4. *What do you know of Wilhelm Richard Wagner and the nature of his legacy?*
5. *Who is St. Augustine? Discuss his philosophy.*
6. *What have you heard of the Roman religious’ rites?*
7. *Tell about the History of Holocaust.*

E.L. DOCTOROW

CITY OF GOD

(Excerpt)

So the theory has it that the universe expanded exponentially from a point, a singular space/time point, a moment/thing, some original particulate event or quantum substantive happenstance, to an extent that the word *explosion* is inadequate, though the theory is known as the Big Bang. What we are supposed to keep in mind, in our mind, is that the universe didn’t burst out into pre-existent

available space, it was the space that blew out, taking everything with it in a great expansive flowering, a silent flash into being in a second or two of the entire outrushing universe of gas and matter and darkness-light, a cosmic floop of nothing into the volume and chronology of spacetime. Okay? And universal history since has seen a kind of evolution of star matter, of elemental dust, nebulae, burning, glowing, pulsing, everything flying away from everything else for the last fifteen or so billion years. But what does it mean that the original singularity, or the singular originality, which included in its submicroscopic being all space, all time, that was to voluminously suddenly and monumentally erupt into concepts that we can understand, or learn – what does it mean to say that... the universe did not blast into being through space but that space, itself a property of the universe, is what blasted out along with everything in it? What does it mean to say that space is what expanded, stretched, flowered? Into what? The universe expanding even now its galaxies of burning suns, dying stars, metallic monuments of stone, clouds of cosmic dust, must be filling... something. If it is expanding it has perimeters, at present far beyond any ability of ours to measure. What do things look like just at the instant's action at the edge of the universe? What is just beyond that rushing, overwhelming parametric edge before it is overwhelmed? What is being overcome, filled, enlivened, lit? Or is there no edge, no border, but an infinite series of universes expanding into one another, all at the same time? So that the expanding expands futilely into itself, an infinitely convoluting dark matter of ghastly insensate endlessness, with no properties, no volume, no transformative elemental energies of light or force or pulsing quanta, all these being inventions of our own consciousness, and our consciousness, lacking volume and physical quality in itself, a project as finally mindless, cold, and inhuman as the universe of our illusion.

I would like to find an astronomer to talk to. I think how people numbed themselves to survive the camps. So do astronomers deaden themselves to the starry universe? I mean, seeing the universe as a job? (Not to exonerate the rest of us, who are given these painful intimations of the universal vastness and then go about our

lives as if it is no more than an exhibit at the Museum of Natural History.) Does the average astronomer doing his daily work understand that beyond the celestial phenomena given to his study, the calculations of his radiometry, to say nothing of the obligated awe of his professional life, lies a truth so monumentally horrifying – this ultimate context of our striving, this conclusion of our historical intellects so hideous to contemplate – that even one’s turn to God cannot alleviate the misery of such profound, disastrous, hopeless infinitude? That’s my question. In fact if God is involved in this matter, these elemental facts, these apparent concepts, He is so fearsome as to be beyond any human entreaty for our solace, or comfort, or the redemption that would come of our being brought into His secret.

– At dinner last night, code name Moira. After having seen her over the course of a year or two and having spoken to her only briefly, al-ways with the same sign within myself, I have come to recognize some heightened degree of attention, or a momentary tightness in the chest, perhaps, or a kind of, oddly, nonsexual arousal, that usually gives way in a moment to a sense of loss, to a glimpse of my own probably thrown away life, or more likely of the resistant character of life itself in refusing to be realized as it should be... I understood as I found myself her dinner partner why, finally, it was worthwhile to endure a social life in this crowd.

She wears no makeup, goes unjeweled, and arrives habitually under-dressed in the simplest of outfits for an evening, her hair almost too casually pinned or arranged, as if hastily done up at the last minute for whatever black-tie dinner she has been dragged to by her husband.

Her quiet mien is what I noticed the first time I met her – as if she were thinking of something else, as if she is somewhere else in all our distinguished surroundings. Because she did not demand attention and was apparently without a profession of her own, she could seem entirely ordinary among the knockout women around her. Yet she was always the object of their not quite disguisable admiration.

A slender, long-waisted figure. Fine cheekbones and dark brown eyes. The mouth is generous, the complexion an even ecru paleness that, unblemished by any variation, seems dispensed over her face as if by lighting. This Slavic evenness, particularly at her forehead under the pinned slant of hair, may account at least in part for the reigning calmness I have always felt from her.

She nodded, smiled, with a clear direct look into my eyes, and took her place at the table with that quietness of being, the settledness of her that I find so alluring.

Things went well. *Let me entertain you...* I spoke my lines trippingly on the tongue. She was responsive, appreciative in her quiet way. On my third glass of Bordeaux, I thought, under cover of the surrounding conversations, I should take my chances. My confession drew from her an appreciative and noncommittal merriment. But then color rose to her cheeks and she stopped laughing and glanced for a moment at her husband, who sat at the next table. She picked up her fork and with lowered eyes attended to her dinner. Characteristically, her blouse had fallen open at the unsecured top button. It was apparent she wore nothing underneath. Yet I found it impossible to imagine her having an affair, and grew gloomy and even a bit ashamed of myself. I wondered bitterly if she elevated the moral nature of every man around her.

But then, when dessert was about to be served, the men were instructed to consult the verso of their name cards and move to a new table. I was seated next to a woman TV journalist who expressed strong political views at dinner though never on the screen, and I was not listening, and feeling sodden and miserable, when I looked back and found... Moira... staring at me with a solemn intensity that verged on anger.

She will meet me for lunch up near the museum and then we'll look at the Monets.

– And everything flying away from everything else for fifteen or so billion years, affinities are established, sidereal liaisons, and the stars slowly drift around

one another into rotating star groups or galaxies, and in great monumental motions the galaxies even more slowly convene in clusters, which clusters in turn distribute themselves in linear fashion, a great chain or string of superclusters billions of light-years on end. And in all this stately vast rush of cosmosity, a small and obscure accident occurs, a chance array of carbon and nitrogen atoms that fuse into molecular existence as a single cell, a speck of organic corruption, and, *sacre bleu*, we have the first entity in the universe with a will of its own.

Message from the Father:

– Everett@earthlink.net

Hi, the answers to your questions, in order: the Book of Common Prayer; surplice; clerical collar with red shirt; in direct address, Father, in indirect, the Reverend Soandso (a bishop would be the Right Reverend); my man was Tillich, though some would stick me with Jim Pike. And the stolen cross was brass, eight feet high. You are making me nervous, Everett.

Godbless,

Pem

– **Heist**

This afternoon in Battery Park. Warm day, people out. Soft autumn breeze like a woman blowing in my ear.

Rock doves everywhere aswoop, the grit of the city in their wings. Behind me the financial skyline of lower Manhattan sunlit into an island cathedral, a religioplex.

And I come upon this peddler of watches, fellow with dreadlocks, a big smile. Standing tall in his purple chorister's robe. His sacral presence not diminished by the new white Nikes on his feet.

“Don't need windin, take em in de showerbat, everyting proof, got diamuns 'n such, right time all de time.”

A boat appears, phantomlike, from the glare of the oil-slicked bay: the Ellis Island ferry. I will always watch boats. She swings around, her three decks jammed to

the rails. Sideswipes bulkhead for contemptuous New York landing. Oof. Pilings groan, crack like gunfire.

Man on the promenade thinks it's him they're after, breaks into a run. Tourists down the gangplank thundering. Cameras, camcorders, and stupefied children slung from their shoulders.

Lord, there is something so exhausted about the NY waterfront, as if the smell of the sea were oil, as if boats were buses, as if all heaven were a garage hung with girlie calendars, the months to come already leafed and fingered in black grease.

But I went back to the peddler in the choir robe and said I liked the look. Told him I'd give him a dollar if he'd let me see the label. The smile dissolves. "You crazy, mon?"

Lifts his tray of watches out of reach: "Get away, you got no business wit me." Looking left and right as he says it.

I was in mufti – jeans, leather jacket over plaid shirt over T-shirt. Absent cruciform ID.

And then later on my walk, at Astor Place, where they put out their goods on the sidewalk: three of the purple choir robes neatly folded and stacked on a plastic shower curtain. I picked one and turned back the neck and there was the label, Churchpew Crafts, and the laundry mark from Mr. Chung.

The peddler, a solemn young mestizo with that bowl of black hair they have, wanted ten dollars each. I thought that was reasonable.

They come over from Senegal, or up from the Caribbean, or from Lima, San Salvador, Oaxaca, they find a piece of sidewalk and go to work. The world's poor lapping our shores, like the rising of the global warmed sea.

I remember how, on the way to Machu Picchu, I stopped in Cuzco and listened to the street bands. I was told when I found my camera missing that I could buy it back the next morning in the market street behind the cathedral. Merciful heavens, I was pissed. But the fences were these shyly smiling women of Cuzco in their woven ponchos of red and ocher. They wore black derbies and carried their babies wrapped

to their backs... and with Anglos rummaging the stalls as if searching for their lost dead, how, my Lord Jesus, could I not accept the justice of the situation?

As I did at Astor Place in the shadow of the great mansarded brown-stone voluminous Cooper Union people's college with the birds flying up from the square.

A block east, on St. Marks, a thrift shop had the altar candlesticks that were lifted along with the robes. Twenty-five dollars the pair. While I was at it, I bought half a dozen used paperback detective novels. To learn the trade.

I'm lying, Lord. I just read the damn things when I'm depressed. The paperback detective he speaks to me. His rod and his gaff they comfort me. And his world is circumscribed and dependable in its punishments, which is more than I can say for Yours.

I know You are on this screen with me. If Thomas Pemberton, B.D., is losing his life, he's losing it here, to his watchful God. Not just over my shoulder do I presumptively locate You, or in the Anglican starch of my collar, or in the rectory walls, or in the coolness of the chapel stone that frames the door, but in the blinking cursor...

– We made our plans standing in front of one of the big blue-green paintings of water lilies. It is a matter of when she can get away. She has two young children. There is a nanny, but everything is so scheduled. We had not touched, and still did not as we came out of the Met and walked down the steps and I hailed a cab for her. Her glance at me as she got in was almost mournful, a moment of declared trust that I felt as a blow to the heart. It was what I wanted and had applied myself to getting, but once given, was instantly transformed into her dependence, as if I had been sworn to someone in a secret marriage whose terms and responsibilities had not been defined. As the cab drove off I wanted to run after it and tell her it was all a mistake, that she had misunderstood me. Later, I could only think how lovely she was, what a powerful recognition there was between us, I couldn't remember having felt an attraction so strong, so clean, and rather than being on the brink of an affair, I imagined that I might

at last find my salvation in an authentic life with this woman. She lives in some genuine state of integrity almost beyond belief, a woman of unstudied grace, with none of the coarse ideologies of the time adhered to her.

– Drifting around town picking locations like the art director of a movie. I place St. Timothy's in the East Village, off Second Avenue around the corner from the Ukrainian hall and restaurant. There had to have been at least one church's worth of WASPs down here in the old days. Before Manhattan moved north to the sunnier open spaces above Fourteenth Street... St. Timothy's, Episcopal, typical New York Brownstone Ecclesiastic, little brother of the grander Church of the Ascension on lower Fifth Avenue. So to please the good Father I've now changed the name and the locale. (There is an actual old ruin of a church on East Sixth, but the wrong color, Catholic gray granite, with a steeple more like a cupola and the stained-glass bull's-eye all blown out and pigeon shit like streaks of rain on the stone. Three young men on the steps, one in the middle eyeing me as I pass, the other two covering each end of the block.)

Here in the neighborhood of St. Tim's, lots of people just getting by. On the corner, young T-shirted girl, braless, tight cutoffs, she is running in place with her Walkman. Gray-haired over-the-hill bohemian, a rummy, he affects a ponytail. Squat, short Latina, steatopygous. Stooped old man in house slippers, Yankees cap, filthy pants held up by a rope. Young black man crossing against the traffic, glaring, imperious, making his statement.

East Village generally still the six-story height of the nineteenth century. The city is supposed to deconstruct and remake itself every five minutes. Maybe midtown, but except for the Verrazano Bridge, the infrastructure was in place by the late thirties. The last of the major subway lines was built in the twenties. All the bridges, tunnels, and most of the roads and parkways, improved or unimproved, were done by the Second World War. And everywhere you look the nineteenth is still

here – the Village, East and West, the Lower East Side, Brooklyn Bridge, Central Park, the row houses in Harlem, the iron-fronts in Soho...

The city grid was laid out in the 1840s, so despite all we still live with the decisions of the dead. We walk the streets where generations have trod have trod have trod.

But, Jesus, you're out of town a couple of days and it's hypershock. Fire sirens. Police-car hoots. Ritual pneumatic drilling on the avenues. The runners in their running shorts, the Rollerblades, the messengers. Hissing bus doors. Sidewalk pileups for the stars at their screenings. All the restaurants booked. Babies tumbling out of the maternity wards. Building facades falling into the streets. Bursting water mains. Cop crime. Every day a cop shoots a black kid, choke-holds a perp, a bunch of them bust into the wrong apartment, wreck the place, cuff the women and children. Cover-ups by the Department, mayor making excuses.

New York New York, capital of literature, the arts, social pretension, subway tunnel condos. Napoleonic real estate mongers, grandiose rag merchants. Self-important sportswriters. Statesmen retired in Sutton Place to rewrite their lamentable achievements... New York, the capital of people who make immense amounts of money without working. The capital of people who work all their lives and end up broke and gray New York is the capital of boroughs of vast neighborhoods of nameless drab apartment houses where genius is born every day.

It is the capital of all music. It is the capital of exhausted trees.

The migrant wretched of the world, they think if they can just get here, they can get a foothold. Run a newsstand, a bodega, drive a cab, peddle. Janitor, security guard, run numbers, deal, whatever it takes. You want to tell them this is no place for poor people. The racial fault line going through the heartland goes through our heart. We're color-coded ethnic and social enclavists, multiculturally suspicious, and ver-bally aggressive, as if the city as an idea is too much to bear even by the people who live in it.

But I can stop on any corner at the intersection of two busy streets, and before me are thousands of lives headed in all four directions, up-town downtown east and west, on foot, on bikes, on in-line skates, in buses, strollers, cars, trucks, with the subway rumble underneath my feet... and how can I not know I am momentarily part of the most spectacular phenomenon in the unnatural world? There is a specie recognition we will never acknowledge. A primatial over-soul. For all the wariness or indifference with which we negotiate our public spaces, we rely on the masses around us to delineate ourselves. The city may begin from a marketplace, a trading post, the confluence of waters, but it secretly depends on the human need to walk among strangers.

And so each of the passersby on this corner, every scruffy, oversize, undersize, weird, fat, or bony or limping or muttering or foreign-looking, or green-haired punk-strutting, threatening, crazy, angry, in-consolable person I see... is a New Yorker, which is to say as native to this diaspora as I am, and part of our great sputtering experiment in a universalist society proposing a world without nations where anyone can be anything and the ID is planetary.

Not that you shouldn't watch your pocketbook, lady.

– Uncounted billions of years idle away as this single-cell organism, this speck of corruption, this submicroscopic breach of nonlife, evolves selectively through realms of slime and armor-plated brutishness, past experimental kingdoms of horses two feet tall and lizards that fly, into the triumphant dominions of the furry self-improving bipeds, those of the opposed thumb and forefinger, who will lope out of prehistory to sublime into a teenage nerd at the Bronx High School of Science.

Of the brilliant boys I knew at Science whose minds were made to solve mathematical problems and skip happily among the most abstruse concepts of physics, a large number were jerks. I've since run into a few of them in their adulthood and they are still jerks. It is possible that the scientific character of mind is by its nature childish, capable through life of a child's wonder and excitements,

but lacking real discernment, lacking sadness, too easily delighted by its own intellect. There are exceptions, of course, the physicist Steven Weinberg, for example, whom I've read and who has the moral gravity you would want from a scientist. But I wonder why, for instance, the cosmologists and astronomers, as a whole, are so given to cute names for their universe. Not only that it began as the Big Bang. In the event it cannot overcome its own gravity, it will fly back into itself, and that will be the Big Crunch. In the event of a lack of density, it will continue to expand, and that will be the Big Chill. The inexplicable dark matter of the universe that must necessarily exist because of the behavior of galactic perimeters is comprised of either the neutrino or of weakly interacting massive particles, known as WIMPs. And the dark-mattered halos around the galaxies are massive compact halo objects, or MACHOs.

Are these clever fellows mocking themselves? Is it a kind of American trade humor they practice out of modesty, as the English practice self-denigration in their small talk? Or is it bravery under fire, that studied carelessness in the trenches while the metaphysical rounds come in?

I think they simply are lacking in holy apprehension. I think the mad illiterate priest of a prehistoric religion tearing the heart out of a living sacrifice and holding it still pulsing in his two bloodied hands... might have had more discernment.

– Heist

Tuesday evening

Up to Lenox Hill to see my terminal. Ambulances backing into the emergency bay with their beepings and blinding strobe lights. They used to have QUIET signs around hospitals. Doctors' cars double-parked, patients strapped on gurneys double-parked on the side-walk, smart young Upper East Side workforce pouring out of the subway.

Lights coming on in the apartment buildings. If only I were elevating to a smart one-bedroom... a lithe young woman home from her interesting job awaiting my ring... uncorking the wine, humming, wearing no underwear.

In the fluorescent lobby, a stoic crowd primed for visiting hours with bags and bundles and infants squirming in laps. And that profession of the plague of our time, the security guard, in various indolent versions.

My terminal's room door slapped with a RESTRICTED AREA warning. I push in, all smiles.

You got medicine, Father? You gonna make me well? Then get the fuck outta here. The fuck out, I don't need your bullshit.

Enormous eyes all that's left of him. An arm bone aims the remote like a gun, and there in the hanging set the smiling girl spins the big wheel.

My healing pastoral visit concluded, I pass down the hall, where several neatly dressed black people wait outside a private room. They hold gifts in their arms. I smell nonhospital things... a whiff of fruit pie still hot from the oven, soups, a simmering roast. I stand on tiptoe. Who is that? Through the flowers, like a Gauguin, a handsome light-complected black woman sitting up in bed. Her bearing regal, her head turbaned. I don't hear the words, but her melodious, deep voice of prayer knows whereof it speaks. The men with their hats in their hands and their heads bowed. The women with white kerchiefs. On the way out I inquire of the floor nurse. SRO twice a day, she says. We get all of Zion up here. The only good thing, since Sister checked in I don't have to shop for supper. Yesterday I brought home some baked pork chops. You wouldn't believe how good they were.

– Another one having trouble with my bullshit is the widow Samantha. In her new duplex that looks across the river to the Pepsi-Cola sign, she's been reading Pagels on early Christianity.

It was all politics, wasn't it? she asks me. Yes, I sez to her.

And so whoever won, that's why we have what we have now? Well, with a nod at the Reformation, I suppose so, yes.

She lies back down. So it's all made up, it's an invention.

Yes, I sez, taking her in my arms. And you know for the longest time it actually worked.

Used to try to make her laugh at the dances at Brearley. Couldn't then, can't now. A gifted melancholic, Sammy. The dead husband an add-on.

But almost alone of the old crowd she didn't think I was throwing my life away.

Wavy thick brown hair parted in the middle. Glimmering dark eyes set a bit too wide. Figure not current, lacking tone, glory to God in the Highest.

From the corner of the full-lipped mouth her tongue emerges and licks away a teardrop.

And then, Jesus, the surprising condolence of her wet salted kiss.

-for the sermon

Open with that scene in the hospital, those good and righteous folk praying at the bedside of their minister. The humility of those people, their faith glowing like light around them, put me in such longing... to share their trustfulness.

But then I asked myself: Must faith be blind? Why must it come of people's *need* to believe?

We are all of us so pitiful in our desire to be unburdened, we will embrace Christianity or any other claim of God's authority for that matter. Look around. God's authority reduces us all, wherever we are in the world, whatever our tradition, to beggarly submission.

So where is the truth to be found? Ecumenism is politically correct, *but what is the case?* If faith is valid in all its forms, are we merely making an aesthetic choice when we choose Jesus? And if you say, No, of course not, then we must ask, Who are the elect blessedly walking the true path to salvation... and who are the misguided

others? Can we tell? Do we know? We think we know – of course we think we know. But how do we distinguish our truth from another's falsity, we of the true faith, except by the story we cherish? Our story of God. But, my friends, I ask you: Is God a story? Can we, each of us examining our faith – I mean its pure center, not its consolations, not its habits, not its ritual sacraments – can we believe anymore in the heart of our faith that God is our story of Him? To presume to contain God in this Christian story of ours, to hold Him, circumscribe Him, the author of everything we can conceive and everything we cannot conceive... in *our* story of *Him*? *Of Her*? *OF WHOM*? What in the name of Christ do we think we are talking about!

– *Wednesday lunch*

Well, Father, I hear you delivered yourself of another doozy.

How do you get your information, Charley? My little deacon, maybe, or my kapellmeister?

Be serious.

No, really, unless you've got St. Timothy bugged. Because, God knows, there's nobody but us chickens. Give me an uptown parish, why don't you, where the subway doesn't shake the rafters. Give me one of God's midtown showplaces of the pious rich and famous and I'll show you what doozy means.

Now listen, Pem, he says. This is unseemly. You are doing and say-ing things that are . . . worrying.

He frowns at his grilled fish as if wondering what it's doing there. His well-chosen Pinot Grigio shamelessly neglected as he sips ice water.

Tell me what I should be talking about, Charley, if not the test to our faith. My five parishioners are serious people, they can take it.

Lays the knife and fork down, composes his thoughts: You've al-ways been your own man, Pem, and in the past I've had a sneaking admiration for the freedom you've found within church discipline. We all have. And in a sense you've paid for it, we both know that. In terms of talent and brains, the way you burned up Yale, you

probably should have been my bishop. But in another sense it is harder to do what I do, be the authority that your kind is always testing.

My kind?

Please think about this. A tone has crept up, a pride of intellect, something is not right.

His blue eyes look disarmingly into my own. Boyish shock of hair, now gray, falling over the forehead. Then his famous smile flashes over his face and instantly fades, having been the grimace of distraction of an administrative mind.

What I know of such things, Pem, I know well. Self-destruction is not one act, or even one kind of act. It may start small and appear in-significant, but as it gathers momentum it is the whole man coming apart in every direction, all three hundred and sixty degrees.

Amen to that, Charley. You don't suppose there's time for a double espresso?

Oh, and his other line: We're absolutely at a loss to know what is going on inside you, Father. But I'm pretty sure you are not availing yourself of the strength to hand.

That may well be, Bishop, I should have said. But at least I don't do séances.

(Sources: Doctorow, E.L. (2000). City of God. New York: Random House).

Questions for discussion:

1. Consider the novel's title and discuss its implications. What insights can you provide about the philosophical underpinnings of the novel?
2. What do we learn from the excerpt of the book: discuss the plotline, the introduced characters, and the imagery?
3. Examine the novel's setting and its intricate descriptions of time and space. Identify the key elements that distinguish these aspects within the narrative.

4. What insights does the author provide about universal history in the opening sections of the novel?

5. Talk about the sound and olfactory system, colour symbolism and other forms of symbolism. Analyze the language in the novel.

6. Who is Moira, and what significance do you believe she holds within the text?

7. What types of issues are brought to light in the excerpt?

8. What do you speculate was Doctorow's intent in organizing the novel in this manner? What interpretations did you draw from its structure, and how did this organization influence your perception of the narrative?

Read the rest of the novel and answer the questions below:

9. How are science and religion portrayed in their interaction within the novel? How does religion intersect with intellect within the narrative? Additionally, what significance does religion appear to hold for the survivors of war and the Holocaust?

10. What leads Pem to argue that the notions of faith and the concept of God need rejuvenation? What does he imply by suggesting that humans reshape God through their evolving interpretations and perspectives? Furthermore, how does religion engage with the contemporary world within the context of this novel?

11. How are the concepts of evolution and the Big Bang theory connected to the unfolding events in the novel? How do the characters in the novel perceive these scientific ideas?

12. Analyze the pivotal characters within Doctorow's narrative.

13. Explore the themes, symbols, and motifs present in the text.

14. Offer detailed summaries for each chapter of the novel.

15. A critic suggests that "*City of God*" revolves around storytelling, portraying language as a tool for reflecting and engaging with reality, and consciousness as a narrative. Do you agree with this interpretation? Explore the multitude of stories woven throughout Doctorow's novel, ranging from the tale of the

universe to Yehoshua's narrative of the ghetto, emphasizing the connections among them.

16. Examine the structure, language, and imagery employed in "City of God." How does it mirror or emulate the patterns of modern thought and existence? Consider Doctorow's intricate structure, characterized by recurring ideas, images, and themes that continually loop back on themselves. Could this structure be likened to a jazz-inspired variation on the Wagnerian leitmotif? Furthermore, how do these repetitive themes contribute to the narrative progression, and how do they intersect with the central enigma of the vanished cross?

17. Upon leaving the priesthood, Pem finds himself in a cancer ward where he encounters terminally ill patients singing popular songs from the twentieth century. Reflect on the significance of this scene. Why does it resonate with Pem in the manner it does? What does it signify when pop songs, typically associated with self-referentiality and immediate recognition, are repurposed into a form of secular hymn?

18. Examine the spiritual and metaphysical journeys undertaken by Pem, Everett, and Sarah, highlighting both their similarities and differences.

19. Trace the evolution of Pem's relationship with Sarah Blumenthal, starting from their initial encounter at the synagogue where the missing cross is found, to their wedding celebration at the end of the narrative. What characteristics draw Pem to Sarah, and vice versa? Furthermore, considering the novel's central themes, what are the implications of their union? How does their marriage impact Everett? Additionally, what aspects of these two religious figures intrigue Everett?

20. "You say all history has contrived to pour this beer into my glass," expresses a sentiment to Everett the nameless Vietnam veteran. Pem discusses "a significant historically accumulated communal creation." Much earlier in the narrative, Rabbi Joshua questions, "Is time a loop? Do you share my sensation that everything appears to be moving in reverse? That civilization is regressing?" What is the significance of these lines collectively? What theme is Doctorow emphasizing here?

21. How could the Jewish concept of Messianic time, where all of history gains retrospective significance through the sudden and unforeseen arrival of the Messiah, be connected to the themes explored in *“City of God”*?

22. What methods does the author employ to flesh out the central characters of the novel? What specific attributes contribute to making these characters believable and emotionally impactful?

23. Examine the novel’s detailed depiction of the individual who realizes that his life is gradually transforming into a film. What is the underlying meaning of this portrayal? Unravel the metaphorical implications within Doctorow's narrative.

24. Pem fiercely grapples with the Judeo-Christian tradition, akin to his historical predecessor, James Pike, as it seems to him more a narrative concerning power, genocidal acts, and the abandonment of human reason and intellect, rather than one of faith, hope, and love. *“I take the position that true faith is not a supersessional knowledge. It cannot discard the intellect... How can we presume to exalt our religious vision over the ordinary pursuits of our rational minds?”* Analyze Pem’s statements to the bishop’s examiners. Then, consider Pem’s poignant toast at the wedding, representing the apex of his internal battle. How does this compelling and fervent speech function to unify the diverse fragments scattered throughout *“City of God”*?

25. Identify the instances of foreshadowing and flashbacks within the novel and discuss their purpose.

Writing task:

Read the text of the novel up to the end and write an essay on one of the topics suggested: a) Ideology and solidarity in Augustine’s *“City of God”*; b) Augustin’s dystopia in the novel; c) From rape to resurrection: sin, sexual difference and politics; d) The philosophy of compassion: Stoicism in the *“City of God”*; e) Augustine on the origin of evil: myth and metaphysics; f) Augustine’s rejection of eudaimonism; g) Augustine’s critique of pagan mimesis.

Topics for self-study, reports and Power Point presentations:

1. *The personality of the author.*
2. *The history of the book “City of God”.*
3. *Roman paganism.*

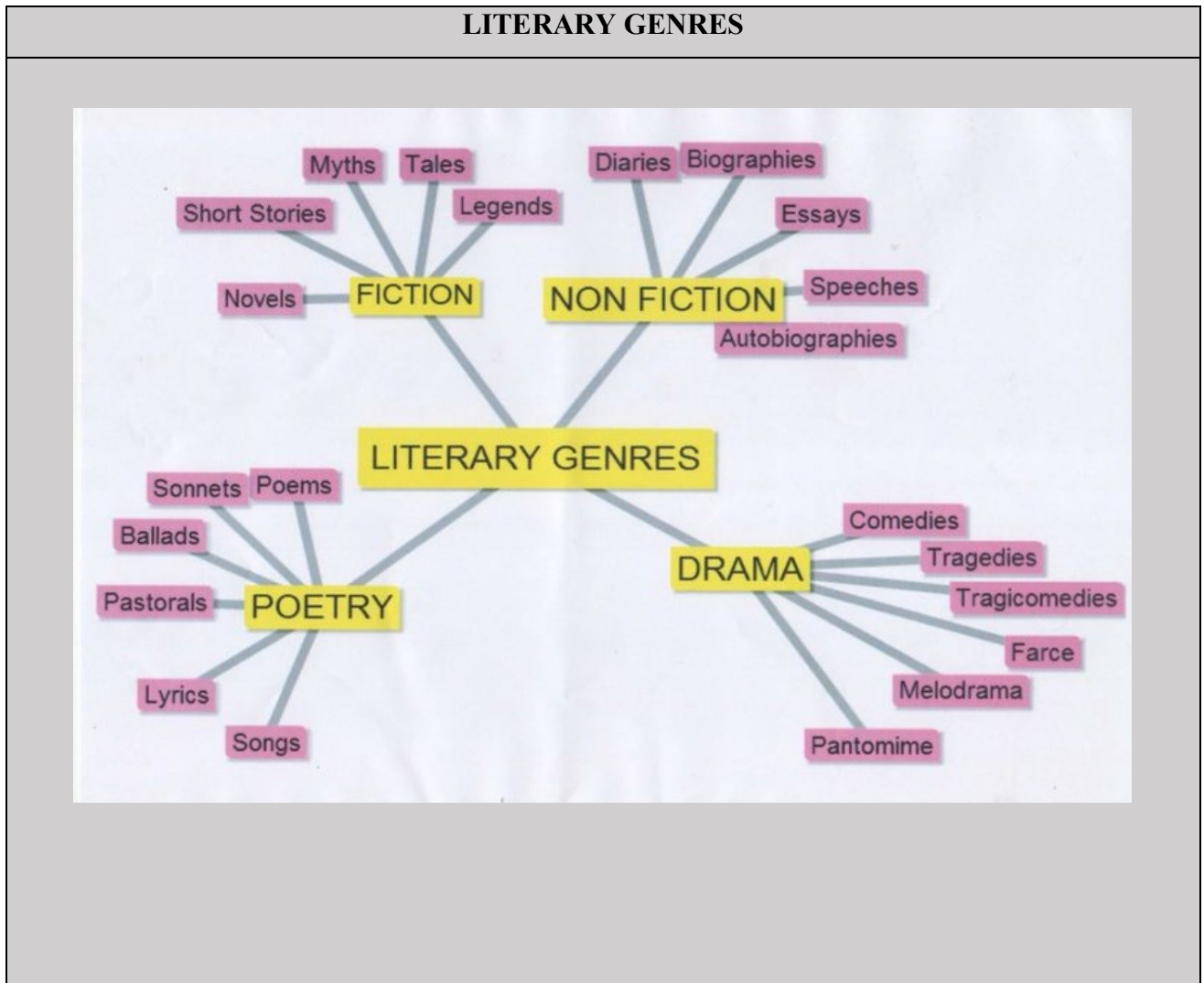
4. *The concepts of the city in world literature: sun-city, a city-cave, etc.*
5. *Postmodernism in American fiction, the manipulation with genre.*
6. *Paganism and the forms of Christianity.*
7. *The philosophical line in the novel.*

Recommended reading:

1. Wetzel, James – edited by (2012). *Augustine's City of God: A critical Guide*. Cambridge University Press. 261 p.
2. Feeney, Dennis. 2007. *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
3. Karras, Valarie A. 2006. *Sex/Gender in Gregory of Nyssa's Eschatology: Irrelevant or Non-Existent?* *Studia Patristica* 41: 363–69.
4. King, Peter. 2009. *Emotions in Medieval Thought*. In *Goldie*. 167–88.
5. Kretzmann, Norman. 1990. *Faith Seeks, Understanding Finds: Augustine's Charter for Christian Philosophy*. In *Flint*. 1–36.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: LITERARY GENRES



APPENDIX 2: THE PLAN OF A PROSAIC TEXT ANALYSIS

A PROSAIC TEXT
The history of work creation. Essential foundation. Controversy around the work or the point of view of critics and contemporaries.
Is it fiction or non-fiction? Genre of the work.
The significance of the text title. Non-story elements (devotion, epigraph, descriptions; lyrical, philosophical, historical diversions)
Subject and idea of the work. The themes raised. The nature of the conflict
Problems of the work (The problem of finding a positive hero; The problem of the meaning of life / search for happiness; The problem of feeling and duty, the problem of love; The problem of fathers and children; The problem of good and evil; What is true beauty?; Ecological problems; Historical memory problems, etc.)
What is the structure of the prosaic text? (narration, sequence of episodes, description, character's speech, flashbacks, foreshadowing). Compositional elements (form, construction of the work): exposition and the hook, setting, culmination, denouement. The role of the end and the beginning of the work.
Artistic techniques (portrait, scenery, interior, the role of artistic details to characterize a hero, chronotope (time and space))
Characters (protagonists, antagonists, secondary characters), their experience (confession, monologue, dialogue, author's speech, comments, opinions of other characters). How do the actions and the speech of personages characterize them? Characters' traits
The system of images and the messages it conveys
The figurative system (lingua-stylistic means used by the author to achieve the purpose). What mood or atmosphere is created by the author with the help of stylistic devices and the choice of verbs, nouns and adjectives?
What are the attitude and the tone of the text under analysis? (positive negative, ironical, lyrical, sad, and joyful)
Intertextuality. Are there any allusions or cultural realia in the text? Explain them
Peculiarities of the unique author's style
Your point of view (reflection)

APPENDIX 3: GENRES OF NARRATIVE FICTION

MYTHOLOGY = comprises narratives that convey people's beliefs and history.

Key themes include the origins of humanity and its customs, as well as the functioning of the natural and human realms. Mythology frequently depicts the daily lives of deities, encompassing their romantic relationships, joys, envy, wrath, aspirations, and abilities.

Kinds of Mythological Narrations:

Legends. In contrast to numerous myths, legends lack religious or supernatural connotations. Nevertheless, legends can still impart philosophical and moral significance. An example of a legend is the '*Tale of Atlantis*'.

Folklore. While legends and myths may be perceived as factual accounts, folk tales are recognized as fictional narratives. They are typically circulated within a restricted geographical region, often confined to small locales such as towns, mountain ranges, or more commonly, entire countries.

Fables. The focal point of a fable invariably lies in its moral lesson. It is a brief narrative typically featuring animals as the primary characters.

Primitive myths. Early myths typically revolved around nature and were often recounted by primitive religious figures, such as shamans or clergy members.

Pagan myths, akin to Greek and Roman narratives, depicted the interactions between gods and mortals.

Based on the themes they address, myths can be categorized into four primary groups:

- ✓ Cosmic Myths: encompass stories about the creation and eventual demise of the world;
 - ✓ Theistic myths: portray the deities;
- ✓ Hero myths: recount the tales of notable figures, like Achilles and Guises;
- ✓ Place and object myths: detail specific locations and items, such as the myths surrounding Camelot.

FOLKLORE = encompasses the collective oral traditions passed down within a specific community, culture, or subgroup. This encompasses narratives, myths, legends, proverbs, poems, jokes, and other oral traditions. Common genres include *romances, fables, fabliaux, and ballads*. Anglo-Saxon folklore draws from both insular and European territories, while American folklore comprises the traditions that have developed in the present-day United States since the arrival of Europeans in the 16th century, incorporating significant elements of Native American tradition.

- ✓ **The Romances** were primarily popular among rural communities, although the aristocracy also enjoyed romantic tales and lyrical poetry. These narratives idealized characters and interpersonal relationships, often praising chivalrous behavior towards women. Many of these stories originated from Old French, which was a Romance dialect, hence they were referred to as "*Romances*." Romances gained popularity in England during the reign of Henry II and his wife Eleanor, who sought to maintain their French cultural heritage. Notable examples include

“*King Horn*” and the Arthurian Legends centered around King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

- ✓ **The Fable.** In urban literature, fables and fabliaux were prevalent. Fables, characterized by animal characters, are concise narratives that consistently impart a moral lesson.
- ✓ **The Fabliau.** Fabliaux are humorous tales featuring clever tricksters and the unfaithful wives of wealthy merchants. They were compiled and recorded much later. In contrast to romances, urban literature did not idealize its characters, instead portraying a pragmatic approach to life.
- ✓ **Folk Songs and Ballads.** Folk poetry thrived in the XVth century due to the widespread illiteracy among the populace. In England and Scotland, folk songs were ubiquitous, composed for various occasions. Among the most esteemed forms of folk poetry were the ballads. The term “*ballad*” originates from the French word “*ballet*,” itself derived from the Italian “*ballare*,” meaning “*to dance*.” According to the most popular version all the traditional ballads can be divided into 3 groups:
 - ✓ Riddling Ballads encapsulate traditional wisdom and magical lore. While primarily serving as ballads, they occasionally hint at ancient native British traditions. These ballads often incorporate riddles or inquiries, a characteristic feature of British folklore. Characters must answer these questions to overcome challenges, defeat monsters, or rescue themselves or others.
 - ✓ Necromantic Ballads are remnants of an ancient practice involving the boundary between life and death. Necromancy, defined as obtaining information or guidance from the deceased, is central to these ballads. The departed possess wisdom that can only be accessed after departing from this world.
 - ✓ Other World Ballads. Otherworldly ballads focus on realms beyond our own, depicting the journey of individuals into these alternate dimensions, either by choice or under duress. These ballads were initially gathered during the XIXth century and the early years of the XXth century, sourced from oral traditions spanning England and Ireland.

A musical ballad served as an effective medium for conveying messages due to its common inclusion of a refrain and rhythmic structure. Refrains typically consisted of the final two lines of a stanza, which, when repeated, enhanced suspense and facilitated memorization of the stories. Additionally, similar repetition techniques were employed to heighten suspense, with slight variations gradually advancing the narrative each time it was reiterated.

A SHORT STORY = is a concise fictional prose narrative shorter than a novel, typically featuring only a few characters. It often revolves around a single effect conveyed in one or a few significant episodes or scenes. The form encourages economy of setting, concise narrative, and the omission of complex plots; character is revealed through action and dramatic encounters, though often not fully developed. Despite its brevity, a short story is often evaluated based on its ability to

offer a complete or satisfying treatment of its characters and subject matter. Various types of short stories include:

Anecdote: a short, amusing account usually illustrating a point in an essay, article, or chapter, often with no specific length limit.

Flash fiction: extremely short piece of literature, typically with a word count ranging from 300 to 1000 words.

Drabble: an exceptionally short piece of fiction, exactly 100 words in length (excluding the title), testing the author's skill in concise expression.

Sketch story: shorter-than-average piece with minimal or no plot, often a character or location description.

Mini-saga: a story told in exactly 50 words, emphasizing brevity and conveying a lot with few words.

Feghoot: a humorous short story or vignette ending in a pun, with sufficient context to recognize the humorous wordplay.

Frame story: a literary technique placing a story within a story to introduce or set the stage for the main narrative or a series of short stories.

Story sequence: a group of short stories that function together to form a longer piece, while remaining complete on their own.

Vignette: a short, impressionistic piece focusing on a single scene, character, idea, setting, or object, often part of a larger work and not bound by conventional structure or story development.

NOVELLA = concise and well-organized narrative, often characterized by realism and satire, played a significant role in shaping the development of the short story and the novel across Europe. Originating in Italy during the Middle Ages, novellas were inspired by local events that ranged from humorous and political to amorous in nature. These individual tales were frequently compiled into collections alongside anecdotes, legends, and romantic stories. Writers such as Giovanni Boccaccio, Franco Sacchetti, and Matteo Bandello further refined the novella, crafting psychologically nuanced and tightly structured short tales. They often employed a frame story technique to interconnect the tales around a common theme.

A NOVEL = is an elaborate prose narrative of considerable length and complexity that imaginatively explores human experience, typically through a connected sequence of events involving a group of characters in a specific setting. The genre of the novel encompasses a wide range of types and styles, including picaresque, epistolary, Gothic, romantic, realist, historical, and more.

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a work of fiction achieves “*novelhood*” when it is long enough to constitute a whole book, as opposed to being merely a part of one. However, there are quantitative categories within this state. A relatively short novel may be termed a novella, or if the content’s brevity matches its insubstantiality, a novelette. Conversely, a very long novel may exceed the confines of a single volume and become a roman-fleuve, or river novel. Length is a significant dimension of the novel genre.

Novel types:

- - The **picaresque novel**, portrays the adventures of a roguish wanderer (from the Spanish term “picaro”) as he navigates conflicts with societal norms (such as in Henry Fielding’s “*Tom Jones*” (1749)).
- The **Bildungsroman** (**novel of education**), often known by its German term, depicts the growth and maturation of a protagonist from childhood to adulthood. An example of this genre is George Eliot’s (1819–80) “*Mill on the Floss*” (1860).
- The **epistolary novel** employs letters as a form of first-person narration, as seen in Samuel Richardson’s “*Pamela*” (1740–41) and “*Clarissa*” (1748–49).
- **Historical novel**, exemplified by Sir Walter Scott’s (1771-1832) works such as “*Waverley*” (1814), “*Ivanhoe*” (1819) unfolds within an authentic historical backdrop.
- The **satirical novel**, such as Jonathan Swift’s (1667–1745) “*Gulliver’s Travels*” (1726) or Mark Twain’s (1835–1910) “*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*” (1884), **highlights weaknesses of society** through the exaggeration of social conventions.
- **Utopian novels** or science fiction narratives construct alternate realities to offer critiques of actual socio-political circumstances. “*Nineteen Eighty-four*” (1949) by George Orwell (1903–50)
- **Gothic novel** is characterized by its emphasis on mystery, horror, and the supernatural, often set in eerie, atmospheric locations such as castles or old mansions. Includes such works as Bram Stoker’s (1847–1912) “*Dracula*” (1897).
- **Detective novel** revolves around the investigation of a crime, typically by a central detective figure or amateur sleuth, leading to the resolution of the mystery (Agatha Christie’s (1890–1976) “*Murder on the Orient Express*” (1934)).

NOVELS AND SHORTER GENRES CAN CLASSIFY AS REALISTIC OR SPECULATIVE FICTION

REALISTIC FICTION = entails narratives set in contemporary times, featuring events plausible within reality. It spans various forms such as prose, poetry, drama, and non-fiction. Realistic fiction portrays stories that feasibly unfold in today's society, featuring credible characters and occurrences within genuine settings, although the specific storyline itself is fictional and hasn't occurred in reality.

Characteristics of realistic fiction include:

- Conflicts that readers might encounter in their everyday lives;
- A setting that takes place in the present-day and is an actual location or a fictional place that could be real;
- Characters who resemble individuals one might meet in real life;
- Conflicts that are solved realistically.

MYSTERY = involves a perplexing crime or other suspenseful event. *Subgenres include:*
Classical / traditional. In these mysteries, a crime is typically committed, often a murder, within a confined social environment such as a small village, university, or club. The investigation is carried out by either a professional or an amateur detective who uncovers clues and interrogates suspects. By the conclusion of the story, the murder is resolved and the perpetrator apprehended.

Look for these authors: Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan-Doyle, P.D. James, and Ruth Rendell.

Crime. These novels concentrate on the scheming or execution of criminal activities, providing elaborate depictions of the underworld and the individuals who inhabit it from their own viewpoints.

Look for these authors: Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan-Doyle, Tana French, and Michael Connelly.

Police Procedurals/Hardboiled. These are akin to crime mysteries, but instead of centering on the perpetrator, they highlight the police investigation process. Modern procedurals often incorporate cutting-edge scientific forensic techniques.

Look for these authors: James Patterson, Michael Connelly, J.D. Robb, Patricia Cornwall, and James Lee Burke.

Noir. Mysteries of this kind are characterized by their atmospheric, raw, and grim nature. Classic Noir protagonists are intricate figures with imperfections, prone to taking risks and often engaging in self-destructive behavior.

Look for these authors: Dashiell Hammet, Walter Mosely, Raymond Chandler, Steig Larsson, Elmore Leonard and Mickey Spillane.

Gumshoe/Private Detective. Novels within this genre center on the professional investigator, with no amateurs involved. The protagonist is typically portrayed as tough, seasoned, and frequently a former law enforcement officer or military personnel.

Look for these authors: Walter Mosley, Sara Paretsky, Alan C. Bradley, and Raymond Chandler.

Cozy Mysteries. Similar to traditional mysteries, these stories unfold within a confined environment such as an inn or summer house. They often revolve around a specific group of individuals, such as crafters, bakers, or knitters, or adhere to a particular theme. The mystery is resolved, and the culprit is apprehended by the conclusion of the tale. Cozy mysteries are characterized by their absence of graphic violence, explicit sexual content, or profanity. The tone may vary from serious to lighthearted, playful, or humorous.

Look for these authors: M.C. Beaton, Donna Andrews, Susan Albert Wittig, Ellery Adams, and Janet Macomber.

Capers. These narratives feature one or more crimes that occur openly, visible to the reader. Frequently, the perpetrators are portrayed as a colorful group of misfits, while the police or authorities are depicted as inept or clumsy. The emphasis lies on the planning and execution of the crimes, such as theft, kidnapping, or swindling, rather than on the resolution of the crime.

Look for these authors: Donald E. Westlake, Janet Evanovich, Lawrence Sanders, Elmore Leonard, and Richard Stark.

HISTORICAL FICTION = transports readers to a specific time and location in the past, typically set at least 50 years prior to the present. While the narrative unfolds in a historical setting, the plot itself is fictional and did not occur in real history.

Common characteristics of historical fiction include:

- A blend of historical events and fictional narratives;
- A backdrop situated in a historical period and location from the past;
- Primarily composed of fictional characters, with occasional inclusion of individuals based on historical figures from the era.

The **ROMANCE** genre is not restricted to any specific time period, **may or may not** incorporate folklore, and can feature either a realistic storyline or include magical elements. However, the central feature of a romance novel is the presence of a love story that unfolds throughout the narrative.

Other characteristics include:

- A central character or hero who becomes the object of affection for another main character;
- Numerous challenges arise throughout the narrative, creating obstacles that hinder the characters' ability to be together;
- A conclusion that provides emotional fulfillment or satisfaction.

SPECULATIVE FICTION is a genre that encompasses various subgenres deviating from the strict portrayal of everyday reality, offering imaginative realms such as fantastical, supernatural, futuristic, or other unconventional settings. This inclusive genre comprises, but is not limited to, science fiction, fantasy, horror, slipstream, magical realism, superhero tales, alternate history, utopian and dystopian narratives, fractured fairy tales, steampunk, cyberpunk, weird fiction, fairy tales, and post-apocalyptic scenarios.

SCIENCE FICTION is a narrative genre that employs scientific concepts to develop extraordinary plots. Subgenres include africanfuturism, afrofuturism, biopunk, cyberpunk, dieselpunk, dystopian fiction, science fiction erotica, feminist science fiction, science fiction horror, indigenous Australian science fiction, libertarian science fiction, mecha (which refers to large humanoid robotic or human-piloted constructs or vehicles, originally from science fiction but increasingly used in mainstream contexts), military science fiction, pastoral science fiction, planetary romances, post-apocalyptic fiction, postcyberpunk, retrofuturism, social science fiction, space opera, steampunk, and science fiction Westerns.

FANTASY is a genre of literature characterized by characters and events that are beyond the realm of reality and lack scientific grounding. It showcases magical and supernatural elements absent from the real world. While some authors blend a real-world backdrop with fantastical elements, others craft entirely fictional worlds with unique physical laws, logic, and populations of mythical races and creatures.

Fantasy, inherently speculative, is not bound by reality or scientific principles.

High or epic fantasy. This subgenre unfolds within a magical realm governed by its own set of rules and physical principles. Its narratives often feature expansive plots and themes revolving around a central, intricately developed protagonist or a group

of heroes, akin to Frodo Baggins and his companions in J.R.R. Tolkien's "*The Lord of the Rings*" (1954).

Low fantasy. Incorporating magical elements within a realistic setting, low fantasy surprises characters with unexpected occurrences, such as the plastic figurines springing to life as depicted in Lynne Reid Banks's novel "*The Indian in the Cupboard*" (1980).

Sword and sorcery. A subdivision of high fantasy, this genre highlights heroes wielding swords, exemplified by the titular barbarian in Robert E. Howard's "*Conan*" pulp fiction tales, alongside elements of magic or witchcraft.

Dark fantasy. Melding aspects of both fantasy and horror, this genre seeks to unsettle and terrify readers, akin to the colossal, otherworldly creatures found in H.P. Lovecraft's literary universe.

THRILLER typically features a rapid-paced narrative filled with tension and suspense throughout. It encompasses various sub-genres including psychological, political, and espionage thrillers, among others.

Some characteristics of the thriller genre include:

- Suspense is woven throughout the entirety of the novel;
- Unexpected plot developments keep readers engaged and guessing as they progress through the story;
- Each chapter concludes with a cliffhanger, leaving the storyline at a pivotal moment, building suspense and anticipation for the next chapter;
- The concluding climax resolves the questions that have been gradually building up in the minds of the readers throughout the story.

A HORROR. In horror literature, the intent is to evoke sensations of terror and thrill within the reader.

Common characteristics include:

- Delving into the more sinister facets of human nature;
- Protagonists with whom readers can empathize, frequently characterized by troubled pasts and emotional scars;
- Supernatural occurrences like spirits or malevolent entities;
- An objective aimed at instilling fear in their audience.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION is crafted and promoted for readers aged 12 to 18. Its storyline may vary from realistic to fantastical, yet typically, the protagonist encounters trials and transformations that resonate with adolescent experiences.

Common elements in the young adult fiction genre include:

- A teenage protagonist;
- A romantic dilemma where the main character is torn between two possible romantic partners;
- The narrative's conflicts are tailored to suit the audience's age group, such as grappling with issues of belonging, excelling in athletics, or navigating romantic relationships.

etc.

APPENDIX 4: TYPES OF NARRATIVE, MODE OF REPRESENTATION, AND POINT OF VIEW

TYPES OF NARRATIVE
Descriptive narrative
Viewpoint narrative
Historical narrative
Linear narrative
Non-linear narrative

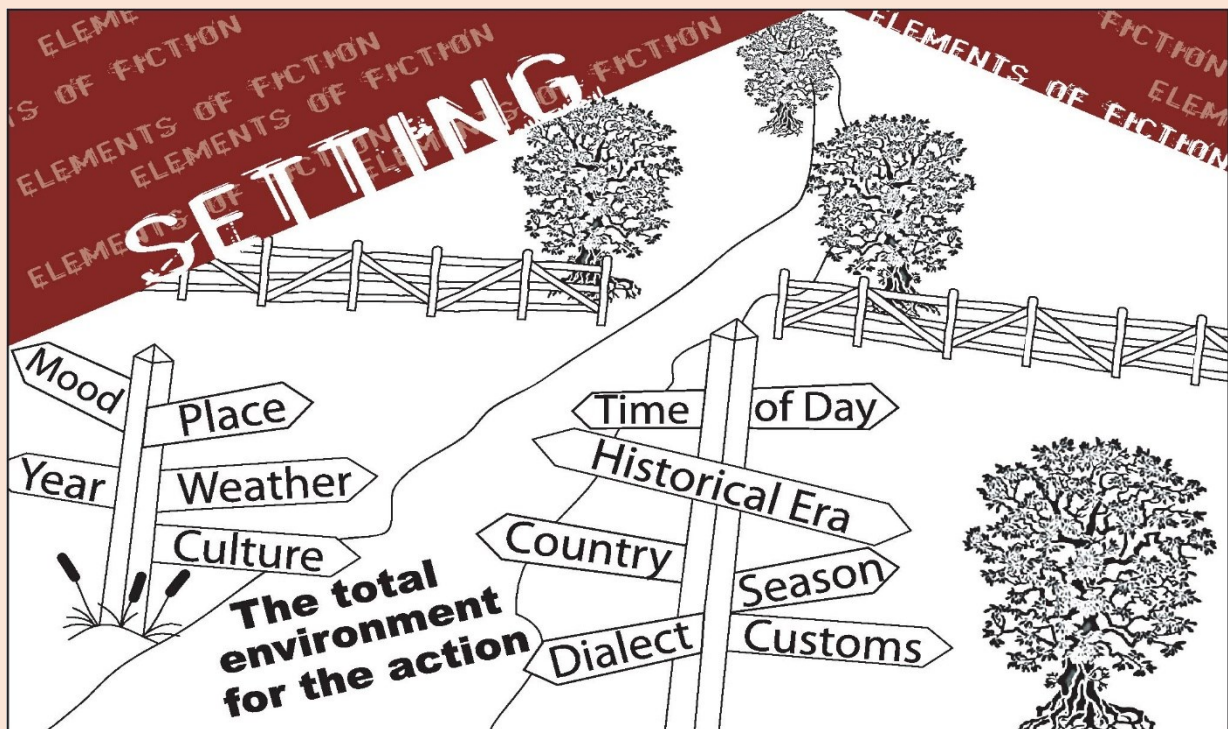
MODE OF REPRESENTATION
The explanatory characterization, or telling , portrays a character through the perspective of a narrator who filters and evaluates the character selectively.
Dramatic characterization, or showing , eliminates the presence of a visible narrator, thereby preventing any direct influence on the reader by a narrative intermediary. This approach gives readers the sense that they can observe the characters directly, akin to watching a theatrical performance. Characters are depicted solely through their actions and dialogue, without any intrusive commentary.

POINT OF VIEW
first-person – the narrator engages in the events as a character, narrating from their perspective, though their understanding is occasionally restricted: <i>When I saw his face I realized that something was wrong.</i>
second-person – the narrator speaks directly to the reader, involving them as if they were a participant in the narrative: <i>You walk into your bedroom. You see clutter everywhere and...</i>
third-person – the narrator remains anonymous and detached from the events, recounting the story from the perspective of another individual or individuals, without being a character themselves: <i>She wouldn't go against him, of course. But once she understood there was no turning back, our mother went to laying out in the spare bedroom all the worldly things she thought we'd need in the Congo just to scrape by...</i>
omniscient narration involves a narrator who possesses knowledge of the thoughts, emotions, and actions of all characters throughout the story. Such a narrator has access to multiple perspectives and might focus on one character for several chapters before shifting to another character for a similar span.
limited – the narrator possesses only a portion of the complete truth and may acquire information in tandem with the reader, potentially making errors, drawing incorrect conclusions, or intentionally misleading the reader.

APPENDIX 5: ELEMENTS OF FICTION

ELEMENTS OF FICTION
AUTHOR
SETTING
PLOT
THEMES
CHARACTERS
STYLE
LANGUAGE

SETTING = refers to the temporal and spatial context within which the events of a literary piece unfold. It encompasses not just the physical environment but also the cultural milieu, encompassing the ideas, customs, values, and beliefs of the individuals inhabiting it.



PLOT = the sequence of events in a narrative work

FREYTAG'S PYRAMID

Basic Plot Diagram



THEME. MOTIF

Theme is the central concept of a narrative, whether it be a story, a poem, a novel, or a play, often encapsulated as a broad observation about life. In some works, the theme is overtly stated, expressed directly and clearly. Conversely, other works contain an implicit theme, which gradually emerges through various elements such as plot, characters, setting, point of view, and symbolism. It's possible for a literary work to encompass multiple themes.

Motif refers to a meaningful phrase, description, or image that recurs throughout a piece of literature, resonating with its thematic elements.

THEME VERSUS MOTIF

Theme is the fundamental concept or the underlying message that is conveyed through a piece of writing.

Theme is not explicitly given in a text.

Theme is abstract.

Motif is a recurring element, idea or concept that has a symbolic value in a text.

Motif is often explicitly stated through the use of repetition.

Motif is concrete.

CHARACTERS

Flat character is a character who typically embodies only one characteristic or trait, often conforming to stereotypes.

Round character = is one who exhibits multiple and occasionally conflicting personality traits.

Static character is one whose personality remains consistent and unchanged throughout the narrative.

Dynamic character is one whose personality undergoes a significant change or transformation throughout the course of a story.

Protagonist = the main character in the story.

Antagonist = the person, thing, or force that works against the protagonist.

AUTHOR'S STYLE = the manner in which an author selects and organizes words within sentences or dialogue lines. *Elements of style include the following:*

Imagery = language that appeals to sight, sound, smell, taste, touch.

Dialect = a way of speaking that is characteristic of a particular region, gender, age group – writers use dialect to bring characters to life.

Tone = writer's attitude toward the subject, a character, or the reader.

Mood = the atmosphere of feeling of a text.

IMAGERY = the visual representations crafted by writers to elicit emotional reactions from readers. Writers create vivid mental images by incorporating sensory details that appeal to one or more of the five senses.

Visual = what you see.

Auditory = what you hear.

Kinesthetic = what you feel.

Olfactory = what you smell.

Gustatory = what you taste.

LANGUAGE

Diction refers to an author's selection of words or specific language to convey particular meanings.

Connotation pertains to the emotional resonance, cultural connotations, and associated ideas linked with specific words.

SYMBOLISM IN LITERATURE:

Writers create **new, personal** symbols in their work.

In literature, a symbol represents an **object, setting, an event, or an individual** that serves its conventional narrative purpose while also **conveying a deeper, often abstract, meaning**.

APPENDIX 6: COMPREHENSIVE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF A POETIC WORK

A POETIC TEXT
The history of work creation. Cultural, historical, philosophical frame. Controversies linked to the work and critical reflection
The symbolism of the title and its significance. Is there a clear link between the subject and the title?
Context (who, what, where, when). The problem of poetic plot
The tone of the poem (sinister, depressed, somber, or light-hearted), and mood = feelings it conveys (sadness, rage, joy, regret, love, or hate)
The underlying theme (central idea and the subject matter), the messages conveyed
The lexical level of verse. Language and the choice of imagery.
Voice = who is speaking in the poem (male / female persona, poet's own voice)? The means of representation of the image of the lyrical character
Stylistic devices and their function.
The concept of parallelism. Allusions (intertextual dimension)
The level of morphological and grammatical elements
Sound and rhythm (the syllabic patterns and the metrical pattern)
Graphic image of poetry. Structure / composition (stanzas, line breaks, rhyme patterns, punctuation, and pauses)
Effects (how the writer's ideas, represented in the poem effect the reader). Personal reflection

APPENDIX 7: TYPES OF POETIC TEXTS, ELEMENTS OF POETRY

POETRY = the genre of poetry is commonly categorized into two main types: *narrative* poetry and *lyric* poetry.

Narrative poetry encompasses various genres like the *epic*, *romance*, and *ballad*, characterized by their structured plots that vividly narrate stories.

Lyric poetry, typically shorter in form, focuses primarily on conveying a single event, impression, or idea.



ENGLISH VERSE FORM

The *metrical foot* is the fundamental building block of a verse. It divides a line based on the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables:

Thě—woods|—äre—love|—lŷ,—dark|—änd—deep.

The four most important feet are:

Iambus, or iambic foot: an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable (˘ˊ)

Thě cur|fěw tolls|thě knell|ōf par|tĩng day.

Anapest, or anapestic foot: two unstressed syllables followed by one stressed syllable (˘˘ˊ)

Änd thě sheen|ōf theĩr spears|wäs lĩke stars|ōn thě sea.

Trochee, or trochaic foot: a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable (ˊ˘)

There thěy|are, mŷ|fiftŷ|men änd|woměn.

Dactyl, or dactylic foot: consists of one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables (‘‘)’’)

Just fōr ǎ|handfŭl ǒf|silvĕr hĕ|left ũs.

According to the number of feet, it is possible to distinguish **monometer** (1), **dimeter** (2), **trimeter** (3), **tetrameter** (4), **pentameter** (5), and **hexameter** (6).

TYPES OF RHYME

End Rhymes = Rhyming of the final words of lines in a poem. The following, for example, is from Seamus Heaney’s “Digging”:

*Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground*

Internal Rhymes = Rhyming of two words within the same line of poetry. The following, for example, is from Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven”:

*Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,*

Slant Rhymes (sometimes called imperfect, partial, near, oblique, off etc.) Rhyme in which two words share just a vowel sound (assonance – e.g. “heart” and “star”) or in which they share just a consonant sound (consonance – e.g. “milk” and “walk”). Slant rhyme is a technique perhaps more in tune with the with the uncertainties of the modern age than strong rhyme. The following example is also from Seamus Heaney’s

“Digging”:

*Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun*

Rich Rhymes = Rhyme using two different words that happen to sound the same (i.e. homonyms) – for example “raise” and “raze”. The following example – a triple rich rhyme – is from Thomas Hood’s “A First Attempt in Rhyme”:

*Partake the fire divine that burns,
In Milton, Pope, and Scottish Burns,
Who sang his native braes and burns.*

Eye Rhymes = Rhyme on words that look the same but which are actually pronounced differently – for example “bough” and “rough”. The opening four lines of Shakespeare’s

Sonnet 18, for example, go:

*Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date*

This is called an *eye rhyme* because the words “rhyme” only because of their similar spelling, as the words are pronounced differently. It is interesting to point out that some of these *eye rhymes* (particularly in older English poems) are a result of historical pronunciation shifts and they used to rhyme phonetically in the past.

Identical Rhymes = Simply using the same word twice. An example is in (some versions of) Emily Dickinson’s “Because I Could not Stop for Death”:

*We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –*

*The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –*

An **enclosed rhyme** scheme consists of four lines of poetry, with the first and fourth lines rhyming with each other and the second and third lines rhyming too.

Monorhyme is the term used for a poem that uses a single rhyme throughout. In other words, the rhyme scheme for a monorhyming poem would just be AAAA, etc.

A **perfect rhyme** (also known as a “full”, “exact”, or “true” rhyme) is a pair of words that sound identical from the last stressed syllable to the end of the word. In the words “rotten” and “forgotten”, the stressed syllable in “rotten” is the first syllable, “rot”. The stressed syllable in “forgotten” is the second syllable, “got”. These two words have the same sounds in their stressed syllables and in all following syllables: a short “o” vowel sound, a hard “t” sound, a short “e” sound, and an ending “n”. Perfect rhymes are not required to have the same spelling, only the same sound. “Grown” and “loan” are a perfect rhyme, even though they have different spellings.

Imperfect rhyme = an imperfect rhyme, unlike a perfect rhyme, only certain syllables or parts of the word rhyme.

For example, ‘bridge’ and ‘badge’.

The first part of the words are different, but they share the same ending of ‘dge’.

Exact rhyme (day/May/fiancé) = We have an exact rhyme when the vowels of the final syllable in different words sound the same and the beginning of that final syllable differs. If you look at the transcription of the words ‘day’ and ‘May’ or even ‘fiancé’), you will notice they exemplify this type (of rhyme: /’dei/ /meɪ/ /fi’ansɛr/)

Alternate Rhyme = In an alternate rhyme, the first and third lines rhyme at the conclusion of each verse, while the second and fourth lines rhyme at the end of each stanza, following the pattern **ABAB**. Poems with four-line stanzas employ this rhyme system. The rhyming scheme is also known as ABAB and rhymes like “ABAB CDCD EFEF GHGH”. E.g., see a few lines from “*Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?*” by William Shakespeare for more clarity.

“Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? (A)

thou art more lovely and more temperate: (B)

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, (A)

And summer’s lease hath all too short a date; (B)

Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines, (C)

And often is his gold complexion dimm’d; (D)

And every fair from fair sometimes declines, (C)

By chance or nature’s changing course untrimm’d (D)”

Masculine rhyme = A masculine rhyme is a rhyme of the stressed syllables of the words. For example, ‘collect’ and ‘direct’.

Masculine rhymes are a very common type of rhyme.

Feminine rhyme = A feminine rhyme is a rhyme of the unstressed syllables of a word. For example, ‘aspire’ and ‘desire’.

Blank verse is a literary term that refers to poetry written in unrhymed but metered lines, almost always iambic pentameter.

APPENDIX 8: BASIC EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC DEVICES

Alliteration is a phonetic technique used to create a musical quality in speech or writing. It involves the repetition of similar sounds, especially consonant sounds, in close proximity, often at the beginning of successive words.

An **allusion** is an indirect reference, by word or phrase, to a historical, literary, mythological, biblical fact or to a fact of everyday life made in the course of speaking or writing. The use of allusion presupposes knowledge of the fact, thing or person alluded to on the part of the reader or listener. Typically, no explicit indication of the source is provided. This sets allusion apart from quotation in two significant ways: firstly, a quotation must replicate the exact wording of the original, even if the meaning is altered by the new context; secondly, an allusion merely mentions a word or phrase, which acts as a focal point for the expression. Allusions possess distinct semantic qualities, wherein the primary meaning of the word or phrase (the allusion) acts as a vessel for conveying new meaning. In essence, the known meaning of the word or phrase serves as a receptacle for the infusion of fresh significance.

Antonomasia is a literary term in which a descriptive phrase replaces a person's name. Antonomasia can range from lighthearted nicknames to epic names. The phrase antonomasia is derived from the Greek phrase *antonomazein* meaning "to name differently." Oftentimes, antonomasia is used to call attention to a certain characteristic. Normal sentence: "He's grumpy, boring, doesn't want to listen to anyone, and definitely doesn't want to help anyone." Sentence with Antonomasia: "Mr. Grumps doesn't want to listen to anyone, and definitely doesn't want to help anyone." Replacing the teacher's actual name with his defining characteristic, grumpiness, serves to highlight just how much the mood is associated with the man.

A **cliché** is generally defined as an expression that has become hackneyed and trite. Examples of clichés are 'rosy dreams of youth', 'the patter of little feet', 'deceptively simple'.

An **epigram** is a literary device similar to a proverb, but with the distinction that epigrams are crafted by identifiable individuals, whereas proverbs emerge from the collective wisdom of the people. This means that the originator of an epigram is known, and when we employ one, we typically acknowledge its authorship.

The **epithet** is a literary device that relies on both emotional and logical implications within an attributive word, a phrase, or sentence. It serves to characterize an object, directing the reader's attention to, and often influencing their perception of, certain qualities or features of the object. This device aims to offer an individualized interpretation and assessment of these qualities or features. Epithets are notably subjective and evaluative in nature. In contrast, the logical attribute is entirely objective and descriptive, indicating an inherent or prominent feature of the subject without evaluation. Thus, in 'green meadows', 'white snow', 'round table', 'blue skies', 'pale complexion', 'lofty mountains' and the like, the adjectives are more logical attributes than epithets.

Euphemism is a term or phrase employed to substitute an unpleasant word or expression with one that is conventionally considered more acceptable. For instance, various euphemisms have arisen in place of the word "to die": *to pass away*, *to expire*, *to be no more*, *to depart*, *to join the majority*, *to be gone*, and the more facetious ones: *to kick the bucket*, *to give up the ghost*, *to go west*. So euphemisms are synonyms which aim at producing a deliberately mild effect.

Hyperbole can be described as a purposeful exaggeration or overstatement of a characteristic intrinsic to the object or phenomenon. Unlike periphrasis, hyperbole emphasizes a feature to an extreme degree, often reaching illogical or absurd levels. For example: "He was so tall that I was not sure he had a face." (O. Henry).

Interjections are linguistic expressions used to convey strong emotions, functioning as conventional symbols of human feelings within language. The significance of interjections in conveying emotional tones has been previously discussed. Now, it is important to explore how these

logical and emotional meanings interact and to determine their broader functions and areas of usage: “*O, carve not with thy horns ...*” (W. Shakespeare, *Sonnet 19*).

Irony is a literary technique that relies on the simultaneous recognition of two logical meanings - one from the dictionary definition and the other from the context in which it is used. However, these two meanings are in direct contradiction to each other. For example: “*It must be delightful to find oneself in a foreign country without a penny in one’s pocket.*”

Metonymic puns leverage the metonymic connection between words, where a term represents something closely associated with it. These puns involve substituting one term for another that shares a conceptual or ideational link. The cleverness or humor in the pun typically arises from the surprising yet fitting association established between the two concepts. For instance, consider a hypothetical news headline: “*The White House loses its balance.*” In this case, “*The White House*” is used metonymically to represent the U.S. government, and “*balance*” could be interpreted both as physical stability (as if the building itself is tipping over) or fiscal balance (as in the budget), thereby creating a pun.

Syllepsis, or *heteronymy*, is a form of punning where a single word simultaneously affects the rest of the sentence, while it changes the meaning of the idiom it is used in. This form of punning uses the word in its literal and metaphorical senses at once, creating a surprising and often humorous effect. An example of a sylleptic pun is in the sentence, “*She lowered her standards by raising her glass, her courage, her eyes and his hopes.*” In this case, “*raising*” applies in different ways to each of the items listed, creating a series of linked puns. This type of punning can often be seen in literature, particularly in works that play extensively with language. (She razed his self-esteem in how she raised the children.)

Antanaclasis is a form of pun in which a single word or phrase is repeated, yet its meaning changes with each repetition. The humor or cleverness stems from the unexpected alteration in meaning of a familiar word or phrase. This type of wordplay frequently utilizes homophones, homonyms, or the contextual adaptability of a word or phrase. A well-known instance is Benjamin Franklin’s statement, “*We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.*” In this quote, the word “*hang*” is first used to mean “*stay*” or “*work together,*” but then, it is repeated with the meaning “*be executed.*”

The term ‘**metaphor**’ as its etymology suggests, involves transferring qualities from one object to another. Since ancient Greek and Roman rhetoric, it has referred to the transfer of meaning from one word to another. In literary usage, a metaphor becomes a stylistic device when it evokes two different phenomena, such as things, events, ideas, or actions, simultaneously. This is achieved by attributing some or all of the inherent properties of one object to another object that naturally lacks these properties. Such a transfer typically occurs when the creator of the metaphor perceives common features between the two corresponding objects: “*Dear Nature is the kindest Mother still*” (Byron).

Metonymy relies on a distinct relationship between the dictionary and contextual meanings, one not of direct identification but of association connecting the two concepts represented by these meanings. For example, “*crown*” may refer to a king or queen, while “*cup*” or “*glass*” may signify the drink it holds.

Onomatopoeia involves the combination of speech sounds that mimic noises produced in nature (like wind, sea, thunder), by objects (such as machines or tools), by humans (like sighing, laughter, footsteps), and by animals. These combinations of sounds naturally evoke the sources of the sounds they imitate. Onomatopoeia comes in two forms: direct and indirect. Onomatopoeic words can be used in a transferred meaning, as for instance, *ding-dong*, which represents the sound of bells rung continuously, may mean 1) noisy, 2) strenuously contested. Examples are: *a ding-dong struggle*, *a ding-dong go at something*.

Oxymoron refers to the juxtaposition of two words, often an adjective and a noun, or an adverb with an adjective, wherein the meanings of the two contradict each other, creating a sense of opposition, for example: ‘*low skyscraper*’, ‘*sweet sorrow*’, ‘*nice rascal*’, ‘*pleasantly ugly face*’.

Paronomasia, also known as punning, involves manipulating with words in order to achieve humorous or rhetorical effects. Paronomastic puns frequently involve altering familiar idioms, proverbs, or phrases to introduce a humorous twist. These puns often follow the classic joke structure, with a setup leading to a punchline, wherein the punchline modifies the expected phrase in a manner that exploits multiple meanings of a word. For instance, in the sentence, “*I used to be a baker, but I couldn't make enough dough,*” the word “*dough*” is used paronomastically to refer both to the substance used to make bread and to slang for money.

Periphrasis, as defined by Webster’s dictionary, refers to the utilization of lengthier phrasing instead of a potentially simpler and more straightforward form of expression. It is also known as circumlocution, owing to its indirect or roundabout manner of referring to a well-known object or phenomenon. From a linguistic perspective, periphrasis involves renaming an object and can be classified within a broader category of word designations that substitute direct names for their referents. Consequently, the same object may be identified in various ways and consequently be assigned different names. Thus, in different situations a certain person can be denoted, for instance, as either ‘*his benefactor*’, or ‘*this bore*’, or ‘*the narrator*’, or ‘*the wretched witness*’, etc.

A **pun**, sometimes referred to as **paronomasia**, is a type of wordplay that capitalizes on the multiple meanings of a word or similar-sounding words to achieve a humorous or rhetorical effect. These linguistic ambiguities stem from the deliberate employment of homophones, homographs, metonymy, or figurative language. Types of pun include:

A *homophonic pun* utilizes word pairs that sound similar (homophones) but possess different meanings. For instance, in George Carlin’s phrase “*atheism is a non-prophet institution,*” the word “*prophet*” is substituted for its homophone “*profit*,” altering the common phrase “*non-profit institution*”.

A *homographic pun* exploits words that are spelled the same (homographs) but have different meanings and pronunciations. An example that combines both homophonic and homographic punning is Douglas Adams’s line “*You can tune a guitar, but you can’t tuna fish. Unless of course, you play bass.*” This phrase utilizes the homophonic qualities of “*tune*” and “*tuna*,” as well as the homographic pun on “*bass*,” where ambiguity arises from the identical spellings of /beɪs/ (a musical instrument) and /bæs/ (a type of fish). Homographic puns are not bound by grammatical rules and often lose coherence when interpreted outside the context of the pun.

Homonymic puns stem from the use of words that are both homographs and homophones. For instance, the statement “*Being in politics is just like playing golf: you are trapped in one bad lie after another*” plays on the dual meanings of the word “*lie*” as “a deliberate untruth” and “*the position in which something rests.*” Another example, adapted from a joke often told by Isaac Asimov, is “*Did you hear about the little moron who strained himself while running into the screen door?*” Here, “*strained*” is a pun, meaning both “to give much effort” and “to filter”.

A *compound pun* is a statement comprising two or more puns. Unlike individual puns where wordplay occurs within separate words or phrases, compound puns require the entirety of the statement to generate the intended effect. For instance, a complex statement by Richard Whately incorporates four puns: “*Why can a man never starve in the Great Desert? Because he can eat the sand which is there. But what brought the sandwiches there? Why, Noah sent Ham, and his descendants mustered and bred.*” This pun uses *sand which is there/sandwiches there*, *Ham/ham*, *mustered/mustard*, and *bred/bread*. Similarly, the phrase “*piano is not my forte*” links two meanings of the words *forte* and *piano*, one for the dynamic markings in music and the second for the literal meaning of the sentence, as well as alluding to “*pianoforte*”, the older name of the instrument. Compound puns may also combine two phrases that share a word. For example, “*Where do mathematicians go on weekends? To a Möbius strip club!*” puns on the terms *Möbius strip* and *strip club*.

A *recursive pun* is a type of pun where the second aspect of the wordplay depends on comprehending an element presented in the first aspect. For example, “*Infinity is not in finity*”, which means infinity is not in finite range.

Visual puns are occasionally incorporated into logos, emblems, insignia, and other graphic symbols, where one or more aspects of the pun are represented by a picture. In European heraldry, this practice is known as “canting arms.” Visual puns, along with other word games, are also prevalent in Dutch gable stones and certain cartoons like *Lost Consonants* and *The Far Side*. Another form of visual pun exists in languages utilizing non-phonetic writing systems. For instance, in Chinese, a pun may arise from a similarity in shape between written characters, despite a lack of phonetic similarity in the words being punned upon. Mark Elvin describes this as a “*uniquely Chinese form of visual punning, involving likening written characters to objects*”.

Rhyme involves the repetition of identical or similar terminal sound patterns in words. Rhyming words are typically positioned at consistent intervals from each other, often at the end of corresponding lines in verse. The degree of identity or similarity in sound combinations can vary. There are two main types of rhyme: full rhyme and incomplete rhyme. Full rhyme requires the identity of both the vowel sound and the following consonant sounds in a stressed syllable, as in *might, right; needless, heedless*. Incomplete rhymes offer a broader range of variations, typically categorized into two primary groups: vowel rhymes and consonant rhymes. In vowel rhymes, the vowels of the syllables in corresponding words match, while the consonants may differ, as in *flesh- fresh- press*. In contrast, consonant rhymes demonstrate agreement in consonants while displaying differences in vowels, as in *worth-forth; tale-tool-Treble-trouble; flung-long*.

According to the way the rhymes are arranged within the stanza, certain models have crystallized, for instance:

1. couplets – when the last words of two successive lines are rhymed. This is commonly marked *aa*.
2. triple rhymes – *aaa*
3. cross rhymes – *abab*
4. framing or ring rhymes – *abba*

Rhythm exists in all spheres of human activity and assumes multifarious forms. It is a mighty weapon in stirring up emotions whatever its nature or origin, whether it is musical, mechanical, or symmetrical, as in architecture. Rhythm in language necessarily demands oppositions that alternate: long, short; stressed, unstressed; high, low; and other contrasting segments of speech. Harmony is not only a matter of similarity, but also of dissimilarity, and in good poetry, irregularities of lines are among the most important features of the poem both in their formal and their expressive functions.

Simile is a literary device that heightens a particular aspect of the subject by drawing a comparison. It's important to distinguish between ordinary comparison and simile, as they represent distinct processes. Comparison involves assessing two objects from the same category to determine their degree of similarity or difference. On the other hand, simile involves characterizing one object by likening it to another object from an entirely different category. While comparison considers all properties of the two objects, emphasizing the one being compared, simile focuses solely on one shared property, excluding all others. “*Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare*” (Byron). ‘Maidens’ and ‘moths’ belong to heterogeneous classes of objects and Byron has found the concept moth to indicate one of the secondary features of the concept maiden, i.e. being easily lured. Of the two concepts brought together in the simile – one characterizing (maidens), and the other characterizing (moths) – the feature intensified will be more inherent in the latter than in the former. Moreover, the object characterized is seen in quite a new and unexpected light, because the writer, as it were, imposes this feature on it.

A **zeugma** is a literary device where one word is used to modify two other words, each in a different manner. An example of a zeugma is, “*She broke his car and his heart.*” Zeugma is the use of a word in the same grammatical but different semantic relations.

(Source: Galperin I. *Stylistics [Electronic resource]*. – Electronic text data. – Regime of access: <https://studfile.net/preview/5116113/>, free (date of application: 03.02.2024). – Header from the screen).

APPENDIX 9: COMPREHENSIVE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF A PLAY

A DRAMATIC WORK
The history of work creation. Cultural, historical, philosophical frame. Controversies linked to the work and critical reflection
Identify the type of play
Examine the title: <i>Is it indicative of a conflict or a human condition? Is it symbolic of something else? Is it sarcastic, satiric, humorous, or serious? Is it descriptive? Why do you think the author chose it?</i>
Read the play. Determine the theme. <i>What is the topic? The setting? The voice (the speaker)? Is there a historical or cultural link? What is the author trying to say? What is the play about? What is the significance of the play? How is the theme revealed through the characters? The plot? The dialogue? The acts or scenes?</i>
What happens? <i>Are conflicts introduced? Resolved? Is the play tragic? Humorous? Insightful? Is the conflict external (man vs. man) or internal (man in conflict with self)?</i>
Who are the characters? Analyze characters' development <i>Who is the protagonist? Antagonist? How do the characters relate to one another? What is their function within the plot? What are the "points of view" or perspectives of the characters? A perspective might be social, intellectual, political, or even physical.</i>
What is the setting? <i>What is the time and place? How do they relate to the theme?</i>
Are there any key statements? <i>Are there any critical lines expressed by the characters that indicate the theme or provide clues to personalities?</i>
How does language contribute to the meaning? Analyze the diction of the main characters (Diction is the choice of words in expressing ideas) <i>Dialogue drives any play. How does the author use speech to develop the characters? Advance the plot? What kind of words are used? Are there words with double meanings? Are characters revealed by their dialects or jargon?</i>
Find and analyze the examples of imagery. <i>Imagery = figures of speech employed in such a way that something comes to have a greater meaning that is implied in its literal sense. If throughout a play or poem we find a linking between light and goodness while at the same time we find an association of evil with darkness, we can then speak of the imagery of light and darkness</i>
Intertextuality: Does the play refer to other literary works? <i>For example, is there a Biblical reference?</i>
Is there a historical, ideological, or cultural aspect?

<i>Does the play relate to a world event, period of time, or particular aspect of culture (race, status, gender, class)? Does the play reflect any aspect of human condition or experience (love, hate, orderliness of the universe, etc.)?</i>
What qualities or emotions does the play evoke? <i>How does it make you feel? Happy? Sad?</i>
Analyze for dramatic techniques: <i>specific strategies or methods used by playwrights and directors to tell stories on stage and create an emotional response</i>
What is the opening scene? Reflect on its importance
At which point does the plot get complicated?
What is the relationship between conflict and structure in the play?
Find the examples of soliloquy, aside in the play
Find examples of symbols in the play. What do these things symbolize?
Find examples of foreshadowing
Find examples of dramatic irony in the play

APPENDIX 10: PLAY TYPES. LEVELS OF A PLAY

DRAMA	A PLAY
Is used in the sense of ‘theatre’ (from Greek <i>theatron</i> < <i>theasthai</i> “to watch”). Drama encompasses the entirety of the theatrical presentation, encompassing elements such as the stage, the auditorium, props, backstage areas like the green room, costumes, music, and other related aspects.	In the context of “a literary composition,” a play refers to a written work comprising dialogues among different characters, along with elements such as an epilogue, monologue, prologue, and conclusion.

TYPES OF DRAMA
TRAGEDY: In the classical Greek context, a tragedy is a theatrical production that concludes with the demise of at least one primary character. In contemporary usage, it denotes a play lacking a positive or joyful resolution.
COMEDY: In ancient Greek tradition, a comedy is a theatrical piece that concludes without any characters facing death. In contemporary terms, it signifies a play that concludes on a positive note or is characterized by humor.
TRAGICOMEDY: A play that combines both serious and humorous elements.

LEVELS OF A PLAY	
<i>Since many textual areas of drama – character, plot, and setting – overlap with aspects of fiction, the following elements are specifically relevant to drama:</i>	
<div style="background-color: #800000; width: 100%; height: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Aside, Monologue, and Soliloquy</h3>	
Aside:	a character’s remark, either to the audience or another character, that other characters on stage are not supposed to hear
Monologue:	an extended speech by a single character that is uninterrupted by others
Soliloquy:	a speech a character gives when s/he is alone on stage

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СТАРОСТЕНКО Тетяна Миколаївна

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