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Abstract

The article introduces the collection of stories written by Hari Kunzru entitled *Noise*. They take up the issues of identity in the world of cultural influences and permeations, technology and religion. Furthermore, the stories, as well as the novels depict a *transcultural* reality as contradicted to the *multicultural* or *intercultural* one. It presents the hybridity of the contemporary culture and society, not their mere variety The proved above tendency of the writer to build a kind of vertical structure within a text has its starting point in the collection in question in which the author applies such a model in order to present elements of even distant cultures more effectively and naturally. The mixture of cultures, ethnicities, religions, lifestyles and classes is much more visible when observed from the top position. The collection initiates the concept of *the translit fiction*, particularly in "Memories of Decadence". Finally, the stories and the novels bear intertextual relationships with other literary texts, which locates Hari Kunzru's prose in a broader cultural context which includes Hindu, Slavic, Irish, Scandinavian and Native American mythology as well as Australian and British masterpieces, ancient drama and contemporary American and French literature. The intertextual relationships enable to decipher the meaning of the image of noise and deepen certain themes of the texts. Although, the novels of Hari Kunzru offer a much more developed and mature form of the presented devices, it is highly useful not to omit the short story collection *Noise* on the reader's literary journey with Hari Kunzru.

Key words: transculturality, translit, postcolonial, intertextuality, Indian

Abstrakt

Artykuł zatytułowany „Transkulturowe koncepcje w krótkich opowoadaniach Hari Kunzru i ich wpływ na późniejsze prace autora prezentuje zbiór opowiadań brytyjsko-indyjskiego autora Hari Kunzru *Noise*. Głównym tematem opowiadań są kwestie związane z technologią, religią oraz tożsamością i przynależnością w dzisiejszym świecie charakteryzującym się przenikaniem kultur. Podstawowym celem artykułu jest podkreślenie *transkulturowego* charakteru tekstów pisarza jako opozycji do koncepcji *multi* i *interkulturowych*. Dodatkowo, analizowany jest I ich wpływ na późniejsze prace autorawertykalnej struktury, która ułatwia pisarzowi intertekstualne wprowadzenie pozornie odległych kultur oraz ich wytworów. Relacje te pogłębiają znaczenie niektórych motywów i tematów prozy pisarza. Artykuł, pokazuje też, iż koncepcje użyte w zbiorze opowiadań *Noise* mają swoją kontynuację w powieściach Hari Kunzru, co czyni je pierwszym etapem jego literackich podróży.

Słowa kluczowe: transkulturowość, *translit*, postcolonialny, intertekstualność, hinduski

Introducion

The collection of stories entitled *Noise* is the first publication of the British Indian writer Hari Kunzru. The stories emphasize the role of technology as well as the position of God and religion in contemporary world. The author's interest in those issues is also visible in his subsequent works in which the writer continues and develops his considerations. Moreover, the stories bear features of transcultural literature, revealing the writer's fascination with issues of identity, culture and globalism. Again, those themes reappear in the author's novels *The Impressionist*, *Transmission,* and *Gods Without Men* in which a transformation from postcolonial to transcultural and finally translit (a term coined by Douglas Coupland in 2012 in his review of Kunzru's last book *Gods without Men* to describe a novel which spans not only across spaces and cultures but also times and universes as it seeks to generate

narrative traction in the reader's mind. Such a book inserts the contemporary reader into other locations and times, while leaving no doubt that its viewpoint is relentlessly modern and speaks entirely of our extreme present) literature is visible, which can be attributed to the spectacular leap of the previously mentioned technology.

Therefore, *Noise* collection can be perceived as a foundation of Hari Kunzru's future works as well as an introductory stage of his cultural and literary journeys. The transcultural aspects of the stories will be examined together with their continuations in Hari Kunzru's novels. In order to accomplish this task, Franco Moretti's approach of distant reading of the transcultural literature will be applied. His bird's eye view method forces the reality of the text to "(...) undergo a process of deliberate reduction and abstraction" (qtd. in Dagnino 19). As a result, "(...) a specific form of knowledge: fewer elements, hence a sharper sense of their overall interconnection" (19) is required. Consequently, the texts will be examined in terms of their realization of the presented issues and in relation to a multiple of works which share these concepts with them for only the mentioned interconnection can provide a broader and deeper comprehension of the existing and ongoing trends in literature of postcolonial origin which Hari Kunzru represents.

In fact, the bird's eye view, useful in analyzing the transcultural literature, is applied by Hari Kunzru himself in order to introduce the transcultural elements into his texts. The vertical construction of his works, which is obtained by means of such top perspective, enables the writer to weave in the references to other cultures and their products more effectively and naturally. It also facilitates the presentation of the relation between the universal and the individual. It seems that the boarders between

these two seemingly different notions currently blur at least in the cultural context. Thus, the basic purpose of this article is to draw attention to the existance of the bird's eye view or the top perspective in Hari Kunzru's short stories and later in his novels as a means to introduce transcultural elements into his fiction. The aim of this paper is to highlight this technique and the vertical structure which is automatically formed, and to show its function, which is, as it has already been explained, presentation of various and often distant cultural elements into one coherent transcultural reality.

The Concept of *Transculturality* as a Response to the Imperfections of the Previous Cultural Concepts

The term transculturality has been introduced by a German philosopher Wolfgang Welsch in his essay "Transculturality: The Puzzling Form of Cultures Today". In this work, Welsch claims that the three, already existing concepts namely of *single culturality*, *interculturality* and *multiculturality* are outdated, unprecise and even potentially dangerous. The concept of single cultures, which assumes that each culture is a separate and homogeneous island, is no longer valid. According to Welsch "(…) modern societies are differentiated within themselves to such a high degree that uniformity is no longer constitutive to, or achievable for, them (…)" (195). There are differences in class, status, wealth, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle, which all create the "(…) inner complexity of modern cultures" (195). Moreover, the traditional concept of culture is a concept of inner homogenization and outer separation at the same time, which consequently leads to racism, separatism, political conflicts and eventually wars. This last argument makes the concept of sigle cultures potentionally threatening.

Wolfgang Welsch continues his observations in discussing the two, further concepts, namely *interculturality* and *multiculturality* which are supposed to overcome the weak points of the first one and promote mutual understanding and tolerance. Interculturality attempts to find ways and means for different cultures to recognize and accept one another. This concept, however "(…) still proceeds from a conception of cultures as islands or spheres" (196). It originates from the assumption that cultures are in fact separate, often hostile units. Multiculturality, on the other hand, accepts the fact that societies occupying one particular space are, nowadays, composed of a number of various cultures which need to coexist. Yet, it again originates from "(…) the existance of clearly distinguished, in themselves, homogeneous cultures, the only difference now being that these differences exist within one and the same state community" (196). Thus, *multiculturality* defines societies and nations composed of various, individual cultures, forced to inhabit the same space, and encourages mutual tolerance and acceptance. However, the concept does not notice and consider the transformations taking place because of this coexistence.

Therefore, Wolfgang Welsch formulates the fourth category, the one of *transculturality* which is supposed to be a response to the fact that "(…) cultures today are extremely interconnected and entangled with each other" (197). They are characterized by mixes and permeations. They influence one another and as a result transform and alter one another. An intact, separate culture does no longer exist. The contemporary culture is based on constant exchange of values, lifestyles and beliefs. Due to this exchange, new forms of links are being created. Moreover, the culture nowadays is characterized by hybridity which refers to its transformed shape obtained through joining

numerous various influences into one. The process of linking cultures and creating never ending hybrids is even more facilitated due to technology, transport and media. The changes occur both on macro and micro levels, with macro affecting culture in general, while micro affecting a particular unit. The identity of the unit is constructed by several diverse cultures.

In order to fully comprehend the contemporary literature, one should definitely apply the transcultural approach to reading it, which provides acknowledgement of the existance of the permeations, influences, links and consequently hybrids.

Transcultural Reality and the Mode of Its Presentation in Hari Kunzru's Short Stories and His Later Works

The awareness of the existence of transcultural reality is definitely visible in Hari Kunzru's texts. The world presented in his short stories and later in his novels can be characterized by mutual permeation of different cultures. Moreover, the vertical model of the texts which is constructed by means of bird's eye view and the top perspective, enables the presentation of such a culturally complex reality more clearly and smoothly.

The author shows interest in issues of culture and identity from the very beginning of his literary activities. The cultural concepts and observations which can be found in Hari Kunzru's novels, originate from the ones presented in the *Noise* collection. Moreover, the vertical model used in his novels can first be observed in the collection in question. In the story "Deus ex Machina*"*, for instance, the writer introduces the narrator who occupies the space above the space of the action. This narrator is the Guardian Angel who observes his protégé from the top sphere. The perspective enables him to embrace not only Christina's life but also the whole world with its

mixture of cultures and religions. Being a supernatural creature, he is also capable of embracing different times and epoques - a concept fully developed in the translit novel *Gods without Men*. Therefore, he mentions *Decameron* by Boccaccio, when he mocks Christina's boyfriend chat-up line at the book launch. The Angel claims that the line had been articulated numerous times in history before Robert did it. He adds: "It is in fact a line which appears in variant forms in the literature of seventeen different cultures, including a version on a tenth-century runestone in Norway" (19). Accepting this fact provides a deeper understanding of the repetitiveness of times and complexity of culture. It also shows Robert in a little favourable light in which he turns out to be a pitiful product of global culture while his words yet another copy of the previously articulated ones. Consequently, he is ripped off his originality and genuineness and becomes merely a further link in a chain constructed by culture. Later, the Angel compares Christina to both Ophelia and a swooning Kunisada geisha. The comparison draws attention to the two distant cultures which the pair comes from and which will come into a reaction if this pair unites. He also notices that Yuko writes everything down "(...) in the manner of a tenth-century Japanese courtesan Sei Shonagon" (26). Although, the observation refers to Yuko's origins, it also highligts the space which he currently occupies which seems to be in opposition with his cultural roots. In this London's flat the two worlds, Asian and Western, clash and influence each other.

Finally, the Guardian Angel claims that in his nature and function he resembles representatives and creations of other cultures, religions and folk traditions. The first divine being he enumerates is Deva who originates from Hindu mythology. The word appears in Vedic literature and is translated from Sanskrit as "(...) heavenly, divine, terrestrial thing of

high excellence, exalted, shining one" (Monier-Williams 492). The term derives from Proto-Indo-European word *deiwos* from which, in turn, such words as *Deus, divine and deity* originate. There are thirty three Devas according to the sacred book of Rigveda. They embody forces of nature and moral values. They are equipped in magical powers and creative energy (Williams, George 25). One of the most characteristic Deva is Agni, the god of fire, who is perceived as an ally of all mankind. He may be seen as a counterpart of Prometheus in Greek mythology or a Guardian Angel in Christianism. On the one hand, Agni, is, indeed, seen as a counterpart of Titans or the link between God and people due to the fact that he is not one of the major gods of Hinduism. However, "(…)the Rigveda itself asserts that gods are only different names and expressions of one universal Being who, in His own reality, transcends the universe" (Paramahamsa 23). Moreover, gods of different religions are, as well, merely alternative names of one supreme force, while particular myths e.g. the gift of fire to human beings, can be, as Paramahamsa puts it, "(…)applied convincingly to any human tradition, acceptable to a layman" (21). The narrator claims that he shares with Deva the nature of his activity. Both of them are close to people whom they offer their assistance. Moreover, each of them is immaterial. Additionally, the ethymology of the term shows that not only do the divine creatures share duties and shape but also the name, for both Deva and God (of which the Guardian Angel is a representative) originate from the word *deiwos*. Thus, it appears that the transcultural mechanisms are not a recent tendency but a well established regularity. The second example he gives, is the household god who derives from numerous pagan religions and folklores, including Slavic beliefs. Additionaly, he recalls leprechaun from the Irish folk tales and tree-spirit and pooka from the Hindu

traditions. The figure of the Angel being literally omnipresent and occupying the top observing position facilitates spanning across history, time and space. As a result, the numerous seemingly distant examples of literary and cultural tradition join smoothly and naturally into one global cultural heritage.

The story "Bodywork" also proposes a vertical structure, for Barry, the main protagonist of the story, places himself above all the society both spacially, as it is clearly stated that his house is located on the hill from which he can observe everybody, and emotionally, as his ambition is to overshadow mundane, celestial people with his brand new, sterile, artificial body. Barry believes in superiority of technology over a human being and builds vertical structure to express it. Being above everybody in the form of a machine is supposed to guarantee Barry eternity and omniknowledge. It has already been mentioned that technology accelerates the process of cultural mixtures and permeations, while the internet gathers and stores all the knowledge and trends of todays life. In this light, Barry, by becoming a machine himself, would absorb all the features of the existing cultures like a sponge and could become an embodiment and quintessence of the transcultural reality.

The vertical structures are visible in Hari Kunru's novels as well. The novel *Transmission,* for instance, builds its space on the opposition between skyscrapers and planes and everything which stays below. The powerful units occupy the top spaces from which they have an outlook on everything which is happening beneath them. They seem to possess all the necessary knowledge of the existing world. Due to plane travels, they span across cultures and countries without being a member of any space and culture themselves. They operate in non-space and as a result resemble Gods. However, a humble, yet genius, IT specialist Arjun Mehta, by means of technology, is able to *delete* the

divisions even from his bottom position. The computer virus, which he creates, infects both inferior units as the superior ones. Moreover, the virus also possesses the ability to cross borders, spaces, cultures and religions as its reach is enormous. The virus in a form of a Bollywood dancer seems to represent Indian diaspora occupying the USA, whose presence is acknowledged, yet neglected. The vertical structure, introduced into the text, enables to comprehend the cultural differences and conflicts in contemporary America. It is even stated that the smell of Naan breads, which have been prepared by Pran's mother and taken by him to America, can be felt high up- also on the plane which Guy, the representative of the powerfull ones, travels by. This image strengthtens the view that the vertical structure facilitates noticing the complexity and variety of the cultures today.

Finally, the novel *Gods without Men* builds a vertical structure by means of The Pinnacles – hills situated on the Mojave desert in America. These rock formations' function is to enable the protagonists to reach God or the absolute. One of the characters, an autistic boy disappears behind the rocks. When he returns, he is found completely healthy. The mysterious act of illumination and transformation resembles the novel *Picnic at Hanging Rock* by Joan Lindsay for the protagonists of both novels reach the absolute, undergo transformation, and are unaware of the time lapse during and after their trip to the rocks. The intertextual relationship with Joan Lindsay's novel highlights the importance of time in a translit fiction as well as the phenomenon of reaching the absolute. The Pinnacles connect the earth with the sky and God and in this manner form a further vertical model of space. Moreover, they reappear throughout the novel, which, as it has already been mentioned, is composed of numerous separate stories which take place in different epoques. Therefore, the vertical structure

formed by the Pinnacles has a similar function to the ones in Kunzru's previous works, namely, it enables to combine seemingly different times, events and cultural elements of the novel into one coherent and universal thought. The representatives of various religions, nations, races and ethnicities appear in the vicinity of the rocks at different times throughout the novel. Furthermore, the author evokes Native American mythology in the character of a coyote who occupies the space near the Pinnacles and functions similarly to them for he joins the individual stories. The apparent tendency of the writer to introduce the top to bottom construction into his works has, by no means, its starting point in his short story collection *Noise*.

Translit Mood of Hari Kunzru's Texts

The translit model of a literary text, which seems to have made a step further from the transcultural one for, as it has already been mentioned, it spans not only across cultures but also times and spaces, fully flourishes in Hari Kunzru's novel *Gods Without Men*, mentioned above. However, the elements and the mood of it are also initially seen in the *Noise* collection. Firstly, the eternal and immortal character of the Guardian Angel, by means of his top perspective, evokes events and products of culture from various epoques. He mentions ancient and medieval times, the Renneisance, Enlightment and contemporary times. He recalls jihads and crusades. He does not limit his examples to the most influential and popular Western culture, but he refers equally eagerly to the Asian one, as well as Eastern European traditions like the Slavic household god, or northern European mythology like the Irish leprechaun or a Scandinavian runestone. The Guardian Angel definitely travels across times, spaces and cultures easily and skillfully. In the story, "Deus Ex Machina", the reader is aware that the journey he embarks on, while reading the text, is based on

references. Although, he is taken for a moment to the distant ages, he is conscious of the fact that the place and time of the action is here and now. Such awareness, however, is difficult to gain while reading the story "Memories of the Decadence." The title suggests a story of the past. Indeed, the first sentences, written in the past tense, in a form of memoir, provide the atmosphere of nostalgia and longing for the old times. However, as the story continues, the reader may actually become confused, for the narrator mentions events which have not happened yet or belong to the most recent history. As a result, the receiver of the story finds himself trapped in a wild wheel of time which is turning quite fast and in which it is truly difficult to define both the beginning and the end. It is complicated to judge what is the time of the action and to what periods in history we are in fact referring to in the story. The narrator evokes social trends, political tendencies, fashions which preoccupied people, plagues, viruses, turning against religion and than returning to it, periods of moderation and peace and the ones of hysteria, panic and wars. He constructs his narration in such a way that the reader witnesses the constant flow of events and the fast pace of it. The observer does not recognize the exact time of the story but knows exactly that the process described is timeless and neverending. The confusion is intentional, and again suggests the continuity and repetitiveness of epoques and culture. It is implied that defining specific, particular time is of no importance, as all the events have their regularity and constitute one global cultural continuum.

The author develops this belief in the already described novel *Gods Without Men* which is a purely translit piece of fiction. The separate stories taking place in various periods of history share the space of the action which is the Mojave Desert. The Pinnacles unite the seemingly distant events which all happen in

their presence. The reader is, for instance, given a story of a Spanish missionary, wandering near the rocks at the times of the Conquista. The story is juxtaposed, yet not immediately, with the story of a New Age sect attempting to meet a sort of UFO on the desert. Moreover, the Pinnacles witness the problems of the Jewish family as well as of the British rockman. The Mojave Desert hosts a number of incidents which initially vary, yet are similar in some manner after some consideration. Moreover, the happenings influence and derive from one another which is the basic feature of the transcultural approach according to which cultures, societies and lifestyles affect one another never to remain intact and the same.

Transculturality expressed through Intertextuality

The texts present reality in which elements of different cultures permeat and mix to form new, altered cultures or hybrids. However, the texts themselves are being affected and transformed by echoes of other pieces of literature often deriving from distant traditions. Therefore, the works should be read with reference to others in order to be fully comprehended. According to Roland Barthes, French literary critic and philosopher, the meaning of a text does not lie in the text itself, but is constructed by the reader in connection not only with the text in question, but also the expanded network of pieces of fiction evoked in the proces of reading. The definition bears some resemblence to the definition of transculturality. Today's cultures must be perceived in relations to other cultures with which they create links and nets which eventually lead to hybrids.The collection, due to its title, enters a discourse with the novel *The White Noise* by Don DeLillo. Obviously, the works share both their title and their major theme. Following and analyzing this similarity may add something to the collection's meaning. Don DeLillo, like Hari Kunzru, is

interested in the issue of technology and media affecting societies. The author of *The White Noise* constructs the TV saturated, information based world controlled by drama, news and trivial talk shows. The Gladney's family, which the novel concerns, is soaked with omnipresent media and popular culture. Even their family relationships and mutual experiences occur through their contact with TV. Furthermore, *Noise* and *The White Noise* have in common the motif of modern society's fear of death, and their characters' conviction that the escape into artificial reality is the solution and the salvation (as it is in the case of Barry from the story "Bodywork") Yet, in *The White Noise,* this anxiety is manifested by an obsession with chemical cures. The noise itself, in turn, is the constant interruption of even potentially valuable TV programmes by meaningless commercials and reality shows.

In Hari Kunzru's works, on the other hand, noise, which is a natural consequence and an inseparable element of the pressing and aggressive activity of media, takes a number of forms. Furthermore, Kunzru's concept of noise has a repairing rather than destructive function. Although, it *is* an interruption of signal passing from sender to receiver, it also possesses a unifying power. The writer's noise is not meaningless itself but reveals the meaninglessness of communication. In the novel *Transmission,* the noise is represented by the virus which is generated by Arjun Mehta, a disillusioned, exploited and abused Indian immigrant. His virus indicates the anomaly of the system which Arjun operates in. The virus is a noise, or rather a scream which draws attention to errors in the signal travel. Although it interrupts the communication and leads to global crisis and chaos, it actually enables to notice that this communication has already been faulty enough not to take into consideration Arjun's ideas, not to appreciate his

efforts and creativity and finally not to respect his needs. Arjun seems to have been omitted on the route of the signal. By designing the virus, the young man manifests his presence and, as if unites the pieces of signal which, from his perspective, were broken for they did not reach him. Therefore, the noise carries a meaning in itself- it is an affirmation of the disruptions of the signal.

In *Gods without Men*, the last of Hari Kunzru's novels, in turn, noise is expressed in time lapses which divide numerous and separate narratives of this translit novel. The breaks and gaps in narration interrupt it similarly to the white noise during some TV broadcasts. Yet, a figure is introduced which unifies the individual parts of the story. It is the character of the previously mentioned coyote deriving from Native American mythology which appears in each of the gaps. On the one hand, the coyote breaks the narration, but, on the other hand, it merges it by being its constant, repetitive element. Moreover, each of the allegedly separate stories evolves around the already evoked Mojave Desert Pinnacles – a characteristic rock formation in America. The rocks are a further unifying device in the novel for they reappear in each of the constructed narrations and represent a solid constancy. However, they, naturally contain 'fault lines', a geological term, defining cracks and fissures in stones. The word has been borrowed by literature where it refers to shifts and diversions in time, place and narration. Therefore, the rock formation, similarly to the coyote, functions as both the noise i.e. interruption, gap, rupture, and a unifying force and constant element. These two constructive devices enable to reflect upon the repetitiveness of fate and history despite the simultaneous distinctness of particular events. Thus, noise again bears a certain meaning in Hari Kuzru's works.

The next approach to the concept of noise, which is about to be presented, has actually given a start to the previously evoked examples and has initiated the author's interest in the issue of noise having a reparatory power. The story "Deus Ex Machina" provides an illustration of noise whose function is definitely positive and meaningful. The Guardian Angel, whose task is to prevent Christina from committing a suicide, changes schedules of the day on mobile phones of certain people so that they can discover Christina lying unconsciously on the floor and rescue her on time. The angel interferes in the signal and redirects it. As a result, he saves the girl's life. The faulty communication, between Christina and her deceitful beloved and between her and the society operating in hyper reality, which is based on misunderstanding, underestimation and lack of appreciation towards the woman, is eventually repaired by means of interrupting the transmission. Once again, the concept of noise is used by Hari Kunzru to merge rather than divide. At the same time, it highlights the problematic character of communication and signal passing in contemporary world.

Reading the *Noise* collection and the later Hari Kunzru's novels through Don De Lillo's *The White Noise* lenses deepens the understanding of the image of noise and links it to the issues of technology, media and problems with communication. It also encourages to look for differences in the concept of noise between these two authors.

The story "Deus Ex Machina", on the other hand, refers to an ancient theatrical device introduced by Euripides in order to solve the dramatic situation on stage. The Guardian Angel acts in the story similarly to this device. *Deus* in antique drama was, after all, also using advanced mechanical tools such as a gearwheel and ropes in order to descend to the stage and alter the course of action. Indeed, the title of this short story

suggests taking into consideration the theatrical aspects of the story, the concept of life as a stage and play and of both God and author as its directors. Hari Kunzru's story shares these concepts with Andrew Foster Altschul's novel of the same title. Foster Altschul, in his work, designs a space of reality show whose contestants inhabit the island in order to participate in the program and consequently win it. The book provides a postmodern blend of reality and fiction for neither the participants nor the readers manage to distinguish these two notions completely. It also offers the image of the director of the reality show losing control of his masterpiece. Both references draw attention to the theatrical aspects of the story and the creative and decisive power of the author and narrator. Indeed, the Guardian Angel admits that he is the originator of the events when he utters the following words: "My work is done for the day and, in purely artistic terms, everything has gone swimmingly" (27).

The protagonist of the story "Bodywork", in turn manifests his repulsion for smell, dirt and sweat, and consequently rejects his celestial side in favour of a dehumanized, plastic form. By doing so, he acts contrary to the main character of Patrick Suskind's highly acclaimed novel *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille who, being deprived of any smell himself, becomes obsessed with gaining it at all costs. Grenouille is already born in a dehumanized, scentless form, which excludes him from the humanity. Collecting scents of murdered women is his desperate quest for identity and acceptance. Both postmodern and magically realistic, the novel seems to be the reversal of the story "Bodywork". An intertextual play conducted by Hari Kunzru with Patrick Suskind's book strengthens the problem of dehumanization by the media in modern times. Moreover, it draws attention to the reversal of priorities.

The above examples, together with the previously discussed references to *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Decameron* by Boccaccio and the character of Ophelia from Shakespeare's Hamlet all become an aid in constructing a more complex meaning out of the text. The references link the text with network of further pieces of literature and as a result place the text in a rich literary and cultural tradition.

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