Of National Bondage: Alasdair Gray's *1982 Janine*

Tamás Tukacs

Introduction

The September 2014 Scottish referendum on independence raises several practical and theoretical problems as to the future of Scotland, the United Kingdom and, we have to add, of the European Union as well. It is unprecedented in the post-1945 history of Europe that a territory which had been united with a larger entity more than three hundred years ago should become a wholly independent state, and, according to the plans of the SNP, remain or become a member state of the EU as well. The referendum was supposed to put an end to the vicissitudes of Scottish identity that have permeated the discourse on Scottish nationalism and national consciousness since the nineteenth century, but, since the majority of the Scottish voters decided in favour of remaining part of the UK, it is to be expected that the issue of independence continues to be a hot issue for decades to come.

Scottish nationalism is peculiar, since it is rare that a smaller country, after being colonised by a neighbouring larger entity, should greatly benefit from the union. The price Scotland had to pay for economic prosperity from 1707 onward, was the lack of the emergence of self-defining, stable nationalism in the Romantic era. The Scottish had little cause to rebel against England. Scottish nationalism, as Michael Billig stated it in the title of his 1995 volume, is "banal nationalism." Since it is not defined by a separate language and since the foundations of Scottish culture are not basically different from the English one, Scottish nationalism is characterised by a concentration on territorial aspects, history, certain institutions, a "mythic past," cultural symbols and icons. One important feature of Scottishness is that from the nineteenth century on, what could be termed collectively as "Scottish culture" has appeared, largely due to the very effective colonising techniques of the English, in the form of fragmented, easily digestible and mostly emptied cultural icons and stereotypes (the kilt, the Scottish landscape, the Celtic tradition, tribal heritage, and the stereotype of the reticent and stingy Scotsman, and so on). The renewal of Scottish literature during the first Scottish Renaissance in the twentieth century and its later versions and reverberations had to cope with this considerable dilemma, namely, that Scotland possessed every attribute that could have paved the way for "healthy" nationalism, yet Scottish consciousness

has constantly been tormented by a profound sense of backwardness compared to its more developed neighbour, which was exacerbated even more by the failure of the 1979 Devolution Referendum. Scotland seems to possess all the essentials of nationhood, yet that has not translated into political existence as of yet – instead, Scotland is still coping with the problem of the binarity between being identified as a mental image, an idea, a mood and its actual, physical existence (Dósa 23). From this aspect, the 2014 vote can be seen as a milestone in grounding a new Scottish national identity.

The lack of a clear idea of what Scotland should look exactly like as a nation is the source of a fundamental dichotomy between isolation and openness. It is ironic that Scotland has been bound to Continental culture with innumerable ties, especially to the intellectual currents of the Enlightenment, as opposed to England, yet the reverse is also true: certain aspects of England's culture seem to be more "open" and flexible in contrast to the inward-looking, isolationist culture of Scotland struggling with its own stereotypes and the lack of a narratable past.

This binarity of openness vs. isolation also appears in literary criticism regarding Scottish works. In recent decades, there has been a tendency to break away from the normative and prescriptive, "traditional" type of criticism, characterised by essentialism, canon-building and the construction of a national tradition that closes off anything that is alien, hybrid, feminine or anything that does not conform to the masculine and working-class thematic of Scottish fiction (Miller 13). As Gavin Miller puts it, "References to a Scottish tradition of context […] seem to invite a metaphysical position in which Scottish cultural artefacts share a common essence which is necessary to their existence as works that are specifically Scottish." (13) In short, Scottish literature appears to be carrying the burden of the obligation to be Scottish, to be about Scottish people and Scottishness. As a solution, several critics have been urging a kind of openness and a transcendence of the "old-fashioned genealogical style of criticism" (Miller 13). As Eleanor Bell, for instance, points out, "Arguably, Scottish literary studies have been more focussed on canon-building and the construction of the national tradition, and too immersed in tradition-inspired approaches" ("Postmodernism" 86). Elsewhere, she states that "this approach of reading against the grain [one that includes issues of postcolonialism, poststructuralism and postmodernism] may, at a symbolic level, prove useful to Scottish studies in its probing and unearthing of national identity" (*Questioning* 2).

It appears that Alasdair Gray's *1982 Janine*, published in 1984, readily offers itself to these kinds of "post-readings" with its typographical experimentation and play with chronology and narrative voice. While it is easy to term Gray's novel "postmodern," the historical context of its publication must not be left unconsidered. Published only five years after the failure of the 1979 referendum, the text could be evaluated as a response to the Scots rejecting independence and the subsequent uneasy relations of Scotland with Thatcher's government. It seems that Gray himself wrote with the intention of transcending the limitations of

essentialism and nationalism. As he put it in "A Modest Proposal for By-passing a Predicament" (referring to Muir's notion of the predicament of the Scottish writer): "It is very queer that a small nation which has bred so many strongly local writers of worldwide scope still bickers and agonises over the phoney old *local versus international doublebind*" (9). Yet such a "postmodern" text as *1982 Janine* cannot help but leave behind concerns with locality, nationality and Scottishness, either. In what follows, I am going to read Gray's novel as an allegorical text on Scotland's situation in the early 1980s, after a failed referendum, paying special attention to the dichotomy appearing in Gray's sentence above between the local and the worldwide and, implicitly, between isolation and openness. Isolation is not only present in a spatial but also in a chronological sense in the novel, and since the protagonist's story clearly parallels Scotland's fate, the interrelatedness of the communal and the personal past is the second major theme of *1982 Janine*. To be able to approach the novel from this perspective, however, we must look at the Scottish literary tradition as a source of anxieties over isolation versus openness.

Unhistorical Histories: The Legacy of Scott

"Scotland is a place with a past but a place without history," Cairns Craig asserts in *The Modern Scottish Novel* (118) and with this, he tackles a vital point of Scottish consciousness, that is, the problematic of the organic relationship with the (national) past, directing attention to the dilemma of the coming to terms, ordering and narrativisation of that past. This is a point around which the discussion of the relationship between Scottish fiction and identity may be ordered. Besides this, it is also important to look into two related themes, the relationship of Scotland to the outside world (including England) and Scotland's relationship to herself.

The history of the Scottish novel still bears the mark of the oeuvre of Walter Scott, together with Scotland's in-between situation that Edwin Muir described in the 1930s, writing about Scott, although his words bearing a more general significance, as Scotland at that time being "neither a nation nor a province" (11–12). On the one hand, Scotland was assimilated into England and the English identity, more specifically into the English Whig tradition (which exerted great influence on historiography and Scottish fiction) in the eighteenth century in a way that it was beneficial for Scotland economically but, in return, the kind of national consciousness and historical culture that could have paralleled national independence and the sense of the past in the Romantic age could never fully develop. On the other hand, Scotland never became an integral part of the new British identity and, to some extent, always stayed in the category of the strange and exotic. Paradoxically, certain elements of Scottish identity lived on – the Kirk, the School and the Law – but nineteenth-century Scottish nationalism was expressed in a way that it supported the union with England (Craig, "Constituting" 5). From this perspective, the beginning of the nineteenth century may be regarded, both temporarily and geographically, as a kind of "no-man's land" for Scottish literature. It was in this schizophrenic, in-between state that Scott began writing his historical novels.

The same dichotomy may be observed in the critical assessments of Scott as the one often referred to in connection with Scotland: on the one hand, he is a writer of European significance, shaping the classical form of the historical novel, and exerting an influence on countless other authors, from Pushkin to Balzac. On the other hand, he was the one who distanced the past from the present, locked Scottish history into quarantine, solidified certain stereotypes, and falsified and mythicized Scottish history to an extent that his influence can be felt in present-day Scottish writing as well, as far as the problematic relationship with the national past is concerned. According to Georg Lukács, "Scott's extraordinary and epoch-making talent in writing is expressed through the structure of his novels based on a 'middling,' merely correct but never 'heroic' hero" (37, my translation). Through the figure of the "hero," Scott presents the critical moments of English and Scottish history more or less objectively, carefully avoiding extremes, Scott being a middle-class, conservative Tory himself. Although, with such a central hero figure, the crises of history are described with "almost unsurpassable perfection" (Lukács 37, my translation), this kind of historical novel could never become the means of national resistance or that of a search for identity, since Scott's aim was precisely seeking out the points of compromise between the two nations by showing how conflicting ideas could merge into a higher and more sophisticated unit; for instance, the fight of Saxons and Normans results in the birth of the English nation, the War of the Roses leads to the reign of Elizabeth I or the Cromwellian civil war is epitomized in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 (Lukács 35).

In fact, Scott mastered the English-type Whig historiography, which brought about a situation in which nineteenth-century Scottish intellectuals had to cope with a rather schizophrenic scenario. The main reason for this is that the educated Scottish did not merely put on the mask of British imperialism but also did away with Scottish history as a possible frame of interpretation and lost their confidence and interest in their history in general, especially after the schism of the Kirk in 1843. Interestingly enough, the roots of Whig historiography can be traced back to seventeenth-century Scottish Presbyterian thinking and various dissenter movements, and even to the Scottish Reformation in the sixteenth century (Trevor–Roper, "Introduction" 8). The main tenets of this Whig ideology are the following: the assertion of the special role of the Anglican church in English history, a firm faith in the continuity of English constitutionalism and limited monarchism, emphasising the importance of the rule of "common law", and the presentation of England as the main exporter of Protestantism and democracy (Kidd 6; in Lukács's words: "the consistency of the English development amidst the most terrible crises" [43, my translation]). Since Scott rigidly believed in the unbroken unity of the British monarchy, the Anglo-Scottish conflicts never undermine the Union in his works. For instance, Waverley, the young officer, who participates in the 1745 Jacobite uprising on the side of the McIvor clan, and falls in love with the chieftain's daughter, Flora, returns to England at the end of the

novel, and marries an English girl, Rose. Thus, Waverley's adventure is neither an integral part of his life story, nor is it symbolically the part of England's history. His love affair and alliance with the Scotsmen is, in fact, a deviation in the normal course of his story and in history, a "romantic perversion" at best (Craig, *Out of* 39), as is demonstrated by the final scene: the main character is contemplating an image of himself in the company of Fergus McIvor. The Scottish past may only exist as framed, elevated into the sphere of art, and securely separated from the present.

As Cairns Craig demonstrates, besides the tradition of Whig historiography, Scott was also the follower of certain currents of the Scottish Enlightenment, which was rather sceptical about the mere writability of history (*Out of* 67). The main precursor of this thought was David Hume, who was fully aware of the fictitiousness of history and treated historiography as a literary genre. His intention was not to write a "true" history, since he knew that a historical event may only become suitable material for the writer if it shows enough literariness, i.e., it is invested with enough dramatic quality, orderliness or developing plot. By writing England's history, Hume's aim was not to present a "true" but a "polished," literary version of the story, which is true by virtue of being impartial. Scott followed this concept of history, and, according to Craig, he was deeply sceptical about any kind of "historical truth" (*Out of* 69), which is attested by the innumerable forewords, prefaces, appendices, explanations, and footnotes that he attached to his novels, as if the recorded (hi)story had not been stable enough to be presented in itself, lacking something that could only be made up for by supplements like these. Contrary to the classical evaluation of Lukács, then, Scott does not seem to be the master of "historical realism," but a sceptic of the Enlightenment who is fully aware of the impossibility of objective historiography. Scott may be accepted as the representative of Whig history writing or as the advocate of the Humean Enlightenment, but, in either case, the result is the same: a version of Scottish history, which is emptied, full of dichotomous stereotypes, and which does away with the organic relationship of the past and the present, displaying a "secure," unhistorical version of history.

This unhistorical concept of history represented by Scott is the root of the basic opposition in Scottish fiction between the idea of home, a sort of familiar isolation, more generally a static and vacuum-like state and the "world," history and a story that could be given shape by narrative means (Craig, *Out of* 32). At the level of the story, the former means a non-linear, non-developing, circular and repetitive narrative turning on itself, as opposed to the English realist novel of the nineteenth century, which is fundamentally teleological, and which develops the eighteenth-century social panorama into a genre tackling human and social relationships. The inward-turning Scottish narrative outside history is only given an impetus by an external event which penetrates the static, homely, familiar, convenient (or suffocating and limiting) environment and subverts it. The most typical of such events that give impetus to an isolated world is the First World War

(Craig, *Out of* 35). Generally, Scottish literature and thinking has been tormented by the desire to connect to history (the outside world, temporality) and being excluded from it at the same time. Fintan O'Toole, for instance, remarks that in 1991, at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Easter Rising, Tom Murphy's *The Patriot Game* was staged, only to be welcomed by the Irish audience rather coldly. Soon after, the same play was on stage in Glasgow, but the reaction of the Scottish audience was totally different. The questions of the nation, independence, defeat and regeneration deeply moved them. As one of the spectators put it, they wished if only Scotland had had such a heroic episode of history as well (O'Toole 65).

The rather contradictory relationship with the past, traditions and history does not mean in the least, however, that Scottish fiction does not deal with certain aspects of the past. As Glenda Norquay and Gerry Smith assert, there seems to be a fundamental difference between Scottish and Irish fiction: while in Irish fiction (and drama), the past generally lives on in the present and constitutes a significant, if not always organic, part of the present (mainly in the form of traumatising returns and repetitions), the Scottish novel tends to deny understanding the present from the past (41). Instead, different versions (collective or personal) of the past live side by side, subverting "grand" narratives of history (such as a teleological and emotion-laden version of Scottish history), or it may happen that the emphasis falls on different family stories, generational conflicts and problems of genealogy.

In fact, Walter Scott's kind of unhistorical past and the problems of relating the past and the present to each other are carried on in the most popular Scottish genre of the nineteenth century, that is, the kailyard school. The nostalgic kailyard type of fiction represents Scotland as a collection of peaceful, idyllic, religious, and isolated communities stuck outside time, separated from the rest of the world, and untouched by problems of modern Scotland and history outside. Although the iconic representative of kailyard writing is generally regarded to be James Matthew Barrie's Peter Pan, the boy who would not grow up, even well after 1945 certain cinematic works of Scottish culture still displayed the main ideological components of kailyardism (*Whisky Galore!* [1949] or *Maggie* [1954]. It has to be added that the critical rewriting and subversion of the kailyard genre appears in the 1980s with films like *Another Time, Another Place* or *Local Hero* (Bényei, "A hegyvidék").

It was with the intention of renewing Scottish literature and culture, working against sentimentalism and the kailyard tradition, that in the 1920s and 1930s, although with different emphases, Edwin Muir and Hugh MacDiarmid appeared on the literary scene. Both condemned Scotland's provincialism and considered the chances of renewal with significant pessimism, as both realised that Scotland lacked the cultural possibilities comparable to the Irish Renaissance taking place at that period. While the Irish managed to create a new literature of their own with the combination of national myths, legends and the means of modernism, the preconditions of this rebirth in Scotland were missing, for two reasons. On the one hand, Scotland lacked a non-English literary language, because of the coexistence

of Scottish Gaelic and Scots. Since the works of the Irish Renaissance were mostly written in English, the second reason was more significant: the retrospectively created, artificial, "Celtic" legends gained a controversial reputation already in the eighteenth century. All in all, the Anglo-Scot, in general, did not feel that their culture was significantly different from that of the English (Craig, *Out of* 15). Muir regarded the very expression "a Scottish writer" indefinable, because Scotland was not in a situation to be able to create a distinct literary culture on par with the English one, which is why Muir stood for the Scottish revival in the English language. As opposed to him, the more radical MacDiarmid, also sensing that his country was imprisoned by false traditions, pronounced the slogan: "not Burns: Dunbar!" – referring to the sixteenth-century Scottish poet, a viable path for Scottish literary renewal. This, however, according to Craig, amounted to the tactics of "scorched earth" (*Modern* 22), since, although MacDiarmid referred to certain precedents in the past of Scottish literature, he failed to create an organic tradition which could establish a link between the past and the present.

Muir's contention in connection with the status of the Scottish writer leads to another topic, Scotland's relationship to the outside world and her relationship to itself as well. In Scottish consciousness, Scotland's double situation is still a lively contradiction, inasmuch as Scotland, during the course of her history, established innumerable links to England and the British Empire, through either the outstanding achievements of the Scottish Enlightenment or through building the Empire itself, but at the same time Scottish culture has always been stigmatised by a certain peripheral quality, exclusion from tradition, history, improvement, and isolation, entrapment, and parochialism. An important source for this schizophrenic cultural consciousness is Scotland's very relation to England. An organic, central culture becomes one precisely by force of integrating the best achievements of a marginal culture, thus solidifying that culture's peripheral situation. Craig cites the examples of the American Henry James and the Polish Joseph Conrad, who could unproblematically become parts of F. R. Leavis's "great tradition," while no-one would insist that, for instance, Dickens could be discussed as a figure of Scottish literary history (*Out of* 19). Thus, to make themselves heard, and to place themselves in any kind of tradition, Scottish writers must immerse themselves in the English tradition, which leads to the loss of their marginal situation, and hence their peculiarity (*Out of* 11–27). The organic, English centre is created precisely by the periphery in the hope of gaining a voice and later voicing its own marginal situation.

This dialectics leads us to the system of relationships already familiar from postcolonial studies: the tension between the desire to identify with the coloniser and rejecting it at the same time. After the Union of 1707, this duplicity characterised Scottish consciousness, coupled with the creation of an enemy image on the part of the English, because identification always creates its own supplement as opposed to which the subject can be manifested. After the Union, "the Scottish subject, hiding behind the mask of British identity, is articulated

against the (English) Other, the enemy image, which it already includes" (Szamosi, my translation); but, during the course of rationalisation, it creates the "residue," the barbaric Highlander, against which this identification is necessary. Peripheral elements keep being integrated into this central discourse, which serve, through English colonisation techniques, the purpose of assimilation and forging a British unity. Such elements include the image of the noble, Celtic savage or concepts like femininity, spontaneity, poeticism and daydreaming, deemed by Matthew Arnold to be "Celtic" qualities versus the "masculine", pragmatic "Saxon" core. Since the colonised would like to raise themselves to the level of the core culture, they begin to see themselves through the eyes of the coloniser, but meanwhile, precisely because of this, they have to realise how backward, isolated and peripheral they still are, just like when the black person is wearing a white mask (Craig, *Out of* 12).

The result is the rejection, denial, denigration, abjection and annihilation of the Other, and through the Other, of the self. A classic example of this split is widely recognised in Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, but just how effective the English colonisation techniques were is proved by Gregory Smith's 1919 account of the national characteristics of Scottish literature, in which the central element is the so-called "Caledonian antisyzygy," according to which the Scottish are "inherently" drawn to opposites and in their writings mingle qualities like practicality and fantasy (Szamosi). Self-denial leads to an inferiority complex, self-hate, neurosis, often coupled with a sense of guilt linked, in Scottish culture, to the strict principles of Presbyterianism and the fear of sin and God. It can be observed that from the nineteenth century on, several pieces of Scottish literature are imbued with motifs of sin, guilt, violence, barbarism, atavism, self-torture or self-mutilation, from James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824), through Stevenson, the thriller writer John Buchan, the anthropologist James G. Frazer, to A. L. Kennedy or Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*. According to Craig, "the potency of fear still remains a central element to Scottish culture" (*Modern* 37).

National Bondage: Alasdair Gray

I am going to approach Alasdair Gray's *1982 Janine* (1984) from the aspect of the interrelated topics discussed above – the relationship with the past, with the Other and with the self, paying attention to motifs of imprisonment, bondage, and surveillance. Such an analysis highlights the fact that even such a postmodern text displaying various linguistic and typographic games, cannot leave behind concerns with Scottishness, national identity and topicality, including the sentiment felt after the 1979 referendum.

The renewal of the Scottish novel is often linked to the failure of the 1979 referendum; it is not an accident that the reissue of Muir's *Scott and Scotland* (1936) took place in 1983, followed by a public debate organised by Polygon,

which also provoked Gray's reaction entitled "A Modest Proposal." According to Eilidh MacLeod Whiteford, "*1982 Janine* appeared at a moment when the whole notion of 'the Scottish writer' was being called into question" (227). The publication of the novel provoked various reactions. Paul Ableman considered the work, blending realism and fantasy, personal and national histories, as a great promise of the future; Joe Ambrose, however, named Gray a "vainglorious lout," whose desire is to get the Nobel Prize, and according to the infamous declaration of Peter Levi, the novel is nothing but "radioactive hogwash" ("Criticism of the Foregoing" section of *1982 Janine* at the end of the novel, no pag.).

These extreme reactions were mostly provoked by the text of the novel full as it was of sexual fantasies. The actual plot of the work can be summarised relatively easily. The protagonist, the aging, divorced, and alcoholic Jock MacLeish, whose job is to supervise security installations, is lying on a bed at a hotel in Greenock, and is trying to make an account of his life, entertaining perverted fantasies about invented female characters. Facing the failures of his life up till now, he attempts suicide, but vomits up the pills in the end. At the end of the novel, when he is writing his resignation letter, a female voice calls him to have breakfast. The novel has two main parts; in the first , the events of Jock's life slowly but incoherently penetrate the fantasies peopled by certain invented characters (Janine, Superb, Big Momma), and in the second section, after the failed suicide attempt, Jock tries to summarise his life in a linear, teleological fashion (193).

One of the central themes of the novel is the main character's making sense of his past. First, various erotic fantasies prevent him from making an account of the previous events of his life. Jock would like to suppress several episodes but the memories of these disrupt his attempt at a linear narrative. Apart from one or two episodes, the protagonist's life, it turns out, has been a complete failure. Jock is presented as a resigned, conservative, passive, cowardly and impotent man who takes a submissive role in relation to women. We learn that it was in fact his one-time love, Denny, who picked him up at the start of their relationship; Jock, however, returning from a trip to Edinburgh, caught her with the landlord. His later wife, Helen, "raped" him (59, 277), and Jock married her only because she led him to believe that she was pregnant, and neither of them wanted to call off the wedding so that the presents should not be wasted (305). They live childless, and when the wife realises that Jock is collecting pornographic magazines, she divorces him.

Facing the self and the personal past obviously depends, to a large extent, on giving a narrative shape to one's personal history. The two sections of the novel dramatize the tension between the past as isolated from the present and a version of the past which is able to elucidate the present and exist in an organic unity with it. The stake of the protagonist's enterprise is whether he can find a way to his own past, its function being similar to the second part of the novel, which is supposed to serve as an explanation to the suffocating, cyclical first part, which is always experimenting with new beginnings and new fantasies. Craig

calls this relationship between the two halves of the text "typological," inasmuch as Jock's pornographic fantasies may be seen as a kind of false New Testament of the modern world which postfigures and enlightens all earlier narratives (*Modern* 185). It is highly dubious, however, whether the perverted fantasies, falling back upon themselves, going round in circles, could in any way explain "the modern world." The question is rather whether Chapter 12, the actual second, teleological and linear part of the novel, could serve as a retrospective explanation for the disintegrating and isolated first half. In other words, as Jock himself refers to it (193), the dilemma must be answered whether the circular "story," chasing itself, in which the past could at best be connected to the present in a form of traumatic returns, could be redeemed by any ordered, straight, straightforward and non-perverted ("straight"), normal plot line.

The precondition of this would be if Chapter 12 could be rewritten as a sort of Bildunsgroman. In fact, it starts out as one, beginning with the family background of the protagonist, his education and successes. However, one crucial element of classical novels of education is missing: finding an ultimate and definite voice with which the main character could be able to recount his story. This voice, as we learn, was actually found by Jock relatively early, around the age of twelve, when he daringly told the much-feared Hislop, the teacher of English literature, that he should not have punished his classmate, Anderson, for not being able to pronounce a particular sound correctly. Jock finds his voice, and conversely, Hislop loses his at that moment. The teacher breaks down and begins to complain like a child to the headmaster in a Scots dialect: "Oh sir they wullnae lea' me alane" (337). This is the last episode of the second part. The rest of the novel is just about the way the protagonist symbolically loses his voice after his childhood; and that is why the story at the end of the novel culminates in mere crying (337–40). It is not by chance that Jock states he has been attempting to fabricate normal, "straight" and linear stories "since the age of twelve or perhaps earlier" (193). Voices surface as memory fragments in a traumatic manner, chiefly in the form of quotations taken from classical English literature, which were "poured into children's ears" (176) by Hislop, whose mania is good sounding, euphony (182). Interestingly, these isolated quotations serve to disguise improper thoughts or the mere lack of thoughts (176). The cathartic moment of the flood of voices can be found right after the suicide attempt, at the end of the typographically peculiar Chapter 11, when, for instance, the simultaneous voices of the narrator and God can be heard. The end of phonetic chaos is vomiting alcohol and the pills by the narrator, a sort of emptying, which is followed, in the style of Laurence Sterne, several blank pages. Thus, the protagonist's life story cannot be written as a story of Bildung because of the lack of a proper narrative voice.

Jock asks himself the question: "what can I do tomorrow if I do not die tonight" (176). Jock needs a sort of narrative closure, but, failing to achieve this, he starts to order his own life story, setting up various lists and categories (at the start of the novel there is a quotation by Paul Valéry about the "boxes in the

mind with labels on them"). Several lists are included in the novel's text: Jock makes a chronological account of his real and imagined lovers (153–166), he lists the differences between his wife and the fictional character Superb (33), he goes point by point listing the events of the Edinburgh theatre festival which eventually turns out to be a failure (246–88), and, indeed, it is as if the novel's title also reminded one of an element in a list or a file label. Contrary to what Miller states, that is, that "the protagonist recovers from his inability to narrate the past" (118), the reverse is true. There is no "time regained," no orderly narrative in the second half of the novel, either. Jock's aim is to gain control over his past, but in trying to do so, he unsuccessfully makes a narrative of his life story, becoming imprisoned in it and in his own past. It is also characteristic that he mentions the last volume of Proust's novel cycle, but instead of the correct version, *Time Regained*, he refers to it as *Time Redeemed* (166).

The second main theme of the novel is surveillance, dominance and control. According to Wallace and Stevenson, one of the important motifs of Gray's novels is a main character locked in (political, economic, social) systems, and this isolation leads to the disintegration and fall of the protagonist (115). The text abounds in closed spaces (during the plot, Jock never leaves the hotel room), enclosed sites, and references to traps. It is no coincidence that Jock happens to control security systems, which prevent external invasion, his task, on the other hand being finding faults in the system (104). A kind of mirror play is taking place: while Jock is a prisoner himself, a prisoner of his own past, his work and perverted fantasies (which are for the most part of the sadist, "bondage" type), he constantly dreams of subjecting, locking, bonding others and gaining control over women. The motif of fear, as referred to by Craig, does not only lead to isolation and symbolic confinement but often turns into its opposite, a delusion of grandeur when the God-fearing subject is often transformed into the opposite, a menacing figure (*Modern* 38). Although Jock's fantasies are never realised, they still suggest a delusion of grandeur: for instance, he would willingly pay Sontag to be able to subject her to unlimited power that his life denied him (43); the most comic episode is when, encouraged by the success of one of his ideas relating to holograms, he begins fantasizing about world domination (263–268).

Jock's inorganic relationship to his past (and to his future) is also manifested in his connection to his parents. Although his relationship with his father is not particularly hostile, they have a hard time understanding each other. The father is naively left-wing, while Jock is conservative, and the father dies without ever learning about the political views of his son (98). It is when Jock grows up that they both realise that they mutually caused hard times for each other during their walks when Jock asked the father about different plants and the father gave exhaustive answers with the help of a pocket book (100). After being left by his wife, the father refuses to move in with his son, despite Jock's continuous entreaties; and when his father dies, Jock throws out his father's war medals and wedding photo, saying that "no good comes from brooding upon the past" (172).

This is not rebellion, they are simply indifferent to each other. At the same time, Jock unconsciously repeats the life of his parents: similarly to his father (who is a foreman at a mine), Jock's job is also connected to surveillance, and another common element is the pregnancy before marriage (although Helen realises later that she is not expecting a baby) (83). According to Cairns Craig, cultural exile is manifested in the novel mainly through biological uncertainty, obscure origins, being created by parents and the search for symbolic parent figures (*Modern* 110). The parents unwillingly imprison their son and make a type out of him. When Jock goes to college, his father has six identical pairs of trousers made for him (202), and when he realises that Jock is interested in collecting stamps but cuts off the jagged side of the stamps, he buys a "normal" stamp album for him (95), which Jock, naturally, refuses to use. This leads to Jock remembering his home later as a prison (50) and as a trap (214).

From this aspect, the playful quotation taken from Hamlet ("LIST, LIST O LIST!", 195), in which the ghost of old Hamlet imprisons his son by giving him the task to take revenge, to be found at the beginning of the second part is important, but, as this quotation is intended for the reader, the narrator may exercise his power over the son-reader as well, besides giving a double entendre to the word "list," meaning "a list" and the verb "listen." As he is childless, Jock cannot become a father figure, he, in fact, escapes his role as a father (165), he is shy with women, and because of his eye defect, he is not enlisted into the army (148). The two main symbolic father figures are the sadistic and fearsome English teacher, Hislop, and Jock's friend, Alan. The protagonist entertains the fantasy that maybe his real father is Hislop (71), who "falls" at the end of the novel when he begins to speak in the voice of a child (337), while his emphatically alien-looking friend (109), whom Jock idolises, ends his life literally falling off the top of a building. Jock's real mother, who is always supervising his son doing his homework in her prison cell-like room, is transformed into the figure of the fat, lesbian prison guard, Big Momma.

For all this, *1982 Janine* would hardly be suitable to be discussed as a novel dealing with the problem of Scottish identity. The novel, however, is a lot more than a postmodern experimental text with an antihero, as the links between the personal life story of Jock and the history of Scotland show. At one point, Jock asks questions linking his personal story and the history of his country:

> Why did my job start to sour? Why did my marriage start to stale? When did I start drinking too much? When did capital leave Scotland in a big way? When did the depression come to Britain? When did we start accepting a world without improvement for the unlucky? When did we start accepting a future guaranteed *only* by the police, the armies, and an expanding weapons race? (309)

The atypically masculine Jock often takes the position of women in certain self-descriptions: Helen "rapes" him or he becomes a whore (277), just as the idea of his home, linked to Denny, is inscribed as a woman, as a woman's body, where Jock can return to or what he has never, in fact, left (167). Craig maintains that Jock is the symbol of Scotland, inasmuch as he transforms himself into a female element that he subjects to sexual humiliation (*Modern* 187). The much-criticised pornographic fantasies are then not gratuitous at all but stand for Scotland's position in the 1980s, dominated by Thatcher's ideology: contempt, abuse, exploitation, entrapment, isolation, "bondage," emptiness and stealing the North Sea oil reserves (134–138). As the narrator puts it,

> But if a country is not just a tract of land but a whole people then clearly Scotland has been fucked. I mean that word in the vulgar sense of misused to give satisfaction or advantage to another. Scotland has been fucked and I am one of the fuckers who fucked her and I REFUSE TO FEEL BITTER OR GUILTY ABOUT THIS. I am not a gigantically horrible fucker, I'm an ordinary fucker. And no hypocrite. (136–7)

Besides the parallels between Jock's imprisonment and Scotland's isolation, the motif of the colonised person's self-hatred also appears: "Who spread the story that the Scots are an INDEPENDENT people? Robert Burns… . The truth is that we are a nation of arselickers though we disguise it with surfaces" (65), which is a reflection of Jock's failed suicide attempt, and also recalls the well-known monologue by Renton in *Trainspotting* – "I hate being Scottish" – in which the lack of future perspective also leads to self-abuse.

According to Gavin Miller, "Gray's fiction shows characters who develop a 'schizoid' relationship with the world" (21), the reason for this being that they withdraw from their communities trying to enforce a stifling ethos on them. Besides its structure and theme, Gray's novel also shows parallels with the prime example of schizophrenic Scottish consciousness*, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Both Stevenson's novel and *1982 Janine* are episodic. In their first parts, we can see the symptoms tormenting the protagonist, and the linearly constructed second halves, containing the life stories (should) serve retrospectively to provide an explanation for the first sections. Other common elements are the themes of creation and the relationship between father and son. The motifs of identification and rejection are also important links between the two texts, besides the contrast between the respectable surface and the chaotic inner life. Finally, the two novels are similar as for the themes of self-annihilation and the radical break with the past and the self.

Similarly to *Dr Jekyll*, in the typographically overdetermined *1982 Janine*, there is a single letter playing a vital role, and that is the letter "Y." In Stevenson's

novella, Jekyll and Hyde are diametrically opposed to each other; what links them is this very letter, which is a perfect symbol of the split of the self, since in both names the letter "Y" stands for the letter "I" (Bényei, "Critic" 95). In Jock's fantasies, the letter "Y" usually appears as turned upside down, standing for Jock's fetish, the dominant female figure standing with her legs spread apart (177), and thus refers to the exposure and impotence which prevents the irregular, pervert and circular narrative of the first part from being ordered into a straight, linear and elucidating narrative. On the other hand, the letter "Y" may stand for the forking paths, the chances in Jock's life that he himself refers to: "Later, when Janine is trapped and trying to escape, she will remember that she was given a chance to leave and refused because of money. We all have a moment when the road forks and we take the wrong turning" (26). In the case of Janine, the wrong choice results in isolation, similarly to Scotland, which could have a chance to create its own parliament in 1979, but which was rejected. (Possibly, the nude male figure raising his arms with his body forming the letter Y on the cover pages of the novel also reminds one of this.)

The letter in question gains significance form a third aspect as well, when it disappears and gets replaced by the letter combination "ie" in certain names. Jock recalls a novel with a title of a man's name: "*Gillespie* by Hay? No. *McIlvannie* by Docherty? No. *Docherty* by McIlvannie" (298, a reference to William McIlvanney's novel published in 1975). Apart from calling authorship, that is, symbolic fatherhood into question, this mistake also points to the difference between spoken and written language. This is precisely the area where the conflict between Jock and his symbolic father, Hislop, reaches is climax.

According to Miller, "Jock is initiated into Scottish manhood by his relationship with Hislop" (22). Miller interprets the punishment of the protagonist as a sort of rite of passage, a ritual humiliation. While this is true to some extent, the conflict is also that between the coloniser and the colonised. The opposition between the protagonist and the teacher of English literature always stems from the conflict between the two versions of language. Jock is first punished when Hislop finds five spelling mistakes in his workbook (72). Jock has to repeat loud "I am an idiot sir," and then he is called to the blackboard where Jock again makes a serious mistake and the teacher beats his palm with a belt. Although Jock detests the teacher, he realises that if someone makes a significant impression on one, the person starts to resemble the feared other (83). Later he mentions the Hislop hidden in him (176). Next time it is Jock who demands to be punished (85), turning the coloniser's sadism against himself, but, at the same time, subverting the coloniser's discourse, since, the surprised Hislop remains speechless. The fall of Hislop, the advocate of English literature and the supremacy of Britishness in a Scottish environment, takes place when he begins to bully Anderson, the student with a speech impediment, the symbol of the reticent Scotsman. First Jock calls out in standard English – "He can't help talking like that, sir" (337) – and then his moral judgment is uttered in the Scots dialect –"You shouldnae

have done that" (337) –, which the Scottish students begin incanting rhythmically. Thus, Jock turns his own (spoken) language against the symbolic father (Craig, *Modern* 189). However, Jock remains bound to the memory of Hislop and begins to resemble him more and more. The similarity between Hislop and Jock is also shown by the fact that the collapse of both of them is brought about by voices. The rebellion against the coloniser, then, is fairly short-lived, since the teacher remains an integral part of the protagonist's self, and the hatred against Hislop turns into a sadism against his own self or against other, imagined figures, just as the 1979 referendum may be interpreted as a failed rebellion against England.

Facing the past fails to bring a resolution, for it is dubious if we can speak about any kind of rebirth at the end of the novel. Jock decides to head for the railway platform and disappear in the crowd. In his last sentence, he implores one of his fantasy characters: "Oh Janine, my silly soul, some to me now. I will be gentle. I will be kind." (341), and finally a rap on the door returns him to the everyday routine. Jock, as an allegory of Scotland in bondage in 1979, continues to be tormented by fantasies, dreams, stereotypes, being unable to break out of the situation of the failed referendum and the Thatcher era. In spite of his depressing story, Gray was confident as to the future five years later: "Our present ignorance and bad social organisation make most Scots poorer than most other north Europeans, but even bad human states are not everlasting." (*Janine* 345)

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