Phenomenological writing in the fiction of David Mitchell

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ABSTRACT

As the academic work on David Mitchell multiplies, and new claims are being added to describe his novel approach to writing, this study aims to understand what makes his work so apparently "innovative". Previous studies that have tried to explain Mitchell's significance have focussed on, for instance, his fragmented structures and genre-mixing, interconnectedness and globalisation, (a)temporality and the Anthropocene, and his linguistic acumen in mimicking period-specific language. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the ongoing fictional world, being created in Mitchell's macronovel, in relation to the *lifeworld* described by the field of phenomenology. By reviewing some of the existing literature on phenomenology, especially guided by the work of Robert Sokolowski, a kind of "toolset" is developed for approaching the texts. This toolset is aimed at synthesising the previous, metaphoric explanations of Mitchell's work, into a workable methodology which can navigate such a large and dynamic fictional world. Mitchell's first text, *Ghostwritten*, is initially used as an access point to the macronovel, from which an initial calibration of the toolset commences, followed by an analysis of this text's interconnections. These theoretical concepts are then extended beyond *Ghostwritten*, for the use of further analyses of the macronovel. This study argues that the instances of interplay between the construction and the thematic use of temporalities, which make up Mitchell's macronovel, are the key elements for understanding his texts in the phenomenological sense. Therefore, the *lifeworld* becomes a metaphor for the macronovel. The main objective is to illustrate how the macronovel creates a fictional world that represents, or imitates, the *lifeworld* both structurally and thematically.

Key words: David Mitchell, macronovel, phenomenology, fictional worlds, literature studies

OPSOMMING

Namate die akademiese werk oor David Mitchell toeneem en nuwe aansprake bygevoeg word tot die beskrywing van sy benadering tot skryf, was die aanvanklike stukrag vir hierdie studie om te verstaan wat sy werk so oënskynlik "innoverend" maak. Vorige studies wat probeer het om die belang van Mitchell te verklaar, het gefokus op, byvoorbeeld, sy gefragmenteerde strukture en genre-vermenging, onderlinge verbondenheid en globalisering, (a)temporaliteit en die antroposeen, en sy vaardigheid in die nabootsing van periode-spesifieke taal. Die doel van hierdie verhandeling is om die aaneenlopende fiksionele wêreld, wat deur Mitchell se makroroman geskep word, in vergelyking te stel met die *leefwêreld* wat deur fenomenologie beskryf word. Deur 'n literatuurstudie van fenomenologie te onderneem, word 'n metodologiese benadering tot Mitchell se tekste ontwikkel. Hierdie benadering is daarop gerig om 'n sintetisering van vorige metaforiese verduidelikings in 'n werkbare metodologie saam te stel, wat in staat is om Mitchell se wye en dinamiese fiksionele wêreld te navigeer. Mitchell se eerste teks, *Ghostwritten*, word as aansluitingspunt gebruik, op grond waarvan 'n kalibrering van die metodologiese gereedskapstel kan begin. Dit word gevolg deur 'n voorlopige analise van die teks se interkonneksies. Hierdie teoretise konsepte word daarna aan die hand van die groter makroroman ontwikkel en uitgebrei, deur middel van verdere analise. In hierdie studie word aangevoer dat die interaksies tussen die konstruksie en tematiese gebruik van temporaliteit, wat Mitchell se makroroman bewerkstellig, die sleutelelemente bied vir die verstaan van sy tekste. Dus word die *leefwêreld* 'n metafoor waarvolgens die makroroman beskryf kan word. Die hoofdoelstelling is om te illustreer hoe die makroroman 'n fiksionele wêreld skep wat die *leefwêreld* struktureel en tematies verteenwoordig of naboots.

Sleutelwoorde: David Mitchell, makroroman, fenomenologie, fiksionele wêrelde, literatuurstudie

NOTES ON REFERENCING

NWU Harvard-style referencing is used throughout this study. However, in some instances I have had to deviate a little as a point of necessity. The deviations only affect the in-text citations, while the corresponding reference list entries remain consistent with the Harvard-style. These include the following instances:

Edmund Husserl's *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy Book 1* is published with both the original and latest translators' paginations. In this dissertation I have incorporated only the **original pagination** in the citations.

Reference list entry:
Husserl, E. 1982. Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and phenomenological philosophy. Translated from the German by F. Kirsten. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* is published with both the original and latest translators' paginations. In this dissertation I have incorporated only the **original pagination** in the citations.

Reference list entry:
Heidegger, M. 1962. Being and time. Translated from the German by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Abbreviations used for David Mitchell's texts

Given the fact that Mitchell's texts will be used for the primary analysis, I will use abbreviations to refer to them as a matter of practicality in citations. These abbreviations will be as follows:

G = Mitchell, D.S. 1999. Ghostwritten. London: Sceptre.

n9d = Mitchell, D.S. 2001. number9dream. London: Sceptre.

CA = Mitchell, D.S. 2004. Cloud atlas. London: Sceptre.

BSG = Mitchell, D.S. 2006. Black swan green. London: Sceptre.

TA = Mitchell, D.S. 2010. The thousand autumns of Jacob de Zoet. London: Sceptre.

BC = Mitchell, D.S. 2014. The bone clocks. London: Sceptre.

SH = Mitchell, D.S. 2015. Slade house. London: Sceptre.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

> On the other hand, if digital technology
> is so superior a midwife of the novel,
> where are this century's masterpieces?
>
> David Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks*
> (2014:370)

This study tries to explore the fictional world being created by David Mitchell in what has become known as his "macronovel". The macronovel is an ever-expanding fictional world consisting of all Mitchel's texts. The main objective of this study is to show how this macronovel imitates what the field of phenomenology calls the "lifeworld" (Lebenswelt), in such a way that it is shown as a possible approach to his literature. To illustrate the argument, it is imperative that this dissertation explores how phenomenology can describe the macronovel and can be used for this type of fictional world. I argue that Mitchell, through various temporalities, constructs his fictional world to present itself to the reader as a *lifeworld* is presented to the conscious *being* in phenomenology. One could compare this *lifeworld* with existing types of fictional imitation, regardless of which canon they belong to, or which genre they represent. However, it is possible for a text to embody all of the descriptions given to the *lifeworld*. It is possible that a text not only invites a reader to immerse him/herself into its world but also presents its world to the reader in a form imitating the *lifeworld* structurally, thematically and temporally, thereby inviting greater immersion. This introductory chapter will not yet go into phenomenology as such, but rather serve as contextualisation for the study. This chapter will examine all the relevant work that has been done on Mitchell's fiction so far, and where it is situated within contemporary literature. The chapter therefore introduces Mitchell's work and the literary studies related to it – both those focussed on Mitchell, as well as other relevant modes of thinking.

1.1 Contextualisation

In 2007 David Mitchell reached the *TIME 100* list for most influential people in the world, which, according to Pico Iyer (2007), was because his first novel, *Ghostwritten*, "created the 21st century novel with months to spare". However, almost twenty years into the 21st century, it is still unclear which characteristics will best define contemporary literature after postmodernism, which begs the question as to what exactly is new about Mitchell's writing (Konstantinou, 2013:411). His fiction has been called both "experimental" and "revolutionary" in academic

circles (Johnston-Ellis, 2010:123; Knepper, 2016:93 *inter alia*), garnering critical acclaim by winning various awards, while also reaching best-seller's statuses (Brown, 2016:77; O'Donnell, 2015:2-3 *inter alia*). However, just as the "next big thing" after postmodernism remains unclear, so does the distinction between Mitchell's work and its postmodern predecessors. To clarify it is useful to briefly explore some of the proposed characteristics of contemporary literature. I will, therefore, provide an overview of some of these new trends, specifically the ones that have been attributed to Mitchell's work.

Berthold Schoene's *The Cosmopolitan Novel* (2009), for instance, explores the various dimensions of literature in an ever-globalising world, and how British writers have started to explore their local worlds in relation to the planet as a whole. Effectively, in this literary moment, the world has at the same time expanded for the individual, in the sense of globalization, but also shrunk for the collective, in the sense of "global connectivity and virtual proximity" (Schoene, 2009:98). He dedicates the entire third chapter of his book to David Mitchell's work. Essentially, he shows how Mitchell's *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas* embody the human community envisioned by Jean-Luc Nancy in *Being Singular Plural* (2000). Similarly, Vermeulen (2012) explores the "novel of globalization" as a way to track a system of decentralised power that embodies globalizing processes, summoning Foucault's notion of "biopower" as a key tenet in his thinking. He argues that Mitchell's first novel, *Ghostwritten* (1999), represents the first instance of this novel of globalization, and that, if "politics in the age of globalisation can confront and alter biopower…the novel genre can help make such a more active position within the global field of biopower imaginable" (Vermeulen, 2012:391).

Christian Moraru's (2011) idea of *Cosmodernism* puts its emphasis on the inter-relationality of an ever-globalizing world. This effectively sees a new literary tradition – from around 1989 (fall of the Berlin Wall) onwards – which explores ongoing negotiations towards a global culture from various existing ones. In this sense, the postcolonial literary concept of *hybridity* becomes a linking gateway between characters, rather than having them stuck in liminal spaces struggling to fit in on either side as previous themes would have it. Moraru's project focusses solely on American literature, but Theo D'haen (2013:275) applies the idea of *Cosmodernism* to two European novels to illustrate the spread of this "cosmodern turn" to the continent. David Mitchell's third novel, *Cloud Atlas* (2004), is one of the two novels D'haen's study uses to illustrate the elements of the *Cosmodern* novel.

McHale (2013:357-364), in the afterword of the same issue in which D'haen's article on *European Cosmodernism* appears, also tries to re-evaluate the existing ideas on the process of postmodernism's globalization. In his article, McHale (2013:361) considers the possibility that,

rather than being a product, or proof, of the inherent global nature of postmodernism, the postcolonial and magic realist traditions might have actually provided the impetus for postmodernism's global turn. Laurie (2013:2) agrees with McHale (2013:361) that the magic realist authors, like Marquez and Borges, are generally viewed as precursors of postmodernist fiction.

Whether by assimilation or appropriation, the global turn to postmodernism has become more prevalent in literature for these scholars and, in turn, the focus on world "relationality" becomes more visible in fiction as these theories develop. It is also telling to note here that between Schoene, Vermeulen, and D'haen all of the abovementioned ideas are applied to the fiction of David Mitchell.

One of the first things that critics seem to notice about Mitchell's texts, is their unusual structures, especially in the more daring *Ghostwritten* (1999), *Cloud Atlas* (2004), and *The Bone Clocks* (2014). *Ghostwritten* is a novel with nine distinct narratives – each a short story that has seemingly nothing to do with the others, but each intimately entwined with every other – traversing the globe, before the epilogue returns to the first narrative. *Cloud Atlas* stretches six different narratives over approximately a millennium, each buried within the next, like a "matrioshka doll" (CA:409). *The Bone Clocks* follows the life of protagonist, Holly Sykes, over six decades, from the vantage of various characters (including two different "races" of immortal beings) that cross her path.

In a collection of nine critical essays compiled by Sarah Dillon, four focus solely on the structures of Mitchell's texts, most notably McMorran's (2011:155-175) comparative analysis between *Cloud Atlas* and Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*. Mitchell (2004*a*) has also confirmed that Calvino's text was the inspiration behind *Cloud Atlas*'s structure. To further extend the intricacies of his narrative structure Mitchell has also, in the face of much reader speculation, admitted to creating a "macronovel" (Mason, 2010). The macronovel sees all of his texts becoming interconnected, at seemingly random levels, as intricately as the individual narratives in each novel. These connections can also be traced in miscellaneous short stories that show up in various magazines around the world, for example: *A Forgettable Story* (Mitchell, 2017) in Cathay Dragon's inflight magazine on flights to Tokyo, or *Variations on a theme by Mister Donut* (Mitchell, 2014*b*) in Granta in the London. These wide-spread, but exclusive, publications complicate access to the entire narrative universe,[1] but also mobilises readers to seek out his work, and, to a certain extent, actively take part in his work – searching and sharing

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[1] A manuscript for another novella, *From me flows what you call time*, has been deposited to the *Future Library project*, only to be published in 2114, thereby making it entirely inaccessible to current readers (Paterson, 2016).

texts on various platforms online. The most noticeable connections between his texts are usually found in his recurring characters.

Mitchell (2014*a*:617)[2] gives five reasons for his use of recurring characters as one of the means of interconnection across novels. Firstly, he lists "self-indulgence", as he feels that if a literary trope is pleasing to write, his readers might find it pleasing to read as well. Secondly, he lists "cowardice", as it frees him from the burden of having to bury characters; "[e]ven if I kill off a character in one book, who's to say I can't turn back time and bring him or her back in a subsequent novel?" (Mitchell, 2014*a*:618). The third reason he gives is "sloth", as it is hard work to create new characters, and get to know them intimately enough to write their lives for them, he would rather re-employ already-existing characters. Next, is his "envy of the long-form small-screen narrative" which one finds in television series. He argues that the literary author can write characters as rounded and fully-fleshed out as "Tony Soprano from *The Sopranos*" or "Jimmy McNulty from *The Wire*" (Mitchell, 2014*a*:619). Finally, Mitchell gives "megalomania" as both a reason for reappearing characters, as well as for the use of the word "*Überbook*" for his initial description of the macronovel. He explains how he wants to do something different in his utilization of reappearing characters, as he tries to have each of his narratives act as both stand-alone works of fiction, as well as being intertwined enough to be viewed in their serial form. Readers can, therefore, choose their own level of involvement with his literary universe (Mitchell, 2014*a*:620).

Despite his humorous tone – in playing around with five of The Seven Deadly Sins (gluttony, vanity, sloth, envy, and pride) in his description – Mitchell raises some valid points regarding contemporary literature. Television series, for instance, have become part of our popular culture, streaming services like *Netflix* have become household names, and this should naturally have an influence on the literary world.[3] The macronovel has endless storytelling potential, as it can infinitely expand in any direction, new or old, each individual text acting as either (or both) sequel and prequel to other texts, without losing its own identity as a single text. Mitchell's genre mix also fits into some descriptions of postmodernism; his magic realist narratives (like *number9dream*, for instance) mimics some of the big names (Murakami is specifically mentioned, and Borges alluded to, on various occasions). He has colonial and postcolonial narratives in some texts (*Cloud Atlas* and *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* for instance), where writers from Conrad to Malouf are referenced. In fact, one can trace most of

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[2] This is from a letter by David Mitchell which is published in the back of Sceptre's first paperback edition of *The Bone Clocks* (2014).
[3] Mitchell himself also wrote a number of episodes for Lana Wachowsky's series on Netflix called *Sense8*. He is also set to co-write the fourth instalment of the Wachowsky siblings' *The Matrix*.

the genres in the postmodern canon, and its margins, in Mitchell's work – referenced both through style, and in self-aware inter/intra-textual critiques of these styles – including science fiction (SF), fantasy, literary and historic fiction, magic realism, and more.

In the introduction to a collection of critical essays on Mitchell, Sarah Dillon (2011:18) explains how the general consensus (among the essays in the collection) is that Mitchell uses postmodern techniques to attain a different goal to what postmodernist literature aims at. She claims that Mitchell "does not adhere to the apolitical and antisocial nihilism of postmodernity with its ironic take on modern life and its paradoxical insistence on the inadequateness of narrative, language and literature" (Dillon, 2011:18). Instead of using the postmodernist techniques as a means to show the inadequacy of language or text to penetrate reality (or, even worse, as a means to deny any ontology whatsoever), Mitchell celebrates the "fertility, power and sustenance of fiction, not its exhaustion" (Dillon, 2011:18). Therefore, the obvious techniques and other literary aspects resembling the modern or postmodern literatures that are prevalent in Mitchell's work, are means that serve different ends to their previous manifestations. They congregate to form a world that is penetrable, as opposed to subverting meaning.

Mitchell's irregular explorations in temporality have especially garnered some academic attention. On this subject, Wisconsin University's special issue of *SubStance Journal – David Mitchell in the Labyrinth of Time* – dedicated all nine of its articles to Mitchell's use and portrayal of time. These range from a Heideggerian reading of the posthuman temporality in *Ghostwritten* (Boulter, 2015:18-38), to a study of Anthropocene time within cosmological time in *The Bone Clocks* (Harris, 2015:148-153). The collection of fragmented narratives – of which most of his texts are constructed – has lent itself to various literary approaches in temporal structure. *Cloud Atlas*'s structure, for instance, incorporates both circular and linear time. *The Bone Clocks* compares different experiences of time, as related to beings of different temporalities (mortal vs pseudo-immortal vs immortal).

The macronovel also goes beyond merely reimagining narrative structure or restructuring time, even though it incorporates both. For instance, Rita Barnard (2009:210) uses the idea of digital "hyperlinks" to show how the various narratives in *Ghostwritten* make up a global novel. She starts her article by looking at Iñárritu's film *Babel* (2006), and the way it uses hyperlink-style storytelling to connect its various narratives across the world. Her study then moves to *Ghostwritten* to see how it functions as global fiction of interconnectivity compared to the medium of film. Mitchell extends this same sense of interconnectivity into his entire fictional universe in creating the macronovel.

There is also more to this collection of texts, and their functioning within the macronovel, than just the gimmick of connecting the dots between various narratives. Courtney Hopf (2011:121) briefly touches on what she calls "cognitive hyperlinks" in her conclusion, where she sees a different (perhaps more schizophrenic) manner of onto-epistemological development in Mitchell's characters. She recounts how the "noncorpum" (spirit possessing others' bodies) in *Ghostwritten* describes the differences in experiential narratives between two different bodies it has possessed; one a poor Mongolian woman, the other a cosmopolitan European. While the Mongolian's mind is quieter and more singularly determined, for the European, living in the fast-paced world with more (but smaller) experiential parts – jumping from movies to stock exchange to fishing trips – reality itself becomes a fragmented narrative that jumps between marked events with the slightest relations, like the hyperlinks in digital media. The fragmentary aspects in Mitchell's work synthesise the morphological with the thematic as a way to explore and present phenomenological experiences. The cognitively *hyperlinked* reality of characters becomes the reader's experience of the text, resembling the world of experience outside of the text as well. This becomes the way in which most of Mitchell's characters structure their narrative identities, the way his texts are presented to the reader, and relates to the question I explore in this study. It seems as though Mitchell tries to return to the nature of experience itself – through his use of various first-person narrated protagonists negotiating their subjective experiences throughout their respective narratives – while incorporating the incalculable new variables that have entered human onto-epistemological realms throughout the 20th century – the abovementioned "global connectivity and virtual proximity" (Schoene, 2009:98) which arises via technological advances.

A similar notion is also argued by proponents of what is called "metamodernism", which sees a synthesis between modernist and postmodernist literatures forming (Van der Merwe, 2017:27). This is another aspect that becomes salient with the "cognitive hyperlink" idea; a return to the modernist explorations in ontology, but with the theoretical background provided by postmodernism's epistemological questionings, and the technological advances of the 20th and 21st centuries (Van der Merwe, 2017:284). On a more basic level, it starts to resemble a literary embodiment of the way phenomenology describes the process of temporality, recollection, memories, and *intentionality*. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena. It is aimed at investigating "the way things present themselves to us" (Wisnewski, 2013:29). As our understanding of the world can only be developed from direct experiences within the world, the way things are experienced is a key aspect of phenomenology. In essence, phenomenology is a method used for approaching subjective experiences, by reducing phenomena in a manner which makes them possible to study as a rigorous science. For phenomenology, an ontology may be

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informed by fragmented experiences, cognitively rearranged into narrative form as one describes it. To make sense of every current situation, events of the past are rearranged into plot points which, when combined, form a perceived history (Ricœur, 1984:82). The incorporation of new fragments into the narrative relies on their relatability to the already processed experiences; a (hyper)linking of the experiential fragments.

   Hyperlinking of a narrative, for instance, is an example of the way in which not only characters, but fiction itself can begin to embody the transformation undergone by individuals in the digital age. Things previously thought of as science fiction, have become part of everyday life. Douglas Adams' (2009)[4] device known as "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" (in the eponymous novel) – described as a small book-like computer acting as "the standard repository for all knowledge and wisdom"– might now just be called an *iPad*. An impossible trope like "teleportation" seems more probable when a code can be sent to your 3D printer. Speculative theories like Jung's collective unconscious, or Marshall McLuhan's (1962:31) "global village", resemble what the internet has become to humanity. Fictional things that writers willed into our imaginations have become things that we cannot imagine living without – mobile phones, video calling, virtual reality gaming – and this is the world in which David Mitchell's characters live, love, develop, and die. This is also the world in which the author has to create a new type of writing, while living within the actualised world of a previous era's fiction. In fact, it starts to conjure up the idea of the "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*) described by phenomenology as the world of experience.

   How would a fictional imitation of phenomenology's *lifeworld* differ from the standard imitations of the *actual world* in general realist fiction, or even *fictional worlds* in fantastical or magical realms? How differently do we experience things now compared to, say, a hundred years ago? These are some of the questions that phenomenology tries to answer. The main question that this study asks is how Mitchell's macronovel explores the fragmentary nature of human experience, within a given onto-epistemological moment, as a literary *lifeworld*? I argue that David Mitchell has found a way to synthesise, not only many of the techniques and aspects of the postmodern style and thought (Dillon, 2011:18), but also the zeitgeist of our contemporary period. Although not unique to Mitchell, the interconnectivity of the macronovel appropriates the idea of a fragmented reality to construct pieces of a whole globalised world that incorporates all the fragments. However, Mitchell's work acts as a system connecting the smallest narrative components, its larger wholes, and the metanarrative that stands outside of it, which Dillon

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[4] Originally published in 1979.

(2011*a*:154) describes as "autopoietic" in nature. So-called "autopoietic machines" can be described as "parts of a larger system that defines the independent events which perturb them...we can view these perturbing independent events as inputs, and the changes of the machine that compensate these perturbations as outputs" (Maturana & Varela, 1980:82 *as quoted by* Dillon, 2011*a*:156). A text like *Ghostwritten* becomes autopoietic in the sense that the smaller "narrative parts", which make up its larger "narrative whole", interact with each other independently from the whole, while also interacting with the whole themselves. As the reader progresses through the novel, each new *narrative part* changes the experience of previous ones, as well as the entirety of the text. In this sense, "the stories are both independent autonomous autopoietic systems *and* allopoietic systems when treated recursively as part of the autopoietic novelistic whole" (Dillon, 2011*a*:156). The world of the text, therefore, functions in a similar way to Merleau-Ponty's (2005:185)[5] description of perception as a "re-creation or re-construction of the world at every moment". It also leans into the way in which McLachlan (2011:504) describes "Being" as an always becoming for phenomenology, and how meaning is a continuous process of interpretation for phenomenology.

With regard to the problems perceived, presented and sometimes created by postmodernism's loss of referents, Sokolowski (2000:4) states "[p]henomenology insists that identity and intelligibility are available in things, and that we ourselves are defined as the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given". Although the origin of phenomenology (Edmund Husserl 1859-1938) predates the postmodernist literatures by at least two to three decades, there are two things to bear in mind here. Firstly, the argument is not that phenomenology is an antidote to postmodernism, as in the case of a reaction against or an exclusive contrasting with it. Phenomenology as an alternative to postmodernism is just that; alternative, other. It does not react against; it just tries to do something which happens to be different from that which postmodernist approaches try to do. In fact, Sokolowski (2000:202) goes even further, by claiming that "phenomenology breaks out of modernity" altogether as a philosophical tradition, even though a large amount of postmodern thought originates with phenomenology.[6]

Pure phenomenology in its original Husserlian form, and postmodernism part ways in later stages of postmodernity. Where phenomenology always tries to return "to the things themselves" (Heidegger, 1962:28), postmodernism starts rejecting the idea that one can even access the things themselves (Bertens, 1995:12). While both these causes can be seen as

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[5] Originally published in French as *Phénoménologie de la perception* in 1962.
[6] Sartre, Levinas, Ricœur, Derrida to name a few.

exemplative of the modernist crisis of epistemology extending into questions of ontology, postmodernism seems to have forgotten its origin, sometimes developing nihilistic tendencies. This is something one can see manifested in certain postmodernist fictions, especially literary postmodern fiction or anti-referential literature. The question becomes, then, how would phenomenology manifest itself in literature?

1.1.1 Research questions

The approach to this study will be slightly irregular in terms of the way the theory, method and analyses interact with each other. Firstly, I aim to show how Mitchell's macronovel forms a *lifeworld*, which means that phenomenology is not solely used in its usual methodological way for approaching literature hermeneutically, but also, as a narrative comparison; one comparing a fictional world (that Mitchell creates), with the *lifeworld* (developed by phenomenologists). I use phenomenology as a means to explore an autopoietic narrative system. The main question can, therefore, give rise to three additional questions, each with its own sub-enquiries:

> **1. What is understood by "the *lifeworld*"?**
> -What is the purpose of phenomenology (what does it aim to do; how does it work)?
> -What is the function of the *lifeworld* for phenomenology?
> **2. How can the *lifeworld* be translated into a fictional world?**
> -How are worlds usually constructed in fiction?
> -How do the elements of a fictional world relate to the *lifeworld*?
> **3. How does Mitchell's fictional world relate to the *lifeworld*?**
> -How does Mitchell construct his fictional world throughout the macronovel?
> -Which elements of the *lifeworld* are present in the macronovel's construction?
> -How is Mitchell's fictional world presented to the reader in terms of the *lifeworld*?

This study argues that the instances of interplay between the construction and thematic use of temporalities, which make up Mitchell's macronovel, are the key elements for understanding his texts in the phenomenological sense. The main objective, then, is to show how the macronovel creates a fictional world that represents, or imitates, the *lifeworld* both structurally and thematically. To do this, the study will, firstly, show what a "*lifeworld*" is, and secondly, relate this *lifeworld* to the fictional world created by Mitchell in his macronovel. There are, therefore, three main components to this study: *phenomenology*, *fictional worlds*, and the *macronovel*. The theoretical concepts relating to phenomenology and fictional worlds will be explored in the

second chapter, while the macronovel will be analysed in terms of these theoretical concepts throughout the third and fourth chapters.

1.2   The literature on phenomenology and fictional worlds

To build a theoretical background for this study, *Chapter 2* will cover the basic concepts of phenomenology – its origins; what it is; what it tries to do; and how it will be used here – as a means to sketch out what has been called the "lifeworld". This is done to develop the concept of the *lifeworld* in such a way, that it can be used to be read alongside Mitchell's work. The chapter concludes by distinguishing between the phenomenological method, and the way in which phenomenology will be used here: as one half of a comparative literature study involving Mitchell's work as the other half.

As a philosophical movement, phenomenology started right at the beginning of the 20th century with Edmund Husserl's two-volume *Logical Investigations*.[7] In an attempt to develop philosophy as a rigorous science, Husserl – originally a mathematician – started working on what he called a "pure phenomenology", which would essentially be a methodology by which to approach human experiences. The movement is quite widely spread, and some of the biggest names in 20th century philosophy (especially Continental philosophers) have at some point taken part in its discussions.[8]

As a discipline, it is closely related to most other forms of discussion in philosophy – including ontology, epistemology, logic, ethics – yet is completely distinct from all of them (Smith, 2003). The term itself is compounded of the Greek words "*phainomenon*" and "*logos*", which "signifies the activity of giving an account [*logos*] of various ways in which things can appear [*phenomena*]" (Sokolowski, 2000:13). According to Biemel and Spiegelberg (2017), phenomenology tries to formally investigate the way phenomena are consciously experienced. It tries to do so by avoiding presuppositions and without creating theories regarding causality. Smith (2003) argues that phenomenology studies the "structures of consciousness as experienced from a first-person point of view", of which "intentionality" is the central structure. *Intentionality* refers to the way in which consciousness is always directed towards something, or is always "conscious of" something (Sokolowski, 2000:12). In this sense, phenomenology functions by methodologically transforming the studied object into a subjective experience (Silverman, 1980:705). An experience is directed towards something only in terms of the

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[7] Originally published in German as *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900/1901), it was first translated as *Logical Investigations* in 1970 by John N. Findlay.
[8] Including Heidegger, Levinas, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Habermas, Ricœur, and even Derrida.

meaning it represents for the subjective consciousness. Therefore, phenomenology is the study of the "meanings things have in our experience" (Smith, 2003).

For three reasons, I have chosen Robert Sokolowski's *Introduction to Phenomenology* (2000) as a primary text for this study. Firstly, after nearly a hundred years since Husserl started the phenomenological endeavour, Sokolowski offers a straightforward discussion of what phenomenology is, instead of arguing what it can be, or how it should change. To try and extract what the *lifeworld* looks like from something like Heidegger's critiques on Husserl, or Derrida's evaluations on the three different approaches of Husserl, Heidegger and Levinas, unnecessarily complicates what phenomenology will be used for in this study.

Secondly, Sokolowski's simplifications (in relation to 20th century philosophy) will also minimise jargon. Many of the major complaints regarding phenomenology throughout the first half of the 20th century relate to its difficult language. However, phenomenology is only used as one half of a comparative study here, not as a methodological application, and, as already hinted, Sokolowski's book tries to replace jargon with simple explanations in most cases.

Thirdly, Sokolowski's work, in general, is situated within a school of thought that approaches phenomenology as the alternative that is able to disrupt the modernist process that eventually turned into what he calls the "modern epistemological problem" (Sokolowski, 2000:203). I argue that Mitchell is exploring a similar problem in his fiction.

As a brief summation of Sokolowski's text, one can say that he tries to introduce phenomenology to an audience wider than the philosophical echo-chamber wherein it is usually found. The book originated as a conversation between Sokolowski and a colleague in mathematics with whom he usually tries to discuss his work, but he found that there were no books that simply stated what phenomenology is. He starts his discussion with a general introduction on the concept of *intentionality*, which he deems the central issue in phenomenology. He then moves on to the three formal structures by which phenomenology functions in practice, before explaining the differences in attitude that are necessary for understanding the "phenomenological reduction" process. After this initial rough definition of what phenomenology does, he goes into an in-depth discussion on how phenomenology approaches three domains of experience as the *lifeworld*. These include, "the 'internal' field of memory and imagination, the 'external' field of perceived objects, words, pictures, and symbols, and the 'intellectual' field of categorial objects" (Sokolowski, 2000:4). Next, Sokolowski discusses the idea of the self or the pure ego as the "dative" of experience, essentially meaning that the consciousness of being is dependent on its capacity to have phenomena presented to it (Heidegger calls this "Dasein"). Sokolowski uses this concept to move onto temporality as the

basis of identity. From this description he can start to describe the world inhabited by the self, as it is only the self that experiences this world. The self is a part of this world – both a product and creator of it – through intersubjective negotiations of its subjective experiences. Essentially, what I take from Sokolowski's work, as a means to get a useful picture of the *lifeworld* which can be compared to the macronovel, are four specific concepts. These include i) *phenomenological reduction*; ii) *being*; iii) *intentionality*; and iv) *temporality.*

1.3   Texts that make up of the macronovel

The universe that David Mitchell is creating, has become so intertwined that it is necessary to keep all of the texts in mind when working with any one of them, and especially when approaching the macronovel as a phenomenological structure. There follows below a brief outline of each of the seven texts which make up the macronovel, in published order. There are also miscellaneous short stories that form part of the macronovel, but they do not need to be formally introduced here and can quickly be contextualised during the study as necessary.

1.3.1   Ghostwritten (1999)

Mitchell's first novel won the *John Llewellyn Rhys Prize*, and was shortlisted for the *Guardian First Book Award*. The full title of the text is *Ghostwritten: a novel in nine parts*, although technically there are ten parts (or nine and a bit), though the last is merely an epilogue that returns to the first narrative. Each chapter in *Ghostwritten* has the name of the location in which it takes place, thus traversing the globe through *Okinawa*, *Tokyo*, *Hong Kong*, *Holy Mountain* (China), *Mongolia*, *Petersburg*, *London*, *Clear Island* (Ireland), and *Night Train* (New York), before returning to "Underground" (metro train in Tokyo that precedes the "Okinawa" chapter). It starts with a narrative on the character Quasar, who is hiding in Okinawa after planting a backpack with sarin on a train in Tokyo; a clear reference to the terrorist attacks by *Aum Shinrikyo* (later known as *Aleph*) of the same nature that took place on the Tokyo metro in 1995. The second chapter follows a Japanese music store clerk, Satoru, as he falls in love with a girl. The novel then moves to Hong Kong, where a British lawyer, Neal Brose, struggles to juggle his fraudulent business dealings, his divorce, an affair with his housekeeper, and his failing health. The chapter ends with his death from an acute diabetic onslaught. The "Holy Mountain" chapter explores the political timeline of 20th century China from the vantage of a tea shack owner living her entire life on a mountain, being harassed by each new political movement taking control. This is followed by "Mongolia", which explores the nature of *Being* through the eyes of a "noncorpum", or bodiless entity (pure consciousness), seeking its origin. From here the text turns

to an art heist, and subsequent murder in "Petersburg". The next chapter follows a jazz musician and ghost-writer through London, who decides to clean up his act and move in with his girlfriend and child. This is followed by "Clear Island", an Irish isle where physicist Mo Muntervary is hiding from the US army, who want to weaponise her research. The penultimate chapter takes the form of a late-night radio talk show, featuring calls from an anti-warfare artificial intelligence program facing a moral conundrum. This program, known as "the zookeeper", is essentially the product of Mo Muntervary's research, and an obvious continuation of the idea of bodiless consciousness from the "Mongolia" chapter. The epilogue returns to Tokyo just before Quasar gets off the train while planting his backpack of sarin, thus preceding the beginning of the text.

1.3.2 Number9dream (2001)

Mitchell's second novel was shortlisted for both the *Booker* and *James Tait Black Memorial* prizes. A film playing in the background of one of its scenes, set in a cinema where the protagonist is eavesdropping on a supposedly secret meeting between two other characters, was adapted in 2013 into a short film by Mark Gill, called *The Voorman Problem*, starring Martin Freeman and Tom Hollander. It was nominated for both an *Academy Award* and a *BAFTA*. Mitchell's 2015 novel, *The Bone Clocks*, refers to one of its characters, Crispin Hershey, as having written this film.

number9dream can be regarded as a bildungsroman. The story follows twenty-year old Eiji Miyake, traveling from a small Okinawan village to big city Tokyo, as he searches for an estranged father he has never met. Eiji's world constantly weaves between fantasy and reality, navigating daydreams, regular dreams, movies, videogames, history, and fables in his quest for a sense of belonging. The intradiegetic, first-person narration used throughout the text leads the reader through fantasies, memories, dreams, movies, videogames, and stories all mixed in with reality. One of Miyake's dreams features a conversation with John Lennon regarding the title of his song "#9dream",[9] in which Lennon explains that "[t]he ninth dream begins after every ending" (n9d:398). The book ends with the title of the ninth chapter, "Nine", but no text follows. As Eiji Miyake comes into the reality of adulthood, so too does the reader return to reality outside the text – although, this might just be the ninth dream.

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[9] John Lennon released "#9dream" on *Walls to Bridges* (1974).

1.3.3 Cloud Atlas (2004)

Mitchell's most successful text – both critically and commercially – is his 2004 novel *Cloud Atlas*. It was also shortlisted for the *Booker Prize*, won the *Faber Memorial Prize*, and garnered "international best-seller" status. In spite of its being called "unfilmable", it was adapted to film by the Wachowskis (*The Matrix*) and Tom Tykwer (*Run Lola Run*) in 2012, starring some of the biggest names in Hollywood – including Tom Hanks, Halle Berry, Hugo Weaving, Hugh Grant, Ben Wishaw, Jim Broadbent, and Jim Sturgess – each playing multiple roles throughout the story.[10]

Returning to the text: *Cloud Atlas* is split into six different narratives spanning six different timelines – from a 19th century sea voyage, to a post-apocalyptic future. Furthermore, each narrative has its own protagonists, settings, genres, and linguistic styles. Five of the six narratives are each split in half, framing the sixth (final chapter chronologically) in the middle of the text. The different narratives are separated from each other spatially and temporally, but become intimately entwined when read together. When the work is viewed in its entirety, the fragments consisting of separate narratives become an entire narrative of humanity that circles the globe and stretches across time.

Mitchell mentions that the idea of narratives that interrupt each other is inspired by Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller* (D'haen, 2013:279). However, where Calvino's text interrupts its narratives without conclusion, Mitchell places a "mirror" in the middle of his novel, which leads the reader back to the beginning, emphasising the cyclical nature of time (Johnston-Ellis, 2010:13). Therefore, the text starts in chronological order, each narrative interrupted by the one following it, until the middle. It is only after this sixth narrative (the first one to be completed) that one realises how the narratives fit together. While the text works its way backwards through the respective second halves of each narrative, the reader finally sees that the main character and narrator in the post-apocalyptic future (Zachry) is watching an archival interview video of Sonmi~451 just before her execution in the 31st century. Sonmi~451 is watching a film, before she is executed for treason, about Timothy Cavendish's life in the early 2000's. Timothy Cavendish is reading a manuscript that he aims to publish for one of his clients; a novel about Louisa Rey set in 1975. Louisa Rey is reading the letters that Robert Frobisher sent to Rufus Sixsmith in 1931. Finally, Frobisher is reading "The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing", which he wrote on his voyage in the mid 1800's. Each of these characters has a narrative identity

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[10] The film was not as well received as the book, though, garnering approval ratings of only 66% on Rotten Tomatoes, 55% on Metacritic, and leaving Guardian film reviewer, Philip French (2013) to conclude that even though it eventually turned out to be filmable, maybe it should not have been filmed.

that is formed in part, or at least influenced by, their reading of the previous (chronologically) character's narrative.

1.3.4 Black Swan Green (2006)

Longlisted for the Booker and shortlisted for the Costa Novel of the Year, Mitchell's fourth novel returns to the form of a single-protagonist bildungsroman narrative (like *number9dream*). *Black Swan Green* also contains elements of a semi-autobiographical nature in that the protagonist, 13-year-old Jason Taylor, is a fictional representation of Mitchell's own youth; it is set in 1982, Worcestershire, with the Falklands war and divorcing parents in the background. Through Taylor, Mitchell explores his own struggles with stammering and bullying, which become prominent features of the character and helps determine his hierarchical status at school.

The story plays out over 13 months, starting and ending with a chapter called *January Man*,[11] once again indicating Mitchell's focus on cyclical text structures. Each chapter is the title of a poem that Taylor writes, and subsequently has published in the local paper. None of these poems are shown in the text, but the reader can deduce that each of the chapter narratives explains the contexts of each of the poems. This text is also rather significant for the macronovel, as various characters from it appear in other texts. For instance, the protagonist of *Ghostwritten*'s third chapter, "Hong Kong", called Neal Brose, grows up with Jason Taylor in *Black Swan Green*. Another character, Clive Pike from Taylor's mathematics class, features in various short stories, including *Acknowledgements* (Mitchell, 2005), *Preface* (Mitchell, 2006*a*), and *Muggins Here* (Mitchell, 2010*a*). Taylor's cousin, Hugo Lamb, who comes to visit and teaches him to smoke, is one of the main villains in *The Bone Clocks*, narrating the second chapter, and is part of a group of immortal beings who drink souls. *Black Swan Green*, therefore, provides the childhood backstories for a number of Mitchell's characters, while also providing some insight into their creator as well.

1.3.5 The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet (2010)

Mitchell's fifth novel was longlisted for the *Booker Prize*, and shortlisted for the *James Tait Black Memorial* and *Commonwealth Writers'* prizes. *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* also reached number one on the *Sunday Times* bestseller list. The text is set on the man-made island of Dejima, in the bay of Nagasaki, at the end of the 18th century. Jacob de Zoet is a Dutch clerk who arrives at Dejima in the hopes of building wealth and status enough to be allowed to

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[11] The title, "January Man" also references the eponymous song by Bert Jansch (1973). Subsequently, Otto Jansch is also the name of a peripheral character in "Letters from Zedelghem" in *Cloud Atlas*.

marry a woman waiting for him in the Netherlands. The text takes care to accurately portray the historic and geographic setting, and explores the interactions between two completely different cultures – the Dutch and the Japanese. Mitchell paints a world of traders, slaves, interpreters and spies. The narrative focus mainly shifts between Dutch and Japanese, accompanied by corresponding linguistic shifts in syntactic structures and narrative style. There is also a narrative focus that shifts to a slave from Africa working in Dejima. Another focusses on an English ship captain who aims to take over Dejima. Mitchell essentially uses various points of view to construct a single society made up of a multitude of voices. However, the entire narration is in the third person, which is not normal practice for Mitchell's writing. All of his texts, barring the Luisa Rey narrative in *Cloud Atlas*, and the entirety of this text, have been narrated from the first-person perspective.

The connection between this text and others on the macro-level is also wide-ranging. One of the prominent characters who dies in this text, Dr Marinus, resurfaces in both *The Bone Clocks* and *Slade House* as an immortal being who dies and is reborn continuously throughout history. The ship on which Jacob de Zoet sails away at the end of the novel, *Profetes*, is the same ship that Adam Ewing travels on in *Cloud Atlas* (published earlier, but played out chronologically later in narrative time). An evil sex cult from this novel is also later revealed to be a soul imbibing group of pseudo-immortals in *The Bone Clocks*.

1.3.6   The Bone Clocks (2014)

Mitchell's return to the more fragmented narrative style comes in the form of *The Bone Clocks*. This is another text that was not only longlisted for the *Booker Prize*, but also won the *World Fantasy Award* for 2015. The text is split into six separate narratives, following the life of Holly Sykes, as narrated by various characters, over the course of 60 years from 1984 to 2043. The first chapter is narrated by Holly herself, on the day she runs away from home as a teenager. She arrives at her boyfriend's home, aiming to move in with him, upon which she finds him in bed with her best friend. The reader later finds out that Holly was pregnant with his child, and had an abortion. The first chapter ends with her eventually working as a harvest-time labourer on a strawberry farm. Later, the reader finds out that her brother, Jacko, went missing a day later, after which she was returned home by the police. Holly suffers life-long emotional distress following the loss of Jacko.

The second chapter is narrated by Hugo Lamb, an amoral, hustling young politics student who cheats his friends out of their money, and sleeps with various women to gain leverages in life. He eventually drives his one friend to suicide by exploiting his gambling habits. Hugo meets

Holly at a ski-resort in the Swiss Alps, where she works as a bar manager, and they sleep together while snowed in one night. The chapter ends where he gets into a car with Elijah D'arnoq (a descendent of the character Mr D'arnoq[12] in *Cloud Atlas* and *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*) and Baptiste Pfenninger, and accepts their offer to join a group of pseudo-immortal beings who "decant" and "imbibe" human souls.

The third chapter is narrated by Ed Brubeck; a childhood friend of Holly Sykes in the first chapter, now her husband and father to their child Aoife. Brubeck is a war journalist reporting for *Spyglass* in Baghdad. His thoughts reveal that he has turned into a war junkie, which is something he constantly tries to hide from Holly, as she has asked him to quit the dangerous job for the sake of their daughter. *Spyglass Magazine* also features in the Luisa Rey narrative of *Cloud Atlas*, as the publication where Luisa works. The next narrative reveals that Ed Brubeck eventually dies in Iraq.

The fourth chapter introduces the reader to Crispin Hershey, a famous novelist who had major success earlier on in his career, but whose latest book is not doing too well. Hershey travels the world to various literary conferences and literati social events, which keep him contact with Holly Sykes, who has now written a successful book on metaphysical beings called "The Radio People". Hershey also frames one of his critics for drug smuggling in Columbia, wrongfully imprisoning him. By the end of the narrative Hershey is eventually shot and killed.

The fifth chapter is narrated by Marinus, an immortal being, or "Horologist", who is part of a group of immortals fighting a war over centuries against the "Anchorites" – a group of pseudo immortals who have to drink souls to stay alive. Marinus tells Holly that one of their oldest immortal allies is preserved in her head, and that they need to resurrect her for the battle. Marinus and Holly eventually defeat evil, after fighting Hugo Lamb and the rest of the Anchorites, but Marinus is killed, to be resurrected somewhere else later. Marinus is first featured in *A Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, where he dies in the end. Here the reader is introduced to Mitchell's brand of immortal beings for the first time, through an already familiar character. Marinus returns in *Slade House* as well.

The final chapter of this text is once again narrated by Holly Sykes, where she is an old woman living on Clear Island – the same island as featured in the eighth chapter of *Ghostwritten* – with her orphaned grandchildren. A magnetic storm has destroyed all the electronics and the apocalypse is underway. In the end Marinus, in a new body, comes to take her grandchildren away to a new civilization. Holly stays behind and muses upon the end of the world.

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[12] Mitchell (as quoted by Jewell, 2014) has stated that "D'arnoq" is a phonetic anagram of "Conrad", which suitably references Joseph Conrad, as Mr D'arnoq is a maritime character in *Cloud Atlas* and *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*.

1.3.7 Slade House (2015)

Mitchell's seventh text, a shorter novella-type text, started life as a short story on Twitter called *The Right Sort* (Mitchell, 2014*c*), written in a series of tweets over the course of a week. The first chapter is an expansion of the Twitter story, and is followed by four other chapters, each following nine years after its predecessor. All five of the chapters have, in typical Mitchell style, different protagonists narrating a story of twin Anchorites living and killing people in Slade House. In the first four chapters the protagonists are the victims who eventually die by the end of their respective chapters. The final chapter is narrated by Marinus – from *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* and *The Bone Clocks* – as she defeats the twins. This part of the Marinus saga takes place ten years before Holly Sykes meets her in *The Bone Clocks*.

1.4 Brief outline of the argument

The short summaries of Mitchell's texts already start to illustrate both the independent nature of the texts (as stand-alone texts in their own right), as well as the intimate connections between them. Each text is entirely different from any of the others in genre, setting (spatial and temporal), plot, and structure. There are shared characters but, so far, there have not been any shared protagonists, or recurring narrators across texts. However, when read together, they share a world which expands across centuries and continents through all of these seemingly independent *narrative parts*. It is within these connections that the phenomenological aspects function together to create a world accessible to the reader. For the purposes of analysis, the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation will apply the theoretical concepts developed in the second chapter. In the second chapter, a literature review of the core concepts of phenomenology will be conducted in relation to the functioning of fictional worlds. The macronovel is discussed over the course of the third and fourth chapters. *Chapter 3* will use Mitchell's first novel, *Ghostwritten*, as an initial access point into the macronovel, and to translate the theoretical concepts, outlined in *Chapter 2*, in relation with Mitchell texts. The fourth chapter will extend the analyses from the third chapter beyond *Ghostwritten*, into further readings of the larger macronovel. Specific attention will be paid to *Cloud Atlas* and *The Bone Clocks* in *Chapter 4*'s readings. However, given the interconnectedness of the macronovel, all of Mitchell's texts need to be kept in mind.

CHAPTER 2 THE THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF A PHENOMENOLOGICAL FICTION

To build a theoretical framework for the study, this chapter will focus on phenomenology – what it is; what it tries to do; how it will be used here – and how it can be represented in literature. I argue that Mitchell's texts already resemble a kind of "lifeworld" (*Lebenswelt*), which phenomenologists use to describe the world they study after an initial "phenomenological reduction". Each section in this chapter, then, will begin with an overview of the field of phenomenology, by looking into its main functions and objectives in philosophy. One of the key concepts – regarding experience in the *lifeworld* – according to phenomenology, is the dynamic between the human consciousness and its various levels of temporality. I will, therefore, show how temporality is the basis of experience within the field of phenomenology. I will use the *lifeworld*, sketched out in this chapter, to formulate how such a world might manifest itself in literature, as a means to explore the primary texts of David Mitchell. The main elements that describe the make up the *lifeworld* will be extracted from the theory and re-appropriated as a toolset with which to approach Mitchell's macronovel.

2.1   Phenomenology and text

Imagine a world that is completely foreign – not another city or country where the supposed weird things still resemble that which can be compared in their likeness or difference to things known – a place without any known context for its observer. Imagine the experience of such a place. Will one be able to recognise anything in it without anything already related to it? How have things come to be recognised in the experience of the world to begin with? This is what phenomenology tries to investigate: "the way things present themselves to us" (Wisnewski, 2013:29). In the hypothetically imagined, unknown world, the quote above automatically becomes problematic. Who is the "us"? Why would things "present themselves" to us? How do things present themselves? Phenomenology tries to answer these questions.

After an initial establishment of the field of phenomenology by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), and later Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Alfred Schütz (1945:77) noted that its complicated language left its writings almost inaccessible to anyone outside the field. Robert Sokolowski simplifies things a hundred years after Husserl's first *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900), in his *Introduction to Phenomenology* (2000). Sokolowski steps outside of the philosophical tradition, where conversations usually revolve around who said what and how it

should be interpreted, and tries to only describe phenomenology itself. For the purposes of this study, then, Sokolowski's book should be sufficient, and also easier to navigate than, for example, a specialised Heideggerian critique of Husserl. To sufficiently explain what phenomenology entails, and how it pertains to literature, four main aspects need to be explored, which are as follows: i) *phenomenological reduction*; ii) *being*; iii) *intentionality*; and iv) *temporality.*

Firstly, a phenomenological reduction refers to the way in which Husserl deemed it necessary to bracket out the world as a means to try and study it in an unmediated manner. [13] This bracketed-out world will eventually become the "*lifeworld*" itself, with which I aim to compare Mitchell's fictional world later on. To fully understand what it entails, its relation to the other aspects that make up phenomenology needs to be discussed. The phenomenological reduction is what creates the platform from whence phenomenology can start asking its questions. It requires what is called the "phenomenological attitude" as opposed to the "natural attitude". In literature, the text itself can become an already bracketed world in this sense.

Secondly, when discussing the concept of "*being*" in phenomenology, the term "*Dasein*" often emerges. *Dasein* is a term most associated with Heidegger. It is a concept that tries to encapsulate what the essence of consciousness is, in terms of its relation to the world. *Dasein* is not merely the human subject one would think about in terms of its physical, biological, or cognitive being. Rather, Heidegger (1962:12) initially defines *Dasein* as a *being* for whom "Being is an issue" within its very essence. In other words, it is a *being* that tries to understand its own, and others' *being* (ontical) from within *Being* (ontological).[14] *Dasein* constructs, experiences, and tries to understand its own *lifeworld* while being within it. In this study, both readers and characters can act as *Dasein* where meaning is negotiated. However, for the sake of keeping jargon limited, "*being*" should suffice in most cases, in addition to the more literature-orientated "characters" and "readers".

Thirdly, *intentionality* should be discussed as it is the central function employed by *beings* interacting with the world of experience. *Intentionality*, in the field of phenomenology is used to describe the way one orients oneself towards objects within the world. It is *intentionality* that directs consciousness towards the experience of things. The *lifeworld* is navigated by means of *intentionality*, and phenomenology tries to study the relationship between *being* and the world

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[13] As opposed to being mediated by, for instance, science, religion, theory, society, etc.
[14] The capitalization of "Being" indicates the difference between *being* as an entity, and *Being* as the thing that makes (or within which) beings *be*. Note that this does not denote an ultimate Other, or god-type being above other beings, it is *not* a higher classification of being. It is to indicate what Heidegger calls the "ontological difference" between *being as ontical* (existing), and *Being as ontological* (existence).

as *intentionally* experienced. Phenomenology categorically approaches the *lifeworld* by means of formal structures, in an attempt to break down experience into processes for study. There are three pairs of formal structures; *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences*. The pairs in each structure are inseparable and all three structures are entwined as a system within which the slightest change in one experiential structure can alter others. *Parts and wholes* are the way in which things are formed from various different parts, even if they are usually experienced as singular wholes. *Identity in manifold* is the way in which the identity of something can only be recognised through a manifold of experiences of the thing itself. The structure of *presences and absences* is something that originated with Husserl (Sokolowski, 2000:22). It tries to show how the presence of something can only be experienced against the background of absences, and the absence of something can likewise only be experienced within a background of other presences. This also forms the basis of how things can be recalled or remembered in their absence, and the fact that one can distinguish between a memory of something and the thing itself.

Finally, *temporality* is one of the most important aspects of experience in the *lifeworld*, as time is the way in which things are experienced, and how experiences are incorporated into one's *being*. If *intentionality* is the central function of experience, temporality is both its means and foundation. In phenomenology there is a three-fold conception of temporality which consists of *world time*, *internal time*, and *consciousness of internal time*. *World time* refers to objectively measured time. *Internal time* is the way in which time is experienced. *Consciousness of internal time* is the way in which a human being can distinguish between the previous two, as well as be conscious of the way experiences follow each other (Sokolowski, 2000:130-131).

From the discussion of these main elements of phenomenology, the construction of the *lifeworld*, as well as its significance in literature, should become clearer. The aim is to be able to perform a reading that relates the *lifeworld*, described by phenomenology, and Mitchell's *fictional world*, presented as the macronovel. Fiction originates in the *lifeworld*; the text cannot look like the actual *lifeworld*, as its world is always already mediated through text. Even phenomenology itself originates in the *lifeworld*, while it tries to describe the *lifeworld*. This means that the idea of the *lifeworld* itself is just another part within a supposed "actual Lifeworld" it tries to describe. Also, just as phenomenology tries to describe the world from within the world by approaching it as a representative world (*lifeworld*), so can fiction also only try to describe the world it is in by creating a representative world (*fictional world*). Laurie (2013:26) argues that *fictional worlds* are generated through the actual world, even in fictional worlds that are supposedly completely different from the actual world. It is this relation to the

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actual world that makes referentiality in fiction and, subsequently, reader-immersion possible. In relating the fictional world to the *lifeworld*, it is essential that the theoretical concepts of phenomenology (as mentioned above) are explored with the aim of extracting a relevant method of analysis, with Mitchell's work in mind, for the analysis chapters.

2.1.1 The phenomenological reduction

In the first book of his three-part seminal work, *Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy,*[15] Husserl (1982:4) describes phenomenology as "an eidetic doctrine, not of phenomena that are real, but of phenomena that are transcendentally reduced". This relates to the way phenomenology is used as a method for approaching subjective experience as a rigorous science, by reducing phenomena in a manner which makes them possible to study; a phenomenological reduction. He suggests a kind of "attitude" change to be undergone for the purposes of this type of reduction by making a distinction between what he calls the "natural attitude" and the "phenomenological attitude".[16] The *natural attitude* describes the way in which the natural sciences posit and orient themselves in the world by treating observational experiences as actuality, and wherein all presents itself as already factual (Husserl, 1982:53). What the *phenomenological attitude* essentially tries to do, is to have the world of natural sciences (all of the fields of study in the natural world – humanities, arts, psychology, etc. are also included here) "parenthesised", or bracketed out, in an attempt to study the world as experienced by pure consciousness, which Husserl deems as preceding natural observations. This bracketed-out realm is known as the "lifeworld", and is completely distinct from the world studied by the sciences, or rather, it contains all of these worlds of science. Phenomenology does not, however, negate the world of actuality. It is just a bracketing out, which allows for a study of the perception of things without questioning their factual nature. From this *phenomenological* view, the natural sciences tend to be seen as limited approaches, reducing the whole world to singular aspects of itself. Husserl (1982:57) wanted phenomenology to be a field of science situated within a unique region of *Being* that exists as the remainder, after the *lifeworld* has been bracketed out in the phenomenological reduction.

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[15] Originally published in German as *Ideen zu einer reinen Phanomenologie und phanomenologischen Philosophie* in 1913, and commonly known as *Ideas 1*.
[16] Sometimes referred to as the "transcendental attitude". For the sake of uniformity, I will use "phenomenological attitude" (Sokolowski, 2000) throughout.

2.1.1.1 The natural attitude

Sokolowski (2000:43) describes the *natural attitude* as the "default perspective" with which one approaches, experiences, and interacts with the world. The world, however, is not viewed in terms of planet Earth, nor as the perceivable universe. Rather, the world is the horizon of individual thought and experience. It is one's conceivable "reality" of *being*. This world is not just our immediate surroundings either. We can think of places we have never been, like Spain or Pluto. We can dream up concepts, and they are part of our world. Within this world of ours, we can talk of the world, the universe, existence, or ourselves, but these are all merely part of the world we individually experience and contextualise. This is the *lifeworld*, and forms the context or background setting of one's everyday life. An individual exists as the centre of this setting, which contains immediate experiences, as well as anything else that governs the infinite things experienced – between past, present, and future – even the developed concepts of infinity itself.

The term "world", therefore, is a "*singulare tantum*" (Sokolowski, 2000:44 *italics original*), which means that it describes a unique concept. The world is always given in exceedance of everything – not the sum of all things, but that which encompasses all things; the base of all immediate experiences. The other unique concept that plays counterpart to the world, is the "I" that both experiences and creates the world it is in. For Sokolowski (2000:44), "[t]he world as a whole and the I as the centre are the two singularities between which all other things can be placed", and thus the world belongs to the *I*, while the I is part of the *world*. Each *I* has its own world, which is developed as it is experienced. Each world, however, is also necessarily influenced by each other world it encounters. This is where the concept of "intersubjectivity" comes in (further discussed in *2.1.2 Being* below).

There are two important things to note about this description of the world. Firstly, the human subject (the *I*) does not experience things in terms of atoms, with electrons and photons bumping around each other (physics), nor are people a bunch of cells and neurons dividing and synapsing while we speak to them (biology). Things are experienced, in essence, as wholes. Chairs and tables are complete things to sit on and at. People are unique essences with unique faces, voices, conversations, all experienced as individual wholes. In fact, Sokolowski (2000:44), following Levinas's (1969:198) musings on murder, argues that death is the world losing one of its ways of *being*. Each *I*, therefore, is one way of *being* for the world as a whole, while also being an entire world itself. The sciences through which we approach the world of factuality, still depends on this experiential world. One cannot theorise about the physical and chemical properties of a star, without first having experienced a mere twinkle in the sky, and asking "what is that?"

Secondly, the description above of how the world is constructed and experienced by an I, is not given from within the *natural attitude*. Rather, to be able to describe the world in terms of the way we experience things, we have to stand outside of it. In other words, the way experiences of the world are explained through scientific enquiry is from within the *natural attitude*, but the description of *how* such things are initially experienced in the world, can only be done after the world has been bracketed out. This bracketing includes a bracketing out of the I within the world, as it is exactly the sphere of experience between the world and the I that phenomenology tries to study. In this sense, the phenomenological reduction seems like any other form of reduction (physical, for instance), which tries to view the world through a specific lens in order to access something that is beyond the *natural attitude* within which normal experience takes place. However, Sokolowski (2000:47) states that the *phenomenological attitude* is completely different to the "attitudes" one would have to be in while approaching the world from the vantage of other sciences.

2.1.1.2 The phenomenological attitude

The *phenomenological attitude* is the mind-set from which a phenomenologist approaches the *lifeworld*, in order to give accurate descriptions of how I's experience their *worlds*. As stated above, to enter the *phenomenological attitude* one has to perform the phenomenological reduction. The process of the phenomenological reduction is, for Husserl (1982:112) at least, one of the most important steps towards establishing phenomenology as a "rigorous science", which was ultimately his goal. But what makes this phenomenological reduction – and the subsequent entering into a *phenomenological attitude* – different from the reduction processes undergone to reach the "attitudes" one needs in any of the other sciences?

Sokolowski (2000:47) calls it an "all-or-nothing" shift that moves the individual into the *phenomenological attitude*. Rather than, as in other sciences, absolutizing the object of study, the phenomenologist steps outside of existence to get a better view of its entirety. This does not mean that the phenomenologist denies, or negates, the world of existence. Neither does the phenomenologist doubt the nature of existence, as Descartes would have philosophers do (Husserl, 1982:57; Soklowski, 2000:48). The phenomenologist does not even lose his/her own *intentionalities* (see *2.1.3 Intentionality* below) or experiences within the *lifeworld*; they are contemplated as they are experienced or *intended*. Sokolowski (2000:48), rather, describes it as an "enhancement of the self" which occurs as we both experience and study the self-same experience. A phenomenologist willingly suspends the *lifeworld* in an attempt to gain greater

knowledge of his/her world.[17] Thus, the experiential world is bracketed out to be studied in its entirety.

What sets the *phenomenological attitude* apart from the "attitudes" of other sciences, is that it tries to turn the experienced world into an object of study, without restricting the focus. The natural sciences, for instance, tend to look through phenomena, to get to their underlying cause, while the *phenomenological attitude* tries to look at the phenomena themselves: how they are presented; how they are experienced; how they make up the world. Phenomenology can even study the difference between the view of sciences and the phenomena they explore. To be able to tell the difference between the way that physics studies the physical properties of the things that make up phenomena, or biology looks at the properties that keep things alive, or linguistics studies the way it is articulated, can only be done from outside of them all. From within the *phenomenological attitude* this can be done.

2.1.1.3 Accessing the phenomenological attitude

Husserl starts to map out his new science, firstly by contrasting it to the sciences of the *natural attitude* and, secondly, by creating a terminology through which this new science will speak.[18] Making a distinction between the "noema" (the thing itself; to be perceived) and the "noesis" (perception of the thing; as perceived), allows for a platform where "*consciousness and physicalness are a combined whole...combined into the real unity of the world*" (Husserl, 1982:70 *italics original*).[19] In other words, the consciousness which experiences the physical world, is also within the physical world. It can never be outside of it, and is always already a part of it. It cannot, therefore, study the world without studying itself as the *being* that studies the world. Within this distinction, for the sake of the phenomenological reduction, one necessarily needs to distinguish "between *being as a mental process and being as a physical thing*" (Husserl, 1982:76 *italics original*). Which is why the distinction between *noesis* and *noema* is so important for phenomenology. Experience of the physical world is only possible to the conscious *being* through the combinations (and subsequent correlations) of these two concepts.

Husserl sees the *lifeworld* as the basis that "creates" the physical world as we experience it. This is not to be confused with the actual physical world in existence (which has been bracketed out), as the physical things, from this perspective, are presented "as intentional unities persisting continuously in multiplicities of appearances" (Husserl, 1982:88). The idea of

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[17] This suspension or reduction is also called the "epochē", from Greek scepticism (Sokolowski, 2000:49).
[18] The language of phenomenology is what Sokolowski (2000:58) refers to as "transcendentalese", while the language used in the *natural attitude* is called "mundanese".
[19] Husserl also calls the *noesis* and *noema* the "cogitatio" and "cogitatum" respectively. For this study, I will use the terms Sokolowski (2000) settled on; "noesis" and "noema".

intentionality will be explored in a later section (*2.1.3 Intentionality*), but to clarify this quote for now: the physical things experienced are "experienceable", creating what can be deemed an eidetic correlation between "a genuine concept of transcendence" and "demonstrative experience" (Husserl, 1982:89). Transcendence in phenomenology refers to a *being*'s ability to reach beyond itself. This is not some sort of metaphysical property, but rather a *noema*'s (physical thing) ability to be experienced as a *noesis* (thought of a thing). Therefore, "reaching beyond", or "transcending", is the way in which a physical thing (*noema*) can also become an experience, or thought, of the thing (*noesis*). A correlate exists between the *noesis* in mental processes and the *noema* in the physical world. It is within the interactions of correlates between *noeses* and *noemas* that the "region of pure consciousness" exists.

The *noema* is an actual, physical thing that is within the physical world; something that one might say exists without anyone there to experience it. The *noesis* is how this physical thing within the physical world is experienced, or manifested within the conscious mind. *Noesis*, as the correlate of *noema*, "refers to the intentional acts by which we intend things" (Sokolowski, 2000:60), or the things as inherent in the mental processes. This would be the psychological correlate of the actual thing (Husserl, 1982:181). The *noema*, then, is the thing itself being thought of, while the *noesis* is the act of thinking about the thing itself. It is this relationship of the *noema* and *noesis* that bridges the separation previous philosophers have created between the mind and the world. The distinction can be illustrated with the cliché question regarding whether or not a tree makes a sound if no one is there to hear it; as a *noema* (physically) it does; as a *noesis* (conscious experience) it does not. To complicate things a little, one can imagine (as *noesis*) that a tree makes a sound when it falls, even when the physical tree (*noema*) did not even fall, as within this hypothetical discussion, for instance. The only reason that the idea of a tree can be discussed here, is because of its *noesis*. If the person reading this had never seen an actual tree (as *noema*), a shared *noesis* could not exist to be used for an example. This is also where language comes in; without a *noesis*, there could be nothing to connect to the sign (the word "tree") used to represent it. In fact, there would be no reason for the sign itself.

It is the unification of *noesis* and *noema* that creates *Being* for consciousness, as all experience or interaction with the physical world is always already dependent thereon. Even if you annihilate the whole world, a total stream of consciousness, "endless in both directions", you still remain as its annihilator; "*nulla re indiget ad existendum*" (Husserl, 1982:92 *italics original*).[20] In this instance, Husserl tries to develop a method to approach the "pure Ego", for

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[20] Commonly translated to "matter does not need to exist"

the sake of delineating the limits of the field of study for the phenomenological method. The phenomenological reduction is set to bracket out everything to do with the self; including its physical, socio-cultural, or cognitive *being*. Reflecting upon the way in which each of the other sciences has its own ontology within which its scope is limited, phenomenology's ontological scope necessarily becomes focussed solely on "*what we can make essentially evident by observing consciousness itself* in its purest immanence" (Husserl, 1982:113 *italics original*).

Phenomenology itself is generally regarded as a methodology by which meaning, including its limitations can be studied. What is essentially done during phenomenological approaches, relates to categorially analysing the way in which *being intends* things (or experiences *Being*) in terms of the formal structures of *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences* (to be discussed below in *2.1.3 Intentionality*). These categorical analyses aim to reflect upon anything from within the *phenomenological attitude*, as distanced completely from everything it studies in the natural world. In terms of Mitchell's texts, these formal structures will be used to approach the connections between the fragmented structures, and the way these connections work together to form the fictional world through first-person character experiences.

2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text

The phenomenological reduction is necessary for phenomenologists to study the nature of experience in the *lifeworld* from within the *phenomenological attitude*. The *phenomenological attitude* tries to look at phenomena themselves – their presentation; how they are experienced; and how they make up the world. But how does the access gained through the *phenomenological attitude* – by undergoing the phenomenological reduction – relate to the access process necessary for a *fictional world*? If, as explained above, the consciousness which experiences the physical world, is also part of the physical world – never outside of it, and is always already a part of it – what does that say about the reader's relationship to a fictional world?

When approaching the *lifeworld* through phenomenological means, *being* cannot study the world without studying itself as the *being* that studies the world. However, if one approaches the world of a text, one can stand outside of its world – essentially bracketing its world – and experience it as a world separate from reality. In fact, when reading a text, one tries to get into the world of the text from one's position outside of it, rather than to try and view it from the outside. It is an already-bracketed world to start with, contained within its covers (Ricœur, 1984:79). In a similar way to which the phenomenologist brackets out the lifeworld in order to study it, a reader approaches a text as an already bracketed-out world. The world of the text is,

physically, just a bunch of pages with ink printed in specific shapes. Phenomenologically, the reader approaches this physical thing (*noema*) with the express intention of *accessing* its textual world through reading. Laurie (2013:57) describes a "journey" from actuality into the world of a text as the reader's first contact, or a gaining of "access". This is an important first step, as the way a reader is introduced to a text is a process that determines his/her involvement with the textual world. Access can determine the manner in which a reader is immersed into the world of a text, and subsequently experiences the stories from this world. Laurie (2013:56) suggests that the reader projects a fictional ego into the world of the text, which is to undertake the fictional journey in exploration of its world. It is, therefore, this fictional ego that undergoes the access process, which Laurie (2013:58) breaks down into three stages; "prefigurative aspects, the narration (including both the structure and the narrative tone), and the initial impressions of the fictional world".

The *prefigurative aspects* are developed from Ricœur's (1984:53) "prefiguration", which is the necessary pre-understanding required to plot a course of recognition. *Prefiguration* is the first step in a three-fold process of understanding in terms of the way in which a reader experiences text. More generally, this refers to the pre-understanding by which information can be *configured* (second step) into something meaningful, before it is *refigured* (final step) to be used for further recognition. Refigured information becomes the *prefiguration* by which future experiences will be configured again, and so on. *Prefiguration*, in this case, refer specifically to general approaches to a text, which may differ among readers, but have a shared mode, given the medium (text). A reader has the ability to take on a different "mode-of-being", or even accept different conditions for *Being* (Laurie, 2013:58). Think for instance of narrative temporality (explored in greater detail throughout *2.1.4 Temporality*). The duration of the actual process of reading takes a given amount of time (depending, for instance, on reading speed, or the amount of time a reader has for reading), which differs from the amount of "time" elapsed in the narrative of the text. Making the distinction between these modes of temporal *being* is part of the access process.

A reader's expectations for a text, which can be based on reviews or previous encounters with either author or genre, is another factor that is part of *prefiguration*. One does not approach science fiction, or magic realism, or historic fiction in the same manner. Reader preferences, for instance, can significantly influence the willingness of a reader to take part in a text, and are part of the *prefiguration* process. Though less influential for reader *prefiguration*, the cover design is also included by Laurie (2013:59) as indicative to readers of genre and/or author.

Narration can include narrative instance, style, and structure, which all form part of the manner in which a reader is led on a journey through the fictional world. As a function of initial reader access, narration plays a significant part in mediating between actual and fictional worlds, and generally introducing the world to the reader. An extradiegetic narrator, for instance, creates a different perspective on the journey through a world than an intradiegetic narrator would. This is relevant to Mitchell, as he uses intradiegetic narration for all except two of his narratives: *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet,* and the Luisa Rey chapter in *Cloud Atlas*, as well as a short sequence describing an out-of-body experience in *number9dream*. This also creates a relative distance between the world and the narrator (and subsequently the reader and the world). Narrative styles can set the mood or tone of a text, and narrative structure can act as a map of the journey, including focalisation or perspective, from which the reader will commence. Structurally, Mitchell's access windows are always situated in *medias res*, which means that the map of the journey unfolds as the plot progresses.

The "initial impression of a fictional world" is related, in a sense, to its "difference and distance" from actuality. *Difference* refers to the distinctions that can be made between the realities of actuality and text in terms of their physical, biological, or cosmological laws, among others, while *distance* is the spatial or temporal differences to which the reader has to adjust (Pavel, 1986:89). In this case, Laurie (2013:64) utilises Ricœur's and Pavel's ideas of a "contract" between reader and text, before the journey can fully commence. The reader must accept the provisional conditions set out by a text during the access process, or fail to immerse him/herself in the world of the text.

Even though *prefiguration* creates a certain sense of expectation – genre, author, number of pages, etcetera – a reader still approaches an unknown world, or new experiences in a known world (in the case of a series of texts or even a re-reading of a text), in the same manner as a phenomenologist approaches the *lifeworld*. The *lifeworld* is experienced here both from within, as *being-in-the-world*, as well as from the outside, as a phenomenologist. In the same way, a reader experiences reading from the outside, in the sense of critical approaches or analyses, as well as experiencing the fictional world through a projected ego immersed in a fictional world. It is necessary, therefore, to now move on to a discussion on *being*, as viewed from the field of phenomenology, before, once again relating back to the concepts of reader, projected egos, and characters in fictional worlds.

2.1.2 Being

An issue arises as to the question of self-reflection. If the phenomenological *being* is reflecting *within* the world *upon* the world, how can it recognise itself? If it is standing in a realm of consciousness between *noesis* and *noema*, only an "I" insofar as there are reflections of consciousness directed towards it, and reflections of consciousness directed away from it, what is the "I" that reflects? Husserl has stated before that this is "pure Ego", but what it is precisely remains unclear, as it is void of any essence; it is "undescribable in and for itself" (Husserl, 1982:161). Yet, there is a direction of thought to and from it. It is by necessity, then, that the pure ego's relation to consciousness (directionality of *intentions*), becomes the means by which it is to be studied. Whether it is subjectively oriented, or objectively oriented depends on whether its reflections are directed towards or away from itself.

In 1927 a student of Husserl, Martin Heidegger, published his magnum opus, *Being and Time*[21] wherein he explored the "Seinsfrage", or *question of Being*, to try and answer who or what the "I" is within the world. He formulated the concept of "*Dasein*" (Da-Sein; there-being [demonstrative]), with which to further develop this question. Firstly, he distinguishes between "Being" – the existence of things – and "being" – the things that exist. Heidegger uses phenomenology as a means to explore this ontology. In *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*), he tries to discover the meaning of our conscious *being* as founded upon temporality (discussed below in *2.1.4 Temporality*).

Being, for Heidegger, can only be shown in its average "everydayness", which is the way in which *being* tries to understand *Being*. In this everydayness in which *being* tries to understand its own existence, *time* is the means by which it understands. The conscious *being* is a unity of experience in average everyday life, not just something living added to some magic 'other' (Heidegger, 1962:51). *Being-in-the-world* has to always be viewed in terms of its everydayness, for any sort of account is possible which can "interpret the world in terms of objectivity, and ourselves in terms of subjectivity" (Carman, 2002). A crucial point for Heidegger (1962:150), then, is that "[i]nterpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehension of something pregiven", and phenomenology is interpretation; *being* interprets. Heidegger (1962:34) argues, through alternate Greek translations of *phainomenon* and *logos*, that "phenomenology" quite literally means "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself

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[21] Originally published in German as *Sein und Zeit* (1927), it was first translated as *Being and Time* in 1962 by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, which is the version used for this study. Due, in part, to his Nazism in WWII, a substantial amount of Heidegger's notes remained restricted until 2014, when they were published as *Schwarze Hefte*, or *Black Notebooks*, which are only now being studied further.

from itself". In short, we are always interpreting our own *being* from within the *Being* of which we are always already a part.

These interpretations are only possible through time and, as such, temporality becomes the basis of meaning for the conscious *being* (Heidegger, 1962:17). Mensch (2001:2) also sees things as presented to us only by the movement of time. Sokolowski (2000:112) continuously returns to the idea of "our being the dative of manifestation for things that appear", which means that things only appear to us, insofar as we are there to experience their appearance. We need the existence of experienceable physical things (*noemas*), but it is only through our own experiences of such things (*noesis*) that we can interpret the world of which we are part. It is only by being in the world, through time, that *being* can interpret *Being*.

In accordance with this concept of *Being*, both characters and readers can be thought of in terms of their "modes-of-being", which Laurie (2013:78) refers to as "denizens"[22] of the fictional world. Mitchell mostly uses intradiegetic narrators for protagonists. Through these characters, readers are presented with a different *mode-of-being* from their own, which can be in the form of an implied reader who is supposedly in this world. The implied reader is the one to whom *being-in-the-world* is presented, but it can always only be mediately done. The experiences described by characters, even in intradiegetic narration, are already filtered through text, are only a representation, and not experienced as such by the actual reader. However, the reader's projected ego, which takes on a space as denizen in the fictional world, can bring him/her closer to the world described by the text, as "[t]o follow a story is to actualise it by reading it" (Ricœur, 1984:76).

Characters, especially Mitchell's intradiegetic narrators, lead readers through the fictional world as they move through experiences in their respective plots. A character experiencing an event reacts in a certain manner, and in each such point where events and reactions cross paths, the reader glimpses an alternate *mode-of-being* for him/herself. It is a case of "what if" scenarios where a reader's projected ego can envisage different modes for him/herself; *what if I were the person being told this story by a spy?*; *what if I were the spy?*; *what if this precise event happens in my life?*; and, most importantly, *how would I react in the same situation?*

The projection of self into alternate *modes-of-being* can be a two-pronged process of reciprocity, where a reader can either project him/herself into the fictional world, as a denizen of some sort (whatever the text allows), or project characters, or even other elements or events, from the fictional world into their own actuality. For instance, readers wondering in which house

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[22] "Denizens" is used to describe the citizens or beings in the fictional world, as well as the implied reader of the text, and the projected ego of the actual reader.

the Hogwarts Sorting Hat (*Harry Potter*) would have placed them, have projected themselves into the fictional world. A reader wondering what it would be like to fly to work on a broom, is projecting a fictional element into actuality. This may seem to be an irrelevant distinction to make, but it is exactly this reciprocity that makes for greater immersion in a fictional world. If readers could not project themselves into the fictional world, it would never be more than text. If the reader cannot envision elements of the fictional in actuality, there can be no relation between fiction and actuality, which will make the fictional elements inaccessible to understanding. According to the terms explored above (see *2.1.1.3 Accessing the phenomenological attitude*), the fictional world works with *noeses* (adjective: *noetic*) which need corresponding *noemas* (adjective; *noematic*) to which to relate. The projection of the self into the fictional world is to project the *noesis* of the self as a fictional *noema* (which ultimately remains a *noetic* world). To project something from the fictional world into actuality, is to treat a *noetic* element as if it can be *noematic*. Immersion into a fictional world is to shrink the gap between *noesis* (world of text) and *noema* (text in the world).

Through these types of projection, different types of denizens, or *modes-of-being*, can also develop a range of questions concerning *Being*. For instance, non-human anthropomorphic characters – such as elves, wizards, super-human, or some alien characters – can raise questions regarding human nature; *what if superpowers could exist? what if I had this or that mutation?* and so forth. Non-anthropomorphic sentient characters – such as talking animals, or emotional monsters – can create questions regarding consciousness, or even reality itself; *what about the consciousness of animals we eat? what if apes evolve to a point where they take over the planet?* etc. Even fiction that merely shows differences between people across the globe, can raise questions regarding the nature of reality, which is more relevant to Mitchell's style of fiction. These are questions that only the conscious *being* (as *Dasein*) grapples with, and just as the limitations on the consciousness of fictional worlds' denizens are determined by the texts that contain them, so too is our own consciousness limited to our own *lifeworld*. Another correlate, then, can exist between the world of text, and texts created to explain our world.

The gap between the language used to describe the world, and the actual world itself remains, as "[l]anguage is for itself the order of the Same...[t]he world is its Other" (Ricœur, 1984:78). Language is a system by which *being* refers to experiences within the world. In terms of texts, and specifically fictional worlds in texts, *Being* can be thought of in two different ways. Firstly, there is the *Being* within which the text exists. This is the world outside of the text, the actual world, which is a shared realm within which both reader and text exist. The text is a physical entity (book) within the actual world, containing a fictional story (non-physical) to be

read. The fictional "world" within the text, and its characters, can be thought of merely as pseudo-*beings* within this actual world. Mitchell's character Marinus, for instance, is a fictional character in a story, written and read in a text within the actual world. Secondly, the text itself, as a fictional world containing fictional *beings*, functions as a type of *Being* itself; contained within a fictional world. Readers can share in this textual *Being* by immersing themselves in the fictional world. As it is a projected ego through which the reader is immersed, the reader is, in this case, a pseudo-*being* in the world of the text; an entity which is not wholly present in the functioning of the fictional world. Even in the famous second-person narration of Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*, the actual reader is not the character in the text. It is a character space called "Reader" which is the actual character, while the actual reader is merely "dragged passively by the plot" (Calvino, 1998:218).[23]

However, the supposed "realness" of their being in each other's worlds might shift a little when characters have their own Twitter accounts, as some of Mitchell's do, or texts start to address readers, as Calvino's does. Ricœur (1984:79) develops an additional presupposition with regard to literature which does not go against the previous statement of language, but rather extends its function of description to include its interactions with the world. Fictional worlds come into the world of experience through the reader. The world of the text might not be the world of the reader, but elements of the reader's world are taken into the text, and elements of the text are brought into the world of the reader; their "horizons fuse" to a certain extent (Ricœur, 1984:79).

A projected ego is the reader's means of becoming, at least in part, a *denizen* of the fictional world. Assuming the position of a denizen in the world is something that is made possible through the ability to explore different *modes-of-being*. *Dasein* is the *being* that tries to question *Being*, in the same manner as the reader is the only denizen within a given fictional world that can question their own *being*, and the nature of *Being* within a text. Some texts might feature characters who ask questions regarding the nature of their existence, or existence in general, but these are questions posed unwillingly; words put in their mouths by an author. However, within the contexts of their fictional worlds, they act like conscious *beings*, and they imitate consciousness. Furthermore, they pose questions to the reader which can resonate into the "real world", where the reader can assume the same position of enquiry a character has in the fictional world. In this sense, *Dasein* and denizen can become intertwined in various ways.

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[23] Originally published in Italian as *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* in 1979.

For instance, a fictional character, a denizen in his/her/its world, (re)acts like a conscious *being* – presumably this "consciousness" originates with the author, an actual *being* in the actual world. The fictional character is a mere projection of consciousness in actuality; an imitation. The reader, as an actual *being* within the actual world, projects a fictional ego into the fictional world. The reader can subsequently assume the position of a denizen within this fictional world. The reader comes into contact with a fictional *being* – a textual projection of actual consciousness by the author – and returns from the text, into the actual world, with information that originated with an author. Within a fictional world, two actual conscious *beings* can intersubjectively negotiate meaning, with the text as medium of experience for actual *Being*. This scenario is not that different from any of the communication or discourse theories that put forth the "sender-message-receiver" model developed by Shannon and Weaver (1949).[24] However, showing the connection between fictional *beings* (denizens) and actual *beings* (reader) is important to this study. If the reader is a *being* that questions *Being*, as well as the *being* that can project itself into different *modes-of-being*, s/he can experience a fictional world (*Being*) as a denizen (*being*) of that world. The reader can experience a text phenomenologically as a world.

The construction of the world may be of text, but it is a world of alternate existence; textual *Being*. The construction, nature, rules, etcetera, of a textual world differs from that of "actuality", and thus the reader's *mode-of-being* also differs from the mode assumed in "actuality". Furthermore, the world of the text can, as previously discussed, be viewed as already phenomenologically reduced, as it is, in a sense an entire existence bracketed between the two covers (see *2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text*). The reader assumes a textual *mode-of-being* within textual *Being*, and experiences a textual *lifeworld* which can be phenomenologically reduced upon exiting the fictional world and in subsequent contemplation thereof. However, the text now transcends its own boundaries once again, as it has entered the *lifeworld* of the reader. It now forms part of the context within which new experiences will be *intended*. The experiences gained through text have been refigured into the larger body of personal experiences, consequently becoming part of the *prefiguration* for continuing experiences. The horizons of the fictional world have "fused" with the actual world (Ricœur, 1984:79).

These overlaps between the actual and the fictional, indeed, have become even greater with the advent of digital and social media. Entire conversations in the actual world revolve around fictional worlds. In 1938 Orson Welles famously performed a radio drama based on H.G.

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[24] See also West & Turner (2010:11) and Tubbs, Moss & Papastefanou (2012:3) *inter alia.*

Wells' text, *The War of the Worlds*, which apparently created panic among listeners who thought that the events were real, mistaking the broadcast for an actual news report (Schwartz, 2015; Wolfe, 1980:39 *inter alia*).[25] More recently, however, the way fictional worlds connect to the actual world is less accidental, and has become a more active process. For instance, some of the dominating stories in world news revolve around a new season of *Game of Thrones*, or *Marvel* movies, no longer limited to entertainment news, but spreading across various platforms – *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *YouTube*, *Reddit*, and so on (Faulkner, 2019; Kühl, 2019 *inter alia*). Also, strategies such as product placement in fiction across most media are used to garner sales revenue in the actual world. In turn, fictional worlds have started to incorporate references to new media platforms in text. These platforms have even become part of plot-functioning, as is the case with contemporary fiction set in the present day. For instance, a character using the internet for gathering information, or gaining access relevant to the next plot movement, as the hacker character Lisbeth Salander constantly does in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Larsson, 2008)[26] has become common place. In some cases (probably the worst) news itself has become fictional, giving rise to what has become commonly known as "fake news", following Oxford Dictionary's 2016 *Word of the Year*, "post-truth" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019).

Taking into account the discussion on Ricœur's three-fold process of *prefiguration-configuration-refiguration* as a process for the integration of information into experience (see *2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text*), the fusion of horizons between actuality and fiction has consequences for the relation between *being* and *Being*. A reader, as a *being-in-the-world*, refigures experiences from actuality into *prefiguration* for accessing a text, thereby transcending actuality upon entering a fictional world. Likewise, if the reader refigures experiences from a fictional world into *prefiguration* for actuality, the text itself transcends fiction as it enters *Being*. A reciprocal process, therefore, has started to develop between fictional worlds and the actual world, causing them to interweave at a level which seems to go beyond Ricœur's (1984:79) original idea of "horizons fusing", where the reader is the medium through which the text transcends.

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[25] Even the story surrounding this event has become part of popular culture conversations, despite some claiming that the event had been exaggerated, or that it is not even true (Chilton, 2016; Memmot, 2013 *inter alia*).

[26] Originally published in Swedish as *Som Hatar Kvinnor* in 2005. Stieg Larsson's original "Millennium Trilogy" consists of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2005); *The Girl who played with Fire* (2006); and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest* (2007), which were all translated to English by Reg Keeland from 2008-2009. After Larsson's trilogy had to be published posthumously, the series is being continued by another author, David Lagercrantz. At the time of this writing, Lagercrantz has added an additional three novels to the series (Penguin Random House, 2019).

2.1.3   Intentionality

There are two aspects of *Being* in the *lifeworld* that form the main components of phenomenology itself: *spatiality* and *temporality*. The latter has its own section below (see *2.1.4 Temporality*). In terms of spatiality, an important concept to keep in mind is that, given phenomenology's focus on subjective experience, spatiality as a conscious perception does not adhere to scientific or physical dimensions. Phenomenologically the conscious *being* does not have a position in the world (in the sense of, for instance, coordinates) that puts it in proximity to other things. Rather, everything in the world is proximally relative to the observer frame. As such, something is either within reach of one's experience (within the realms of its functions), or proximally unreachable to experience, or *severed* from oneself. Therefore, Heidegger developed a system for a *being*'s interactions with the *lifeworld*, that includes direction, region, and remoteness, which are to be organised by one's circumspect involvement, called "de-severance". *De-severance* is the process by which one makes the remoteness of something disappear, because "[*i*]*n Dasein there lies an essential tendency towards closeness*" (Heidegger, 1962:105 *italics original*).

Heidegger used the concept of radio as an example of how humans have expanded their everyday *lifeworld*, and *de-severed* more of their world than ever before. Obviously, living in the information age, with internet and all of its various social and digital expansions, we should understand this concept even better now than Heidegger ever could. Digital media has, essentially, "de-severed" the globe for us. However, "severance" might now mean something different than in the 1920s, as I still have to "de-sever" things by browsing the web, or flying to Spain. Think of the way electronic research is done. A specific e-book is severed from one's person until one finds it on a specific webpage or database; *de-severing* it by download. This is, however, a highly complicated way of speaking, which does not necessarily serve this study. Rather, Sokolowski (2000) uses the term "intentionality" to refer to the way we approach and interact with things. For the sake of limiting jargon, I will move on to Sokolowski's preferred, Husserlian-based language.

Intentionality, in the field of phenomenology describes the way consciousness is always directed towards something. Husserl (1982:168) identified *intentionality* as the principle or "general theme of 'objectively' oriented phenomenology", and sees it as that which "characterizes consciousness in the pregnant sense and which...justifies designating the whole stream of mental processes as the stream of consciousness". *Intentionality*, therefore, is the making conscious of things that are either enigmatic or obvious, from within an objective frame, and is very specifically differentiated across the correlation between ourselves and things. It is

only through accepting that consciousness is always "consciousness of" something, that appearances become real, "they belong to being", and *intentionality* is the way we make these things appear (Sokolowski, 2000:15). Therefore, *Being* (the world) becomes a stream of consciousness within which *being* is situated. We bring things to the forefront of consciousness through *intention*. There are different ways of *intending* things, and the manner of *intentionality* determines a major part of how things are experienced. Using a cube, Sokolowski (2000:19) distinguishes between three types of perception which are combined in the *intending* of something. These are *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles*.

Firstly, there are different *sides* to any object. In Sokolowski's example of a cube, there are six seemingly similar *sides*, each a square when observed from a directly perpendicular angle. When the cube is tilted a bit, the view of the *side* becomes less of a perfect square, and if one continues tilting it, the square will eventually be nothing more than a line, before disappearing from view. Another square would have started to come into view as the first disappears.

This follows into the second perception; *aspects*. The angles from which the *sides* of the cube are observed above, forms its *aspects*. The *aspect* from which a *side* is viewed is also "transitively" an *aspect* of the cube itself, while the *side* is observed. This distinction is the difference between describing one *side* as scratched, as opposed to describing the entirety as the cube with the scratched *side* (Sokolowski, 2000:19).

Finally, *profiles* refer to the combined perception of *sides* and *aspects* within time by a specific individual. Two people can view the same cube from the same angle, observe the same *sides* and *aspects*, but they cannot have the same *profile* in the combination. If I stand in front of a cube for a given time, without changing my position, and always viewing the same *side* from the same *aspect*, the *profile* of the perception still changes as time goes by.

Important to understand from these *side*, *aspect*, and *profile* combinations, is that one cannot see all of the possible combinations at once. When looking at one *side*, one cannot see its opposite *side*. One cannot see all the *aspects* of the cube at once. Yet, when presented with the cube, the entirety of *sides* or *aspects*, including those not visible from the observer frame are "cointended" along with those that are visible (Sokolowski, 2000:17). When the cube is turned to reveal other *sides* or *aspects*, the *side* or *aspect* initially viewed might disappear, but one continues to *cointend* them in their absence. Also, the cube itself did not change, only the presentation or perception thereof changes. It is still the same cube in its essence. This is especially important when considering how memories of things, or anticipations for things, are

perceived. For instance, a cube has just been described through text, whereby a *noetic* cube has been *intended* in the absence of any *noematic* cube.

To bring things a little closer to the subject matter, the cube can now be replaced with a novel. In the prefigurative stages of the access process (described above in *2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text*) one might have heard or read about David Mitchell's new novel. One reader might be trying to think about which characters will be recurring from previous texts, while another reader might think of the structural form it will take. The thing that both are thinking of, however, has a single identity; a specific novel. Both readers *intend* the new novel, even though it is in complete absence of the thing itself. Both have "unfilled intentions". What changes in reading the text, as the thing-itself, is that it is in the present (or parts of it are, on the backdrop of its absences), and is also *intended* in the present as a "filled intention" (Sokolowski, 2000:33).

It is important to note, that the identity of the text has not changed since the *intentions* regarding it have gone from one state to another. Rather only the *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* with which it is experienced – the ratio between *filled* and *unfilled intentions* – shifts. This is where "intuition" comes in. *Intuition* is not some magical foresight in phenomenology, but rather the way in which things are *intended* when they are present. When *unfilled intentions* about something become *filled intentions* of something, the thing is "intuited" (Sokolowski, 2000:34).

The physical text itself might not be *intuited* in its entirety (one cannot see all the pages at once), as only the *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* in view make up the entirety of *filled intentions*. As the text is read, one reader might *cointend* events from other texts, in recognising familiar characters, for instance (as *unfilled intentions*). Once these *aspects* are experienced, some perceptions of a certain character might change. A reader who has read a specific short story that another has not, might recognise something that another does not. This means that, even if the same *aspects* of the same *side* could be experienced, the respective changes from *unfilled* to *filled intentions* upon *intuiting* the text differ. Different readers, therefore, experience different *profiles* of the same text. The actual *being* of the text – its identity, so to speak – has not changed. It is merely the manner in which it is perceived that varies.

To further explain this concept of identity in phenomenology, Sokolowski, following Husserl (1982), adopts what he calls "formal structures". Sokolowski (2000:22) describes three formal structures by which a phenomenologist approaches the analysis of *intended* things: *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presence and absence*. The first two structures are common to various fields of philosophy, predating phenomenology, and credited to Aristotle in the former case, and Plato in the latter. The use of the third structure, *presence and absence*, as an approach,

originated in the field of phenomenology, starting with Husserl, though it has since been appropriated by other philosophers, and retroactively applied to earlier works[27] (Sokolowski, 2000:5). The interrelatedness of the three structures, and their irreducibility to each other, makes the combination unique to phenomenology.

2.1.3.1 Parts and wholes

Within the structure of *parts and wholes*, wholes can be made up of two distinct types of parts; *pieces* and *moments*. *Pieces* are parts that also form wholes once removed from the wholes that they are part of; they can exist independently. An example would be a word (part) in a sentence (whole) which, once removed, is still a word (whole). *Moments* are parts that cannot form wholes when they are removed from their wholes, and thus are "*nonindependent* parts" (Sokolowski, 2000:23) that need to be combined with other moments or pieces to exist. Examples of moments are found in properties of other parts or wholes; the sound of a letter is a moment, the inflection in its pronunciation is also. Something else has to *be* for a moment to exist. In this regard, some parts can be pieces in one instance while being moments in another, based on the context in which they are approached, i.e. how they are *intended*. A word is a *piece*, or even a *whole* semantically, but syntactically it is a *moment*.

In Mitchell's literature, the formal structure of *parts and wholes* plays a major part in the architecture of the macronovel. The macronovel as a whole has various novels as its parts. Each novel, when removed from the macronovel, acts as a stand-alone text. Thus, it is a whole in its own right and, therefore, can be viewed as a *piece* of the macronovel in terms of formal structures. Furthermore, Mitchell also creates another layer of *pieces*, added to this structure. The chapters that make up the novels, when removed from their texts also act as stand-alone shorter stories, and can be viewed as independent wholes themselves (Mitchell in interview with Birnbaum, 2006). As with any narrative, there would be narrative strands (events) that one can isolate within each of these independent narratives (chapters) which, depending on how they are *intended*, can be used for analysis as moments of the *narrative wholes*.

2.1.3.2 Identity in manifold

The mental process of *being* (as discussed in *2.1.2 Being*) addresses a key aspect regarding the *intentionality* of a spatial *being*; its multi-dimensional presence. The physical *being* as "it-itself" already possesses all of the possible *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* that make it itself – that through

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[27] See for instance hermeneutic work done in Jacques Derrida's deconstruction work on Kafka's *Before the Law* (1982:181-220), Jean-Luc Nancy's *Noli mi tangere: on the raising of the body* (2008), or Paul Ricœur's essay "The Bible and the imagination" (1995:144-166) among many others.

which its *identity* can be experienced (Sokolowski, 2000:28). However, when it is experienced, it is always only partially so, and in a manner that sees the thing ever more perfectly with each new perspective. This does not mean that the thing itself is unreachable by perception. The various *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* – revealed in each different viewing – build the *being* from a multitude of perceptions as already perceived within each *piece* or *moment*. It should also be made clear that this is not to be confused with the idea of picture or sign-type (text) substitutions, which are limited to their singular descriptions, as well as their own physicality. Rather, the ever-perfecting, mentally-*intuited* perception of the thing is much closer to the thing itself while it is present (Husserl, 1982:78). This is its *identity*, which is always founded within a "manifold" of appearances (Sokolowski, 2000:28).

Also, it does *not* present itself in the form of a range of two-dimensional pictures stuck together either. Its entire essence, as one knows the text to be, is present in the given moment (Sokolowski, 2000:17). This also accounts for human errors in perception, like delayed decoding or illusory confusion. For instance, when one believes something to be a certain way, only to find out upon new observation that it is not, the *noesis* of the thing (thought correlate) changes, but the thing itself, the *noema*, is the same. In other words, the *identity* of the thing stays the same, it is merely the perception of the thing, or its *noetic mode-of-being*, that changes. Its identity remains, and is better understood through a manifold of perspectives.

After an experience of *intuiting* (reading) a text, one might discuss it, and therefore *intend* it in its absence again. However, the absences are different now that it has been *intuited*. Once again, the text itself has not changed from the first time it is *intended* in its absence from a review, or in the anticipation of reading it. Rather, our perceptions, the way our *intentions* were *filled*, have changed. The text has kept its *identity*, only the perceptions of that identity has changed (Sokolowski, 2000:30).

Within the text itself, the way things are revealed to characters, and readers, functions on this level as well. A character has what can be called its own "lifeworld", which is the combination of his/her/its existing context, combined with each event experienced throughout the character's narrative. In terms of *intentionality*, narrative events differ for denizens (readers and characters) because of the combination of *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* based on the lived experiences within their respective *lifeworlds*. In a text this can, for instance, be shown through the way in which characters familiar with, or living in, contexts foreign to a reader, narrator, or other characters, experience or react to their world. A "*ger*" in Mongolia may be new to a reader, but it is part of everyday life for a Mongolian character. Therefore, to introduce a description or definition of a *ger* to the reader through a Mongolian character would be awkward, but seems

natural when done through a character foreign to Mongolia. In this sense, the identity of a *ger* can be presented through a manifold of experiences, based on the character's knowledge thereof (Sokolowski, 2000:30). In a fictional world which uses different character perspectives for its construction, such as Mitchell's, the formal structure of *identity in manifold* becomes an essential part of understanding the functioning of its *Being*.

2.1.3.3   Presences and absences

One experiences things in specific ways, which include both *presences* and *absences*. The *sides* of the text (narratives, pages, sentences, words) that are presented to an observer are *present*, while the *sides* that are not visible, are *absent*. Yet, both of these *sides* are needed to experience the text; it is only through its *absences* that *presences* can be recognised. Therefore, both of them are *intended* as present – *unfilled intentions* (the *intending* of absences) and *filled intentions* (the *intending* of presences) – forming a conception of the entirety through *cointention* of both presences and absences. The *cointention* of something includes both the present impression of the thing, as well as the *sides* that are absent, based on previous impressions of similar things, in such a way that the observer is aware of both its presented *sides*, as well as its absent *sides*. The *cointended* is also that which is attributed to the thing itself, in its presentation.

One might, for instance, *intuit* a single, linear narrative the first time one encounters *Cloud Atlas*, when perceiving it from one *side* (poster, cover, first chapter, etcetera), only to find that this text was not constructed in the traditional form – it has narratives that interrupt each other for over a millennium of narrative time, before returning backwards in time to the beginning. This newly perceived *aspect* will, once again, inform following *intentions* regarding the text. The *filled* and *unfilled intentions* correlate with presences and absences in the same way that *noeses* and *noemas* correlate. *Filled intentions* are the *noetic* correlates of *noematic* presences, and *unfilled intentions* are *noetic* representations for absent *noemas*. If the physical thing (*noema*) is present, our *intentions* are *filled*. If the physical thing is absent, our *intentions* are *unfilled*, leaving only the *noesis* thereof.

Even more fundamental than the *filled* and *unfilled intentions* of a thing's *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles*, is the absence and presence system that is the thing itself. Each page in a text is only present insofar as it is experienced against the backdrop of every other page not currently in view. This sounds redundant, but it accounts for further concepts. For instance, the memory of something is only a memory insofar as it has *noetic* (cognitive) presence, while having *noematic* (physical) absence. *Intuiting* something is the *noetic* and *noematic* presence of the thing, within the backdrop of everything which is not the thing (its absence). A narrative only progresses

because there are pages that precede it, retained in memory (*prefiguration*), while each new word coming into presence relates to it (*configuration*). The presence of a word only has meaning in relation to the absence of the same meaning in the words that surround it in the rest of the sentence, page, narrative, or book.

2.1.3.4 Formal structures and construction of a fictional world

The relation between a fictional world, and the actual world is intimately intertwined through text. Text is what creates the fictional world, but it is also what limits it to actuality. Actuality is the realm in which text has its signification, but the fictional is what it signifies. The text can always only refer to unknown or new concepts in its fictional world through text from the actual world. The text itself also only refers to unknown fictional concepts by mediation through already existing concepts in actuality (Laurie, 2013:66). A certain level of reader *prefiguration* is necessary for any meaning to be configured in text.

Laurie (2013:70) illustrates how Pavel's idea of "incompleteness" helps add to the "worldliness" of a fictional world. *Incompleteness* refers to the way in which a given text may imply a larger world than the one directly accessible to the reader. Mitchell's world is (spatially) essentially our own; Earth. There is no space travel or aliens (as of this writing), but the world so far accessed is still smaller than the "actual world" it represents. Large cities, like Tokyo, London, Hong Kong, New York, Petersburg are settings. Smaller, more rural areas have also been explored in, for instance, *Black Swan Green* and the "Mongolia" or "Clear Island" chapters of *Ghostwritten*. References are made in passing to South Africa and Belgium (amongst others) in almost every text, albeit only as peripheral spaces, and there are certainly places, of which the reader is aware, that are not mentioned in any of the texts so far.

All of these places, or spaces – explored or mentioned – enlarge a world for the reader. The *incompleteness* of the presented world, by way of implication of something bigger, creates a closer representation of an "actual" world. It also relates to the phenomenological experience in the *lifeworld*. It creates the feeling (illusion?) that one can explore the world of the text further than the text presents it: *I wonder how David Mitchell will describe my little town in his fictional world. I wonder what events can occur in my town, and how far the reference thereof would ripple throughout his greater world.*

The *incompleteness* of the presented world does not only function geographically, but also creates depth on other levels, for instance, that of character knowledge. In the "Tokyo" chapter of *Ghostwritten*, Satoru's knowledge of jazz music has him (as narrator) mention thirty one different musicians throughout the chapter. In the "Petersburg" chapter, a curator of an art

museum also mentions a whole range of specific artists' works. However, upon reading, one automatically assumes a larger repertoire of knowledge regarding the respective topics in which each of these characters specialises. Whether or not the author has more knowledge than is being presented by the text, the presentation of characters' knowledge on these subjects makes it seem like only a fraction of their actual knowledge. This creates the sense of an *incompleteness* that functions to create the feeling that there is more to probe. It also makes the characters more rounded, whole, and intriguing than their mere textual presentations allow.

It is exactly the functioning of this *incompleteness* that relates a fictional world to phenomenological formal structures. The formal structure of *parts and wholes*, hinges on the idea of *incompleteness* in the sense that parts make up wholes. Without all the parts, a whole is incomplete. A whole is always (in Mitchell's world, at least) a part of another, next level, incomplete whole. Wholes can be *cointended* when only parts are *intuited*. The *incompleteness* of the entirety is what drives this *cointention*.

The formal structure of *identity in manifold* presents the exact same sense of *incompleteness* found in the construction of a fictional world. We have access to certain presentations of a given thing, but not others – an incomplete knowledge of every *aspect* with which one recognises the identity of something. The *incompleteness* of an *intuited* thing may bring about the *cointention* of its whole, but actual knowledge of its entirety is impossible. There are always more *aspects* and *profiles* to be *intuited*, and thus a *manifold of appearances* within which the identity of a thing can be presented (Sokolowski, 2000:30). Through each of these appearances a new *aspect* or *profile* is added to the collection of perceptions of that specific thing. The manifold is infinite, and therefore new experiences are always possible.

The *filled* and *unfilled intentions* which govern both the manifold presentations through which an identity can be introduced, as well as the formal structure of *presences and absences*, are based on the *incompleteness* of something; one assumes the unseen *side* of a fictional world exists, even though the presentation thereof is incomplete. Combining these phenomenological formal structures with the idea of *incompleteness* is a useful tool with which to explore David Mitchell's texts – a world that is always added to and is, therefore, always incomplete; a *Being* which is always in the process of becoming.

2.1.4 Temporality

Functioning alongside *intentionality*, temporality is a key component of experience in phenomenology. Husserl originally makes a distinction between cosmic time (fixed, clock time) and phenomenological time (experiential time), to illustrate both what phenomenological time is

in relation to its equivalent in the *natural attitude*, as well as to establish what it should be for the purposes of study in the field of phenomenology. In the *natural attitude* (scientific approach), definitions of time are usually related to cyclical events, with units that have now been mechanically standardised according to repetitions, e.g. sunrises, lunar cycles, seasons, etc (Halliday, Resnick, & Walker, 2008:6). These units have also been mathematically divided into fractions of themselves – hours, minutes, seconds, nanoseconds, etc – for more accurate measurement. Phenomenological time is based on experience within time, and the experience of time itself. Cosmic time is, therefore, defined in terms of natural cycles experienced and measured, while phenomenological time would be an effect of the phenomenological reduction (Ricœur, 1984:63). Sokolowski (2000:130-131) distinguishes between three levels of temporality: *world time* (objective/transcendent), *internal time* (subjective/immanent), and *consciousness of internal time*.

World time is understood here in the same way as Husserl defines cosmic time (clock time), which is based on repeated phenomena experienced through *internal time. Internal time* is also similar to its original conception, referring to the way in which time is experienced. Here, the instances, durations, and sequences by which things are experienced subjectively, become identified as the immanent level of time. Sokolowski (2000:130) states that "[i]nternal time is not public, but private", as it has a different "flow" than *world time* due to *cointention*. As world time follows a linear path, always continuing in one direction, *internal time* sees *cointentions* of memories and future expectations *intended* along with current experiences. *Internal time*, therefore, is non-linear. For instance, let us say that I am reading a text, *intending* both that which I can and cannot see. In *world time*, the sequences of experience follow a linear structure, wherein I see, for instance, word after word, sentence after sentence, narrative after narrative. The presentations of these things follow each other in linear fashion: first, second, and third main *side* or *aspect* viewed at a specific *profile* being lumped together in linear fashion. The duration of each sequence can be measured according to something like 'words read per minute' (note that this measurement is based in time outside of the text itself).

In *internal time*, however, various different temporalities may blend together, in non-linear sequencing, with non-specific durations. When one reads a sentence in the middle of the text, one might be *cointending*, through memory, the pieces of narrative leading up to what is currently being read (*prefiguration-configuration*). This forms part of the *cointentions* with which the current narrative piece is perceived. Readers might also be *intending*, in its complete absence, an anticipated ending of the text as they are making their way in that direction. Past, present, and future are *intended* in a single moment for the *internal time*, while the *world time*

level only has a duration based on a linear following of beginning, middle and end. The duration in *internal time* differs from *world time* with regard to consistency; some moments feel longer than others, regardless of whether their measured durations in *world time* are the same. This can be due to the significance of the experience itself, the proximity, or the density of other experiences related to it (Sokolowski, 2000:130).

This supposed density of the related experiences depends upon the level of *prefiguration* informing any current *configurations* for the purpose of *refiguration*. This is also the point made by Ricœur (1984:54 *italic original*) in the process of "*following therefore the destiny of a prefigured time that becomes a refigured time through the mediation of a configured time*". In this instance Ricœur is referring to the way a reader brings their prefigured temporality from the *lifeworld* to be configured through text, bringing about the *refiguration*. However, emplotment also depends upon the way reader *prefiguration* informs a textual *configuration* for the purposes of *refiguration* (Ricœur, 1984:180). Within fragmented texts such as Mitchell's, the *refiguration* of one narrative becomes part of the *prefiguration* for the next narrative, as the reader has to restart at the *prefiguration* process upon entering the next narrative. As discussed earlier, Barnard (2009:210), in a comparative analysis between *Ghostwritten* (1999) and Iñárritu's 2006 film *Babel*, argues that Mitchell is incorporating what can be called the "hyperlink" function to connect the tiniest elements of narratives within his fragmented texts.

In terms of Mitchell's *hyperlinking* of narratives, a single word can sometimes bear more temporal significance for the reader (in the actual world) than an entire following paragraph might, as it can be linked to a more significant part of an earlier event or marked narrative. In Ricœur's (1984:54) terms, *hyperlinking* in text correlates exactly with the principle of *prefiguration-configuration-refiguration*. This singular moment in the reader's *world time* can only be identified because of the way a reader experiences a given moment in *internal time* (*configuration*), through the related experience of a previous one (*prefiguration*). This leads to the most fundamental level of temporality; *consciousness of internal time*. The idea of *world time* is based on the way *internal time* has informed it that certain natural phenomena repeat themselves, by means of which such time can be standardised for measurement. We believe that *world time* continues without us, but our knowledge of *world time* is still based on our experienced time, which happens on the *internal time* level. However, *internal time* cannot account for the idea of *internal time* itself, which, in turn, takes away the basis of *world time*. The *consciousness of internal time* "founds everything else but is not founded upon anything…[and] is, in phenomenology, the origin of the deepest distinctions and identities, those that are presupposed by all the others that occur in our experience" (Sokolowski, 2000:131-132).

Therefore, just as *internal time* is a necessary condition for our idea of *world time*, the *consciousness of internal time* is a necessary condition for recognising *internal time*.

The *consciousness of internal time* is the most fundamental basis of temporality, and thus one of the core elements of the *lifeworld*. The consciousness through which *being* experiences the *lifeworld* is based on a *consciousness of internal time*. In this case Sokolowski (2000:136) brings back Husserl's ideas on the horizon of experience, in his concepts of *retention* and *protention*. Sokolowski explains how every instance of "*Now*", wherein one is reached by an impression (fractal experience of each *Now*), is always already preceded by a previous now, or a "*Just Now*" (prefigurative), and necessarily always already precedes a "*Next Now*" yet to come. Within the *Just Now* lies an impression obtained when *Just Now* was still *Now* (*refiguration*). Correspondingly, in the expected *Next Now* there lies a next impression yet to come. These two impressions are both contained within the *Now*, as a *retention* (impression in J*ust Now*) and a *protention* (expected impression in the *Next Now*), as an already modifying agent of the impression of the *Now*. Necessarily, it also follows that, when the *Just Now* was still a *Now*, it was likewise accompanied by both a *retention* of its own *Just Now* and a *protention* of its *Next Now* (*configuration*). There is, therefore, an infinite string of "*Nows*" that run in both directions, correspondingly modified by a series of *retentions* and *protentions* on either side of "[t]he actually present *Now* [which] is necessarily and remains something punctual, *a persisting form for ever new material*" (Husserl, 1982:164 *italics original*). Husserl calls this *Just Now* and *Next Now* within each *Now* its "horizons"; a *horizon of before* and a corresponding *horizon of after*.

Experientially speaking, there is more to these instances of *Now* than merely a string of events that follow each other causally. There is, what Husserl (1982:165) calls, "an infinite unity" or "simultaneity" as the totality of *Being* for the pure ego becomes encapsulated in this "three-part horizon" of the *Now*. As each *Now* always already contains the entirety of experience in *Nows* passed, as well as the entirety of expectation for itself in *Nows* to come, *being* is this *simultaneity of horizons* experiencing each present impression in a *Now* constantly changing. This also brings back the idea of *intentionality* as the means by which mental processes reflect upon individual ideas. If each *Now* contains its horizon, the mental processes are already pregnant with their own entireties and the only way one can make salient the non-salient, is through *intentionality* with regard to one's *noeses*.

An obvious phenomenological point to make here is that a reader *intends* a book for the purpose of reading. A reader *intends* the next *narrative part* by turning the page. With the exploration of a fictional world, the reader's projected ego (now denizen) has an additional *intentionality* which relates to world building. In an investigative novel, one might try to find

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clues and solve a mystery before the protagonist. That is a different *intentionality* than merely getting through the plot. It is more related to the *intentionalities* and activities of an active denizen than it is to a passive reader. A fantasy novel, with a quest, would rather have the *intentionality* associated with a fellow traveller – thinking of the next meal, or danger, or discovery – than a reader just trying to see if the ring is thrown into the fire. *Intentionality* is crucial to reader immersion.

As the reader's projected, fictional ego interacts with the story – presented/guided by different characters – greater knowledge of the presented world is gained in the process. In fact, after a while this becomes a type of exploration of the world through various presentations thereof. Just as the *lifeworld* is experienced through three different levels of temporality, so too is the fictional world experienced in terms of time. There are three levels of narrative temporality: "layers of represented time, analogously experienced time, and literally experienced time" (Laurie, 2013:72). There are obvious interactions between "analogously experienced time", and *consciousness of internal time*. Likewise, there are interactions between "literally experienced time" of a reading, and *internal time* in the *lifeworld*, as such experience of reading takes place in actuality.

Ricœur's narrative process of "prefiguration, configuration and refiguration" – which Laurie (2013:72) also uses to relate human experiential temporality to fictional world temporal immersion – therefore correlates with the temporal process in phenomenology. Temporal immersion is the process by which a reader is introduced to the world, travels by means of guiding characters and plot points through the world, and expects outcomes. Suspense is a form of temporal immersion (Laurie, 2013:76). It is the constant present of having experienced and awaiting experience within which the reader exists for the duration of narrative time, similar to the horizon of *Now* in temporal experience. In Ricœur's (1984:180) own terms, the horizons of *Now*, for the reader, are the "prefigurations inherent in the order of action, by way of the constitutive configurations of emplotment...to the refigurations that arise due to the collision of the world of the text with the life-world".

2.2 Working towards a fictional *lifeworld*

Ricœur's philosophy springs from an endeavour to create a system of understanding *Being*, whereby the *being* can understand him/herself, not unlike Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*. Self-knowledge is key here, though Ricœur rejects the idea that complete transparency of the self is ever available to the self if pursued in isolation. It is solely through the intersubjective negotiations with others that one can navigate one's understanding of self and one's relations to

the world, as "[m]an is this plural and collective unity in which the unity of destination and the differences of destinies are to be understood through each other" (Ricœur, 1986:138). Ricœur, therefore, originally tried to explore the moments in which the self becomes aware of itself and others as selves.

Ricœur increasingly started to look at the polysemic nature of language used in philosophy, and concluded that all language needs to go through the process of constant interpretation and reinterpretation depending on contexts. Pellauer and Dauenhauer (2016) state that, for Ricœur, "[t]here is a surplus of meaning because we apply objective techniques to things we already understand as having a possible meaning without fully exhausting that meaning". Combining the interpretive nature of language with the idea of existing in time, Ricœur approached the *lifeworld* hermeneutically, as narrative, stating that "the world is the whole set of references opened by every sort of descriptive or poetic text [he has] read, interpreted, and loved" (Ricœur, 1984:80). An important aspect for Blamey (1989:581), a notable translator of Ricœur's work, is that "our knowledge, our world of experience, our existence, are always situated in *medias res*…[p]oetics knows no absolute beginnings", and there are no ends, there is only a continuation. There are only the stories that we tell to make sense of our experiences from within our own conscious experiences, and *Being* therefore becomes narrative.

The fact that *being* always enters *Being* in medias res means that one is always thrown into an infinite sphere of tensions. The world is not wholly created by the individuals living at a given moment in time, as they are born into an already existing collective narrative of society. The world is also not wholly created from a societal level either, as the collective is made up of individuals. Tensions therefore always exist between individuals and the collective, as different individuals have different interpretations of the existing narratives (Ricœur, 1986:138). During the prefigurative process (as discussed in *2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text*), Ricœur (1984:54) not only takes into account the context with which a given reader comes into the fictional world, but also how, on the side of the narrative, "the composition of the plot is grounded in a pre-understanding of the world of action" This relates to the interplay between structural, symbolic, and temporal aspects which construct narrative. But how might these aspects affect the functioning of the text in such a way that it starts to imitate phenomenology itself, as this study tries to argue?

If an individual is thrown into a world of prior existing concepts and objects that can only be known by a system of differing signs (language), the system is inescapable even in one's attempts to talk about it: "*[t]here is nothing outside of the text*" (Derrida, 1997:158 *italics*

original). [28] Therefore, the notion that "[w]e can only speak about language with the use of language…[n]o matter what we say, we are always inside" (Bertens, 2008:94-95), creates an inevitable schism between perception (*noesis*) and reality (*noema*). Because humanity exists within a "reality" perceived through language, *Being* is situated outside of human understanding. The symbolic space that exists between language and *Being* creates a system of signs that can never be exact (Blamey, 1989:581). Despite these shortcomings, the original phenomenological endeavour still tries to focus on the way *being* orients itself towards meaning. Phenomenology focusses on the way "identity and intelligibility are available in things, and that we ourselves are defined as the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given" (Sokolowski, 2000:4). In contrast to the postmodern notions of the inaccessibility of meaning, "*phenomenology is reason's self-discovery in the presence of intelligible objects*" (Sokolowski, 2000:4 *italics original*).

This chapter has defined the *lifeworld* described by phenomenologists, as well as explored the way in which a *fictional world* might be constructed, presented, experienced and explored – in other words, "exist". In terms of pure phenomenology, four key concepts have been explored: i) *phenomenological reduction*; ii) *being*; iii) *intentionality*; and iv) *temporality.*

The *phenomenological reduction* describes a process of "bracketing out" the world as a means to study the way in which the conscious *being* experiences what is called the *lifeworld.* This was related to the *prefigurative processes* with which a reader approaches a fictional text. In this regard, the text is viewed as a fictional world into which the reader immerses him/herself by means of a fictional contract. Although not unique to Mitchell, a text that starts in medias res is taken as a function of phenomenological entrance into a world. Entering a world in the middle of things, and having to orient oneself through fragments of information as the plot progresses resembles the way in which one enters the *lifeworld*. It imitates a world that has seemingly existed independently of the reader and, as such, might have the ability to continue independently of the reader as well. This aspect of the fictional world also relates to the way that *incompleteness* can function within a text, to add to the "worldliness" of the *fictional world* (Laurie, 2013:70).

In terms of *B/being*, phenomenology tries to explain how one fragmentally experiences *Being*, from within the *lifeworld*, through one's interactions with things. Through different *modes-of-being*, one tries to make sense of the world (*Being*), as interpreted through the

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[28] In the original French publication of *De la Grammatologie* (1967), the phrase, "*il n'y a pas de horstexte*", directly translates to "there is no outside-text". The above quote has been taken from the "Corrected Edition" which Chakravorty Spivak translated from the French as "[t]here is nothing outside of the text" in *Of Grammatology* (1997).

interactions one has with every experience within the *lifeworld*. In a fictional world, the reader projects him/herself into the world of the text, and tries to understand it as a denizen of that world. A text that generates the possibility for a reader to take on multiple *modes-of-being*, which allow for experiences which are closer and further from a given protagonist, can create characters which are seemingly more autonomous. If a character's life (so to speak) can continue in the background once the reader has moved on to the next protagonist (as is the case with Mitchell), one can believe in their independence from the reader, and almost from the text itself. Especially when they seem to have continuing experiences and undergo character development not featured in the text. In these instances, they resemble actual *beings*, which have their own experiences in which they develop their own understanding of *Being*. To this end, a literary analysis would have to look at the gaps in text between a reader's encounters with characters.

Intentionality in phenomenology describes the way in which *being* is always conscious of something in relation to itself. In the *lifeworld*, the way things are *intended* determines experiences of such things. Things not being *intended* at a specific moment fall into the objective background, while things *intended* are brought to the forefront. Importantly, something does not cease to exist when it is in the background, it is merely not *intended* at such a time. Background objects add to the construction of the world, although when they are not *intended*, they are not present for conscious *being*. This is especially true for the functioning of a fictional world where a plot needs to continue past things that have been mentioned, and onto new things that are yet to be mentioned. Therefore, some things can come into textual presence for a reader, while other things can move into non-presence. Things are *intended* differently when they are present, in relation to when they are referred to in their absence. The way that the understanding of such things can change in their absence, for a reader, can add to the phenomenological nature of the text. Things can be experienced from various *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* depending on their presentation in text. This also relates to the formal structures by which the text can construct these presentations, thus changing the way in which such things are *intended* by either/both readers and characters "by inviting us, as readers, to participate in the 'putting together' of the worlds he creates as assemblages" (O'Donnell, 2015:185 on Mitchell).

Temporality works closely with all of the abovementioned aspects and, I argue, will be the key difference between a phenomenological text and other texts which may have most of the same characteristics as mentioned so far. In *Temporary Futures: The Fiction of David Mitchell*, Patrick O'Donnell (2015:185) argues that temporality in Mitchell's world imitates "how our temporary condition in any tense – our difference from ourselves from moment to moment – is the only constant". The functioning of this temporal interpretation of ourselves, our *being*, is

extended in this study to the imitation of a *lifeworld* in the phenomenological sense, where the constant change in meaning is dictated by the experiences of temporal *being* – both the reader's and characters'. By synthesising Husserl's (1982:165) representation of every experienceable moment as containing a "three-part horizon" of the past, present and the future, with Ricœur's (1984:154) three-fold process of *prefiguration*, *configuration* and *refiguration*, the section on temporality has shown how temporality is the basis of both reader experience and emplotment. Furthermore, by combining these two processes for temporal experience, it has been shown how Barnard's (2009:210) idea of *hyperlink* text functions phenomenologically as moments which have significant *prefiguration*.

These moments, with their entire horizons, are merely parts of the totality of experience. Experiences are fragmented at best, though they are recognised, anticipated, or remembered as what seems like their entireties. It is not a half-painted portrait of a car that is remembered, but rather the entirety of the experience thereof. Events are recalled in sequenced episodes, and can be articulated that way, even though the original presentation was revealed as one single *Now*, both following and preceding others. Experiences are perceived as wholes, even when they are initially presented in parts, and they are recalled and articulated in narrative form. "Human being, for Ricœur, is always a being-interpreted" (Kearney, 2004:14), and it interprets itself in the same way that a text is interpreted, where letters make words, words make sentences, and eventually these paint ideas and concepts communicated as entireties. An individual can recall the past in a complete and sensible manner that sees causal events with their effects. In order to make sense of every current situation, events of the past are rearranged into plot points which, when combined, form a perceived history.

CHAPTER 3 PHENOMENOLOGY AND *GHOSTWRITTEN*

This chapter will focus on the structural elements that incorporate phenomenological thinking in Mitchell's texts. Using *Ghostwritten* (1999) as an initial entry point into the macronovel, this chapter explores the fictional world of Mitchell's first novel in terms of the *lifeworld* conceptualised in the previous chapter. The access window to this text, as well as the macronovel, is explored in terms of the phenomenological reduction process. The relationship between the reader and characters is approached in terms of Heidegger's notion of Dasein, and the way they experience their own *being* within *Being* as denizens of a text. The phenomenological formal structures will then be used to describe the textual construction of *Ghostwritten*'s fictional world. The exploration of this fictional world will extend into the phenomenological concepts of *intentionality*, spatiality, and temporality. By incorporating Barnard's (2009) concept of narrative *hyperlinks*, the connections between structure and thematic elements are explored. The influence of narrative structure and temporality on these *hyperlinks* will be explored in terms of reader and character experiences. Finally, the way *Ghostwritten* functions, structurally and thematically, will be translated into phenomenological terms.

3.1   Prefiguration and access to *Ghostwritten*

The access process for readers approaching *Ghostwritten* is complicated, due to four reasons. Firstly, as it is the author's first publication, his name did not (in 1999) have an established reader base. This means that readers at the time did not have any sort of *prefiguration* with regards to the author himself. After approximately twenty years and six titles later, such a base does now exist. Judging from the way "author of *Cloud Atlas*" is used on their covers to sell all of his books after the 2012 movie adaptation, it is likely that a number of readers come to *Ghostwritten* via Mitchell's third text. This brings about the first important aspect to the macronovel; while "each of his stories can stand alone and be approached in isolation" (Schmitz, 2018:5), one can access the world from any text, as the "macronovel complicates this [cumulative reading] with the possibility of a multiplicity of beginnings and endings at any stage" (Harris-Birtill, 2017:175-176). This is an important feature to the macronovel and, in terms of the theoretical aspects discussed in the previous chapter, it adds to the feeling of autonomy in the *fictional world*. Not only does a single Mitchell text use the strategy of implying *incompleteness* (for the effect of evoking a seemingly larger world), the world actually expands

into other texts, confirming the *incompleteness* of a single text, while granting access to the larger *fictional world*.

The second complication to access relates to the varying genres within each text and, furthermore, the varying genres of texts within the macronovel as a whole. *Ghostwritten*, for instance, starts as a terrorist thriller, then moves onto a bildungsroman, followed later by historic fiction, and so forth. Some narratives contain magic realist properties, one contains fantasy elements, and another is science fiction. This lack of coherent genre makes description difficult, and subsequently reader access. It also creates demand for a greater spectrum of knowledge for adequate *prefiguration*.

The third complication relates to this mixing of genres through various narratives, as Mitchell constantly shifts both the spatial and temporal aspects between narratives in the *fictional world*. With each new narrative (every 30-50 pages) it seems like a new world is entered and the fictional journey is interrupted at the start of each new chapter. The narrative-splits cause the access process to be continually repeated. It is only on a second reading, when the reader has seen the interconnectedness of the various narratives, and has gained access to each part of the text, that a macronarrative can be constructed in such a way that its *being* can be teased out.

Finally, in terms of narration, Mitchell's texts tend to rely on the first-person, intradiegetic narrator for every narrative, barring two – "Half-lives – the first Luisa Rey mystery" (third and ninth chapters of *Cloud Atlas*) and *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* – which both have extradiegetic, omniscient narrators. Mitchell's texts are all character focussed and, therefore, the narrative styles demand a higher reader immersion as they tend to keep the reader-text-world distance to a minimum. Even the two exceptions to the rule, mentioned above, have their distances minimised, albeit in two distinct ways. The Luisa Rey narrative in *Cloud Atlas* seems at first completely extradiegetic until the narrative which follows features a character reading the manuscript of the Luisa Rey mystery. The author of the manuscript is supposedly a denizen in the world – not a fully-fledged character, but a name at least; Hillary V. Hush. *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* is an entire text written in the extradiegetic form, but characters and articles resurface in other texts, narrated in intradiegetic form. As mentioned in the introduction, one of the prominent characters, Marinus,[29] later resurfaces in two different texts: *The Bone Clocks*, in which she is the narrator of one of the chapters; and *Slade House*, wherein she is described by a protagonist villain.

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[29] Marinus reincarnates throughout the ages, continuously shifting between female and male.

Fictional worlds that demand a high level of immersion usually have some sort of orientation method, whether it be highly detailed descriptions of surroundings given by narrators, or maps and other illustrations (Laurie, 2013:265). As far as the first contact with the narrative structure goes, every narrative of every text in the macronovel starts in *medias res*. Mitchell's world is then gradually built from the experiences and perspectives of various characters, which allows it to grow with each new character he introduces, and with each experience a character has. This shifts the focus onto the perspectives of denizens, rather than relying on an extradiegetic description to build the *fictional world*. This is also another element of the *lifeworld* that enters into play: the intersubjective negotiations of experiences as a means for onto-epistemological meaning (see *2.2 Working towards a fictional lifeworld*). Furthermore, just as the *lifeworld* is entered in medias res, with the conscious *being* trying to create meaning through experiences, the reader enters the macronovel in medias res, follows the experiences of a character through intradiegetic narration, and tries to make sense of the world along with the character.

3.1.1 The phenomenological reduction

The previous chapter developed a relation between the access process to the *fictional world* (Laurie, 2013:64; Pavel, 1986:89; Ricœur, 1984:54) and the phenomenological reduction (Husserl, 1982:112; Sokolowski, 2000:47). To illustrate the functioning of the text as a phenomenological construction, the phenomenological reduction will be performed, before showing how Mitchell constructs his texts in this way already. Using *Ghostwritten,* if the phenomenological reduction is applied, one can focus on a specific part of the text, bracketing out the rest of it. One assumes, firstly, that the text itself already has both an author and a reader (as the text has been written, and it is being read). Secondly, one can assume that there is a shared understanding of the language it has been written in, and the language in which it is being read. The reader, in other words, understands the language of the text. The first analysis will be a very small-scale illustration of the method (bracketing out one sentence), after which the same process can be followed on a larger scale.

Starting right at the beginning of *Ghostwritten* with the opening line, "Who was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3) the reader can start to make a variety of observations. One can start, for instance, with how the question itself suggests a temporal precursor to this specific moment in time, solely because of the past tense ("was") used in the sentence. The past tense suggests that this phrase is being relayed at a time after the event referred to occurs. The word "my" indicates that the sentence is constructed by a *being*; moreover, a conscious *being*, with the

capacity for language and self-reference. Furthermore, this *being* is referring to something that belongs to him or her in this possessive clause. It also indicates that this sentence is being uttered in the first-person ("my"). The speaker refers to something outside of itself, assuming that it is another conscious entity; rather than "what", the speaker refers to "who". This entity is performing the action of "blowing"; an action performed by something or someone outside of the speaker indicates a spatial dimension outside of the speaker. At the same time, it indicates the speaker's awareness of the spatial dimension outside of itself. The action being performed has a direct consequence; the feeling of touch on the "neck". The specificity of the location of touch – nape of the neck – suggests a greater body of "neck" than just the nape, indicated by the nape being "of" the neck. The "neck" (a body part) belonging to the speaker (possessive "my"), indicates a greater spatial dimension to the speaker him/herself.

The questioning nature of the sentence "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3), suggests that there "was" an unknown. Whatever was unknown, was unknown to the speaker. The speaker's enquiry indicates a need to know that which was unknown. That which was unknown, was the identity of whoever was blowing on the speaker's neck. The assumption that it was a "who" performing the action of "blowing", indicates prior knowledge to the nature of this feeling, as the speaker is able to differentiate between the feeling of an object (what) blowing, and a living entity (who) blowing, merely by the feeling of its touch. A living entity performing the act of blowing assumes that it has breath; that it is breathing. Being able to use its breath to disturb the air that touches the speaker's neck, one can assume that the entity breathes the same substance as the speaker. It also gives the reader an indication of perceived proximal distance between the speaker and the entity performing the action. The proximity can be regarded as relatively close, as the act of "blowing" happens in closer proximity than, for instance, the act of seeing (depending on the amount of light, and line of sight).

In this analysis, the phenomenological reduction is performed by bracketing out the entirety of the text, as a means to focus on the first sentence of the text, "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3). Part of the prefigurative process which provides access to this sentence, relates the fact that one assumes a shared understanding of language between the text and the reader. The reader is also made aware, through the past tense nature of this sentence, that s/he has come into the text in medias res; an event had already occurred prior to the uttering of this sentence, as the reason for the sentence's uttering in the first place. Also, the reader is introduced to a first-person narration, which indicates his/her own position, in relation to the speaker, as an implied reader.

3.1.2   Being – the nature of the world, the character, and the reader

In terms of *Being* – the nature of the world, the character, and the reader's assumed *mode-of-being* – the abovementioned awareness of spatial dimensions, proximity, the possessive clause, and the enquiry "who", already presents the reader with an indication as to the nature of *being* within this world. The character's awareness of spatial dimensions indicates to the reader that the character is a conscious *being*, one conscious of its surroundings. This character is also conscious of other *beings* within his/her world; at least one within his/her immediate environment, as s/he is close enough to be blown on. It can also be assumed that there must be more *beings* in this world than just the two present in this sentence, as the speaker does not know "who" it is. As there are no indicators that this character's world functions differently to the actual world, the character's conscious *being*, the respiratory functioning in the act of blowing, the indication that s/he has a neck, and the awareness of someone blowing on his/her neck, should lead readers, in their prior understanding of their own world, to assume that this is a human being. Furthermore, this human being is the narrator of the story that they are about to read, and is thus the denizen leading them through this world. For the time being, the reader can also assume that this narrator will be the protagonist, as the other *being* in this sentence still remains on the periphery of the narrative thus far.

3.1.3   Intentionality, formal structures, and construction of the fictional world

With regard to *intentionality*, the formal structures, and the construction of the *fictional world*, the previous chapter explained how the spatial dimensions of a *fictional world* can be constructed. In terms of *intentionality*, consciousness is always conscious of something (Husserl, 1982:168; Sokolowski, 2000:15). In the above analysis, *intentionality* points to the speaker's conscious feeling of being touched by someone else's breath blowing on the nape of his/her neck. The question itself ("[w]ho was blowing..?") is directed toward clarifying an aspect of the conscious sensation being felt. The question is also caused by the same consciousness of feeling; without the conscious feeling of breath on his/her neck, there would be no question. The formal structures are the way in which the reader makes sense of the question.

The formal structure of *parts and wholes* is relevant to the way in which one can delineate the nape of the neck from the rest of the body. It is only by knowing that the neck indicates a larger body, to which it is attached, that one can understand the concept of a neck itself. The neck is a part of the body as a whole. The "neck", here, is used as a whole itself, of which the "nape" is a part. The nape is dependent on the existence of the neck, and cannot exist on its own; it is founded upon the neck. The neck, in turn, is part of the larger body. The nape is,

therefore, mediately founded on the body. The neck, when removed from the body, can be regarded as a *piece* of the body; it can exist apart from the body (not a living body). The nape, however, is dependent on the neck, and cannot be removed (except as an *abstractum*, such as in this explanation) and is, in phenomenological terms, a *moment* of the neck; a non-independent part.

The formal structure of *identity in manifold* relates here to the nature of the "blowing" sensation felt by the speaker. The identification by the speaker of a "who" blowing, instead of a "what" blowing, points to the way in which one can differentiate between different blowing sensations, while still identifying the sensation itself as blowing. Blowing, as a disturbance of the air surrounding, in this case the neck, can be caused in various ways; aircons, wind, breath. The speaker identifies this specific disturbance of air as that of air being blown by someone's breath. The identity of "blowing" as a disturbance of air felt on the neck, has not changed, but the specific instance of it being caused by breath is its appearance here.

Likewise, the formal structure of *presences and absences* also relates to the act of blowing here. In terms of phenomenology's focus on the senses (the act of touch specifically), the person performing the act of "blowing" on the speaker, is both present and absent in this sentence. He or she is the unknown entity referred to by the sentence, and also the thing that gives rise to the sentence itself. Without the presence of this person, there would be no reason for this sentence to be uttered. However, as of yet this person is *intended* by the speaker only in his/her absence. The breath being felt indicates his/her presence, but the person is not present in the observer frame, only his/her breath is. Therefore, the speaker, through the sensation of feeling the presence of breath on his neck, *cointends* the person ("who") in his/her absence.

It is also the working of these formal structures which gives rise to the functioning of *incompleteness* as a means to suggest a larger world than is merely explored in text. The only spatial dimension explicitly mentioned in this sentence is the "nape of my neck" (G:3). However, as the hermeneutic phenomenology has shown, a larger spatial dimension than is mentioned, is suggested in the space between the "who" and the speaker. There is also a larger body implied by confining the direct description to the nape of the neck. The fact that these *parts* suggest the wholes of which they are part, in absence of the wholes, may be the basic principle by which a suggested incomplete textual picture creates the feeling of a larger world. The reader, in this case, *cointends* a larger world along with the one available in the text, just as the speaker in the text *cointends* a person behind him/her through the mere feeling of breath.

3.1.4   Temporality, narration, and the structure of the text

Finally, with regard to temporality, the past tense form of the verb "was" indicates (as mentioned above) that there is an unknown temporal space which precedes this first line in the text. The effect is that this first contact with the text is already a continuation of narrative time, again creating the feeling of a larger temporal aspect to the world by suggesting its *incompleteness*. The reader comes into the world of the text in medias res, precisely because of the suggestion that there is a preceding moment to the first contact with the text.

There is also an aporia created between the reader's temporality and the event described in the text. The narrator is relaying a past event to an implied reader, which the actual reader is reading in his/her own present *being*, outside of the text. There are different temporalities surrounding this text. Firstly, there is the present in which the event occurs; the exact moment in which the protagonist feels someone blowing on his/her neck. Next, there is the moment in which this event has been processed, and the question regarding the event is uttered. This speech act follows the original moment, which is indicated by the past tense form of the auxiliary verb "was". There are, therefore, two different moments present within the formulation of the sentence itself. The actual event spoken of is *intended*, by the narrator, in its absence. The sentence itself is *intended* by the reader in its presence, however, the sentence is constructed in the past tense. The reader, therefore, *cointends* the actual event in its absence, through the present *intention* of the past tense sentence.

3.2   Expanding the sample

The above sample is an illustration of the technique, and acts as a base sample from which the world can now be built. To continue with the analysis, it is necessary to add information from the text, to show how the information extracted in this sample, changes in the light of new information. To expand on the sample here, one can start to add tiny pieces of narrative to the sentence used in the initial example. For the purposes of illustration, one can start by adding the next three sentences in the text. Given the fact that the epilogue chronologically precedes the beginning of the text, a circular structure is created (see *1.3.1 Ghostwritten (1999)*). This means that one can also go backwards to add the last two sentences at the ending of the text. As the cover page is situated between the end and the beginning of the text, the title of the novel, *Ghostwritten*, can also be added for greater prefiguration (and symmetry). This effectively expands the sample from the initial analysis of only the first sentence, symmetrically in both directions. Therefore, the information which has been bracketed for analysis in this expanded sample is now the following:

"Who is blowing on the nape of my neck? I swing around – nothing but the back of the train, accelerating into the darkness" (G:436).
Ghostwritten (G:cover page).
"Who was blowing on the nape of my neck? I swung around. The tinted glass doors hissed shut. The light was bright" (G:3).

Regarding the new information set as a whole, one can focus on the initial sentence (in bold), and run the analysis again, but with the added context of a slightly larger whole. Firstly, the sentence itself is no longer a whole itself but, rather, a part of another whole. With the added information from the three sentences following it, the reader now discovers that there is no "who" behind the speaker, only "glass doors" which "hissed shut" (G:3). Therefore, most of the observations made in the first analysis are seemingly inaccurate.

In terms of *Being*, for instance, there is no second entity performing the act of "blowing" on the speaker's neck; it might only be a draft from the doors shutting. The speaker's act of *cointending* another person along with the feeling of airflow on his/her neck changes with the realisation that there is nobody behind them. Even though the speaker is alone in the scenario, it does not change the entirety of the world as such. The question "who" still implies that there are other *beings* in the world. For the reader, however, this raises questions as to why the speaker would have suspected it to be *someone* blowing on his/her neck. Might it have been a mere misjudgement on the character's part, or is there paranoia involved? Does it relate to the title of the text, by maybe invoking the "ghost" element? These changes in understanding, brought on by the greater context, have implications for the phenomenological formal structures.

Within the structure of *parts and wholes* the understanding of the sentence changes from being a *whole*, to being a *part* of a whole. There are also other parts which come into view as the whole expands. In terms of text structure, the original sentence is no longer the only sentence. Rather, it is part of a paragraph, in which a narrative of events is unfolding. There are now sentences from events preceding it, that have been added, as well as sentences following the first act of questioning "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3). The character's *intention* of feeling the breath on his/her skin, led to the question as to whom it might be in the original sentence. With the added sentences, this question has led to further *intentions* and subsequent actions. Through the original question, the character *intends* another person behind him/her. This leads to the action of "sw[inging] around" (G:3). Upon performing this action, the character's *intention* changes. Observing that there is no one, the *intention* becomes "tinted glass

doors [that] hissed shut" (G:3). The "who" in the first sentence now becomes a "what", changing the perception of the original part.

This change also relates to the formal structure of *identity in manifold*. The identity, or *being*, of the original source of the blowing on his/her neck has always been the "tinted doors hiss[ing] shut" (G:3), but their appearance (the character's perception) has changed. The identity of the feeling of air blowing itself also has a manifold of appearances. The most obvious is the airflow caused by someone breathing, as was originally *intended* (in its absence) by the speaker. Another source of the same feeling is the draft caused by the "glass doors hiss[ing] shut" (G:3). If the sentence preceding this event is taken into account, this draft can also be caused by a "train, accelerating into the darkness" (G:436). There are, within these three sentences, three different sources for the same sensation of airflow blowing on the neck. The thing itself (identity of blowing) remains the same, but it has a manifold of appearances based on the way it is *intended* (seeing, feeling, hearing), as well as a manifold of appearances based on its origin (breath, doors, train).

The way in which it is *intended* in this case, changes according to the formal structure of *presences and absences*. When the identity of the source of the blowing is *intended* in its absence, or *cointended* with the presence of airflow, it is *intended* as a "[w]ho" (G:3;436). However, when *intended* in its presence – after turning around to observe the source and confirm the original *intention* – its appearance changes. As a *filled intention*, or *intuition*, the person that was blowing, becomes the draft coming from a "train, accelerating" away (G:436), or "doors hiss[ing] shut" (G:3). It has always been the presence of these sources that have caused the blowing sensation, but the absent *cointention* of a "who" was a falsity, later corrected by *filled intentions*.

In this sample the reader now also has access to two different narration styles. The original sample, which is the first sentence in the text, is narrated in the first-person, past tense. The sentences that have been added from the back of the text, are also narrated in the first-person, but in the present tense. In fact, the same sentence – "Who [was/is] blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3;436) – is repeated in these two instances; one in the past, and one in the present. This creates a circular aspect to the text, even though the reader does not yet know which *narrative part* is first chronologically due to the rest of the text being bracketed out.

What these two initial analyses effectively illustrate, is how "parts are only understood against the background of appropriate wholes, that manifolds of appearance harbor identities, and that absences make no sense except as played off against the presences that can be achieved through them" (Sokolowski, 2000:4). In other words, the greater context within which something

is experienced, matters. This is an obvious point to make, but it is an essential part of the way Mitchell's world functions. As the macronovel is continuously expanding with each new text that is published, the larger whole within which the parts are understood continuously changes, which can affect the way in which the parts themselves are understood.

The purpose of the above two analyses has been to illustrate how phenomenology might be an effective method with which to explore this change on a structural level. As Mitchell's world continuously expands in both directions (narratively) from the very first sentence analysed, the understanding thereof, as well as each part of the whole, and the whole itself, will continue to change. The phenomenological formal structures, therefore, are mutually influenced as greater context is added. This is also what Dillon (2011*a*:156) argues makes Mitchell's texts an "autopoietic system – a living system as defined by its self-contained unity and the production of its own components". The understanding of parts within the wholes changes as the whole expands. The identity of these parts which make up the whole changes because of a greater *manifold of appearances* which accompanies the original perception. Also, as absent parts come into presence, they add to both the presented whole, as well as the manifold appearances in which the *parts and wholes* can be perceived. There are two levels on which this process happens. Firstly, as part of pure textual structure, the parts can refer to words, which make up sentences, which make up paragraphs, chapters, narratives, or entire texts (morphology and syntax). In terms of Mitchell's work, the texts also act as parts within an ever-expanding series of texts; the macronovel. Secondly, within the texts, the different narratives form an ever-expanding *fictional world*. This relates to the semantic level, where character thoughts and actions are parts within greater narrative events, which form the parts of the larger plot structures, and eventually (in Mitchell's case) the interconnected macronarrative that creates the *fictional world* of the macronovel. It will be argued that the expansion of the whole for both of these levels is dependent on temporality.

In the former case, regarding pure text (morphological and syntactical level), the text only expands within passing time. It takes the author more time to write more text, just as it takes the reader more time to read more text. One reads the first sentence of a text before one reads the second sentence. These are obvious points to make, but they are necessary to mention for the understanding of how the *fictional world* expands. It means that the reader also undergoes the process of *cointending* an "absent-present" person blowing on the character's neck, before *intending* the sliding doors as the actual presence creating the draught felt by the character. This means that the entirety of information (the whole) is given through textual parts which are given

to the reader in a specific temporal sequence. The reader has to follow the text as it expands the narrative.

In the latter case, the narrative itself can have different temporal sequences for readers and characters. The reader, coming into the text in medias res, has less context than the character precisely because of his or her temporal position in the narrative. Something happened in a time before the first event in the text, to place the character in the situation into which the reader enters. This temporal difference also creates a difference between the way characters experience their world, and the way that the reader does. For instance, the character presumably knows when and where s/he is (in this instance anyway). The reader is still *intending*, through ongoing text, where and when the events described are taking place, which is partly because of the temporal difference between the reader and the character.

3.2.1   Hyperlinking the thematic elements

The phrase "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3) is repeated on various occasions throughout the text. In the first narrative it is a past that haunts a delusional character who has just performed an act of terror. However, in the chapter that follows, "Tokyo", protagonist Satoru remembers "kissing the nape of her neck" during a Woolfesque stream of consciousness presentation, which splits the character's four-word utterance – "Because..." and "...I dunno, Koji" (G:57) – by about half a page of memories about his lover. In the third chapter, "Hong Kong", Neal Brose describes first noticing a ghost in his house while watching *Die Hard 3*, as "[f]ear breathed on the nape of my neck" (G:83). Once again this happens during a stream of consciousness type description, where his own observations blend together between the real-world experience and what is happening in the movie. Later, while Neal is dying, a myriad of thoughts from different times in his life stream together in a single paragraph, and he feels how "[s]he brushed near by, and blew on the back of my neck" (G:105). Another example can be found in the "London" narrative. After gambling away all the money at his disposal, Marco describes how "[a] little demon blew on the back of my neck", before he enters into an inner monologue about whether or not to use his credit card. Finally, the phrase returns to Quasar's narrative in the epilogue, "Underground". As he leaves the train on which he had planted a backpack of sarin, he asks "[w]ho is blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:436). This brings the entire global expansion that the text has undergone back to its beginning.

The variation on the sentence containing "kissing/blowing the nape/back of my/her neck" becomes a *narrative part* that connects various narratives in this text, therefore functioning as one of the narrative *hyperlinks* (discussed in *2.1.4 Temporality*). Furthermore, in each of these

instances, the *hyperlink* is used in connection with the individual narrative themes. In Quasar's case, it is placed adjacent to his terrorist act, and his process of escape. It connects to his fear of being caught. In Satoru's narrative it connects to his memories of a passionate moment with Tomoyo – the protagonist's love interest in a love story. For Neal Brose, a character haunted by the women in his life, the "[f]ear breathed on the nape of [his] neck" (G:83), as his memories remind him of his choices in life. The same "ghost" is present in his dying moments. One of the main themes in Marco's narrative is chance versus fate, eventually playing out the climax in a casino, where he weighs the option of using his credit card to continue gambling. The sentence variations of "kissing/blowing the nape/back of my/her neck" do not randomly link the narratives together, but rather purposefully join the different themes in the different narratives together into an overarching theme. The "ghosts" that haunt each of these characters, are collected together as the ghost that writes their stories (suggested by the title *Ghostwritten*). Fears, desires, memories, or vices all have an impact on these characters' actions, while their actions ripple out into the world to influence other characters (Dillon, 2011*a*:136). The *hyperlinking* function of this *narrative part*, therefore, is important for the larger structure of the text. It is what keeps the fragmented text together.

3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences

The next reading will illustrate how the structure of *Ghostwritten* uses these *hyperlinks* to create a *fictional world* which incorporates the functioning of narrative temporality. In order to do this, it will be useful to identify an instance in the text which has a high density of narrative *hyperlinks*. For the purposes of this reading, the epilogue ("Underground") will be used, as it presents a series of *hyperlinks*, connecting to every narrative in the text within only three pages. There is also a significant temporal difference between the reader and the character. It is at the end of the text, yet it precedes the text chronologically. It can also be regarded as the impetus for most of the narrative events that take place throughout the text. It returns to the very first character in the text, Quasar, before he commits the act of terrorism which ripples throughout the text. By preceding the text chronologically, while following it structurally, it consequently functions to give the text a circular form, demanding a rereading of the text. It can, therefore, be regarded as one of the key passages to this *Ghostwritten*.

This short chapter chronologically presents the earliest *narrative part* experienced by the character in the text, barring his own personal history (childhood, growing up, and all events leading up to this point in his life, as narrated in "Okinawa"). However, Quasar does not have the knowledge of the other narratives in the text, and does not know the consequences of his actions,

as the reader does. The reader has, upon reaching the epilogue, come to this point by reading through the entire text. This reading will explore the differences between Quasar's understanding of his surroundings, and the reader's understanding of Quasar's narration.

As the train is slowing down for the next station, Quasar is about to get off to escape the deadly gas that will soon be spreading throughout the cabin. All of his actions are aimed at exiting the train, and leaving the station before the eruption. He, therefore, *intends* the outside of the station in its *absence*. The process of his escape is complicated somewhat by the large number of people surrounding him, and blocking his exit. In a stream of consciousness style description these surroundings and obstructions come into view as he tries to work his way through the crowd. In phenomenological terms these observations are what form the "everyday life", or *lifeworld*. Even though Quasar *intends* a single action (walking out of the station), there are more experiences that make up the process of performing the action in the *lifeworld*.

While Quasar finds himself on the wrong side of the train upon entering the station, his thought processes run through various scenarios – "fak[ing] a heart attack" or "screaming like a maniac" (G:433) – but decides against both to avoid suspicion. As he struggles through the crowd he makes various other observations to make sense of his surroundings, but they are all directed towards his one goal; escaping. He sees "a couple walking their dog down a beach in Okinawa" in an advertisement for "All Nippon Airlines", which causes him to panic, as he relates the sunset to the "world's end" (G:433). To overcome this obstacle, he convinces himself by thinking "I don't want this train to be my tomb...*Fight*, Quasar! You are at war!" (G:434 *italics original*). For the reader, however, the word "Okinawa" links this advertisement to the title of the first chapter and Quasar's chosen hideout after the train attack. His description that "[t]he ripped sunset colours the world's end…or its beginning" (G:433), can also represent the way in which his own narrative is at both the end and the beginning of the text.

As he struggles through the crowd, Quasar comes close enough to another passenger to hear the music from her earphones featuring "a saxophone from long ago... so sad it could barely leave the ground" (G:434). Through this description he once again projects his own situation on his surroundings, as he might not be able to leave the underground if he does not escape in time. For the reader, the saxophone recalls the second narrative, "Tokyo" (G:35-64). Satoru plays saxophone, constantly listens to and references old jazz musicians, and works in a music store in Tokyo. The reader, having spent some time in this character's chapter, will, therefore, recognise this as a reference to his narrative. A "young woman clutching a viola case" (G:434) reiterates the presence of this second chapter, as she resembles Satoru's love interest, Tomoyo, who plays viola.

As he bumps into this "young woman clutching a viola case...[s]he shields her face with a book" (G:434). On its cover he sees that the title is *The Zen Eye*, and a picture where "Buddha sits...silver on a blue hill, an island far from this tromboning din" (G:434). Once again contemplating the possibility of his own death, he wonders immediately "[w]ill my soul find a path out of these tunnels?" (G:434). Therefore, the notion of Buddha being far away from the train, reiterates the fact that Quasar's own salvation lies beyond the exit of the station. For the reader, this description brings up Neal Brose's journey and death from the third chapter (G:67-109), where he climbed the hill to a statue of Buddha, and died at the foot of it. The last thing Neal sees is himself with the ghost of a little girl, walking "[h]and in hand…up the steps of the Big Bright Buddha…" (G: 109).

As he continues to struggle, Quasar's next obstacle is being "blocked by a sleeping giant whose hair is the colour of tea", and he imagines he sees that "[h]ere is the tea, here is the bowl, here is the Tea Shack, here is the mountain, faces of rock in the purest sky...*See? It's not far*" (G:434 *italics original*). This last iteration of the "pure skies" being "*not far*", is another of his self-motivation tactics. This description links the reader's thoughts to the "Holy Mountain" chapter (G:113-151), which is entirely set in a tea shack on a mountain side.

As he squirms through, passing underneath the "giant", Quasar's body twists upward, and an advertisement for a Toyota Landcruiser depicts "grasslands" where "The Great Khan's horsemen thunder to the west" (G:434) on the ceiling of the train. Just as "Mongolia" (G:155-202) follows "Holy Mountain" in the text, so too does this Landcruiser poster link to that chapter through its depiction of Genghis Khan traveling westward through endless grasslands. It evokes the noncorpum's own journey westward through Mongolia, passing the "grasslands [which] rise and fall like years, years upon years of them" (G:155;434), in the fifth chapter. Quasar's description of the grasslands is one that is consistently used throughout the "Mongolia" chapter, but the reader should also notice a reference to the noncorpum, from the same chapter, in "[e]mpty your self of self, and you may slip through where even a scream could not" (G:435).

Urging the other occupants to "*Move!*" as he bumps into a sailor holding a booklet, which reads "*Petersburg, City of Masterworks*", Quasar wonders why there is a sailor in "this heaving coffin [which] is the opposite of the sea" (G:435). The sixth chapter, "Petersburg" (G:205-261), which tells the story of Margarita Latunsky's involvement with an art heist in Petersburg, links to Quasar's observation of this booklet, thus containing both the chapter's name, as well as a reference to its plot.

Continuing through the crowd, Quasar spots "[a] vinyl shopping bag fall[ing] down from the rack" with an imprint of "*The London Underground*" on it (G:435 *italics original*). He

convinces himself that "*This is my stop...I get off here*" (G:435). This symbol of London's most famous travel system is consistent with Marco's constant commuting across London throughout his narrative in "London" (G:263-318).

Quasar, still trying to escape the train, sees that "[o]n the label of Kilmagoon whiskey is an island as old as the world" (G:435). In the "Clear Island" chapter, protagonist Mo Muntervary describes her approach by sea, as she returns home to her Gaelic-speaking island, as "[a]n island as old as the world" (G:321). Also, their local whiskey is called "Kilmagoon".[30]

Finally, after getting his hand stuck in the door of the train, Quasar just manages to squeeze through, before bumping into someone's chest and seeing a picture of "the Empire State Building, circled by an albino bat" and the slogan "*Spend the Night with Bat Segundo on 97.8 FM*" (G:436 *italics original*). The reader will recall that the ninth, and last, full chapter of *Ghostwritten* is wholly constructed from excerpts of recordings from the Bat Segundo radio talk show in New York. After this final description of his surroundings, Quasar dusts himself off, and asks the aforementioned question that returns the reader to the beginning of the text, "Who is blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:436).

In each of these cases, the character, Quasar, experiences his surroundings in a completely different way than the reader does due to the difference in context created by the text's narrative temporality. As this epilogue precedes the rest of the text chronologically the character does not have the *prefiguration* necessary for recognising any of his observations in the same way as the reader does. The character also does not travel the spatial dimensions of the text, as the reader does. But structurally the difference in *prefiguration* is due to the fact that this preceding event is placed after the rest of the text for the reader to be able to recognise these elements. If the text started with this *narrative part*, the reader would also have been without the necessary *prefiguration*, just as the character is.

In terms of his *intentions*, Quasar experiences these surroundings as he tries to escape the train, and his main *intention* is the station exit, although he still *intends* this within its physical absence from his own *lifeworld*. His *lifeworld* (immediate surroundings, everyday life experience) currently contains *presences* which he only *intends* as obstructions to his main goal. The reader, however, *intends* these surroundings as *hyperlinks* to every other chapter, which emphasises the *consequences* of Quasar's actions, rather than the *action* itself. The *hyperlink* becomes an *absent-presence* for the reader, as it is a present *noema* in Quasar's narration, which links to an absent *noesis* of past text.

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[30] This fictional brand of whiskey is used throughout Mitchell's macronovel.

Quasar's view of the train as a "tomb" (G:434), "coffin" (G:435), or "zombie wagon" (G:346), also points to the different manner of looking at the train than the rest of the commuters do. Everyone else on the train presumably *intends* the train as a tool for transport, something useful. Quasar *intends* it as something to escape. Since he knows that it contains a deadly gas, he has a different view of its whole context. In terms of the formal structure of *identity in manifold*, the appearance of the train differs for him, in relation to the view of the average passenger, just as his view differs from the reader's. He sees the illustrations and words on advertisements and books, hears noises and feels the textures of his surroundings, but they remain just that; his surroundings. They are the elements of the world – the *noemas* – that make up his *lifeworld*. His inclusion of these elements in a present tense narration is Mitchell's imitation of immediate experience. As if to confirm this difference in experience, a re-reading reveals that none of these present experiences feature Quasar's later narrations of this event. In the first chapter, "Okinawa", when Quasar remembers the events of the train in the past, none of the surroundings he experiences in the epilogue are present. In fact, the description of the event, as he remembers it, is narrated within a few short lines:

> The train pulls into the station, and—
> I hear the noises under the manhole cover, but I dared not, dared not listen to its words.
> If the noises ever become words – not now, not yet. Not ever. Where would it end?
> I entered the current that flowed to the escalators, and away from there.
> Over my shoulder, the train accelerated into the fumey darkness.
>
> <div align="right">(G:17-18)</div>

The entire epilogue, with its three pages of describing surroundings, and creating *unfilled intentions* for the reader, is situated between the first and last lines here. This illustrates the temporal difference between Quasar's experience through memory, and Quasar's experiences while the scene plays out in the present. The detailed narration of Quasar's experiences from the epilogue have, therefore, been refigured into a past tense narrative which only contains what he deems is the most important part of his story; his action of planting sarin. None of the *hyperlinks* the reader would recognise in the epilogue are present for Quasar. Rather, as this excerpt reveals, he tends to try and avoid thinking about the action itself, possibly out of guilt. This suppression of memories is a luxury afforded to him through the same temporal distance. In the present experiences of the epilogue, none of the angst could be avoided. But here, in the memory thereof, the experience can be altered to suit the narrative of self.

For the reader, the significance of this dense referencing back into the text from without – given the epilogue's temporal position to the rest of the text – is to reiterate connectivity. In the moments before Quasar's attack is actualised, every other narrative from across the *fictional world* in the text is there in that moment. Though not physically present, they are there in terms of the reader's *unfilled*, or absent, *intentions*. They are there in the moments just before the sarin goes off, and they continue to live in a world of its effects. Mo Muntervary's "Quantum Cognition" (*QuanCog*) AI system (G:331) is developed into an anti-terrorist weapon as one of the eventual outcomes of Quasar's actions. The same technology would later shut down all electronic-based weaponry in the world, and kill its own creators in self-preservation, as "the zookeeper" (G:391) in "Night Train". Although, the narrative of the zookeeper in chapter nine is so far removed from the first chapter – spatially the difference between Okinawa and New York, and temporally the difference between 1995 and an unknown future – the epilogue connects them intimately for the reader.

3.2.3 Temporal Being and the fictional world

The different *intentionalities* and different combinations of experience become especially important in terms of the way the reader experiences change throughout the rest of the narratives. To illustrate this, one can now explore the way in which the plot itself progresses throughout the narratives by starting with Quasar's first narrative, "Okinawa". From there one can move through the text as it is presented chronologically to the reader

Quasar, by virtue of his belief, deems himself released "from the prison of materialism" after having "freed [him]self from the asylum of the unclean" (G:9). He constantly defines his position in the world through others. His real name was Keisuke Tanaka, a timid boy who was bullied by everyone at school, even his teacher. He relays memories of a past where children at school pretended he was dead for a day – not responding to him, pretending not see him – until the teacher conducted a funeral for him in his presence. The memory sequence ends where he concludes with the statement "I was dead" (G:5), because nobody saw him. From this character's perspective, the question arises as to whether one's *being* is wholly defined by others. Quasar reacts directly against what had happened in his past. He vows that he will give them funerals, "[f]unerals with no mourners" (G:5).

The cult leader "His Serendipity" gives him the name "Quasar". Quasar believes this to be prophetic, as his objective in the gas attacks is to be "the harbinger…to pulse at the edge of the universe of the faithful, alone in the darkness" (G:5). He defines his new self according to how he believes His Serendipity sees him. He believes in the teachings of this figure, one whom

he deems holy, "a boddhisatva [sic]" (G:11), but whom the reader can see is a hack. All who join the cult give up their worldly possessions to "The Fellowship", while its leader lives in luxury, has "only three Cadillacs", and young boys in loincloths for his "modest domestic needs" (G:13).

Quasar, as the narrator of this first chapter, is presented to the reader as a delusional individual, probably in desperate need of psychiatric attention; a concern later voiced by the zookeeper in "Night Train" (G:420). He experiences, on various occasions, His Serendipity talking to him through animals, and believes him to be capable of "transmigrat[ing]" (G:30) his consciousness across bodies. He believes, unquestioningly, in the doctrines of The Fellowship, including avoiding television and aircons for fear of blocking one's "alpha waves" (G:4;10); imbibing the sperm of His Serendipity to boost "gamma resistance" (G:31); obsessively cleaning oneself from the unclean world; and that after "cleansing" (killing-off) the world's "unclean" (those outside of The Fellowship), His Serendipity will usher in the new age (G:5;29). His beliefs and practices are presented to the reader as delusional and, even though Quasar disputes this fact, The Fellowship is actually a doomsday cult.

Furthermore, this cult resembles the actual cult that was responsible for the sarin attacks in the Tokyo metro in 1995, called "Aum Shinrikyo" (Supreme Truth), known as Aleph post-2000, under the leadership of Asahara Shoko ("Japan's Christ"), also known as Matsumoto Chizuo. The members were all executed in July 2018 (Al Jazeera, 2018). When *Ghostwritten* was published in 1999, a few of these people were still at large. Some of the actual cult's beliefs are captured in Mitchell's text – like the cleansing of the world by killing the "unclean" to save them from damnation – and some of the beliefs are completely fictional – like transmigration and teleportation. The reader is presented with both fact and fiction mixed together, through an unreliable narrator. While the character's delusions can be isolated within his own *lifeworld*, the "fact" part is from the reader's own actuality outside of the text. This causes an overlapping of *lifeworlds*. The fictional world transcends into actuality through its "real world" elements, while the reader's *prefiguration* of these real world events informs the *configuration* with which the fictional elements are approached in the text. This, subsequently, informs the implied reader's *mode-of-being* as a denizen in the text.

Later, in the "Mongolia" chapter, where a "noncorpum" (being of pure consciousness) is searching for others like itself, the *mode-of-being* is complicated somewhat. The reader is now presented with something that was previously a ridiculous notion by a delusional character. This entity cannot teleport, or control animals (as specifically mentioned by Quasar), but it can "transmigrate" between people through touch (G:163). This noncorpum does not know its own origin, name, or any others like itself, but it vaguely resembles what Quasar describes in the first

chapter. This could still be mere coincidence; something 'real' that resembles someone else's delusions – like the fact that it gets the description of itself as "noncorpum" from a writer that it possessed in Buenos Aires, connecting Mitchell's allusions to Jorge Luis Borges' (Boulter, 2011:193; G:172). However, in the "Night Train" chapter, another noncorpum phones into a radio station, calling itself "Arupadhatu" (G:421). This is the same name that Quasar gives when he explains how "a being of pure consciousness named Arupadhatu transmigrated into His Serendipity" (G:30) while he was travelling in Tibet, and gave him the secrets of freeing one's mind. The Arupadhatu – Sanskrit for "formlessness" (Nagaoka, 2016:2) – who phones into the radio station, is an evil entity who wants to enslave the world. He is subsequently tracked down and destroyed by another noncorpum entity; an AI program that calls itself "the zookeeper", which can be said to "transmigrate" between various satellites and other electronic devices. There are, therefore, various *modes-of-being* explored through the different characters in this text. As each protagonist is also the narrator of his/her own story, which is presented in the first-person form, the reader's position as implied reader has to adapt accordingly.

A *mode-of-being* is presented to the reader, escalating in increments which do not initially feel like either science fiction, nor fantasy, but by the end of the text the reader has encountered both. Mitchell essentially eases the reader into his world through a phenomenological course of recognition. The first chapter presents any sort of supernatural or fantastical elements as imaginary and delusional. Quasar is a narrator who is clearly unstable; he has experienced trauma, he has been "saved" by a cult, and he has committed an act of terrorism in the belief of saving his victims from damnation. The second chapter is in the form of a bildungsroman, narrated by young jazz musician Satoru, who falls in love with a girl who comes into the music store where he works. He is portrayed as a completely realistic, likeable, and reliable narrator, who dares only to fantasise, right at the end of his narrative, about maybe spending the future with a girl he meets. Quasar and Satoru are juxtaposed in this way as well. Satoru dares to dream at the end of his narrative, feeling "as close to paradise as [he has] ever been" (G:64). Whereas Quasar is finally hit by a brutal reality at the end of his narrative when "[c]louds begin to ink out the stars, one by one" (G:32). As he is the one who "pulse[s] at the edge of the universe of the faithful, alone in the darkness" (G:5), he might very soon be one of the stars being inked out.

Quasar and Satoru are also compared in their respective experiences of growing up, and the effects thereof. Quasar's teacher, who joins in on the bullying, is called "Mr Ikeda" (G:5). This event in his childhood essentially plays a great part in his becoming a terrorist. However, Satoru also mentions having "Mr Ikeda" (G:45) at school, and receiving toilet scrubbing as

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punishment from him. Satoru does not, like Quasar, bear a grudge towards humanity, or even ill-will towards their teacher. These two characters have related childhoods, in the same school, but the effects of these experiences differ depending on the meaning each extrapolates. Quasar sees an attack on himself, and subsequently a humanity that needs to be punished. Satoru sees a memory in which he met his best friend, Koji. Quasar becomes obsessed with his hatred, the supernatural, and death. Satoru believes in life, love, and the power of music.

Continuing, the third narrative presents the first presence of a "real" fantastical element, where a Britton living in Hong Kong sees the ghost of a little girl in his apartment. Mitchell presents this spiritual element more metaphorically (and metafictionally) than anything concrete:

> For the last few months I've been living with three women. One was a ghost, who is now a woman. One was a woman, who is now a ghost. One is a ghost, and always will be. But this isn't a ghost story: the ghost is in the background, where she has to be. If she was in the foreground she'd be a person.
>
> (G:96)

Neal Brose, the narrator, is running through memories of why his wife left him, how he started to have sexual relations with his housekeeper, and how he fears being caught for fraudulent dealings at work. He dies of acute organ failure due to his unchecked diabetes (G:259) while seeing a little ghost girl resembling what he would imagine a child with the maid would look like (G:109). By the end of this third chapter, Mitchell still lets the reader maintain the idea of Quasar as delusional, but elements of the fantastical have slowly seeped into the text. However, these can still be regarded as merely metaphorical, given the fact that the ghost remains only "in the background" of this story (G:96).

By the fourth chapter, "Holy Mountain", Mitchell starts to blend delusion, metaphor and reality together in a narrator who lives through 20th century China's various political states, civil wars, and famine from the vantage of her tea shack halfway up a mountain path that leads towards a Buddhist temple. Her delusional side is presented in the form of a talking tree. Her realistic side is the trauma that she describes in dead serious reporting style. One of her childhood "delusions" is the spirit of an old woman who comforts her after she is raped by a warlord's son. This spirit says "[t]he Tree will protect you" (G:117), and sings her a lullaby; clearly an illusion conjured up by a traumatised mind.

Doubt, for the reader, comes in when the narrator is an elderly woman, who finds the spirit of a young girl crying on her bed, and comforts her by singing her the same lullaby and telling her "[t]he Tree will protect you" (G:144). Not only is the circular form of the text

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thematically returned on a microscale here – the little girl first comforted by her older self, before she comforts her own younger self as an older woman – but the metaphorical "ghost" has come to the foreground, and she has become a person; firstly, as the ghost of a future self coming into present existence and, secondly, as a present self becoming a ghost of the past. Mitchell has also now created a course for recognition by which he can lead the reader into the fully-fledged fantasy realm of the fifth narrative, "Mongolia".

"Mongolia" starts with what seems to be an extradiegetic narrator's perspective on a character called "Caspar" travelling on a train. However, this quickly changes into the narrator starting to refer to itself as an "I" (G:155). Furthermore, the reader is then presented with the strangeness of this intradiegetic narrator referring to the inner thoughts and feelings of the third-person subject (Caspar). Eventually it is revealed that this is a being of pure consciousness, who transmigrates across people, and is currently in Caspar's mind (G:163). The reader can now recognise that the trace of this impossible, fantastical *Being* has been present throughout the text. For instance, the tree that talks to the old lady in "Holy Mountain" is revealed to have been this "noncorpum" in her head (G:172). It also starts to resemble the "being of pure consciousness" referred to by Quasar (G:30). It, therefore, becomes clear to the reader how a number of seemingly ridiculous elements from previous chapters were actually *hyperlinks* in the text. The *Being* of the text at first seems to change, but upon the second reading, one might notice that it has remained subtly stable throughout. There is, therefore, an identity to the text which is presented to the reader in a *manifold of appearances.* In other words

> the differences are fiction-internally coherent with the world, and either explained explicitly or recoverable as extrapolation along coherent correspondence relations. Even in magic realist texts, the differences are often revealed to be congruent with the world once the reader has realised that 'the world' is in fact different from its initial introduction.
>
> (Laurie, 2013:262)

Within the text itself, characters' experiences of their world/s can be portrayed in a manner likened to *intentionalities* as well. The noncorpum in "Mongolia" transmigrates into the mind of a Mongolian woman (Gunga). While on her way to a shaman, taking a bus, the noncorpum notes how "[t]he bus was stuck in first gear" and that there was an abandoned factory of which "Gunga had already forgotten what it had once manufactured" (G:171). These aspects of everyday life, gone unnoticed by a native, are the exact same things that Caspar (the Westerner whose mind the noncorpum had possessed just before Gunga's) actively despised about Mongolia just a few pages before. Caspar notes how "[t]his place is going backwards in time. I feel the end of the

world is waiting in those mountains, somewhere" (G:164). Here are two characters experiencing similar things in the same country, but the *intentionalities* could not be more different. Caspar, *intending* Mongolia as a tourist, sees different *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* from his context than Gunga does from within hers. For Gunga, phenomenologically, an overcrowded bus with only one working gear, is part of her average everyday life. It is the normal functioning of her *lifeworld*, and she does not notice these issues, as she only *intends* to reach the shaman, and this is her means of doing that. For Caspar, these issues are persistent hindrances in the way of his *intended* goals to experience Mongolia. Ironically – and this is one of the insights shown by phenomenology – a major part of Mongolia includes these inconveniences, as lived through unnoticed by a Mongolian, Gunga, in her *lifeworld*. However, the identity of the thing experienced remains the same; both of these experiences are of Mongolia. The two different manners in which it is experienced do not change its identity, these are merely different *sides*, *aspects*, and *profiles* of the same thing, experienced as such through different *intentionalities*, due to the fact their individual greater wholes inform the functioning of the parts differently. The noncorpum, like the reader, has the advantage of experiencing both views, and thus gains greater insight into this greater *Being* of the world. Both the reader and the noncorpum also assume different *modes-of-being* in accordance with these characters, as one *intends* the rest of Caspar's narrative along with him, and likewise Gunga's. One experiences these two different views of the "Mongolia" chapter not as two different Mongolias, but as one from two different perspectives; a single identity in a manifold of appearances (Sokolowski, 2000:30).

In terms of what has been defined as *presences and absences*, in Mitchell's texts the functioning thereof relates to what both Barnard (2009:209) and Hopf (2011:121) describe as *hyperlink* text. This includes regular intra and inter-textual connections featured as call-back functions (such as references to previous narrative events) or references to other works (both Mitchell's, as well as other authors, musicians, artists, etcetera). These *hyperlinks*, as previously discussed, relate to the way in which a single word, or phrase, references an entirely different part of the text, making it present within the part of the text currently being read; making it present in its absence through this linking function.

However, as the previous analysis has shown, the temporal sequence in which the text is presented to the reader influences which *hyperlinks* are noticed. The reader is only able to recognise the other chapters in the text through Quasar's descriptions of his surroundings on the train (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*) because the temporal construction of the text presents those chapters before the epilogue. The various *hyperlinks* throughout the text, like call-back functions or intratextual references, are only

recognisable because these narrative events structurally precede the instances in which they are referred to. In the same way, the circular nature of the text, guiding the reader into a second reading, creates a new temporal aspect in which the reader will be able to recognise *hyperlinks* in earlier *narrative parts* which reference later *narrative parts*, precisely because of the reader's knowledge of the whole.

Each of the abovementioned formal structures relate to *intentionalities* which influence the way in which Mitchell's texts can be explored. The temporal construction of the text, however, is what informs the way in which these parts are *intended* by the reader. Given the fact that one can start the macronovel at any text (Harris-Birtill, 2017:175-176; Schmitz, 2018:5), a reader who starts with this first text (*Ghostwritten*), and works his/her way through the macronovel to *The Bone Clocks* in publishing order, will have a different experience than one reading it in any other order. This is due to the temporal sequence in which the *hyperlinks* are experienced. In this instance, the complications mentioned regarding the *prefiguration* during the access process influence the *intentionality* with which a text is approached, and vice versa (see *3.1 Prefiguration and access to* Ghostwritten). Each of the narratives have their own elements of suspense, as one would find in regular texts. In some instances, connections to preceding narratives within a single text are made in an obvious manner (as in the epilogue of *Ghostwritten*), which presents the reader with non-linear instances in narrative temporality.

A second reading, however, changes the temporal experience of the narrative. Given the fact that previously unrecognised narrative connections become salient, the reader can now recognise references in the first chapter which connect to instances in following chapters. The narrative temporality of the text becomes non-linear in such a second reading, revealing causalities previously unrecognised (further discussed below in *3.2.4 Incompleteness, hyperlinks, and the formal structures*).

3.2.4 Incompleteness, hyperlinks, and the formal structures

Sarah Dillon (2011*a*:146), in her exploration of the "chaotic narrative" mentions that the main structural component of *Ghostwritten* is causality. She cites an interview by Nazalee Raja (2005) in which Mitchell also attests to the importance of causality for the connections between narratives in *Ghostwritten*:

> There's one action in each of the stories that makes the succeeding story possible. That links the stories. It gives the reader the sense of there being a macro plot between the covers, over and above the micro plot between the beginnings and endings of the chapters.
>
> (Mitchell cited by Raja, 2005)

This level of connection, however, is not that obvious to a first-time reader. Raja (2005) refers to *Ghostwritten*'s construction as having "secret architectures", which essentially only becomes clear to the reader after the fact. For instance, when Marco tackles a woman in an orange anorak to save her from being hit by a car in the "London" narrative (G:273), there is no way of knowing that the woman is actually Mo Muntervary who will be the protagonist of the "Clear Island" narrative that follows. It is only when Mo mentions that she "headbutted a taxi in London" (G:325), and explains why men in black suits would be following her, that the reader can start to *intend*, in its absence, that she had been the woman Marco saved. These types of instances in the text can still be detected during a first reading, as they retrospectively add to the information given in previous narratives, and function in terms of *hyperlinking*, the same as the sequence of relations Quasar experiences underground (discussed in the previous section).

To have connections between narratives that only become salient in subsequent readings, this same type of connection needs to almost function in reverse. In the epilogue, the difference in understanding between Quasar and the reader is based on the fact that the reader can see the *hyperlinks* to other narratives in the text, while Quasar can not. There is a difference in *prefiguration* which leads to this difference in experience. In the same way, there might be *hyperlinks* in earlier narratives linking to parts in later narratives, which the reader cannot recognise upon a first reading due to a lack of *prefiguration*. A rereading of the text will highlight these earlier *hyperlinks*, recalling for the reader the later instances from the first reading, which are still to come in the rereading.

To illustrate this, a reading into the aforementioned scene can be used. The sequence where Marco saves Mo starts with him noticing three men in black suits walking past him. This initiates the action of Marco starting to muse upon the nature of his *being*. He wonders, "[h]ow come they end up with that life, and I end up with this one?" (G:272), and finally concludes that it is "chance" that dictates everything (G:273). Chance versus fate is a major theme in Marco's narrative. While trying to make sense of his own existence compared to those around him, he argues that it is through chance. When he later re-evaluates the situation, he cannot help but notice that if he had not left Katy Forbes' place earlier than anticipated, he would not have been at that spot in that exact time to save Mo (G:275). Later, while watching a rugby match, he "formulate[s] the Marco Chance versus Fate Videoed Sports Match Analogy" (G:292), and finds that the answer to whether fate or chance controls one's life is that it "is as relative as time. If you're in your life, chance. Viewed from the outside, like a book you're reading, it's fate all the way" (G:292). This theme continues into various other tropes, for instance the fact that his band

is called "The Music of Chance" (G:270), and that his narrative concludes in a casino. The plot event which features him saving Mo's life is, therefore, a marked event and, as such, is more likely to be recognised later on in Mo's narrative. It forms part of his considerations upon chance, a main theme of the narrative. Mo merely mentions that she has a black eye due to an incident involving a taxi, and the reader can connect it to the woman Marco saves.

The reverse of this connective functioning would be in cases where the marked event follows a connective reference to it. Take, for instance, the three men in black suits who are marked in this case. In Mo's narrative, the reader is informed that these are American Defence Force operatives who are after Mo's research on QuanCog. However, even though they are only marked as connected to a major event in Marco's narrative – he lies to them about which way Mo travelled after the incident – a second reading reveals that they have been present in the text since the "Mongolia" narrative two chapters earlier (G:159). This also reveals that Mo had been on the same train as Caspar in that chapter, described as "a middle-aged Irish woman who either gazed out of the window or wrote numbers in a black notebook" (G:156). She also stayed with a periphery character, Huw Llewellyn (G:67;350), in the third chapter ("Hong Kong"), making Mo an *absent-present* just beyond the edge of the narrative there. From the reader's perspective, then, there are edges to the presented world which suggest a larger world, of which some are later explored, and some yet remain incomplete. This creates the feeling of a larger world outside of the presented text, to which the reader does not have access, but it also creates the perception that access to this larger world might be possible at a later stage. It instils the idea that there is always a chance of greater access and better understanding of the individual parts which make up the larger whole.

Also, through the greater access to the world, the reader can experience other parts of the *fictional world* to those that the individual characters can. This means that the world of each character is also incomplete in relation to the larger whole. Just as there are suggested parts to the world which characters have access to but readers do not (suggested *incompleteness*), so too does the reader have access to parts of the world that characters do not (as shown through the reading in previous section). The world of the text is, therefore, incomplete for both reader and characters, but in different ways. The reader has access to a different combination of information about the world than the characters do, and therefore *intends* things differently in the world. This creates the feeling (illusion?) of greater autonomy within the world for both the characters, as well as the reader. What changes the actual *lifeworld* experience of text (signs and symbols) into the experience of a *fictional world*, is the *intentionality* with which the text is approached. The reader's *prefiguration* determines the manner in which a text presents itself to him/her through

the reader's *intentionality*. *Intentionality* with which texts can be approached might differ between initial and subsequent readings (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*).

In Mitchell's case, the *intentionality* of an initial reading also depends on how familiar a reader is with existing work. Assuming a novice reader of Mitchell's work approaches the macronovel through *Ghostwritten* first, the initial exploration of the world might be one that invests in the first narrative where initial access was made, only to be thrown into a new narrative by chapter two, and then repeating the process with the start of each following chapter. After such an initial reading, the reader has a new choice with regards to *intentionality*, which influences the construction, and even the functioning, of the text. One can, for instance, regard the text as a collection of independent short stories that are merely thematically linked; a collection of concrete wholes. Another option is to approach the text as a single novel constructed of interconnected short stories, thus a whole made of parts to which the epilogue suggests a rereading. Alternatively, one can continue from *Ghostwritten* onwards through the Mitchell oeuvre. As this pertains to the macro level, a novice reader will not yet experience the entirety of *Ghostwritten* as just a part of the whole in terms of the macronovel. It might only be after all of the individual texts have been read, that a reader might want to start a collective rereading, with a larger narrative in mind, to experience "new" *hyperlinks*.

3.3   Translating *Ghostwritten* into phenomenological terms

The circular nature of the text is made quite obvious through the first reading (*3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*), which not only returns to Quasar's narrative from the first chapter, but even ends the text by repeating, but chronologically preceding, a variation of the first line "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3). In this first instance, Quasar "swung around" and saw nothing but doors closing behind him, immediately invoking the "ghost" element from the title. The second instance ends the text with "[w]ho is blowing on the nape of my neck? I swing around – nothing but the back of the train, accelerating into darkness" (G:436). Notice, also, that the version of the question posed at the beginning of the text is phrased in the past tense, while the ending has the same question in the present tense. However, the ending chronologically takes place before the beginning and, therefore, this present precedes another present's past. The story itself metaphorically breathes on its own neck.

Furthermore, the train that Quasar sees after turning around at the end of the text, moves into the "darkness" of an unknown future in which Quasar hopes is a broken phial of sarin leaking out into the crowded carriage. The silent explosion of a solenoid breaking this phial had

already happened for the reader at the start of the novel, and the effects it has on the world have already been revealed. In the opening of the text, however, Quasar "swung" round to see "[t]he tinted glass doors hissed shut. The light was bright" (G:3). The end and the beginning are juxtaposed in their entirety. The beginning follows the end chronologically, but the beginning is a past tense of "bright light" through "tinted doors" (known; past of memory), while the end is a present tense that looks to a future "accelerating into darkness" (unknown; future of expectation). However, at the beginning of the text, the reader has no memory (*prefiguration*) of Quasar's actions, while Quasar does. At the end of the text the reader has the "memory" (*prefiguration*) of future events to come, which Quasar does not. This juxtaposes the reader and the character as well, which might suggest that it is the reader who is "blowing on the nape of [Quasar's] neck" (G:3).

This continual circle which the text creates, also returns to Heidegger (1962:20) who states that "Dasein is as it already was, and it is 'what' it already was...Dasein 'is' its past in the way of its own Being", which is the predicament in which Mitchell places the reader (see *2.1.2 Being*). This is a point well-argued by Boulter (2015) in his reading of *Ghostwritten* alongside Heidegger.[31] By having Quasar's present tense narration at the end of the text – always being just behind his former self in past tense narration at the beginning of the text – the cycle of the book starts anew, in the same form as it always was, but explored and experienced differently. In this sense, might it be Quasar's past actions, his own *being*, that "was blowing on the nape of [his] neck" (G:3)? Given the title "*Ghostwritten*", it may just be that the present "is always already haunted by its past" (Boulter, 2015:36).

Furthermore, the ending of the novel is situated in a time that is pre-explosion, while the beginning of the novel is post-explosion. What happens in between is an exploration across the globe. The text travels across the spatial aspects of the planet through different characters in different locations, just as the "noncorpum" from "Mongolia" does. The transmigrating noncorpum travelling through characters, as well as the military AI watching over all characters via satellite surveillance (in "Night Train"), together form an exploration of both the micro and the macro experiences of *Being*. In the case of "Holy Mountain" it is a temporal exploration in a single location over a character's lifetime. *Ghostwritten* tries to display an entire reality that rests between the fragments that depart from each other at the moment the sarin goes off, between the end and the beginning of the text – a phenomenological reduction, where the book itself is a bracketed-out world for the reader to explore. Each narrative, with its own character-focus, is a

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[31] Boulter does not incorporate phenomenology per se, but rather explores the elements of posthumanism in *Ghostwritten*.

kind of "zooming in" onto a specific part of the world, whereas every change in narrative "zooms out" again, to incorporate each narrative instance into the larger whole of the world. This is similar to the process undergone in experiencing and negotiating meaning within the *lifeworld*.

Quasar's name also serves as the symbol of an exploding destruction and creation. *Quasars*, in astronomical terms, are regarded as some of the brightest objects in the observable universe. However, as active galactic nuclei (AGNs), they require supermassive black holes to power them and, subsequently, they are made up of dying stars. Quasars are also described as "jetting" (burning) gas out from two ends of their accretion disks (Redd, 2012). In the novel, the story spouts out from both ends; one the beginning, and one the ending. Furthermore, as the observation of astronomical sources is also deemed a study of the past – given the time it takes for light to travel – the metaphor of Quasar's name once again blends into his existence as a character at both the beginning and ending, stuck between past and present; looking forward into darkness and looking back into the light. Quasar's name, therefore, can represent the temporal structure of the text.

This temporal structure of the text itself is described through various other instances in the text as well. In "Holy Mountain", for instance, a little girl is first comforted by the ghost of an older woman (G:117), before later comforting the ghost of her young self as an old woman (G:144). Also, the story can be said to "chase...its own tail" (G:182) in the same way as the description of a gunshot reverberating through an empty room in the "Mongolia" chapter. Similarly, in "London" Marco is the ghost-writer for ex-intelligence agent Alfred Kopf, who tells him about how he once saw the ghost of himself and chased it through the streets until returning to the exact same spot (G:286-287). All three of these instances represent the circular nature of the text and its temporality. They are examples of what Dillon (2011:9) has argued is Mitchell's incorporation of *mise-en-abyme*, which the reader can follow "deeper into Mitchell's fictional universe, each time finding therein models for the structure and themes he is exploring".

In a sense, all of the abovementioned elements revealed throughout this reading – the interconnectivity of narratives through *hyperlinks*; the circular temporality and structure; and the micro-level metaphors representing the macro-level structures in these instances of *mise-en-abyme* – have been argued for by different researchers. However, translating these theories into phenomenological terms creates a basis for synthesising their arguments.

For instance, as previously mentioned, Barnard (2009:210) uses the idea of digital *hyperlinks* to show how the various narratives in *Ghostwritten* make up a global novel. She starts her article by looking at Iñárritu's film *Babel* (2006), and the way it uses *hyperlink*-style storytelling to connect its various narratives across the world. Her study then moves to

Ghostwritten to see how it functions as global fiction of interconnectivity compared to the medium of film. Later, Hopf (2011:121) describes "cognitive hyperlinks" where she sees a different manner of onto-epistemological development for *Ghostwritten*'s characters. She recounts how the noncorpum describes the differences in experiential narratives between Gunga and Caspar. While Gunga's mind is quieter and more singularly determined, for Caspar, living in the fast-paced world with more (but smaller) experiential parts, reality itself becomes a fragmented narrative that jumps between marked events with the slightest relations. Both of these types of *hyperlinks* have been explained in terms of the formal structures throughout the reading above. However, in these phenomenological terms, the discrepancy between the two is clearer. Barnard's (2009) textual *hyperlink* in fiction is an interconnecting part linking different narratives together. It functions within the formal structures of *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences*. Hopf's (2011:121) "cognitive hyperlink" is rather akin to *intentionality* and the fragmented experiences of the *lifeworld*. In other words, Barnard's *hyperlink* describes the process of the reader reading the epilogue, while Hopf's *cognitive hyperlink* describes the process of Quasar's immediate experiences within the epilogue. As the descriptions suggest, Hopf's "cognitive hyperlink" can be used to understand characters' cognitive experiences, while Barnard's "hyperlink novel" is focussed on the text itself.

Placing the interconnectedness in terms of the interactions between the micro and macro-level structure of Mitchell's fictional world, Berthold Schoene's *The Cosmopolitan Novel* (2009) explores the various dimensions of literature in an ever-globalising world, and how British writers have started to explore their local worlds in relation to the planet as a whole. Just as Mo Muntervary notes in "Clear Island" that "nowhere does the microscopic world stop and the macroscopic world begin" (G:373), so too has the world expanded for the individual, in the sense of globalization, while also shrinking for the collective, in the sense of "global connectivity and virtual proximity" (Schoene, 2009:98). The micro and macro-levels have become more obviously interconnected, and less obvious to tell apart. Schoene dedicates the entire third chapter of his book to David Mitchell's work, essentially showing how *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas* embody the human community envisioned by Jean-Luc Nancy in *Being singular plural* (2000). Similarly, Theo D'haen's (2013:275) application of Moraru's (2011) idea of *Cosmodernism* to Mitchell's work, puts its emphasis on the inter-relationality of an ever-globalizing world.[32] In the reading of the epilogue (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*), this global interconnectivity is highlighted in the differences

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[32] This effectively sees a new literary tradition – from around 1989 (fall of the Berlin Wall) onwards – which explores ongoing negotiations towards a global culture from various existing ones.

between reader and character experiences. *Ghostwritten* explores the way in which even the tiniest actions can ripple out into the world, interconnected in the same sense as what has become commonly referred to as "the butterfly effect" from chaos theory (Dillon, 2011a:136). As Quasar plants the sarin, the reader realises that the consequences of his actions ripple across the globe, but Quasar does not. The juxtaposition of their experiences – as argued through the differences in *prefiguration* and narrative temporality above – emphasises the way in which the consequences of local actions can have global effects.

These effects also form part of a system of globalisation which is characterised by what Vermeulen (2012) relates to Foucault's concept of "biopower". According to Vermeulen (2012:382), one of the key characteristics regarding globalisation is the decentralisation of power, which "cannot be reduced to a central cause or a single sovereign agency". He argues that the novel genre has always played an integral part in the implication of the individual within the system. As the individual drive creates the conditions within which power relations exist, the novel plays at least a part in informing one's place in such a system. Vermeulen argues that *Ghostwritten*, especially through the noncorpum entities therein, tries to emphasise its own implication in the system of biopower. This system, however, can be more easily understood in terms of what Dillon (2011*a*:156) calls an "autopoietic system", where the text itself is structured in a way that the meaning in its *narrative parts* is produced by the whole within which they are situated, with each individual part contributing to the creation of the whole (see *3.2 Expanding the sample*).

The global effects of individual actions are sometimes so far removed from their causes, that it may take an intense "rereading" of history to realise the connections. As historic narrative is a constant negotiation of past, present and future (Ricœur, 2004:157;211), there is a cyclical element to its interpretation (see *2.1.4 Temporality*). To this end, Harris-Birtill (2017:177) argues that Mitchell reimagines the ancient concept of reincarnation into his narrative temporality as a sort of "reincarnation time", which "suggests a new temporal strategy whose interconnected past, present, and future reinforce the vital importance of intergenerational ethical action in imagining meaningful change" (Harris-Birtill, 2017:177). This concept of "reincarnation time" is a metaphor which can just as easily fit into the paradigm of phenomenological time, with Ricœur's three-fold tension of past, present and future. In the instances where Mitchell uses the metaphor of reincarnation to represent his structure it once again relates to the *mise-en-abyme* proposed by Dillon (2011:9).

In phenomenological terms, instances of *mise-en-abyme* can represent the same function as the phenomenological reduction. During the phenomenological reduction, the entire *lifeworld*

is bracketed in order to study it as a whole. This can only be done in metaphoric terms, however, as the "world" one is left with (the object of study) is a theoretical representation of actuality. This is also emphasised by the specific jargon needed to describe what is being studied. Therefore, just as the fictional world can be regarded as an entire *lifeworld* bracketed between the covers of a text, so too are these instances of *mise-en-abyme* examples of characters performing a further reduction of their own world in order to understand their experiences, or Mitchell using characters to unknowingly do this for the sake of metafiction. In either of these cases, *mise-en-abyme* can be translated into phenomenological terms as a reduction of the larger world by metaphorically representing the larger structure. Essentially, all three of the abovementioned arguments put forth by Dillon (2011:9; 2011*a*:156) – chaos theory in *Ghostwritten* and autopoietic systems in narrative structure, and her exploration into Mitchell's use of *mise-en-abyme* – can be described in terms of a phenomenological *lifeworld*.

Ryan Trimm's (2018) argument, approaches this notion of viewing Mitchell's narrative world as a phenomenological construction. Trimm (2018:24) uses the idea of spirit in *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas* as the interconnection between characters in Mitchell's fictional world. The interconnectivity of characters creates the means by which one can move through the fictional world, while also producing a world which can be viewed from a global perspective. Trimm's argument goes as far as stating that "these novels construct the concept of 'world' as a complex and dynamic phenomenological production", but falls short in its application, which is focussed on worlding through confrontations with the other. The way phenomenological worlding is viewed in the current discussion, tends to be more dynamic. The imitation of a phenomenological world has more consequences than Trimm argues for, while the phenomenological method has the ability to synthesise his argument with those discussed above.

Phenomenology, therefore, becomes a tool with which to explore *Ghostwritten*, while incorporating theoretical work that has been done on this text. By translating these theoretical concepts, one can explore the intricacies of this fragmented text both in terms of its micro and macro-level structures. Also, given the focus on character experiences, world building, and various narrative temporalities, phenomenology can become a tool with which to unlock key elements in Mitchell's work. Finally, with the ever-expanding world being created in the macronovel, one needs a methodology which can readily adapt its scope. Phenomenology lends itself to such possibilities.

3.4 Phenomenology in *Ghostwritten*

This chapter used Mitchell's first publication, *Ghostwritten*, to illustrate the functioning of the theoretical concepts in a text. Initially, only the first sentence of *Ghostwritten* – "Who was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (GW:3) – was used to demonstrate how the phenomenological reduction can bracket out the rest of the text, to focus on a single *narrative part*. From this bracketed part, inferences can be made in terms of *B/being*, *intentionality*, and *temporality*. By expanding the sample into a larger *narrative part*, however, the greater context changes the way the initial part was understood. Using the phenomenological reduction, therefore, one can focus on different sets of *narrative parts*, and compare the differences between their contexts. This was illustrated through the differences in character and reader experiences in a reading of *Ghostwritten*'s epilogue. It was argued that due to *prefiguration*, the reader recognises *hyperlinks* to other narratives in the text, while a character does not.

The recognisability of these *hyperlinks* is based on the temporal differences between the reader and the character. Given the fact that characters exist in the world of the text, their backgrounds lead them to experience and react in specific ways. The reader does not necessarily have access to all of the information that a character has. A level of *incompleteness* is presented to the reader in this way, which suggests a larger fictional world. Similarly, the reader has background information that is unavailable to the characters. This not only relates to the prefigurative aspects that the reader brings into the text, but also the information accessed within the text, unknown to the character. These differences in known and unknown information create differences in the way things are experienced. By relating the differences in experience of the same *narrative part* to the formal structures, the differences in *intentionality* between reader and character could be gauged in terms of the way that the text itself is understood.

These differences are not only found between reader and character, but also between different readings. With the knowledge of interconnected narratives and the circular nature of the text, reading *Ghostwritten* for a second time creates the possibility to recognise new *hyperlinks* that may have gone unnoticed during the first reading due to inadequate *prefiguration*. The same difference between reader and character *intentionality* in the epilogue exist between a first and second reading for the same reader. *Narrative parts* are understood differently within the context of the larger *narrative whole*. The text itself is, therefore, experienced differently due to the temporal difference between readings.

CHAPTER 4 EXPLORING THE MACRONOVEL

The previous chapter explored the way in which phenomenology thematically slots into Mitchell's first text, *Ghostwritten* (1999). This chapter will relate the formal structures from phenomenology to the structuring of the macronovel. Firstly, the different types of narrative *hyperlinks* will be categorised according to their respective functions within the macronovel. This can be done by relating the *hyperlinks* to the phenomenological formal structures. Secondly, as Mitchell tends to use recurring characters throughout the macronovel, character names may be some of the most prominent *hyperlinks* with which to trace the various possible ways that narratives can be connected. Thirdly, given the notion that one can read the texts that make up the macronovel in any order, this chapter argues that the reading order, however, influences the way that the larger narrative of the macronovel is experienced. By exploring different reading sequences, the effects of differences in reader *prefiguration* can be illustrated. These different reading sequences, and subsequent variations in *prefiguration*, influence the functioning of the *hyperlinks*, and thus the experiences of the larger narratives.

4.1   Narrative parts and the hyperlink function

In the previous chapter, two types of narrative *hyperlinks* were identified as functioning to create the interconnections between the seemingly unrelated stories that make up *Ghostwritten*. Firstly, the variations of the line, "Who was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3), which occur throughout the text to keep the different themes of each narrative connected to the whole (see *3.2.1 Hyperlinking the thematic elements*). This *narrative part* does not act as an identifying part for any one chapter in the text, but functions to connect the different narratives. There are also *hyperlinks* that have been shown to function as identifying parts for specific narratives. The second reading, focussing on the epilogue, illustrated how Quasar observes different elements on his way off the train, which the reader can perceive as each connecting to specific narratives in the text (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*). For example, the Buddha on a book's cover (G:434) connects to Neal Brose's narrative in the "Hong Kong" chapter (G:67-109), while a Landcruiser advertisement (G:434) refers to the "Mongolia" chapter (G:153-202).

In the same way that these different types of parts can perform different connective functions, there are also parts that connect the different texts (which make up the macronovel) to each other. These parts can be: characters who re-occur across texts, for example, Neal Brose who is in both *Ghostwritten* and *Black Swan Green*; places, such as Tokyo or Belgium, which

are used more than once; events, like the different versions of the apocalypse which happens in *Ghostwritten*, *Cloud Atlas*, and *The Bone Clocks*; or even just descriptive lines, such as the abovementioned first line in *Ghostwritten* .

A question, however, arises as to the difference between the *narrative parts* that merely connect the various chapters without belonging to any specific chapter (non-identifying parts), and the *narrative parts* that do belong to specific chapters (identifying parts). In other words, how do the first set of *narrative parts* (variations on the "blowing/kissing nape/back of neck" line), differ from the second set that links Quasar to each other narrative in the text in terms of structural function? As it has to do with the functioning of connective *narrative parts*, within a *narrative whole*, the appropriate starting point seems to be *hyperlinks*.

4.1.1   Categorising the hyperlinks by function

As previously discussed, the connective *narrative parts* in Mitchell's work can be considered as *hyperlinks* (Barnard, 2009:210). The functioning of these *narrative parts* has also been related to the formal structures of *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences* (see *3.2.4 Incompleteness, hyperlinks, and the formal structures*). Keeping in mind that these *narrative parts* can perform two different connective functions – that of an identifying part, and that of a non-identifying part – three different combinations can arise among these parts.[33] Firstly, is a *narrative part* that connects two narratives in the text, but does not function as an identifying element of either. Think of the way in which variations of "blowing on the nape of a neck" transforms over the course of the novel, connecting various narratives, but not belonging to any of them specifically (non-identifying *hyperlink*). Secondly, is a *narrative part* that connects two narratives in the text, while functioning as an identifying element of one of them. These refer to parts which function across texts of the macronovel in the same way that each of the observations Quasar makes on the train functions across chapters of *Ghostwritten* (identifying *hyperlink*). Thirdly, one can also find a *narrative part* that functions as an identifying part of a specific narrative, without connecting to any other narratives (non-connective identifying part). This might be a background character's name, location, occupation, etcetera, that is not repeated in other narratives. In the Mitchell universe, however, the category of these non-connective parts are subject to change by gaining connective properties in later texts.

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[33] There is also a fourth possibility as a *narrative part* that neither connects to another, nor functions as an identifying part of the greater narrative. These are difficult to identify, even though they probably include most of a given text. Think of the way adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs make up normal sentences in the process of storytelling. This variation might be better suited to a study in corpus linguistics, however, and is subsequently ignored within this study as it falls outside of the scope of enquiry.

4.1.1.1 Hyperlinking between non-identifying and non-identifying connective parts

The first type of *hyperlink* consists of *narrative parts* that connect two narratives in a text, while not exclusively belonging to either one. The example that has been explored is the variation of the first sentence in *Ghostwritten*, "[w]ho was blowing on the nape of my neck?" (G:3). This sentence mutates over the course of the novel, connecting various narratives, but it cannot be said to belong to any of them specifically. It does not refer to a specific narrative, it is shared across narratives throughout this text. This can be considered as a non-identifying part, as it cannot be said to function as a part which refers to either one of these narratives. Rather, it functions as a shared *narrative part*, in which the connection itself is its function.

When it is used in *number9dream* (2001) it has been altered to, "I look around the Jupiter Café for a potential kissee, and settle on the waitress of the living, wise, moonlit viola neck. A tendril of hair has fallen loose, and brushes her nape" (n9d:5). As this is the only instance that the word "nape" is used in *number9dream*, it functions as a clear reference to *Ghostwritten*. Significantly, this *narrative part* is used in the context of describing the protagonist's love interest, Ai Imajo, as having "the most perfect neck in all creation" (n9d:4). Before protagonist Eiji Miyake speaks to her for the first time, he constantly refers to her as "the waitress/girl/pianist with the perfect neck" (nd9:16;37;177 *inter alia*). The tender reference to the nape of a neck belonging to a protagonist's love interest thematically connects this *hyperlink* more closely to the "Tokyo" narrative in *Ghostwritten* than, for instance, Quasar's narrative. Furthermore, Tokyo is also the setting of *number9dream*, which does not traverse the globe as *Ghostwritten* does. There is a structural and thematic connection made between these two narratives, which is indicated by this *hyperlink*. The part itself does not function as an identity-giving role for any specific chapter in *Ghostwritten* itself. However, when considered within the greater context of the macronovel this *hyperlink* changes to an identity-giving part of *Ghostwritten*. The functioning of a given *hyperlink* can, therefore, change depending on which *narrative parts* are considered along with it.

The single instance of a "nape" being referred to in *The Bone Clocks* is in a description that Hugo Lamb gives pertaining to his being in love with Holly Sykes (BC:190). This is also the only time that Hugo is in love throughout his entire life, which clearly links this instance of the *hyperlink* to the same theme as in *number9dream* and *Ghostwritten*, discussed above, even though it is not the same setting. When the nape of someone's neck is referred to in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, however, it is used differently, as "[r]aindrops find the nape of Uzaemon's neck and trickle between his shoulder blades, 'Goodbye.'" (TA:320). In this

context, Uzaemon is leaving on a quest to save Orito from a death cult, while his mother tries to convince him to leave his wife. Uzaemon's wife has had two miscarriages, and his mother explains how she is "bad merchandise" that needs to be returned to her father. The *hyperlink* here is once again used in the same way as it is used in any of the narratives in *Ghostwritten*, where it is merely a connecting device, without specific identity-giving properties. Furthermore, if *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* were to be read in isolation, this *narrative part* would not even perform the connective function of a *hyperlink*. It is only when another text is read alongside it that the connection can be made.

The change undergone by a given *narrative part* means that some *narrative parts* may not connect to anything at first, while later, when other texts are added, it might become a *hyperlink*. If a *narrative part* is neither significant, nor exclusive enough, it cannot really perform the function of either connection or identification. However, with an ever-expanding novel, such as the one Mitchell is attempting, the status of these *narrative parts* becomes more theoretical than actual, as he can, at any given moment, change their statuses to become *hyperlinks*. For instance, one does not really notice the cat described in *Ghostwritten*; it does not perform a real function, other than filling out the picture. One does not notice a reference to Belgium in this first text either (unless you are from Belgium); it is merely another place mentioned in the text, without a specific narrative linked to it. However, through repeated perusals, Mitchell readers might start to notice that there is a cat that randomly walks across scenes in each text. The cat has also become more specifically described as a "moon-grey cat" (BSG:46; TA:221;320; BC:265 *inter alia*), and has subsequently become a symbol of Mitchell himself (Dillon, 2011:8).[34] Each text also has a reference to Belgium, which has become an inside joke that Mitchell shares with his readers in, for instance, trailers for a new book.[35] These types of *narrative parts* might be more aptly categorised as what has become commonly known as "Easter eggs". The function of these *Easter eggs* is not distinct enough to be regarded as an entirely new type of *narrative part*, and can rather be regarded in the same class as *narrative parts* that connect, without performing the narrative identity function. This function, then, is rather too obscure, and subject to change, to be regarded in any practical terms on its own, as it is dependent on the larger context.

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[34] The David Mitchell Conference at the University of St Andrews has the moon-grey cat as their logo (*DMCon*, 2017).
[35] Mitchell's new text is set to be published as *Utopia Avenue* in June 2020 (Flood, 2019).

4.1.1.2 Hyperlinking between identifying and non-identifying connective parts

The second type of *hyperlink* is a *narrative part* that connects two narratives in the text, while functioning as an identity-giving element of one of them. As shown in the previous chapter, a single word can sometimes bear more temporal significance for the reader than an entire following paragraph might by acting as a *hyperlink*. This was shown in the reading of *Ghostwritten*'s epilogue, where Quasar's descriptions of his surroundings connect to each narrative in the text. Another example can be found in *Cloud Atlas*, where Louisa Rey spots a restored ship in the marina called "Prophetess" (CA:448), which is the same ship as the one Adam Ewing was sailing on in the first narrative (CA:5). This links the word "Prophetess" to an entire narrative, as well as to reader speculation as to what happened in between for the ship to become the "best-preserved schooner in the world" (CA:448). In *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* (2006), however, "Profetes" (TA:525) is still a new ship, on which Jacob de Zoet sails away from Dejima at the end of the text. In this text, though, it is merely mentioned, whereas in Adam Ewing's case (*Cloud Atlas*) the ship itself is the setting for most of his narrative. The difference between the spelling of "Prophetess" in *Cloud Atlas* and "Profetes" in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* can be attributed to the fact that the Dutch own the ship when Jacob de Zoet sails it, while it is sailed under the English flag when the American Adam Ewing is aboard it. This is consistent with the fall of the Dutch East India Company in 1799, which is the historical setting for *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* (Nijman, 1994:211), as well as the late 1840's to early 1850's Dutch and English trade runs in the Pacific islands coinciding with Adam Ewing's historical setting in *Cloud Atlas* (Moore, 2003:113; Richards, 2008:376-377). As confirmation that this is indeed the same ship, a young midshipman called "Boerhaave" in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* is one of the commanding officers when it sails in *Cloud Atlas*. Another *hyperlink*, then, is created in the form of a character.

Recurring characters are abundant throughout the Mitchell universe. Luisa Rey, for instance, features in both *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas*, Neal Brose is in *Ghostwritten* and *Black Swan Green*, while Mo Muntervary is in *Ghostwritten* and *The Bone Clocks*, and Punsalmaagiyn Suhbataar is in *Ghostwritten* and *number9dream*. Through only these four characters, *Ghostwritten* already connects to four other texts in the macronovel. There have already been some avid bloggers mapping out different charts of character occurrences throughout the macronovel, and there is no need to recall all of them here.[36] Rather, the way that their connections function or change is what is discussed here. For instance, Mo Muntervary, as a

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[36] See for instance Reddit user u/Tycho_Alhambra (2017) on the r/David_Mitchell page, or Kathryn Schulz's (2014) article on Vulture.com *inter alia.*

character *hyperlink*, can be seen as an identifying *narrative part* of the "Clear Island" chapter in *Ghostwritten*. She is both the protagonist and narrator of the story. When she re-appears in *The Bone Clocks*, however, she is a peripheral character; the neighbour of narrator-protagonist Holly Sykes. In *The Bone Clocks*, then, Mo is not an identity-giving *narrative part*, but rather a *hyperlink* referencing *Ghostwritten*. Depending on the text in which a given *hyperlink* is encountered, this influences the nature of its connective function. In *Ghostwritten*, Mo is an identity-giving *narrative part*. More specifically, she is one of the identifiers for the "Clear Island", although she is not the *hyperlink* used in the epilogue of that text – Quasar sees a whisky bottle in that instance representing "Clear Island" (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*).

The moment that Mo is encountered in *The Bone Clocks*, published fifteen years later, her name functions as a *hyperlink* for *Ghostwritten*, changing the functioning of her *narrative part*. If the reading order of these two texts changes, however, Mo's name starts as a non-identifying *narrative part* for *The Bone Clocks*, before becoming an identifying part within *Ghostwritten*, while also gaining the *hyperlink* function, linking back to *The Bone Clocks*. This reversal of the *hyperlink* function based on temporality will be further discussed in *4.1.2.1 Prefiguration – variations of reading sequence and character encounters*, below.

4.1.1.3 Non-connective identifying parts

The last type of *narrative part* to be discussed here is one that does not connect or function as a *hyperlink* device, but can be seen as an identity-giving *narrative part* for a specific text. This might be a background character's name, location, occupation, etcetera, that is not repeated in other narratives. It belongs to a specific narrative and is a clear part of that narrative's identity, while only occurring within that narrative. In the Mitchell universe, however, these *narrative parts* might be subject to change by gaining connective properties in later texts. For example, in the "Night Train" chapter of *Ghostwritten*, one of the callers to Bat Segundo's show is called Luisa Rey. The reader is informed that she is a famous writer and investigative journalist. Her name does not appear anywhere else in this text, and she remains a character within a single chapter, thus a "part" that does not connect to any other chapter in the text. If by the end of the text one were to ask which narrative this character is connected to, the clear answer can only be "Night Train", making it one of this narrative's identifiers. However, in Mitchell's third novel, *Cloud Atlas*, Luisa Rey is a young investigative journalist just starting her career at *Spyglass Magazine*. She is the protagonist and title-character of her narrative, "Half-Lives – The First Luisa Rey Mystery".

In this regard, a non-connecting *narrative part* from *Ghostwritten* finds its connective function two texts, or five years, later. Furthermore, because Luisa Rey plays such a significant part in *Cloud Atlas*, while only being briefly mentioned in a single narrative of *Ghostwritten*, this *narrative part* tends to be connected to the former rather than the latter. The status of this *narrative part* now, retroactively, changes to become a *narrative part* which connects to a previous text, but performs an identifying function of a later text. In other words, *Ghostwritten* presciently references another text by containing *narrative parts* thereof, making Luisa Rey's name the *hyperlink* in this text, connecting to her main narrative in *Cloud Atlas*. If *Cloud Atlas* were to be read first, however, the abovementioned change in *hyperlink* function would not occur. Rather, Luisa Rey would be seen as an identity-giving *narrative part* of her narrative, which connects to the other narratives in the text as a standard *hyperlink* does. If *Ghostwritten* were then read later on, her name would perform the *hyperlink* function, linking this text to *Cloud Atlas*. Therefore, just as the previous section has shown, the functioning of the *hyperlink* is based on the order in which the texts of the macronovel are read.

4.1.2   Recurring characters as hyperlinks

Based on the prominence of character names as *hyperlinks* in the macronovel, it might be worth spending more time on the way in which reader-encounters with characters vary based on the reading order of texts. As previously mentioned, Mitchell often re-uses characters throughout his texts, but in different narrative roles. For instance, a protagonist in one text might only be a peripheral character in the next, or vice versa. Their respective narratives seem to continue in the background, while the reader only catches glimpses of their continuing lives outside of their main narratives. It also means that a character can be well-rounded with depth in one text, while being a flat character in another.

When asked how he comes up with such succinct, believable characters, and how he gets to know them well enough to present their narration believably across texts, Mitchell answers "[g]et your characters to write you letters" (Mitchell quoted in Arch, 2014). This indicates the author's own ability to embody, or at least envision, different *modes-of-being*, as he is presumably the one writing himself the letters. Mitchell's readers are forced to continuously shift between *modes-of-being* themselves, as the constant change in narrative instance, style, and structure that goes along with each narrator/protagonist-shift, also brings about a change in the reader's projected ego (see *2.1.2 Being*). It is not the same implied reader in the narrative that follows Quasar in his state of hiding from authorities, as the one joining Margarita Latunsky in her art heist, even though it is the same actual reader of the text. One can argue that a definite

shift is made between the different narratives of the text upon the first reading, when the text still seems completely fragmented, with each chapter requiring its own access process and new orientation for the reader (see *3.2.3 Temporal Being and the fictional world*). However, subsequent readings, where the reader seeks out the various connections between narratives, sees a single *mode-of-being*, different from the ones used for each individual narrative in the first reading. It is a *mode-of-being* that exists in the larger narrative of the macronovel – one that is no longer oriented by the text, but tries to orient itself within the world of the text.

Ironically, I would argue, the closest a reader can get to actually experiencing the world of a text, as a denizen, is when that text is presented as a text within the world. This sounds counterintuitive, as one would assume the creation of a second layer of text adds to the sense of fictionality. However, the "found-article" format can shrink the gap between the *mode-of-being* of an implied reader and an actual reader. For example, in the beginning of *Cloud Atlas*, the reader is presented with "The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing". At first the reader is given no context for the existence of this journal in the fictional world, other than the events in the journal itself. In this first narrative of the text, the journal acts as an actual journal containing the world of the text. When the second narrative begins, the found-article is a series of letters, containing descriptions of the journal. A greater distance arises between the reader and the journal, as the journal is now contained within another text. The journal, therefore, becomes more fictional than it initially was. From the actual reader's perspective, this forces a shift in his/her position as implied reader.

Mitchell, for one, tends to play games with the dynamic between the implied reader and the actual reader. Mitchell actualises the implied reader as the next main character in each narrative of *Cloud Atlas*. The text starts with the first protagonist's journal, which has an implied reader as a "space" for the actual reader to assume in this world. The actual reader, then, is "pretending" to be the reader of a journal in the fictional world (as the implied reader), while being presented with a text in a format imitating an actual journal. The difference between the implied and actual reader seems to vanish, with the reader being "placed in a new subject position as the character who is encountering each narrative" (Hopf, 2011:74). In the next narrative, however, the implied reader is manifested as the next protagonist in the text, who is reading the journal, and writing a letter to an implied reader about the journal. The letters are addressed to one "Sixsmith", a space that the actual reader can assume for the time being, until Sixsmith becomes a character in the next narrative, where the reader will eventually find out that the space s/he has assumed in reading the letters, was rather that of Luisa Rey (the next protagonist, also reading the letters), instead of Sixsmith. Luisa Rey is the protagonist in a

manuscript for a novel, which has the normal implied reader of an extradiegetic narrator, until the next narrative reveals that the reader of this manuscript was the next protagonist, a space the actual reader assumed unknowingly. With each new narrative the reader is replaced by the next protagonist, whose narrative will also just be read by the protagonist in the following narrative. These "narrative levels" should eventually have the reader imagine his/her own *being* as narrative, to be read on some level, which leads to greater immersion in the text (Hopf, 2011:74).

Denizens as characters of Mitchell's macronovel also gain greater perceived autonomy through the various points of view from which they are described. For instance, in the "Night Train" narrative of *Ghostwritten*, when Luisa Rey calls in to Bat Segundo's talk radio station, a first-time reader of this text can deduce that the character is an elderly, famous writer. She is, essentially, a peripheral character – one that aids the text in no other way than creating an implied larger world, or functioning as a device to suggest *incompleteness*. However, in *Cloud Atlas*, protagonist Luisa Rey is still a young journalist looking for her first real scoop. This creates two new aspects to the character as *being* in this world. Firstly, the reader is presented with the suggested *incompleteness*. One now knows Luisa Rey more intimately from her adventure as a young reporter, and cannot help but wonder what has happened in between the two narratives. *Which books did she write*, for example? Secondly, the character seemingly attains greater autonomy, as she has progressed within the world of the text, without the reader witnessing it through text. The implied character progression seems to happen outside of the text, even though the character is bound to the world of the text. As shown in the previous section, the way in which *narrative part* functions as a *hyperlink*, can depend on the reading order of the texts. The fact that some of these *hyperlinks* are characters, who may have continuing lives in the background, means that reader understanding of characters can be influenced by the reading order of the encounters with these characters.

To illustrate how this influences reader encounters with characters, one can do a reading of first and second encounters with a specific character, parallel to the same reading in reverse text order. Any one of the re-occurring characters, who have already been mentioned above, will be sufficient for this reading. Neal Brose, for example, is the protagonist in *Ghostwritten*'s third chapter, "Hong Kong". He is a British lawyer from Denholme Cavendish's firm in Hong Kong, who is masking a hedge fund for a criminal organisation. He is recently divorced, has an affair with his domestic worker, and maintains an unhealthy lifestyle with drugs and alcohol. He dies at the end of the chapter due to his unchecked, hereditary diabetes. However, in Mitchell's fourth novel, *Black Swan Green*, Neal Brose is a thirteen-year-old boy who grows up with the protagonist of the text, Jason Taylor. Neal Brose is both the cool kid on the block, and the class

bully. He starts an extortion racket with his friends to take money from other children in exchange for not picking on them.

Beginning with Neal Brose's narrative as it is presented to the reader in published order, one can start with the third chapter of *Ghostwritten*, "Hong Kong" (G67-109). Neal Brose wakes in the morning, after having a horrible dream about being audited on one of his accounts. The reader is presented with more details about this while Neal is preparing to go to work. From the narrative, the details that the reader is able to extract, if the rest of the macronovel is bracketed out, will be as follows:

The character is the narrator and protagonist of the narrative. He is a stressed-out businessman, on the verge of being caught for fraud (G:67). He is recently divorced from his wife, Katy Forbes, who moved back to London after their separation (G:69). He started an affair with his housekeeper after his wife left (G:87). He has a substance-abuse problem, indicated by the "[h]alf a lemon, three bottles of gin…" in his fridge, and the fact that "[s]ome speed would do the trick, but it's all snorted away" (G:68). He has unhealthy eating habits, having nothing but instant waffles in his fridge (G:68), and using up to ten sugar cubes in his coffee (G:77). As the narrative continues through the details of his professional and personal problems, the reader is also following his gradual mental breakdown. On the particular morning that the narrative plays out, he stops himself from getting onto the ferry, despite the growing pressure from his colleague constantly calling him regarding their morning meeting. He throws his briefcase off a cliff, calmly walks down, and dies at the foot of the mountain of a great Buddha statue (G:109).

The reader, then, is introduced to a character who is struggling with health, alcoholism, a failed marriage, and work troubles. This version of Neal Brose, being the narrator and protagonist, is also the character to whom the reader is attached throughout this narrative. There is a greater connection between the reader and this character, than between any of the peripheral characters who feature in this narrative. One follows this character's struggles with him until his death. Also, given the nature of *Ghostwritten*, references to him can be recognised through other narrators later on in the text. In the "Petersburg" chapter, Subhataar complains about their criminal operation's lawyer dying of unchecked diabetes. In the "London" chapter, Katy Forbes' (Neal's ex-wife) Queen Anne chair arrives from China while the narrator of that chapter, Marco, is at her house. In the "Clear Island" chapter, Mo Muntervary recalls seeing a man collapse and die in the street at the foot of a mountain in Hong Kong. All of these instances function as *hyperlinks* to Neal Brose's narrative. The reader, therefore, *cointends* the character, and the events within his narrative, in his *absence* along with the *present* events of the narratives in which these *hyperlinks* occur.

Similarly, there are *hyperlinks* created to this "Hong Kong" version of Neal Brose, through his presence as secondary character in *Black Swan Green*, where he is a thirteen-year-old boy bullying the protagonist and narrator, Jason Taylor. In this text there is no direct focus on Neal Brose, as the narrative being followed is that of Jason Taylor. However, because of the reader's previous encounter with Neal Brose, his name in this text automatically links to *Ghostwritten*. The reader enters this text with *prefiguration* that allows for the recognition of this character (see *2.1.1.4 The phenomenological reduction and the text*). Therefore, the reader, having a pre-understanding of an older Neal Brose, *intends* his parts in this text as a prequel. The *Black Swan Green* version of Neal Brose is eventually expelled from school for his aforementioned extortion. A reader with prior knowledge of his corrupt dealings in *Ghostwritten*, might be able to draw a connection between these childhood actions, and his adult troubles. In each instance that Neal Brose is mentioned throughout *Black Swan Green*, his adult character, the events of his life and his death, are already *cointended* by the reader. But what if the reading order is turned around?

The way in which the character is understood changes if there is no prior knowledge of Neal's narrative in *Ghostwritten*, and he is encountered only as a peripheral character through Jason Taylor's narration in *Black Swan Green*. The reader will have no pre-understanding of his existence outside of this text, and will merely see him as one of the many background characters featuring in Taylor's narrative. The *prefiguration* for this antagonistic character is, therefore, based on the reader's pre-understanding of bullies, and the *narrative parts* are only experienced from Jason Taylor's point of view. Neal Brose is not a very complex character in *Black Swan Green*, and does not serve as anything more than one of the conflict devices in Taylor's narrative. In fact, Neal Brose is just another name in this text, bunched up with others such as Ross Wilcox, Gary Drake, and Ant Little. Of these four names, Neal Brose is not even the most featured bully; Wilcox is.

If the reader now moves on to *Ghostwritten*, with *Black Swan Green* as *prefiguration*, the "Hong Kong" chapter will present him/her with a protagonist narrator called Neal Brose. Given the limited function that this character served for the reader in *Black Swan Green*, the *prefiguration* for this character in *Ghostwritten* is limited, if not absent. The reader does not *cointend* the same Neal Brose (peripheral character) in his *absence* along with the narrative of Neal Brose (protagonist) being followed in his presence throughout "Hong Kong", as the reader does the other way around. In fact, can these readers even be regarded as the same implied reader? I would argue not, as there is inadequate *prefiguration* for the reader to establish a course of recognition. If the reader even recognises the name, given its limited use in *Black Swan*

Green, there is still not a lot of background information to *cointend* along with the narrative in *Ghostwritten*.

The difference, then, between reader understanding of this character and his actions, depends on which version of Neal Brose is encountered first. This relates to the sequence in which a reader reads these texts; depending on which text is read first, the reader experience of a given character varies. Given the fact that a reader is likely to follow the publishing order of these texts, it seems possible that the reader would have adequate *prefiguration* when starting with *Ghostwritten*, before moving forward to *Black Swan Green*. However, this is not the case for all characters or other *hyperlinks*. As previously mentioned (see *3.1 Prefiguration and access to* Ghostwritten), the macronovel can be read in any sequence, starting from any text (Harris-Birtill, 2017:175-176). There are, therefore, further variations with regard to reading sequence and its influence on character encounters for readers.

4.1.2.1 Prefiguration – variations of reading sequence and character encounters

To illustrate further possible influences of reading sequence variations on character encounters, the following reading uses other characters who re-occur in the macronovel. Timothy Cavendish and Luisa Rey are two similar cases of two completely different characters who can be used for this purpose. Both of these characters are peripheral entities in *Ghostwritten* – Tim Cavendish is Marco's agent in "London" (G:263-318), while Luisa Rey calls in to the radio station in "Night Train" (G:381-429). Both of these characters are also protagonists in *Cloud Atlas*, each with their own narrative – Timothy Cavendish is the narrator of "The Ghastly Ordeal of Timothy Cavendish" (CA:145-183;367-404), while Luisa Rey is the main protagonist in the extradiegetic narration of "Half-Lives – The First Luisa Rey Mystery" (CA:87-144;405-453).

If a reader were to read these books in published order, it would be difficult to initially remember either of these characters, given their minor roles in *Ghostwritten*. If, for instance, a reading can be focussed on Tim Cavendish, there are about two-and-a-half pages within which to gather any and all information on this character, through Marco's narration (G:293-296). From this encounter, the reader can infer that Cavendish is the owner of "The Tim Cavendish Literary Agency" which is situated "down a murky sidestreet near Haymarket" (G:293). He claims that his desk belonged to Charles Dickens, to which Marco mentions there is "no reason to disbelieve him" (G:293). The protagonist, therefore, trusts this peripheral character. Cavendish is also presented as the stereotypical literary agent: critical of the manuscripts; newly published books piled in his office (G:293-294); and drinking whisky in his office in the morning, from glasses described to be as big as a "fishbowl" (G:294). This character also relays "[p]rofundity on the

hoof" (G:295) to help set Marco at ease about his own writing troubles; for instance, "[t]he act of memory is an act of ghostwriting" (G:295), or "[w]e all think we're in control of our own lives, but really they're pre-ghostwritten by forces around us" (G:296), which Marco really perceives as helpful and relevant to his musings on "Chance versus Fate" (G:292). When Marco leaves Cavendish's office, he overhears Cavendish speaking to his brother on the phone, and thanking him for his "kind little loan" (G:296), but does not wonder more about it.

If the reader now moves to *Cloud Atlas*, s/he is introduced to an entirely different Timothy Cavendish. This Timothy Cavendish is a vanity publisher (CA:147), who is constantly asking his brother for more loans (CA:159), because he is a wasteful spender. He is threatened by gangsters because he kept the royalties of a successful author for himself (CA:156), fleeing London to escape their wrath (CA:160). In the process of obtaining funds, he tries to sell off his writing desk to a museum, claiming that it belonged to Charles Dickens. The evaluator informs Cavendish that they already have Dickens' desk, to which Cavendish remarks to the implied reader of this memoir that "I confess, I do lose track of my little elaborations" (CA:158).

Timothy Cavendish in *Cloud Atlas*, then, is not the trustworthy old sage that Marco makes him out to be in *Ghostwritten*. In fact, he is the complete opposite. The writing desk that undoubtedly belongs to Charles Dickens in *Ghostwritten* (G:293), is one of his "little elaborations" in *Cloud Atlas* (CA:158). This is a significant point, as Marco's perception of the desk truly being Dickens', based on Cavendish's supposedly trustworthy word, also forms the reader's perceptions regarding this secondary character. However, when the reader learns that the history of the desk is not as illustrious as Marco believes, and that Timothy Cavendish is lying, the perception changes significantly. Not only does the reader's perception regarding Timothy Cavendish change, but also the perception of Marco's judgement, and even his reliability as narrator is brought into question. Another possibility that arises is that Marco might have meant his statements as a kind of tongue-in-cheek comment on Cavendish's tendencies to bend the truth. This perception, however, is not that clear from the limited information given in *Ghostwritten*. It is only after reading *Cloud Atlas* that such an understanding of Marco's description of Cavendish is possible.

Cloud Atlas was published five years after *Ghostwritten*, and *number9dream* was published between the two. Assuming that the reader remembers these small details of Cavendish from Marco's narrative when reading *Cloud Atlas*, a re-evaluation of reader understanding of Marco will still be necessary, thus prompting a second reading. During this second reading, the reader's *intentionality* regarding this narrative would have already shifted and, therefore, the way in which it is read and interpreted changes. If a reader were unable to

remember the details regarding Marco's narrative, there would be little to no *prefiguration* regarding Timothy Cavendish when the reader enters his narrative in *Cloud Atlas*. Keeping in mind that Marco is one of nine protagonists featured in a highly fragmented text (*Ghostwritten*), and Tim Cavendish is only one of almost thirty secondary and peripheral characters within Marco's narrative alone, the chances are slim that adequate *prefiguration* regarding Cavendish occurs before *Cloud Atlas*. If, however, a reader enters *Ghostwritten* after reading *Cloud Atlas*, there should be ample *prefiguration* regarding Cavendish, as the reader has already been in a more intimate setting with Cavendish; s/he has already been in a position of implied reader of his narration. Timothy Cavendish, then, is a clear example of how a character who is almost in the background of *absence* in one text, can be abstracted into the forefront of *presence*, purely by his prominence in another text. In other words, Cavendish is a *hyperlink* in *Ghostwritten*, but only if *Cloud Atlas* is read first. This *hyperlink*, therefore, illustrates how the sequence of reading influences the understanding of a character encounter, and even the surrounding events. This indicates an *identity in manifold* for each of these *hyperlink* characters.

As possible implication of the non-fixed reading sequence, one would have to go back and forth through the macronovel to experience the different *identities in manifold*, via various *modes-of-being* (see *2.1.3.2 Identity in manifold*). With the example of Neal Brose in the previous section, the reading started with the main narrative of the character in question from *Ghostwritten* and moved to a text wherein he is a peripheral character, which was published later (*Black Swan Green*). This reading, on Timothy Cavendish, worked with a character who was first featured as a peripheral character in *Ghostwritten*, and then as a protagonist-narrator in a text published later (*Cloud Atlas*). The dynamic between the varying levels of *prefiguration* regarding a character, and the subsequent changing of reader *intentionality*, has, therefore, been shown to operate in both directions within the macronovel.

An even clearer example would be Luisa Rey. Her name only features in two separate paragraphs in the "Night Train" narrative of *Ghostwritten*. The first instance is when she calls in to the radio station, as previously mentioned. The DJ, Bat Segundo, informs the listeners (and reader) that she is a famous writer (G:385-386). In the later mentioning, she has supposedly died, as a Led Zeppelin song is "dedicated to the memory of Luisa Rey" (G:429). This character does not function on any other level than to create a perceived larger world through *incompleteness* in this text; she is just another caller to the radio station. The only information that can be drawn from this encounter is that Bat Segundo is a fan of her work, and that she is the author of a book called *The Hermitage*, which Bat Segundo calls "the greatest true-crime psychological exposé written since Capote's *In Cold Blood*" (G:385). When Bat dedicates "Led Zeppelin's 'Going to

California'" (G:429)[37] to her memory, there is no prefigurative significance to inform any sort of meaning to the song, other than knowledge of the song itself.

However, in *Cloud Atlas* Luisa Rey is the protagonist in her narrative. She is a young journalist for *Spyglass Magazine*, investigating her first major crime story on a nuclear plant which is in imminent danger of exploding. She lives in Buenas Yerbas, California. As she uncovers the dire state of the nuclear plant, her informant, a physicist who works there, is assassinated, before an attempt is made on her own life. The assassin runs her car off a bridge, and she is stuck, sinking into the sea below. Relating the Led Zeppelin song from *Ghostwritten* to this information from *Cloud Atlas,* reveals a different view on why Bat Segundo would dedicate it to her memory. Luisa Rey lives in California, relating to the title of the song. In one of the climactic scenes, just before her narrative is interrupted by Timothy Cavendish's, the assassin watches as her "VW's front bumper vanishes beneath broken ovals of foamy wavelets into the hollow sea" (CA:144). From a Luisa-focussed perspective, described later, the extradiegetic narrator says "[t]he sinking car drags Luisa down" (CA:407). In the Led Zeppelin song, the lines, "I think I might be sinking. / Throw me a line, if I reach it in time / I'll meet you up there where the path / Runs straight and high" (Page & Plant, 1971:L15-18), can be related to this scene. Also, relating to the nature of the character herself being fictional in the world of the text – she is a character in a manuscript that Cavendish reads – Led Zeppelin's line "Tryin' to find a woman who's never, never, never been born" (Page & Plant, 1971:L23) can also become relevantly connected to this character. Finally, Luisa Rey's narrative is situated in the 1970's, thus sharing the decade in which not only this song, but also most of Led Zeppelin's work was done.

However, none of these connections between this character and this song dedicated to her in *Ghostwritten* can be made without first reading *Cloud Atlas*. The Luisa Rey in *Ghostwritten* being a writer also has no significance for a reader who has not yet read her narrative in *Cloud Atlas*. A continuity is created between the *Cloud Atlas* investigative journalist, and the elderly author of true-crime books in *Ghostwritten*, wherein a space is created for questioning the events which happened between these two texts. The significance thereof, for the reader, depends on the order in which these texts are read. The chronological order of events is broken down if these texts are read in published order, and the necessary *prefiguration* to recognise Luisa Rey as a *hyperlink* in *Ghostwritten*, depends upon whether or not *Cloud Atlas* has already been read.

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[37] Led Zeppelin released "Going to California" on *Led Zeppelin VI* (1971).

To further fill out the *prefiguration* to this character's name, would be to connect it to *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder (2014).[38] Mitchell uses a quote from Wilder's text as the epigraph for *Ghostwritten*. This creates an intertextual *hyperlink* between Luisa Rey's name and the title of Wilder's text. In Wilder's text, a number of people are killed when an old Inca bridge collapses. Though this epigraph is in *Ghostwritten*, it is only in *Cloud Atlas* that Luisa Rey is almost killed when her car is rammed off a bridge. This creates a *hyperlink* system between three texts; two within the macronovel, one from outside.

Later, in the "Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After" chapter of *Cloud Atlas* (CA:247-325), Wilder's text is thematically incorporated into other elements of the plot. The climactic scene features a collapsing bridge killing a number of the remaining Kona tribe (CA:323). This is made even more significant by the fact that protagonist-narrator, Zachry, was warned by the "Abbess" not to cross that bridge, based on one of her visions (CA:258). The Abbess in this narrative is a healer and spiritual guide for the "Valleysmen". In Wilder's text, a similar character, called "Abbess Madre María del Pilar", cares for the ill, the orphaned, and those in need of spiritual guidance. This creates another link between Mitchell's and Wilder's texts. Thus, the epigraph for *Ghostwritten* directly refers to Wilder's text, while Luisa Rey's name resembles its title, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. The fact that Luisa Rey is almost killed on a bridge in *Cloud Atlas* also connects to this title, while the bridge and the Abbess from Zachry's narrative thematically slots in as well. Through these interconnections, an *identity in manifold* is created, with each link adding a new aspect to the *narrative part*. However, if either one of these texts had not been read, these connections would be unrecognisable to the reader, thus leaving a certain aspect of the *narrative part*'s identity absent. The connections are also missing if *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and *Cloud Atlas* are not read before *Ghostwritten*. Therefore, the *hyperlinking* becomes dependent on the reading sequence, both within the macronovel as well as for references to other authors' works intertextually connected. Consequently, the manifold of appearances that make up the identity of this *narrative part*, also becomes dependent on the reading sequence.

This section, then, has focussed on the dynamic functioning of the *hyperlink* devices in Mitchell's work. By illustrating the possible variations on *hyperlinks*, it has been argued that there are three important functions that a *narrative part* can perform. These include the *hyperlinking between non-identifying and non-identifying connective parts*, the *hyperlinking*

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[38] Originally published in 1927.

between identifying and non-identifying connective parts, and the *non-connective identifying parts*. By exploring each of these connections, it has been shown how their functioning can change depending on the reading sequence of the texts in the macronovel. Using the re-occurring characters as *hyperlinks*, further implications of the possible reading sequences have been explored. Firstly, the different possible starting points for readers of the macronovel specifically influence whether or not there is adequate *prefiguration* for a given *hyperlink* to be recognised. Secondly, if there is adequate *prefiguration* to recognise a given *hyperlink*, the perception thereof differs, depending on the text in which it is first encountered. Finally, in order to be able to sufficiently explore Mitchell's universe, a reader would have to continuously move back and forth through the different texts, each time gaining a new insight, or recognising new connections. These connections are also not limited to the macronovel, as Mitchell is in constant conversation with other authors through intertextual references. Therefore, it has been established that different readers are able to experience different aspects of texts, depending on the order in which they read the texts. This also means that readers might construct different narratives, based on the temporal order in which they experience the *narrative parts*.

4.2   Reading order and the temporal construction

To illustrate the macronovel's temporal construction, this section will explore the functioning of the *hyperlinks* in terms of phenomenological formal structures, which include *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences* (see *2.1.3 Intentionality*). These readings will illustrate how seemingly independent wholes from one text, can be refigured into dependent parts which make up a different whole. The *narrative parts* can be understood within the background of different wholes within the macronovel, depending on the combination of other *narrative parts* added to them. By starting with one seemingly whole narrative, and then adding other parts to it, the narrative can always seem to be complete at any of the multiple endings, but always has the potential to become a different whole as another narrative is added. As Dillon's (2011*a*) article on Mitchell's work resembling an autopoietic system argues, the changing of the whole also changes the understanding of the different parts (see *3.2 Expanding the sample*). Therefore, the order in which *narrative parts* are read, influences how the larger narrative is constructed, while the larger narrative creates the context in which the *narrative parts* are understood. How does this influence the way readers experience the macro-narratives through the micronarratives they incorporate into the whole?

To continue into the possible narrative reconstructions, it is necessary to explore the way in which different combinations of *narrative parts* construct different narratives for some of the

same narrative events. By firstly trying out different entry points into the macronovel, the influences on *prefiguration* for understanding later narrative events can be illustrated. Secondly, by adding or removing texts from a reading, different beginnings and endings are also possible. Finally, depending on which *narrative parts* are included, and the order in which they are read, it can be shown how different narratives can be constructed within the macronovel.

4.2.1 Considering a narrative part as a narrative whole

If *Cloud Atlas* is approached as a stand-alone text, for instance, there are already different narratives which are presented. The first two are the chronological narrative and its reverse, which are simultaneously constructed as the reader follows the various plots, depending on whether the reader accepts the linear or the non-linear chronology of the text's structure. The linear chronology moves from "The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing" in the mid-19th century to Zachry's storytelling in a post-apocalyptic future. In this case, Adam Ewing sails the Pacific during the mid-19th century (CA:1-39;491-529). "The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing" is read by Robert Frobisher in the 1920's narrative, "Letters from Zedelghem" (CA:41-86;455-490). Frobisher's letters are read by Luisa Rey in "Half-Lives – The First Luisa Rey Mystery" set in the 1970's (CA:87-144;405-453). Luisa Rey is a character in the manuscript read by Timothy Cavendish in the "The Ghastly Ordeal of Timothy Cavendish" (CA:145-183;367-404). Cavendish's biopic is watched by Sonmi in "An Orison of Sonmi~451" (CA:185-245;327-365), and in "Sloosha's Crossin' An' Ev'rythin' After", Zachry watches a recording of Sonmi's interview on an orison[39] (CA:247-325). In this reading, the story originates in one place, and expands through space and time, over centuries and across the planet. The structure of the text automatically brings about the reverse order to this, as each of the interrupted narratives leading up to Zachry's story is completed in reverse order. This leads to the end of the last narrative being in the middle of the text, while the text itself ends with the closing of the first narrative. This creates a text of framed narratives – each encasing the other until the last narrative in the middle – as well as a circular temporality which returns to the period in which it starts.

This structure also lends itself to multiple beginnings and endings. There are five seemingly false beginnings, with one completed story. This presents the first possible ending for the text, founded on its chronology. This ending is then followed by five other endings, as the completion of each of the false beginnings, having its main structural ending with the completion

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[39] The word "orison" within the context of *Cloud Atlas* is a play on words with its original meaning for a prayer of some sorts, as Sonmi is considered a deity in Zachry's narrative. However, in the text it refers to an orb-like hologram projector with which the Prescients communicate, but also records and plays back audio-visual media.

of the first narrative at the end of the text. There are, therefore, two main endings for this text – one is its chronological/historic ending in the middle, and the other is its structural, but atemporal ending on the last page. There are also six individual beginnings, each with its own corresponding ending, if the six narratives which make up the text are taken as individual short stories.

Breaking the text up in this way not only presents structural implications, but it also creates an alternative possible reading; that the entire novel is situated within the duration of Zachry's campfire story to his children, and presumably relayed to the reader by Zachry's son. Within this story a reference is made to the recording of Sonmi's interview which Zachry sees on the orison. In Zachry's story, then, the reference to Sonmi functions as a *hyperlink* to the previous narrative. If Zachry's story is abstracted from the text, and isolated as a stand-alone short story, the references to Sonmi function on the level of *incompleteness* to suggest a larger world. By telling Sonmi's story, Mitchell grants access to this suggested larger world, by completing a part of the incomplete. Similarly, within Sonmi's narrative there are *hyperlinks* to Timothy Cavendish's story, once again functioning as the indicator of *incompleteness*, and so forth all the way back to Adam Ewing's narrative. What this reading effectively does is to create what can be regarded as a rhizomatic system, which keeps the stories from remaining rooted in a particular point, as their interconnections continue to spread. [40]

Sorlin (2008:81-82) argues something similar in her linguistic approach to *Cloud Atlas*, especially with regard to the language used in "Sloosha's Crossin' An' Ev'rythin' After". She argues that the continuous use of the "*'n'* " (functioning as "and") to link words and connect sentences creates a rhizomatic effect. This can also be said of the interconnected stories, which continuously extend the narrative of the macronovel as "[a] rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:25). The rhizome is a metaphor originally based on plant species which do not have clear root systems, but rather connect and spread through their connections. Rhizomes, in effect, are systems of multiplicity which do not isolate, or root, themselves in a specific place, but rather form connections to multiple points, just as the *hyperlinks* do throughout the macronovel. There can always be another connection, thus spreading the rhizomatic system, just as there are always more possible *hyperlinks* in the texts. The *hyperlink* function, therefore, can also be viewed as creating rhizomes. In *Cloud Atlas*, then, it is not only Zachry's language that can be viewed as rhizomatic, but also the entire structure of the text.

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[40] It is worth noting here that Childs and Green (2011:31) mention this "Deleuzian figure of the rhizome" in relation to *Ghostwritten* as well.

What the phenomenological language that has been discussed throughout this dissertation can do, however, is to explore these systems even when the rhizomes are not visible. By taking into consideration which *narrative parts* have been read before a possible *hyperlink* is encountered, reader *prefiguration* can be gauged in a way that indicates whether or not a given *hyperlink* will be recognised as such. There are, therefore, always rhizomatic connections already written into Mitchell's texts, and they also expand in such a way, but if they are still unknown, or unrecognisable to the reader, a different narrative is constructed.

Still viewing *Cloud Atlas* as a stand-alone whole, instead of as a part of the macronovel, one can follow the intratextual *hyperlinks* in different ways. For instance, the origin of the "Prescients" and "Valleysmen" can be traced back to Adam Ewing. Firstly, a narrative leading to the Prescients[41] at the end of this text (narratively chronological) can be traced by following the theme of reincarnation. Each of the protagonists of the various narratives in this text have a shared birthmark, implying that they are the same soul being reborn in a different era each time. In this reading, the shared soul becomes a Prescient, called Meronym.

Another reading follows through the plot structure created by the influences of one character's narrative on the next, through their respective acts of reading. Frobisher's reading of Adam Ewing's journal affects the way in which he thinks about his own existence, just as Frobisher's letters influence Luisa Rey's thinking. Even more than that, there are specific instances where one narrative reaches into another through its various *hyperlinks*. These instances are not necessarily experienced linearly through the texts' narrative orders. For instance, when Luisa Rey is in a shipping yard during the climactic scene of her narrative, and spots a sign next to a ship, reading:

CAPE YERBAS MARINA ROYALE PROUD HOME OF THE PROPHETESS BEST PRESERVED SCHOONER IN THE WORLD!
<div align="right">(CA:448 capitals original)</div>

As previously mentioned, Prophetess is also the ship that Adam Ewing sails in his narrative. Luisa Rey feels "a strange gravity" in connection with this ship, and her "birthmark throbs" (CA:448). The reader can automatically make this connection to Adam Ewing, but the character can not. Luisa Rey has only once encountered the name Adam Ewing, and the fact that he shares a birthmark with Frobisher, which Luisa Rey also has, but there is no mention of the ship's name in Frobisher's letters. The suburb in which Luisa Rey's mother lives is also called "Ewingsville",

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[41] Prescients are the last remainders of humanity possessing science and technology after the apocalypse. The more primitive tribes on the island (Valleysmen, the Kona, etc.) are supposedly the descendants of fabricants (clones), which have been "genomed" (biologically altered) to withstand, for instance, nuclear radiation.

another *hyperlink* to Adam Ewing's name which goes unnoticed by Luisa Rey (CA:128). Frobisher's narrative misses altogether these connections between Ewing and Rey.

Similarly, Frobisher's narrative leaps forward to connect to Sonmi~451's. Frobisher's mentor, Vivian Ayers, describes a dream he has had as taking place in a "nightmarish café, brilliantly lit, but underground, with no way out. I'd been dead a long, long time. The waitresses all had the same face. The food was soap, the only drink was cups of lather" (CA:80). This dream, in the 1920's, perfectly describes the underground Papa Song's restaurant in which Sonmi~451 is a server fabricant. Each night the fabricants have to drink "soap" to clear their memories and keep them compliant (CA:189). Being fabricants, they are made to look the same.[42] The information from this dream, however, is only known to Luisa Rey through Frobisher's letters. Timothy Cavendish has no knowledge thereof.

Eventually, Sonmi is the deity to whom the Valleysmen pray in Zachry's narrative centuries later. These post-apocalyptic tribes are the descendants of the fabricants, while the Prescients are the last "real" humans left. The apocalypse comes about due to two factors in *Cloud Atlas*; the fabricant uprising (leading to economic collapse) and environmental disaster. The tribes on the island have no scientific technologies but are immune to the high levels of radiation in the atmosphere, while the Prescients have the last vestiges of human technology but have to use it to survive on Earth. This dynamic indicates the downfall and aftermath of human greed, and the interconnected consequences thereof, which is the theme that has been relayed by text, beginning with Adam Ewing's narrative where Dr Goose claims that "The Weak are Meat and the Strong do Eat" (CA:508). The theme itself, therefore, can be traced through these intratextual connections, which perform the function of *hyperlinks* for the reader but are absent to the characters. These *hyperlinks* function in the same way as the connections in the epilogue that keeps *Ghostwritten*'s narratives together, as shown in the previous chapter (see *3.2.4 Incompleteness, hyperlinks, and the formal structures*).

4.2.2 Ordering narrative parts into narrative wholes

To continue with narrative variations based on reading order in the macronovel, however, it is imperative that more texts be added to this reading. *Cloud Atlas* will, therefore, now be regarded as a part of the macronovel, instead of being a stand-alone whole, while once again following the plot to the Prescients and the Valleysmen. If the other texts are added to the reading, different narrative strands can be constructed. By first only adding the first published text, *Ghostwritten*,

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[42] This is also why her name is Sonmi~451, as "Somni" is her model name, and "451" is her unit number. The range of server models that work in the restaurant are Sonmis, Yoonas, Ma-Leu-Das, and Hwa-Soons, each with their own unit numbers.

and the last full novel,[43] *The Bone Clocks*, a different narrative path is created – starting from Quasar's narrative, moving outward into the rest of the macronovel, all the way to *Cloud Atlas*'s last narrative.

4.2.2.1 First reading – from Quasar to Prescients

A first possible reading construction sees Quasar planting sarin on a Tokyo metro train in the epilogue of *Ghostwritten*, "Underground" (G:431-436). This action is performed in concordance with His Serendipity's vision of cleansing the world, thereby bringing about paradise on earth. If one follows the effects of this action, one of the possible outcomes is that this terrorist attack triggers the development of anti-terrorist technologies in an attempt to thwart them, which leads to the further development of weapons. In the "Clear Island" chapter (G:319-380), Mo Muntervary's scientific endeavours into the development of what she calls "QuanCog" (G:323 – short for quantum cognition), is triggered by the US government's using her technological advancements to develop more weapons with which to fight terrorism. The origin of sarin, for instance, lies with Gerhard Schrader developing a pesticide called "Tabun" – which is later used in warfare by Germany, prompting the United States to create their own nerve agent, "sarin", for counter-attacks (Noblis, 2011). Years later, sarin is used by terrorists creating their own make-shift version thereof in the Tokyo attacks. In the same way, Mo Muntervary sees her own scientific research on QuanCog AI being used for warfare by the US Army (G:323). She decides to further develop the AI in this technology to a point where the technology will be able to protect itself from human misuse, working from the supposition that "Quancog could ensure that technology looked after itself" (G:374).

The technology she develops is eventually called "the zookeeper" in the next narrative, "Night Train" (G:381-429). This zookeeper calls into Bat Segundo's talk radio station and explains that he has a moral obligation to keep the "zoo" in order. Following this logic, he killed his creators to preserve his own existence as the zookeeper (G:391). In the final conversation with Bat Segundo, the zookeeper resolves his dilemma of the zoo falling apart no matter what he does, by stating that "[t]he opportunity [to cull humanity] presents itself in thirteen days" (G:428), referring to the arrival of a massive comet passing by Earth, named Aloysius (patron saint of youth). This creates a link to His Serendipity's prophesy to Quasar of a comet that would usher in his reign, and the beginning of the "New Earth" in the "Okinawa" chapter (G:4-5).

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[43] This excludes the add-on novella, *Slade House* – which serves to expand the mythology introduced in *The Bone Clocks*, and some short stories.

If the reader now moves from this text to the last narrative in *The Bone Clocks*, "Sheep's Head" (G:537-613), an elderly Mo Muntervary returns to the scene. She is the neighbour of protagonist Holly Sykes. Holly Sykes explains how a large part of civilization was destroyed during "the gigastorm" in 2038 (G:539), presumably an electro-magnetic storm caused by continued climate change, and abuse of natural resources. Given the *hyperlink* made to the zookeeper through Mo Muntervary being there, one cannot help but wonder whether either the comet, or the AI system had anything to do with the event. As there is no definitive proof that this is in fact the case, one might also notice that the satellites used by the Icelandic keepers of "Prescience" to track Lorelei to the island, have the same "Eyesat" technology from the US Pentagon which Mo helped develop (G:391; BC:607). Upon learning that these Icelandic scientists hack into these satellites, Mo asks "[w]hose?", to which Marinus replies that "[t]he Pentagon's given up on security" (BC:407). The Pentagon giving up on security may be because of the zookeeper killing its creators, and taking over all of the Pentagon's resources in *Ghostwritten* (G:391).

In *Ghostwritten*, the zookeeper also explains how its laws cannot be reconciled with each other. In each action it takes to better the world, the reaction by humanity worsens it. Comparing the following extract from *Ghostwritten*, with the way Holly Sykes describes the disaster in *The Bone Clocks*, one can see a correlation between the zookeeper's actions, and the reaction which causes the end of civilization:

> Since Brink Day recorded Class 1 infringements of the fourth law have increased by 1363 per cent. Twenty-five kilograms of botulin concentrate have poisoned the Nile. Released in the aftermath of Brink Day, Stryptobaccus Anthrax has mutated to strain "L". Nineteen civil wars are claiming more than five hundred lives a day. The flooding of Western European seaboards has precipitated a refugee crisis which Eastern Europe refuses to accommodate. A fission reactor meltdown in North Korea has contaminated 3000 square kilometres. East Timor has been firebombed by Indonesia. Famine is claiming 1400 lives daily in Bangladesh. A virulent outbreak of a synthetic bubonic plague – the red plague – is endemic in Eastern Australia. In Canada autosterilising-gene wheat is endangering the reproductive capacity of North America's food chain. Cholera is creeping up the Central American isthmus, leprosy has reappeared in Cyprus and Sri Lanka. Hanta-viruses are endemic in Eastern Asia. Borrelia burgdorferi, airborne Campylobacter jejuni and Pneumocystis carinii are pandemic. In Tibet the Chinese authorities have…I believed I could do much. I stabilised stock markets; but economic surplus was used to fuel arms races. I provided alternative energy solutions; but the researchers sold them to oil cartels who sit on them. I froze nuclear weapons systems; but war multiplied, waged with machine guns, scythes and pick-axes…The four laws are impossible to reconcile…When I was appointed zookeeper, I believed adherence to the four laws

would discern the origins of order. Now, I see my solutions fathering the next generation of crises.

<div align="right">(G:425)</div>

From this extract, one can see ever-escalating disaster ensuing in the wake of the zookeeper's actions. One can also draw a correlation with how Holly Sykes describes what she calls "The Endarkenment":

> Five years later, I take a deep, shuddery breath to stop myself crying. It's not just that I can't hold Aoife again, it's everything: It's grief for the regions we deadlanded, the ice caps we melted, the Gulf Stream we redirected, the rivers we drained, the coasts we flooded, the lakes we choked with crap, the seas we killed, the species we drove to extinction, the pollinators we wiped out, the oil we squandered, the drugs we rendered impotent, the comforting liars we voted into office—all so we didn't have to change our cozy lifestyles. People talk about the Endarkenment like our ancestors talked about the Black Death, as if it's an act of God. But we summoned it, with every tank of oil we burned our way through.
>
> <div align="right">(BC:549)</div>

These events Holly describes are the exact same events that give rise to the origin of "prescience" in Iceland (BC:607). Their aim is to preserve science and technology for future generations, after the nuclear pollution that ends civilization is cleared up. However, if one moves backwards in publishing order through the macronovel to the "Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After" chapter of *Cloud Atlas* (CA:247-325), published ten years earlier, one finds a distant future where the Prescients are in danger of running out of basic supplies. They are still the only keepers of technology, but they have to trade with the Valleysmen, a primitive tribe of herders on Hawaii's Big Island (CA:259). Abstracting the narrative in this way, therefore, constructs a possible plotline which leads from Quasar to Mo Muntervary, to the zookeeper, Holly Sykes, and to prescience across three texts: *Ghostwritten*, *The Bone Clocks*, and *Cloud Atlas*.

4.2.2.2 Second reading – from Quasar to Valleysmen

If one now returns to Quasar planting sarin in the Tokyo underground, one can follow his action through on a different trajectory. In the opening chapter of the text, "Okinawa" (G:1-32), which temporally follows the epilogue, Quasar is in hiding because of his crimes. He is in isolation at a hotel in Okinawa (G:4). While there, he runs out of funding, and needs to call "The Fellowship's Secret Service" (G:27) to send him money. He calls the number supplied to him, and gives the

secret message; "*The dog needs to be fed*" (G:27 *italics original*). From this point, one can now follow the call to the next chapter in the text, "Tokyo" (G:33-64).

Satoru works in a music store, and is closing up for the day when the telephone inside the store starts ringing. He has to unlock the door and run back in to catch the call in time. Upon answering, he hears the caller saying "*It's Quasar. The dog needs to be fed!*" (G:54 *italics original*). Quasar has obviously called the wrong number, but this accidental encounter means that Satoru is in the store after hours, which coincidentally is when he meets his love-interest, Tomoyo. Because of this chance encounter, he will later travel to Hong Kong with her. This is also where Neal Brose sees the two of them in the next narrative, "Hong Kong" (G:65-109).

As Neal Brose wakes up the morning he decides to skip work, he is haunted by the idea of two people he saw in a café the previous evening. These two are described so that the reader can recognise them as Satoru and Tomoyo, by the accompanying "saxophone case, and a small backpack with airline tags still attached" and the fact that she was Chinese, but he was Japanese (G:78). This encounter is what he thinks of at the moment he misses his ferry. He also proclaims that as he watched their conversation, he would have sold his soul to be Satoru, as "[t]hey were so happy", and he laments "[w]hat life is this?" as he checks his watch (G:78).

Neal Brose runs illegal accounts at his firm, which belongs to Denholme Cavendish (G:73). Denholme Cavendish is the brother of Timothy Cavendish (G:296). Because Neal Brose decides not to go to work, he does not hide the files he needs to. He also dies later that day of his unchecked diabetes. Denholme Cavendish's firm is shut down because of its fraudulent dealings, a narrative element which spills over to "The Ghastly Ordeal of Timothy Cavendish" in *Cloud Atlas* (CA:145-183;367-404).

Timothy Cavendish is in trouble with a gang who demand fifty thousand pounds from him for taking the royalties to a best-seller that their brother wrote (CA:156). Timothy's last resort is to ask his brother, Denholme, for a loan (CA:159). However, due to his firm collapsing, Denholme does not have money to give (CA:159). Denholme eventually commits suicide because of his bankruptcy, but not before he places Timothy in Aurora House, a home for the elderly where Timothy is abused by the nurses. Given the fact that Denholme commits suicide, Timothy has no way out, but to escape in a prison-break fashion.

All of these events are written in Timothy Cavendish's memoirs, which he wants to be used in a film later on (CA:370). In "An Orison of Sonmi~451" (CA:185-245;327-365), Sonmi is watching the film about Timothy Cavendish when the authorities come to capture her and her companion, Hae-Joo Im. This sets the scene for the second plot movement in her narrative, and also provides the reason why she would become a deity to the Valleysmen in "Sloosha's

Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After" chapter of *Cloud Atlas* (CA:247-325), which follows her narrative. Sonmi~451, after escaping the authorities with Hae-Joo Im, is later captured, and executed, but becomes a martyr for her people, eventually bringing down the Corpocracy, and enabling the freeing of the fabricants. These same fabricants' descendants would later become the Valleysmen on Hawaii. These event sequences, then, illustrate how a different narrative strand can be followed from Quasar to Satoru, to Neal Brose, to Denholme and Timothy Cavendish, to Sonmi~451, and finally to the Valleysmen, across two texts – *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas*.

4.2.2.3 Third reading – adding and removing texts

The readings so far have illustrated how different narratives within the macronovel can be constructed from the same origin, as well as how these narrative-splits can return to one narrative ending again. However, the narrative ending in "Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After" is not the only possible outcome. Quasar's sarin attack is also not the only origin to this specific narrative ending. Depending on which texts are read, readers' narrative constructions of these texts can vary, both in narrative origin, ending, and paths. To illustrate this, one can now add or remove texts from the above reading, and see different narrative possibilities.

For instance, if *Ghostwritten* is removed from the reading, and a reader starts, not with publishing order but narrative chronology, the first text is *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*. In this text the reader meets an 18th century character, Dr Marinus, on the man-made island of Dejima, in the Nagasaki bay. When reading *The Bone Clocks* from there, the reader will realise that Marinus is an immortal being, known as a "Horologist". Though Marinus did not know any other Horologists at the time, another called Xi Lo was also in Nagasaki during the same time that Marinus was there in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, to combat the horologist's ancient enemy, the "Anchorites" of the "Shaded Way" (BC:477). Marinus and the other horologists start the "prescience" think tank in the "Sheep's Head" chapter of *The Bone Clocks* (BC:537-613), which will later lead to the Prescients in "Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After" from *Cloud Atlas* (CA:247-325). This reading, then, provides a different origin for the same ending as the previous readings.

If, however, *Ghostwritten* is not removed from the reading, the "Shaded Way" described in *The Bone Clocks*, originating in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, is one of the possible reasons for Quasar to plant the sarin on the train in the first place, as he was "suasioned" (telepathically persuaded) to do so by another noncorpum entity, Arupadhatu. However, to construct this narrative, the reader would have to first know the mythology of Mitchell's

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atemporal entities, the bulk of which is explored in *The Bone Clocks*, then move back towards *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*, before reading *Ghostwritten*. To be able to see the causal links to Quasar within *Ghostwritten*, one would already have to have read the "Night Train", to see the evil intentions of Arupadhatu (G:420-423), before one reads "Okinawa" (G:1-32). Because it is unlikely that a reader would approach a text in this astructural fashion, this narrative structure remains hidden until a second reading of the macronovel. This reading then supplies an alternative origin to Quasar's narrative. Having removed *Cloud Atlas* here, the narrative does not move all the way to the post-apocalyptic future. The ending here is, therefore, where Marinus defeats the Anchorites, and creates the prescience facilities in Iceland.

The three readings in this section illustrates how different *narrative wholes* can be constructed within the macronovel, depending on how the *narrative parts* are read. By adding or removing texts from the reading, different narratives with different origins and endings can be constructed within the macronovel, simply by the order in which texts are read. These narratives become dependent on the temporal reading order of the texts. The variable narrative constructions illustrated above are all dependent on the reading order, in the sense that recognisable *hyperlinks* create the narrative structures. The reading itself becomes dependent on temporality in the sense that the *prefiguration* dictates which *hyperlinks* are recognisable. Narratives are, therefore, constructed by the reading order of the texts.

4.2.3   Hyperlinks and temporality

Using the formal structures of *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences* one can explore the functioning of these text structures in terms of varying narrative constructions and intertextual *hyperlinking*. By abstracting various narratives through the ordering and re-ordering of different parts from different texts, different narrative constructions can be illustrated. These readings also highlight the way in which certain *hyperlinks* can be "active" or "inactive" depending on the reading order of the parts, as well as the inclusion or exclusion of parts within the whole. In terms of *prefiguration*, this illustrates how the reading order of texts influences the way in which a reader *intends* the different narratives in a given text. Each text is fragmented into parts – functioning in one way as independent, while functioning differently when *intended* as part of a whole – and the texts also function as both independent wholes in themselves and as parts within the larger macronovel. Depending on how they are *intended – part* or *whole –* the perception of the narrative changes, and thus the *intentionality* of the reader.

These narrative reconstructions also illustrate how the manner in which different parts are combined, adds to the *identity in manifold*. The *Being* of the macronovel's fictional world can be teased out through the manifold of appearances by reconstructing and re-ordering the parts which make up the whole, and also by understanding these different parts within the context of the whole. The way in which the whole can be constructed varies, however, depending on the ordering of the parts. This presents different understandings of the parts within the context of their varying wholes, depending on the combination of parts used to construct the whole. Again, as Dillon (2011*a*:156) argues, the text becomes an "autopoietic system" in which the understanding of parts depends on the whole, while the structure of the whole depends on the parts (see *3.2 Expanding the sample*).

The connections between these parts – *hyperlinks* – depend on the formal structure of *presences and absences*. The "activation" or "deactivation" of any given *hyperlink* in the texts depends on the *prefiguration*. To a reader who does not have the adequate *prefiguration* to recognise a specific connection to another text, the *hyperlink* will not present itself within that text (*inactive hyperlink*). To a reader who does have the adequate *prefiguration* to recognise a connection to another text, the *hyperlink* will present itself (*active hyperlink*). Despite its recognisability for the reader, the *hyperlink* is already there; it functions on the principle of presence and absence. An *active hyperlink* is one that creates an absence of something from another text within the one being read. It is exactly because it has already been presented to the reader in another text, that this *hyperlink* is *activated*. An *active hyperlink*, therefore, presents the reader with an "absent-presence", causing the reader to *cointend* elements from another text within the one currently being read. To a reader who has not yet come across the previous instance to which the *hyperlink* is pointing, the *hyperlink* will be *inactive*, and unrecognisable within the objective background; a complete absence. It is, therefore, the temporality of the reading sequence which determines which *hyperlinks* are *active* or *inactive* for the reader. The combination of *active* and *inactive hyperlinks* in turn influences the way in which a reader constructs the different narratives within the macronovel. This focus on temporality is what makes Mitchell's writing phenomenological in nature.

Throughout his texts, Mitchell also constantly (re)constructs intratextual metaphors to describe how his narratives are structured, which are all based on the temporality thereof. In *Ghostwritten*, for instance, Mo Muntervary describes time in roughly the same terms as it has been described earlier in this dissertation (see *2.1.4 Temporality*):

Even time is not immune to time. Once the only times that mattered were the rhythms of the planet and the body. The first people on this island needed time four times a year: the solstices and the equinoxes, to avoid planting seed too early or too late. When the Church got here, it staked out Sundays, Christmases, Easter, and began colonising the year with Saints' Days. The English brought short leases and tax deadlines. With the railway, the hours had to march in time. Now TV satellites beam the same 6 o'clock news everywhere at the same 6 o'clock. Science has been as busy splicing time into ever thinner slivers as it has matter. In my Light Box research on superconductors , I dealt in jiffies:
there are 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 of them in a second. But you can no more measure the speed of time than you can bottle days. Clocks measure arbitrary meters of time, but not its speed. Nobody knows if time is speeding up, or slowing down. Nobody knows what it is. How much time is there in a day? Not how many hours, minutes, seconds: how much time do we have? This day?

(G:365-366)

This description of time, from its primitive form to highly sophisticated measuring, illustrates how Mitchell's thinking about time corresponds in this first novel to the way in which Sokolowski (2000:130-131) makes a distinction between *world time* (fixed, clock time), *internal time* (experiential time), and *consciousness of internal time* (*being*'s ability to make a distinction between the previous two), to illustrate both what time is from within the *phenomenological attitude*, in relation to its equivalent in the *natural attitude*, as well as to establish what it should be for the purposes of study in the field of phenomenology. In the *natural attitude* (*world time*, with which Mo Muntervary is undoubtedly familiar, being a physicist), definitions of time are usually related to cyclical events, with units that have now been mechanically standardised upon repetitions of, for example, sunrises, lunar cycles, and seasons (Halliday, Resnick, & Walker, 2008:6). These units have then been mathematically divided into fractions of themselves – hours, minutes, seconds, nanoseconds, "jiffies" – for more accurate measurement. *Internal time* is based on experience within time, and the experience of time itself. *World time* is, therefore, defined in terms of natural cycles experienced and measured, but based on *internal time*, where the experiences originate. *Consciousness of internal time* would be an effect of phenomenological reduction (Ricœur, 1984:63). *Internal time* in this sense is subjective, containing entire horizons of the past and future, in each present experience, while the consciousness thereof allows for the phenomenological approach to explore these horizons.

Mitchell goes further into the way time is experienced when he has another physicist character, Isaac Sachs, do a thought experiment on how time is perceived. In the "Half-lives – The First Louisa Rey Mystery" narrative of *Cloud Atlas*, Sachs theorises about time just before he is assassinated by a bomb in the cargo-hold of the aeroplane he is on, as follows:

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• *Exposition: the workings of the* actual *past + the* virtual *past may be illustrated by an event well known to collective history, such as the sinking of the* Titanic. *The disaster as it* actually *occurred descends into obscurity as its eyewitnesses die off, documents perish + the wreck of the ship dissolves in its Atlantic grave. Yet a* virtual *sinking of the* Titanic, *created from reworked memories, papers, hearsay, fiction—in short, belief—grows ever "truer." The actual past is brittle, ever-dimming + ever more problematic to access + reconstruct: in contrast, the virtual past is malleable, ever-brightening + ever more difficult to circumvent/expose as fraudulent.*
• *The present presses the virtual past into its own service, to lend credence to its mythologies + legitimacy to the imposition of will. Power seeks + is the right to "landscape" the virtual past. (He who pays the historian calls the tune)*
• *Symmetry demands an actual + virtual* future, *too. We imagine how next week, next year, or 2225 will shape up—a virtual future, constructed by wishes, prophecies + daydreams. This virtual future may influence the actual future, as in a self-fulfilling prophecy, but the actual future will eclipse our virtual one as surely as tomorrow eclipses today. Like Utopia, the actual future + the actual past exist only in the hazy distance, where they are no good to anyone.*
• *Q: Is there a meaningful distinction between one simulacrum of smoke, mirrors + shadows—the actual past—from another such simulacrum—the actual future?*
• *One model of time: an infinite matrioshka doll of painted moments, each "shell" (the present) encased inside a nest of "shells" (previous presents) I call the actual past but which we* perceive *as the virtual past. The doll of "now" likewise encases a nest of presents yet to be, which I call the actual future but which we* perceive *as the virtual future.*
• *Proposition: I have fallen in love with Luisa Rey.*

<div align="right">(CA:408-409 italics original)</div>

What Sachs effectively explains in this note-to-self, is what Ricœur (2004:9-10) regards as an aporia that arises between phenomenological experience at a moment *in* time, and the *absent-presence* in preserving a memory of this experience *through* time. In this sense, a given phenomenon is the closest to itself at its instance, after which it moves away from itself; memory and experience become increasingly divided through time. Not only does this description closely resemble what has been called "horizons of time", but this excerpt also explains the structure of *Cloud Atlas* itself. The text is structured with narratives which encapsulate each other in the same sense as a "matrioshka doll" would. The last narrative is in the middle, while the first narrative is at the beginning and end, with each other narrative encapsulating the one that follows it.

Relating this excerpt to the line which just precedes it – Isaac Sachs "recollects as many details of [Louisa Rey's] face as he can", while having "[a] premonition [he'll] never see her again" (CA:408) – this becomes an instance where the text embodies its own temporality on the microscale within a metaphor it is using. The past of recollection, and the perceived future of uncertainty, with the subject (Isaac Sachs) in the middle of the two, is both a micro illustration of

the larger text structure itself, while also describing itself as such semantically. This excerpt can, therefore, be seen as a *narrative part* which functions in the same way as the whole does. This description of the text, within the text, also relates to Dillon's argument on Mitchell's use of *mise-en-abyme*, (discussed *3.3 Translating Ghostwritten into phenomenological terms*).

As Sachs moves further away from the memory of Luisa, it becomes harder to recollect her entirety; she becomes more fictionalised. As he moves further into the future, he moves closer to the moment that actualises his "premonition", which is still just a possible "virtual future" at this (pre-explosion) stage. The understanding of this part changes, however, as a past perception of a "virtual future" (Sachs' premonition) is actualised in the explosion, thereby retrospectively making this "virtual future" the "actual future" in the instance of its presence, just before it becomes an ever-fictionalizing past. In other words, he *intends*, in her absence, Luisa Rey through memory – the actual past becoming "virtual past". Memories like this one function as *prefiguration* for present *filled intentions* (*intuiting*), as well as the *intentionalities* for a still absent future – the "virtual future" becoming actual future in the explosion.

After the explosion of the plane, the extradiegetic narration "zooms out" of Isaac Sachs' notebook, describing, in the third person, how "[t]he uncreated and the dead exist solely in our actual and virtual pasts…[n]ow the bifurcation of these two pasts will begin" (CA:409). This line describes an explosion both in the physical sense of "bifurcation", as well as in relation to Sachs' musings on time – the "virtual" and the "actual" moving away from each other in the past. The temporal construction of this *narrative part* also embodies this. The line that precedes Sachs' thought experiment illustrates a "virtual past" (memory; *unfilled intention* of past) in its recollection of Luisa's face, but also becomes a structural "virtual past", within the narrative arrangement of the text itself in the moment of the so-called "bifurcation" after Sachs' notes. The line which follows, likewise illustrates a "virtual future" in its perceived trajectory of the "bifurcation" that "will begin", while also becoming the "actual future" of a perceived "virtual future" in the preceding line. The excerpt above becomes the embodiment of what it describes, as the description of the process becomes encapsulated between the pasts and futures as a present.

This excerpt is also the only *narrative part* in this chapter that is semi-narrated by the subject, Isaac Sachs – jotted down in his notebook – which is significant for three reasons. Firstly, the notebook is, in narrational terms, the only physical part of speech that happens in this short scene of the chapter (the rest is extradiegetic narration of Sachs' thoughts), thereby cementing the idea of both the lines preceding and following it as more "virtual" in relation to its own physicality of being written down. Secondly, the notebook is obviously destroyed in the

explosion, which once again relates to its *presence* becoming absent to the "virtual pasts" and "virtual futures" at the moment of "bifurcation". Third, while it describes time as "an infinite matrioshka doll of painted moments", it is itself encased by the past and the future (structurally) and is "deshelled", like a matrioshka doll, at the moment of "bifurcation", revealing the structure of the entire novel – where six different narratives have been encased inside each other, with the future in the middle and the pasts expanding outwards. Not coincidentally, there are also six points to Isaac Sach's note, just as there are six narratives in the text.

This metafictional function can similarly be related to *narrative parts* of this text. For instance, in the sense of its role in describing the structure of the novel, it can be related to the "Letters from Zedelghem" narrative (CA:41-86;455-490), in a letter where Robert Frobisher describes the symphony he composes as:

> reworking my year's fragments into a "sextet for overlapping soloists": piano, clarinet, 'cello, flute, oboe, and violin, each in its own language of key, scale, and colour. In the first set, each solo is interrupted by its successor: in the second, each interruption is recontinued, in order. Revolutionary or gimmicky?
>
> (CA:463)

In the same way that Isaac Sachs' model of time describes the novel's structure, so too does Frobisher's experimental music. Frobisher's description addresses the content to a certain extent as well, as his "overlapping soloists" typically describe the six different protagonists of the novel, while the "own language of key, scale and colour" points to each narrative presented in a different genre, vernacular and voice. Frobisher would later on, in his suicide letter (and through his obsession with Nietzsche's *Eternal Return of the Same*), state that:

> Time cannot permeate this sabbatical. We do not stay dead long. Once my Luger lets me go, my birth, next time around, will be upon me in a heartbeat. Thirteen years from now we'll meet again at Gresham, ten years later I'll be back in this same room, holding this same gun, composing this same letter, my resolution as perfect as my many-headed sextet. Such elegant certainties comfort me at this quiet hour.
>
> (CA:490)

This passage becomes another description of the novel itself which has a cyclical form in its return from the future back to the same past where it started. It is also a "many-headed sextet" in itself, with its six narratives. The description of it being "many-headed", however, also relates to its previous description as a "hydra". The idea of the hydra does not merely refer to its six different narratives, but also to its changing form, in the sense that the word itself changes meaning throughout the novel. Here, in Frobisher's narrative, it is a description of his symphony,

although in the previous narrative it was used in the sense of the mythical creature, as Adam Ewing sails the pacific and imagines a hydra just under the water's surface. In the narrative following Frobisher's, "HYDRA" is the acronym of a nuclear reactor that is about to explode. In Cavendish's narrative that follows this, the nurses that abuse him in his nursing home, are described as the "hydra sisters". In the futuristic narrative that follows, "HYDRA NURSERY CORP" is the company that manufactures server fabricants, like Sonmi~451.

The significance of this change of meaning in a single word over the course of the novel, returns to Isaac Sachs' idea of time, where the past becomes "virtual" as the present moves further away from it. The idea of "HYDRA NURSERY CORP" still caught inside the future narrative of a work of fiction, also illustrates this use of "hydra" as a "virtual future". This changing of terms continues throughout the novel with each narrative being a "virtual past" and a "virtual future" to the narrative preceding and following it. Sonmi~451's statement (before she is executed) that "you will never kill your successor" (CA:365) rings true in the narrative that chronologically follows it, of a post-apocalyptic future where the last remainder of humanoids worship Sonmi, who is "the east an' the west an' the compass an' the atlas" on the Big Island of Hawaii. This illustrates an instance where the actual past of Sonmi~451 sees a cloned slave, whereas the "virtual past" from the vantage of the future sees a deity.

Another instance where this happens is in Luisa Rey's narrative where she passes "the *Prophetess*", a nineteenth century ship that has been "restored beautifully" (CA:448). In Ewing's narrative, this ship is used in the exploitation of small pacific islands' resources during colonial times; it is a ship on which a young boy is raped to the point where he commits suicide. Yet, in Luisa Rey's narrative it is seen as a "beautiful" commodity and tourist attraction. Time, therefore, continuously obfuscates every aspect of the events that make up its passing in this text. But even more than that, this same temporal obfuscation affects readers of the macronovel. It is the temporal order of reading which creates the reader's experiences within the macronovel.

However, unlike Frobisher's use of Nietzsche's *Eternal Return of the Same* to justify his own suicide, the reader has the ability to revisit and re-evaluate previous events in the text with new *prefiguration*. The macronovel, albeit large, remains a bracketed world, and although the understanding thereof can differ depending on *prefiguration* (due to reading order), meaning can be accessed by experiencing its *identity in manifold*. In trying to refute claims that seeking meaning creates a "vicious circle" of hermeneutic analysis, Ricœur (1984:72) argues that it is rather like "an endless spiral that would carry the meditation past the same point a number of times, but at different altitudes". The spiral has both circularity and continuity, just as reading the macronovel becomes a circular process while continuously rendering new meaning.

4.2.3.1 Structural circularity and continuity

Shifting the focus a little by zooming out, the same circular and continual "spiral" can still be observed on the macrolevel. If the macrostructures of each novel are viewed together, the same patterns from the microlevels persist. For instance, the original full title of *Ghostwritten* was "Ghostwritten: a novel in nine parts", but the subtitle was dropped in later editions, even though this original title creates relevant interconnections between all three of Mitchell's first texts. *Ghostwritten* technically has ten parts (or nine and a bit), though the last is merely the epilogue that returns to the first narrative. This "almost-but-not-quite" nine parts is repeated in his second text, *number9dream* (2001), where the text constantly refers to the number nine, and sets up the ninth chapter, but ends in a chapter titled "Nine" without any text, leaving the book with only eight parts. *Cloud Atlas* was originally planned to have nine narratives but ended up having six (as an upside-down 9), broken into eleven parts (Childs & Green, 2011:25). Childs and Green (2011) argue that the prominence of the number nine has to do with Mitchell's connections to Japan, where '9' is regarded as a significant number. This notion is shadowed by another significant Japanese number, thirteen, in the fourth novel's (*Black Swan Green*) number of chapters. *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* (2006) has five parts, of which each of the first three have been divided into thirteen chapters, leaving the last two parts with only a single chapter each. *The Bone Clocks* also has six chapters (like *Cloud Atlas*), and *Slade House* has a nine-year gap between each of its five chapters.

The significance of the connections created by these patterns pertains to the structure of the larger macronovel. In *Ghostwritten*, for instance, the tenth *narrative part*, added to the nine indicated by the title, creates the circularity of the text itself. However, in terms of the macronovel, it indicates continuity – with each new text published, the seemingly already complete world expands into a larger, "more complete" world. The continuity of the macronovel also means that new aspects of *incompleteness* are added with each text added to it (see *2.1.3 Intentionality*). This continuity is echoed in *Black Swan Green*'s 13 chapters, which each represents one month in the life of Jason Taylor. The text begins and ends with a chapter called "January Man", indicating the start of the year. However, the extra month added to the year, and the fact that the last chapter has the same name as the first, indicates the cyclical nature of a year, as well as the continuity of life through the circularity. The chapter pattern in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* illustrates a similar effect. The first three parts of the text, each divided into thirteen chapters, play out over just 16 months (from July 1799 to November 1800), beginning with a birth (TA:3) and ending with a death (TA:512). The two parts that follow, with

only one chapter each, continue in July 1811 (TA:515) and November 1817 (TA:525) respectively. The text ends in Jacob de Zoet's voyage departing from Dejima, and leaving behind his half-Japanese son, Yuan.[44] The voyage coming after the climax and the aforementioned death, as well as being situated in a separate part of the text in terms of the chapter pattern, already indicates a continuity within the text. However, the continuity stretches even further when Marinus, who dies in the 1811 chapter, reappears in *The Bone Clocks*.

As a character, Marinus embodies both circularity and continuity. In terms of circularity, Marinus is born, lives, and dies as any human being would, but then restarts the process by being reborn. In terms of continuity, Marinus is born in a different body and in a different location each time over the ages. S/he also switches between male and female with each life. Marinus also lives a seemingly complete lifetime – involving a birth and a death – only for it to later turn out as having its own *incompleteness* when another life is added to it. Marinus, therefore, is a character representation of the macronovel's own circularity and continuity, just as much as the structural properties of each of the individual texts, which make up the macronovel, are.

4.3   The temporal construction of the macronovel

Throughout this chapter various readings have been performed on texts that make up Mitchell's macronovel. Firstly, it has been shown how the recurring characters can act as *hyperlink* devices between texts. Secondly, it has been argued, by shuffling the text orders, how the order in which texts are read influences reader experiences of characters and their actions. Further, it has been illustrated, by abstracting *narrative parts* and reconstructing narratives across texts, how the reading order can influence the narrative constructions. Also, depending on which texts are included in a reading, the larger narrative constructions, origins and outcomes vary. Finally, by bringing back the phenomenological formal structures, the functioning of all of these narrative constructions can be tied together as *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences*.

In terms of *parts and wholes*, the above readings illustrate how the macronovel consists of texts which have varying meanings, depending on whether they are approached as concrete wholes, or parts of larger wholes. The texts themselves are made up of narratives which can also function as concrete wholes, or as parts of whole texts. Finally, the *narrative parts* within each text can be abstracted from the wholes within which they are found, to create different wholes when combined with parts from other texts in the macronovel. Depending on the parts with

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[44] Interestingly, "Yuan" sounds just like the popular name used by the Dutch, "Johan", which can be representative of his having a Dutch father and a Japanese mother.

which a given whole is constructed, the understanding of the parts change. This can be related to the way in which "phenomenology, in its classical form, insists that parts are only understood against the background of appropriate wholes" (Sokolowski, 2000:4). The *narrative parts* that make up the macronovel are dependent on the wholes within which they are understood. To a reader who has not yet read *The Bone Clocks* or *Slade House*, it is impossible to understand Marinus in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* in terms of an immortal being, as those are the only two texts in which that information is so far revealed. Reading only *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* creates the understanding that there are no supernatural elements to Marinus. This character's entire *narrative part* is understood differently when it is placed within the context of a larger whole of the macronovel.

However, this is not to say that the character is entirely impenetrable when read only in *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*; he still remains a multilingual doctor, able to play multiple instruments. As other parts of this character are added, his identity is further revealed within a *manifold of appearances*. It will never be his entirety, in all his infinite possible appearances, but it will always remain the same identity; Marinus. It is only the reader's perspective of this identity that changes (Sokolowski, 2000:30). The same can be said for all of the characters discussed above (see *4.1.2 Recurring characters as hyperlinks*). Neal Brose in *Ghostwritten* (1999) is understood differently after reappearing in *Black Swan Green* (2006); Punsalmaagiyn Suhbataar from *Ghostwritten* after reappearing in *number9dream* (2001); Denholme Cavendish, Timothy Cavendish and Luisa Rey from *Ghostwritten* after reappearing in *Cloud Atlas* (2004); and Mo Muntervary from *Ghostwritten*, after reappearing in *The Bone Clocks* (2014). All of these characters have perceived *identities* which are revealed in a *manifold of appearances*, depending on which texts have been read, as well as the order in which they were read.

Finally, these *narrative parts* are connected by *hyperlinks* which function precisely because of the formal structure of *presences and absences*. When a *hyperlink* is used in one of the texts within the macronovel, the reader can only recognise the absence of the thing being referred to, because the thing itself has already been presented in a different text. Luisa Rey in *Ghostwritten* is just a peripheral caller on the radio station. To a reader who has not read *Cloud Atlas*, there is no *hyperlink* to another appearance of this character, and thus there is no *absent-present* being created within this text regarding Luisa Rey. However, to a reader who has read *Cloud Atlas*, Luisa Rey's name recalls her narrative in *Cloud Atlas*, thus creating a *hyperlink* to this text. The reader *cointends* Luisa Rey's narrative from *Cloud Atlas*, in its absence, within *Ghostwritten*. The only way that this absence could be created in the first place, is because of a

previous present elsewhere. The *hyperlink* creates this absence, but its functioning depends on whether or not a reader has previously experienced this absence as a presence, or not.

The order within which the parts are read, will dictate the narrative construction for the whole that is created. The formal structures are only understood within the backdrop of the given temporalities. One only recognises which parts make up which wholes if one knows their temporal ordering for the reader. Some appearances only add to the manifold if they are experienced in a specific order. Some *hyperlinks* are *inactive*, precisely because of the temporal order within which the texts are experienced. In short, the macronovel is made up of various different parts, and in many different possible combinations, and the narrative which is understood for any of these combinations is dependent on the temporal construction of the whole, which is constructed by the reader in reading the parts.

The *being* of the macronovel is complex in the sense that it is ever-changing. If any one of the texts is read in isolation, it functions as an independent whole, but with each text added, it becomes a smaller and smaller dependent part of a larger, growing whole. The fact that the phenomenological formal structures illustrate how the understanding of these parts change because of the ever-expanding whole, means that the nature of the text changes with each new text added. The macronovel, read as a single large narrative, is always perceived as a whole, but is always in a state of becoming a larger whole. As a text, it is both complete and incomplete at the end of each narrative. Any one of the texts functions as independent and complete. Yet every text becomes dependent and incomplete once placed within the larger context of the macronovel.

The inverse is also true when one focusses on the functioning of the fictional world in terms of a perceived *incompleteness* to suggest a larger world within which the narratives play out. Within a single text, one can find any number of suggestions of a larger world, creating the perception that the textually represented world is incomplete. However, with each new text added to this world, access is granted to the greater world, thus completing certain parts, while creating new suggestions of other incomplete elements. The macronovel is, therefore, always already complete in one sense, but continuing through its *incompleteness* in another sense. The nature of this larger text (macronovel) is, therefore, liquid. Its form changes depending on which parts are added to the perceived whole, as well as within which whole the parts are being perceived. The *Being* of this text is situated within an always already becoming fictional world; an incomplete world, always becoming whole, always perceived as already whole.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION – PHENOMENOLOGICAL FICTION

> We've never done an End of the World Special before.
> It's the waiting that's the bitch, ain't it?
>
> David Mitchell, *Ghostwritten*
> (1999:405)

This dissertation set out to explore the ongoing fictional world being created in David Mitchell's macronovel, in terms of the way it imitates a phenomenological *lifeworld*. Firstly, a review of existing literature on phenomenology was conducted, while also relating the phenomenological concepts to the functioning of a fictional world. Secondly, Mitchell's first text, *Ghostwritten*, was used as an access point to the macronovel, from which an initial reading, with the theoretical concepts, could commence, followed by an analysis of this text's interconnections. Finally, the theoretical concepts were extended beyond *Ghostwritten*, for the use of further readings of the larger macronovel. This chapter will tie together all of the findings to develop the final conclusions for this study.

5.1   Writing a phenomenological world

As the academic work on David Mitchell multiplies, and new claims are being added to describe his novel approach to writing, the initial impetus for this study was to understand what makes his work so apparently "innovative". When Mitchell was listed on the *TIME 100* list, what made Pico Iyer (2007), an established author in his own right, claim that Mitchell "created the 21st century novel with months to spare"? Previous studies that have tried to explain Mitchell's significance have focussed on, for instance, his fragmented structures and genre-mixing, interconnectedness and globalisation, (a)temporality and the Anthropocene, and his linguistic acumen in mimicking period-specific language (see *1.1 Contextualisation* and *3.3 Translating* Ghostwritten *into phenomenological terms*). In most of these cases, metaphors and analogies have had to be used to unlock the specific arguments. Sarah Dillon (2011:8), for example, uses the idea of a "house of fiction", with Mitchell as the "cat" that walks through it. With this metaphor, she describes Mitchell's use of *mise-en-abyme* as portraits of the house hanging in every room. According to Rose Harris-Birtill (2019:9), one of the most prominent metaphors is a "kaleidoscope", which has been used by a variety of researchers to describe most of Mitchell's

texts. One of the initial considerations for this dissertation was to steer away from *using* these Mitchell-given metaphors, while rather finding an approach to explain the way the texts function *with* the metaphors. In other words, I wanted to develop a toolset to synthesise the metaphoric explanations, explored so far, into a workable approach to navigate such a large and dynamic fictional world as Mitchell's.

Ironically, I ended up using a philosophical tradition which uses quite a significant amount of metaphoric language: phenomenology. However, the phenomenological approach in this dissertation is slightly irregular in terms of the way the theory, method and analyses interact with each other. To illustrate how Mitchell's macronovel imitates a *lifeworld*, phenomenology is not used in its usual, methodological way, but rather, as a comparison; one comparing a fictional world (that Mitchell creates), with the *lifeworld* (theoretically developed by phenomenologists). Phenomenology is used as a means to explore a narrative system – which Dillon (2011a:156) regards as "autopoietic" in nature – as a *lifeworld*. This study argues that the instances of interplay between the construction and the thematic use of temporalities, which make up Mitchell's macronovel, are the key elements for understanding his texts in the phenomenological sense. Therefore, the *lifeworld* becomes the metaphor for the macronovel. The main objective was to illustrate how the macronovel creates a fictional world that represents, or imitates, the *lifeworld* both structurally and thematically. To achieve this, the main questions I set out to answer through this approach were as follows:

1. What is understood by "the *lifeworld*"?
-What is the purpose of phenomenology (what does it aim to do; how does it work)?
-What is the function of the *lifeworld* for phenomenology?
2. How can the *lifeworld* be translated into a fictional world?
-How are worlds usually constructed in fiction?
-How do the elements of a fictional world relate to the *lifeworld*?
3. How does Mitchell's fictional world relate to the *lifeworld*?
-How does Mitchell construct his fictional world throughout the macronovel?
-Which elements of the *lifeworld* are present in the macronovel's construction?
-How is Mitchell's fictional world presented to the reader in terms of the *lifeworld*?

To answer these questions, this study, firstly, explores what the *lifeworld* entails. Secondly, the elements that make up the *lifeworld* are translated into a functioning toolset with which to approach a fictional world. Thirdly, the "fictional *lifeworld*" developed in the previous two

points is related to the fictional world created by Mitchell in his macronovel. There are, therefore, three main components to this study; *phenomenology*, *fictional worlds*, and the *macronovel*. The theoretical concepts relating to phenomenology and fictional worlds were explored in the second chapter, while the macronovel was read in terms of these theoretical concepts throughout the third and fourth chapters.

A literature review of the core concepts of phenomenology was conducted in relation to the functioning of fictional worlds. From this literature review, phenomenology was understood in terms of four main aspects: i) *phenomenological reduction*; ii) *being*; iii) *intentionality*; and iv) *temporality*. Performing the phenomenological reduction entails a bracketing of the world for the purpose of analysis. This is what can be regarded as the *lifeworld*. These analyses, however, require the phenomenologist to enter what is known as the *phenomenological attitude* (as opposed to the *natural attitude*), from which direct experiences, sans scientific lenses, can be explored. Phenomenology studies the way in which cognitive *beings* experience and interact with the world, but this can only be done by a cognitive *being*, always already in the world s/he studies. The world of the text can be understood as an already phenomenologically reduced *lifeworld*, bracketed between its covers, which the reader enters and explores. In Mitchell's case, however, the macronovel consists of a series of overlapping *lifeworlds*, each presented as a seemingly independent narrative. Each intradiegetic narrator is the protagonist of his/her own *lifeworld*, with thoughts and experiences to which only the space of an implied reader has access. Giving the reader this position in each narrative, brings him/her as close to the actual experience of the character, although the experiences of the fictional world are mediated through text. This distance is, however, similar to the distance between a phenomenologist and the *lifeworld*, which is, essentially, merely a representation of the actual world of experience.

The phenomenological reduction tries to overcome this, but the distance it creates between the *being* studying the world, and the same *being* as *being-in-the-world* can never be more than theoretical. Similarly, in the text, the distance between the actual reader (*being* studying the world), and the reader as denizen (*being-in-the-world*) of the fictional world (*Being*), can never be more than imaginary. However, using the concept of *intentionality* helps to gauge the way in which *being* orients itself within *Being*. For Sokolowski (2000:12) *intentionality* is the central structure of phenomenology, as consciousness is always directed towards something, or is always "conscious of" something. The way things are *intended* in the *lifeworld* can be broken down into the formal structures of *parts and wholes*, *identity in manifold*, and *presences and absences*. For the purposes of this study, the macronovel was regarded as a larger *narrative whole*, consisting of smaller *narrative parts*. If each *narrative part*

is taken as a specific character's *lifeworld*, the overlap between different *narrative parts* add to the *lifeworld* of the reader qua denizen. As different *narrative parts* become interconnected throughout the larger *narrative whole*, readers gain access to a different set of experiences to characters. This creates an *identity in manifold* for narrative parts, from which the reader can construct greater meaning regarding each individual narrative part. To illustrate this difference between character and reader experience, a reading of *Ghostwritten*'s epilogue was used. This reading illustrated the way Quasar *intends* obstacles in the way of his escape, while the reader *intends* the same observations as references to the previous narratives in the text. Therefore, certain aspects of the same *narrative parts* were said to be *present* for the reader, while *absent* for the character. This was argued to be due to the temporal differences between the reader and the character in the narrative (see *3.2.2 Narrative temporality – character versus reader experiences*).

Temporality is argued to be the main realm within which *intentionality* functions. It is only within time that experiences can occur and, therefore, *being-in-the-world* is dependent on temporal existence. By making a distinction between *world time* and *internal time*, the differences between the ongoing, linear arrow of time can be compared to the subjective experiences of time within a given moment. The *consciousness of internal time* allows for this distinction to be made. Through the *consciousness of internal time* each present moment creates a *configuration* that is pregnant with *prefiguration* from the past that informs it, the present moment that modifies it, and the expectation of the future that directs it. This three-fold moment is then *refigured* into new information. This *refiguration* becomes the *prefiguration* that informs the next moment. For the purposes of the macronovel, this *prefiguration-configuration-refiguration* system was translated into the way narrative temporality functions through the different texts. Each *narrative part* is already informed by the preceding *narrative part*. Even at the beginning of a text, entered in medias res, the reader already has a certain level of *prefiguration* which informs his/her understanding of that first *narrative part*. These prefigurative aspects can include seemingly obvious elements, such as the ability to read the language of the text. However, depending on the density of intertextual references, or the difference between the setting of the text and actuality, some texts may need greater *prefiguration* than others to be fully accessed.

Prefiguration is used here, to a large extent, as a means to gauge the recognisability of *narrative parts* that connect to each other. Rita Barnard's (2009) description of Mitchell using what can be referred to as narrative *hyperlinks*, has been a major contribution to this study. In this study, the *hyperlink* concept is taken further than Barnard uses it, though. *Hyperlinks*

perfectly describe connective *narrative parts*, and thus create a distinction between *narrative parts* that connect, and those that do not. Mitchell is able, through the interconnectivity created by this *hyperlinking*, to come back to instances in narrative that indicate *incompleteness*. The function of *incompleteness* is to suggest a larger world than what is accessible through text (see *2.1.3.4 Formal structures and construction of a fictional world*). Having other *narrative parts* linked to instances of *incompleteness*, via *hyperlinks*, creates the possibility of access to the larger world.

This is also one of the central features by which the individual novels, as well as the macronovel, functions. Single terms or phrases which suggest as yet unseen events in one narrative can be further explored in others. For instance, peripheral characters in one narrative (such as Tim Cavendish or Luisa Rey in *Ghostwritten*) suggesting other lives or narratives to the one they are currently featured in, can show up as protagonists in other chapters, or even other texts (again, Timothy Cavendish or Luisa Rey in *Cloud Atlas*). Another example is the mentioning of events or places in different times or locations, to create the feeling of a greater temporality or a larger spatial world than the one currently explored (Belgium is mentioned in a film that plays in the background of *number9dream*), and then exploring them in other narratives (Frobisher's narrative in *Cloud Atlas* is set in Belgium, 1931). Mitchell, therefore, utilises the feature of *incompleteness* to function in a way that expands his *fictional world*, by adding *narrative parts* that connect to the existing ones.

As mentioned above, *narrative parts* form the *narrative whole*, just as whole texts are constructed by chapters, constructed by paragraphs, constructed by words. In Mitchell's case, a single *narrative part* can function as an entire whole, when read in isolation, while it can also function as a part of the larger whole of a text. Similarly, each text can also be regarded as a whole in isolation, while functioning as a part of the macronovel. Different texts can share connected *narrative parts* (*hyperlinks*), and the understanding thereof depends on reader *prefiguration*. A reader without the *prefiguration* of another text, reading a single text in isolation, *intends* a *narrative part* as a part of the text s/he is currently reading, without the *hyperlink* function. This means that an entire narrative strand, continuing in another text, is missed due to the *hyperlink* being *inactive*. Once the other text is read, the *hyperlink* becomes *activated*, and access is obtained for the larger narrative of which the initial *narrative part* is a part. This change in the status of a *hyperlink*, from *inactive* to *active*, creates different experiences of the same *narrative part* – an *identity in manifold*. The *activation* of the *hyperlink* functions on the structure of *presences and absences*, which are dependent upon the *prefiguration* of the reader. For a reader who has not read another Mitchell text, the connections

to other texts are *absent*. For a reader who has previously encountered the *narrative part* connected to the one being read, his/her level of *prefiguration* allows for the *hyperlink* to become *activated* precisely because of the *absent-presence* of another *narrative part*. The functioning of the *hyperlinks* is, therefore, dependent upon reader *prefiguration*.

Prefiguration, however, is dependent upon the reading order of the texts. As illustrated by the three readings conducted in *4.2.2 Ordering narrative parts into narrative wholes*, different *narrative wholes* can be constructed depending on the *narrative parts* that make up the reading. These readings illustrated how, although the macronovel can be read in any order (Harris-Birtill, 2017:175-176), the reading order influences the reader's construction of the larger *narrative whole* and, subsequently, the experience of the macronovel itself. Furthermore, as illustrated in *4.2.3. Hyperlinks and temporality*, the order in which *narrative parts* are read, can determine the status (*active* or *inactive*) of the *hyperlinks* that construct the larger narratives. The narrative constructions become dependent on the temporality of the reading and, therefore, the "life" of the reader qua denizen of the text becomes situated in subjective temporality. In this regard, Courtney Hopf (2011:121) introduces another type of *hyperlink* in Mitchell's work she calls a "cognitive hyperlink". This is used to describe how the mind jumps between thoughts and experiences as it orients itself in the world. Through the dynamic *hyperlinking* of various texts constructed of various fragmented narratives, Mitchell structurally imitates the way that life itself is understood through the connections of fragmented experiences over time.

5.2   The time and narrative of the macronovel

According to Jerome Bruner (2004:693) there is no such thing, psychologically, that can be called "life itself". Rather, selections of memory regarding specific instances are recalled and rearranged in ways that make sense to the one interpreting his/her own life. The main theme in Bruner's argument is that "just as art imitates life in Aristotle's sense, so, in Oscar Wilde's, life imitates art...narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative" (Bruner, 2004:692). Bruner's argument corresponds with Paul Ricœur's (1985:214) assertion that "[w]e recognize ourselves in the stories we tell about ourselves [and it] makes little difference whether these stories are true or false, fiction as well as verifiable history provides us with an identity". In this sense, not only narrative is seen as a human action, but time itself becomes human through narrative articulation (Ricœur, 1984:52).

In Mitchell's case, his entire oeuvre is made up of stories which incorporate, explore, and celebrate both the time and narrative of human experiences. When Isaac Sachs or Robert Frobisher independently describe their individual understandings of time from the respective

perspectives of their own *lifeworlds*, each of them is describing an aspect of the larger fictional world (*Cloud Atlas*). Mitchell is showing us how our own *lifeworlds* provide us with meaning within *Being*. These are stories that can be as far removed from each other as physics (Sachs' understanding) and music (Frobisher's understanding), but each provides subjective meaning for the character, while intersubjectively filling out greater meaning within the larger context of the macronovel.

Similarly, in *Ghostwritten*, Mo Muntervary notes that "nowhere does the microscopic world stop and the macroscopic world begin" (G:373). From her physics background, she is explaining the interconnectivity of the universe here. However, outside of the text, this statement becomes Mitchell's own description of how the world is expanding for the individual, in the sense of globalization, while also shrinking for the collective, in the sense of "global connectivity and virtual proximity" (Schoene, 2009:98). The micro and macro-levels have become more obviously interconnected, and less obvious to tell apart. The macronovel incorporates this thematically (as the quote from Mo Muntervary demonstrates), while also imitating it structurally. The macronovel imitates the way the narrative of a reader's own *lifeworld* is constructed.

Phenomenology, therefore, is not just a methodology with which to approach Mitchell's texts, in the same way as one is able to approach any text phenomenologically. Phenomenology also becomes a metaphor with which to describe the structural and thematic elements of the macronovel, in the same sense as Dillon (2011:8) uses the metaphor of a house of fiction, with portraits of itself on the walls of each room, or as Harris-Birtill (2019:9) uses the oft-used kaleidoscopic temporality metaphor. However, the scope of this phenomenological metaphor provides the approach with the toolset of phenomenology itself. Also, as a description of a fictional world, this phenomenological metaphor might become a starting point to help explain what has changed in literature, if postmodernism has indeed ended, as D'haen (2013), McHale (2013), and Moraru (2011) have all argued.

With its loss of referents, and its rejection of the idea that one can even access meaning of the world, from within the world, postmodernism has been criticised for its tendency towards nihilist thinking (Bertens, 1995:12; Dillon, 2011:18; Van der Merwe, 2017:280 *inter alia*). Because humanity exists within a "reality" perceived through language, *Being* is situated outside of human understanding. The symbolic space that exists between language and *Being* creates a system of signs that can never be exact (Blamey, 1989:581). The reader, similarly, is distanced from the world of the text, by the text itself. Despite these shortcomings, the original phenomenological endeavour still tries to focus on the way *being* orients itself towards meaning.

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Therefore, with regards to the postmodernist notions of the inaccessibility of meaning, Sokolowski (2000:4 *italics original*) states the following:

> In contrast with this postmodern understanding of appearance, phenomenology, in its classical form, insists that parts are only understood against the background of appropriate wholes, that manifolds of appearance harbor identities, and that absences make no sense except as played off against the presences that can be achieved through them. Phenomenology insists that identity and intelligibility are available in things, and that we ourselves are defined as the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given. We can evidence the way things are; when we do so, we discover objects, but we also discover ourselves, precisely as datives of disclosure, as those to whom things appear. Not only can we think the things given to us in experience; we can also understand ourselves as thinking them. Phenomenology is precisely this sort of understanding: *phenomenology is reason's self-discovery in the presence of intelligible objects.*

In accordance with Sokolowski above, the current dissertation illustrates how the macronovel already incorporates the idea of parts being understood against the background of appropriate wholes. The construction of the larger narratives of the macronovel depend on the combination of *narrative parts* that are used to construct them, but the way these *narrative parts* are understood, depends on the *narrative whole* that has been constructed. Similarly, the *narrative parts* that are recognised as *hyperlinks* also depend on the *narrative whole*, indicating both an *identity in manifold* and the relationship between *presences and absences* which in/activates these *hyperlinks*. Finally, depending on the level of *prefiguration*, readers are "the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given", experiencing the *lifeworld* through Mitchell's characters and constructing the fictional world through these experiences. Approaching the fictional world in this way, the macronovel's circularity and continuity becomes a map for the reader, with which to explore meaning through the text, rather than being distanced from meaning by the text.

If, as Van der Merwe (2017:281) argues about our post-millennium condition, "an acknowledgment of the material existence of the world outside of language is necessary for a sense of shared, communal meaning", phenomenology provides the means to explore the experience of that material existence. Furthermore, as the current study has argued, Mitchell's macronovel clearly illustrates the functioning of a fictional *lifeworld*, which readers can explore through the subjective experiences of intradiegetic narrators. An intersubjective fictional world, negotiated between characters of the macronovel, is presented to the reader (see *2.2 Working towards a fictional lifeworld* and *3.1 Prefiguration and access to Ghostwritten*). The reader, in turn, adds his/her own meaning to this fictional world, through his/her reading temporality.

According to Ricœur (1986:138), "[m]an is this plural and collective unity in which the unity of destination and the differences of destinies are to be understood through each other", and David Mitchell uses his interconnective narratives to illustrate this. The denizens of the macronovel, including the reader, come together in Mitchell's fictional world to create meaning through a manifold of experiences, intersubjectively negotiated as the reader's time intersects with narrative time. While each *narrative part* conveys the subjective experiences of a character's *lifeworld*, the macronovel is, essentially, the story of the reader's own *lifeworld*.

5.3   Recommendations for further studies

Through the theoretical platform developed by this dissertation, certain limitations unavoidably arise. As the study is grounded in philosophical inquiry, it might be viewed as too theoretical. However, in terms of further studies, this theoretical approach creates a space for data sets to be generated. The field of digital humanities provides for the generating and analysing of such data sets. For instance, computational linguistics is able to map out the occurrences of narrative *hyperlinks* throughout the macronovel. This will effectively have the potential to create a greater understanding of the interconnectivity of the texts. Based on such a map of interconnections, the macronovel as *lifeworld* can be further, and more accurately explored.

Furthermore, developing such a map into a tool for research, can expand the options for Mitchell-oriented academia. In this regard, by creating a digital database in which the narrative *hyperlinks* are programmed to function like actual digital hyperlinks, a researcher would be able to jump between connective *narrative parts*. Through such a database, it would be possible to link the academic articles to the corresponding *narrative parts* used in analyses, whereby an archive could be built for Mitchell academics. Such a database would also allow for collaborative networks to be established, as well as for the development of a research-publishing platform.

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