

Authorship and authority in the novels of Alasdair Gray

Submitted by

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

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*Some material from this thesis has been published in the journal, *Limina* in the article, "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark and 1982*, Janine". (21.2 2016) All material was produced during my candidature at ACU. Footnotes have been used throughout the thesis to indicate where material from the thesis was used in the article.*

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Signed:

Date: / /

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ABSTRACT

Alasdair Gray's novels highlight the construction of the author to frame a discussion around authority and the political implications of destabilising and reconstructing power structures. In this thesis I engage with both the postmodern and political nature of Gray's work, using a metafictional approach that accommodates these two often conflicting aspects of Gray's novels. This metafictional discussion will centre on the author and how Gray, in his novels, exposes and manipulates the authority held by the author figure to form a political dialogue. Gray uses polyphony to present a range of authorial figures that act to destabilise traditional textual authority held by the author. I discuss the role of the novel form in developing ideas of the nation, presenting Gray's destabilisation of the author as a political statement. This discussion of the author, 'Alasdair Gray', allows for a broader discussion of the self, reflecting Gray's political position as one not limited to Scotland but encouraging of all nations to consider postcolonial futures.

INTRODUCTION

Alasdair Gray's novels highlight the construction of the author to frame a discussion around authority and the political implications of destabilising and reconstructing power structures. In this thesis I engage with both the postmodern and political nature of Gray's work, using a metafictional approach that accommodates these two often conflicting aspects of Gray's novels. Metafiction can be defined as writing that is self-conscious; writing that displays its constructed nature. This metafictional discussion will centre on the author and how Gray, in his novels, exposes and manipulates the authority held by the author figure to form a political dialogue. Gray uses polyphony to present a range of authorial figures that act to destabilise traditional textual authority held by the author. I discuss the role of the novel form in developing ideas of the nation, presenting Gray's destabilisation of the author as a political statement. This discussion of the author, 'Alasdair Gray', allows for a broader discussion of the self, reflecting Gray's political position as one not limited to Scotland but encouraging of all nations to consider postcolonial futures.

Alasdair Gray, born in Glasgow in 1934, is a high-profile public figure in Scotland, celebrated for both his writing and his visual art work. The dual nature of Gray as both visual artist and author is not limited to his public persona. His novels include artworks which function as both illustration and accompaniment to the text. All aspects of his novels are designed by Gray, including typography, cover and page design, as well as author biography and fake critical responses, creating material objects that encourage all components to be considered when reading the text, not just the narrative. The entire book becomes a creation of the author, and in turn informs author construction, which I will discuss in further detail later in the introduction.

To date Alasdair Gray has published nine novels including: *Lanark, 1982, Janine, McGrotty and Ludmilla, The Fall of Kelvin Walker, Something Leather, Poor Things, Mavis Belfrage, A History Maker* and *Old Men in Love*. He has also published plays, poetry, short stories and political pamphlets. His first novel *Lanark: A Life in 4 Books* (from here on referred to as *Lanark*), published in 1981, met with critical success and remains highly acclaimed.

In this thesis I will demonstrate that, through the destabilisation and reformation of the author, Gray presents socio-political power structures through textual authorities, and in doing so Gray's novels present a warning against reinforcing the current hierarchical systems and enact the hope that comes with change. Gray does not present a single model of governance, instead, through polyphonic voices, Gray's novels offer an egalitarian approach to authorship and authority. I have identified two models of authority that I will discuss in this thesis. I have labeled them established and new models of authority, which although somewhat simplistic acknowledges that Gray does not present a different model from the currently held political structure. Gray uses the authorial authority held in different genres to engage with the different models. The established model of authority places the author in the position of the ultimate authority over the text, whereas the new model holds the text as its own authority. In reconciling these authorities Gray presents a pragmatic new approach, one that works within, whilst also against, the established political and power system/s. I will look at two somewhat contradictory methods of author construction, the implied author and author-function, to examine how the authority of the author is constituted, broken down and reconstructed in the novels of Alasdair Gray. This thesis will show that Gray's use of authorship aligns with his political ideas regarding Scottish independence and identity, and whilst not a conclusive alternative to the current political system, creates a broadened and egalitarian approach to authority. Much of the

political discussion in this thesis will focus on Scotland, however, the implications of Gray's novels reach beyond this single nation. The political discussion of Scottish governance and identity reflects Gray's general political views regarding authority and external governance. The authority Gray envisions is transparent, multifaceted and interactive. While the author in Gray's novels remains the central authority, s/he is not the sole authority on the text. In this thesis I draw a correlation between the authority of the author and that of governance. If Scotland, or any other nation with limited sovereignty, were to become independent they would inevitably have a government, a centralized authority. Although Gray never suggests an approach for this government he does urge it to be one that is reflective of and answerable to the people of the nation.¹

I have limited this thesis to Alasdair Gray's novels, as his body of written work is extensive, including plays, short stories and poetry. Gray has published nine novels, so even examining his novels remains an ambitious task. This thesis thus focuses primarily on four of them: *Lanark* (1981), *1982*, *Janine* (1984), *Poor Things* (1992) and *Old Men in Love* (2007). I have chosen these novels because they allow the fullest discussion of thematic and structural elements in Gray's work. They demonstrate the extent of Gray's use of typography and visual images, as well demonstrating high levels of intertextuality. Unlike some of Gray's other novels such as, *The Fall of Kelvin Walker* (1985), *Something Leather* (1990), and *McGrotty and Ludmilla* (1990), none of these novels derive from other work by Gray. *A History Maker* (1994) and *Mavis Belfrage: A Romantic Novel* (1996) are smaller works that are considered in relation to the four "touchstone" novels I have identified.

¹ Drawing on the argument of my thesis, some of this paragraph has been published in *Limina* in the article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*"

Alasdair Gray's work, and *Lanark* in particular, has received considerable attention from the academic community. The scholarly focus on Gray's texts has been based primarily on two analytical approaches: as postmodern novels, and, to a lesser extent, on the political nature of the texts as "Scottish novels". Although defining the postmodern novel is difficult, several traits are often acknowledged by scholars, including irony, pastiche, parody, intertextuality, self-referentiality and fragmentation. His novels are visual objects that play with novel conventions such as structure, they acknowledge intertextuality and blur genre. The postmodern discussion often revolves around the self-consciousness of Gray's work; his use of typography and parody. *Lanark*, for example, is arranged so the books are ordered Chapters Three, One, Two and Four. *1982 Janine* uses typography to divide voices, and Alasdair Gray appears in character as the editor of both *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* (with *Old Men in Love* making reference to *Poor Things*). Beth Dickson in "Class and Being in the Novels of William McIlvanney", writes of Gray's work, "Gray was the first Scottish writer to couch a vision of the Scottish urban wasteland in the postmodern idiom, with parallel worlds, disappearing narrators and an eclectic bibliography" (56). Gray's use of postmodern parody and intertextuality has also been noted. Joanne Malecka in her article "'Gorgeous Monstrosity': Derrida's Deconstruction as an Alternative Postmodernist Tool in Analysing Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*" deconstructs the image of the creature in *Poor Things* as a parody of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (147-157). Malecka foregrounds the connection between the character of Bella, a construction of Charles Baxter, and that of Frankenstein's creature.

Although there has been a strong scholarly focus on the postmodernism of Gray's work it does not come without some criticism. In an interview Gray once addressed the concept of postmodernism, saying: "I have never found a definition of postmodernism that gives me a distinct idea of it" (Axlerod 111). Alan McMunnigall in "Alasdair Gray and

Postmodernism” also addresses issues with the term postmodern, arguing that “Certain literary critics are eager to view the term postmodern as one that should properly be applied to literary works written only in the second half of the twentieth century” (339). This defining feature of postmodernism is problematic for Gray and McMunnigall as many of the narrative techniques of postmodern writing predate this period, including, as pointed out by McMunnigall, many of the techniques used in *Tristram Shandy*, published between 1759 and 1767 (339-341). Scholars such as Rhind and Stevenson draw strong comparisons between Gray’s *Lanark* and James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, which, as Gray points out, is considered modern, rather than postmodern (Axelrod). A strictly postmodern reading of Alasdair Gray’s novels poses a problem for Niall O’Gallagher also, who states: “Readings of Gray’s fiction that are determined to assert its postmodern status are often left unable to account for its explicit political commitment, and respond with embarrassment” (536). Both Randall Stevenson and Alison Lumsden discuss the possibility of Gray’s work as a form of “post-postmodernism” (Stevenson 56; Lumsden 122).

In *Independence* Gray acknowledges that he is writing from a Glaswegian perspective but writes, “I believe my account of what I see as political corruption in Glasgow will be recognized as typical of other places by patriotic Islanders, Highlanders, Aberdonians and more” (13). The Scottish identity that this thesis addresses is in the context of the formation of a Scottish Commonwealth, and is therefore placed in opposition to Scottish identity in Britain. This thesis does not address this complex national identity from regional perspectives. Furthermore, the political discussion is not simply in relation to Scotland, but extends to Gray’s political ideas regarding external governance and postcolonial societies. Cristie March discusses Scottish identity at length in her article “Bella and the Beast (and a Few Dragons, Too): Alasdair Gray and the Social Resistance of the Grotesque”. March investigates the link between gender and nation, with

Scottishness in Gray's novels moving away from the masculine tradition. The connection between the female body and Scottish identity has been discussed by other scholars as well, including Donald Kaczvinsky, Kristen Stirlings and Neil Rhind. For many scholars, the image of Bella Caledonia in *Poor Things*, can be read as a national allegory (Bernstein; Leishman; Kaczvinsky; Gifford; March; Hawley; Rhind). Bella Baxter is a woman who, upon being found dead, had the brain of her unborn infant transplanted into her, giving her a mature body with an infantile brain. March reads this as representing Scottish identity, as Scotland begins to break away from the English state and starts to develop an independent national identity. However, Bella holds on to aspects of her former self, such as her accent, which are foreign to her new identity. This too is symbolic of Scottish identity, and as Kaczvinsky observes, "The major problem facing Scottish writers is that they must write in a "foreign" language that does not adequately convey the Scottish way of thinking and thereby undermines Scotland's sense of identity" (789). Despite Gray's desire for a Scottish identity founded outside of the British Union, Gray is acutely aware of the inability for this to happen. Instead of creating a character able to found a new identity without retaining any of her past, he creates a character who combines the new with the old to form a new identity. Bella represents an identity in which there is a disconnect between the mind and the body. This could be considered in straight-forward terms; United Kingdom as body and Scotland as mind, with Scotland breaking away from the British state. Identity, however, is not that simple for Gray and his characters. This is an outside perspective of Bella's identity. Bella has her own version of her coming to be; one which the reader can believe or not. According to Bella's story her mind is not an infantile one, but is still that of Victoria. She chose to leave her old identity and form a different one. From this perspective, when reading national identity in the text, we see Scottish identity after Britain, not as new but rather as one that is reconsidered and reconstituted;

doing away with the aspects that are no longer desired. This notion of Scottish national identity as something which is to be constructed is one that is most prominent in *Poor Things* but is also seen throughout Gray's novels.

This thesis examines the metafictional traits of Alasdair Gray's novels as tools to discuss politics. In distinguishing metafiction from postmodernism I allow for the sometimes conflicting arguments in defining Gray's novels as postmodern or political. Drawing primarily on Patricia Waugh's theoretical engagement with metafiction, in this thesis I provide an analysis of the metafictional devices used in Gray's novels that draw attention to authorship and textual authority. The playful and self-referential nature of some of these devices may be considered postmodern tools, however, by considering them only as metafictional the political implications of their use is not distorted by the postmodern approach. Metafiction in Gray's novels presents authorship and authority as dialogical, and suggests that national identity and political power structures should be consistently reconstructed by those who constitute the nation. The novels therefore present a pluralistic politics, in which there are multiple and varied authorities that hold equal authority over the text.

Although this thesis draws primarily upon textual analysis and scholarly discussion, it also considers a published interview-style piece by Gray, "Tailpiece: How *Lanark* Grew", included in post-2001 editions of *Lanark* (563-573) and other interviews conducted by scholars (Axelrod; Norquay and Anderson). I use this tailpiece and the interviews to establish Gray's own theory of writing. This is important for the thesis because it will contribute to the metafictional analysis, with consideration of Waugh's idea that authors are aware of theoretical approaches to writing. This interview is not used to establish authorial intent, but instead to examine how Gray influences the author-function, creating an image of the author of the novels even as this "autobiography" is fictionalised.

I also consult Gray's political pamphlets, primarily drawing on his recent book *Independence*, which argues for Scottish rule of Scotland. This book addresses historical and current events and issues that are, at least to Gray, relevant in the argument for Scottish independence. Gray identifies growing nationalism in Scotland as a motivating factor in this need for independence, allowing the Scottish people to form an identity outside of the British state.

Chapter One outlines the theoretical approach of the thesis, defining the key terms and theories used throughout the thesis in relation to authorship. The two primary theories of authorship I draw on are author-function and the implied author. I adapt the term author-function from Michel Foucault to refer to the superimposed figure of the author on the text. I draw on Wayne Booth's implied author to discuss the author created through the text. This chapter also outlines Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of the polyphonic novel and the dialogical novel to discuss how author-function and implied author work together in Alasdair Gray's novels as tools to explore authority structures. Polyphonic voices in the novel can hold different perspectives and ideologies, presenting the complexities of the human experience. Each contesting voice is positioned as equal to the other. These contending voices bring the authority of the author into question, and into relation to a broader political discussion on authority and sovereignty. These terms offer a consistent approach when analysing the various ways textual authority and authorship is considered in Gray's novels.

Chapter Two discusses the metafictional role the author plays in Alasdair Gray's novels. This analysis of Gray's authors are framed in relation to the key terms and author theories established in Chapter One. It identifies five different, compartmentalised roles played by the author: Intrusive Author, the Artist, the Critic, the Editor and Alternative Authors. Each of these roles represent a specific and differentiated form of textual

authority in Gray's novels. This chapter will discuss these authorial voices in terms of Bakhtin's concept of the polyphonic novel, with each voice given equal value in the novels. These authorial positions are developed across the novels, demonstrating how the construction of the author is informed by both the individual text and a body of work. By compartmentalising the author Alasdair Gray highlights the multifaceted manner in which the author is constructed, and how each of these roles, both internal and external to the text, work together to form an image of the author. In doing so Gray destabilises the assumed power the author holds over the text and locates textual authority in multiple figures, including the author, reader and critic. The destabilisation of textual authority through compartmentalised authors establishes my analysis of the egalitarian aesthetic of Gray's novels, with the following chapters focusing on the consequences of this aesthetic and how Gray resolves this egalitarian politics within his novels.

Chapter Three examines the anxiety that results from the breaking down of power structures, demonstrated in the previous chapter through authorship. This is demonstrated in Gray's juxtaposition of the genre conventions of realism and fantasy. Genre is used to acknowledge and enact the concern and anxieties around reconsidering or replacing power structures, from both the position of assumed power, and those that constitute the nation. I argue that these genre conventions correlate to authority structures in authorship. I argue that Gray's use of realism presents a single-author model, correlating with the established centralised mode of political authority. Fantasy, in contrast, presents multiple authorial positions, destabilising the authority of the author. This opens up the possibility of a new form of authority, a yet to be defined one. Genre becomes another tool Gray uses to discuss authorial positions, and in turn authority. Drawing on Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* this chapter discusses the connection between the nation and literature. The novel form provides a way of thinking about or conceptualising the nation.

The characters of the novel are placed in relation to each other through the enclosed form of the novel. The novel, therefore, becomes an imagined community, much like the nation. Gray presents a postmodern distortion of forming national identity through the novel, continually shifting the constructions of identity throughout his novels to highlight the fluidity of national identity in modern society.

Chapter Four draws out Gray's possible outcomes of changing power structure through the themes of transformations, resolving the anxieties formed from an unknown future political system. The primary transformations this chapter focuses on are suicide and rape. Both of these acts are traumatic and violent, however in Alasdair Gray's novels they result in a form of rebirth for the protagonist. The focus of chapter four shifts from a discussion primarily based on Scottish politics to a global postcolonial discussion, presenting Gray's political discussion of Scotland as an example of changing political structures after external governance. Gray does not offer a single alternative model of governance, instead presenting an open dialogue that remains hopeful for a future postcolonial society.

The originality of my thesis lies in the direct engagement with authorship in the body of Alasdair Gray's novels. I focus on Gray's metafictional use of authorship, engaging with the scholarship of both the political and postmodern aspects of Gray's novels. I establish a correlation between a democratic aesthetic and a broader egalitarian politics in Gray's texts. I argue that Gray's novels are part of a dialogue, both between the novels, and as part of a global political discussion, addressing new forms of authority. Gray uses authorship to model forms of authority, although they remain speculative figurations. In continuously destabilising and reforming authorial authority Gray provides alternatives in conceptualisations of power that are future-orientated rather than ready

working models. In this way, Gray's novels are utopias in their proposition of other possibilities for authorial and national authority.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL APPROACH

Alasdair Gray's novels present a variety of authorial voices and positions, many of which pose questions about the construction and authority of the author. *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* claim to have authors other than Gray, both of which are fictional characters. *Lanark* presents an author figure who names himself not as Alasdair Gray but as Nastler. Gray frequently uses what he calls "plagiarisms" often attributed to postmodernism by scholars. These plagiarisms include both Gray's prose and his artwork. His work is often considered postmodern, but it is also political, addressing issues around Scottish independence.

Alasdair Gray uses metafiction in his novels to make the construction of the author explicit. In focusing on metafiction in Gray's novel I am able to consolidate the postmodern and political aspects of Gray's novels. Metafiction draws attention to the constructed nature of the text, including the construction of the author as part of the text. In metafictional texts the author can demonstrate an awareness of theoretical approaches to literature and is therefore able to manipulate these in the texts. This thesis will focus on the metafictional traits that relate to the construction of the author. In this chapter I will establish the terms "implied author" and "author-function". As I will discuss further, the implied author is the author-figure that is perceived through the written text, whereas author-function is a superimposed figure that is brought to the text by the reader. I argue that the implied author and author-function inform each other to construct authors in the text. This dialogical process is consistently occurring throughout the novels. As a result the image of the author has a fluid identity that is determined by the author, the text and the reader.

This chapter will examine theoretical ideas regarding the construction of the author, and the ways in which the ideas interact with each other. The terms and concepts I

outline in this chapter will be used throughout the thesis to examine textual authority in Gray's novels. I will establish the terms "author-function" and "implied author" as the two approaches to authorship that will frame my analysis of Gray's metafiction in the texts. I will look at the ways these two theoretical approaches to authorship, which could be viewed to be in opposition to each other, interact. Michel Foucault considered the author to be a figure that is superimposed onto a text. The reader brings to the text an image of the author that is informed by a number of factors, including knowledge of the author, genre and modes of distribution. Although the author is not accessible through the text, notions of the author figure are brought to the text, thereby influencing the reading of it. This superimposed figure I will refer to as author-function, a term I have taken and adapted from Foucault's "What is an Author?" (1475-1490). I argue that, although the reader superimposes an image of the author on a text, it is not the only position constructing the author in the text. A text also has an author-figure contained within it, the implied author. As the author's intentions are not accessible through the text, it is the implied author that any apparent manipulation of the text is attributed to. It is not the author that is accessed through the text but a second-self, the implied author. The implied author is the constructed textual author who brings to the text consistent beliefs, values and purposes.

In terms of constructing the author I argue that author-function and the implied author not only coexist in the text, but work together to develop the image of the author. The author-function has a role in interpreting the implied author, and in turn the implied author helps construct and reinforce the author-function. In this discussion of authorship, I also draw upon Mikhail Bakhtin's terms polyphonic, dialogic and monologic. These terms frame the discussion to highlight the plural nature of Gray's authors, and the consequential political implications of rethinking textual authority.

Metafiction

Patricia Waugh defines metafiction as “a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality” (*Metafiction 2*). Metafiction shows an awareness of the limitation of language and reveals that language is an insufficient medium to represent the world and the writer’s experiences in the world. By drawing attention to the formative nature of writing, metafiction is able to explore this problem. To do so, writers draw on strategies that have come to be described as metafictional. Wenche Ommundsen defines these traits: “Metafiction relies centrally on textual strategies such as metaphor, irony and parody, all of which require the reader to recognise more than one level of meaning” (5). These strategies, as well as “an extreme self-consciousness about language, literary form and the act of writing fictions” (Waugh 2) are explored in the novels of Alasdair Gray.

Analysing metafiction allows for the exploration between language and the world, demonstrating a relationship between language and the way we construct the world outside of fiction (Waugh 3). The focus of this thesis is not merely the relationship between the literary and external worlds, but extends to the way in which these two worlds construct the author. I argue that the presence of the author in the text is intrinsic to metafiction. In this I draw on Patricia Waugh’s discussion of the author’s metafictional engagement in the text:

For some writers, however, the text may be a fictional construction, but the author is not. All else may be ontologically insecure and uncertain, but behind the uncertainty is a lone Creative Figure busily inventing and constructing, producing the text from His (*sic*) position in the Real World (131).

The writer is able to hold on to the notion that as author s/he is the inventor of the text, and in order to draw attention to this the “Real Author” incorporates her/himself into the text. Waugh goes on to write of the author as a figure in the text, “Instead of integrating the “fictional” with the “real” as in traditional omniscient narrative, he or she splits them apart by commenting not on the *content* of the story but on the act of narration itself, on the *construction* of the story” (131). Waugh highlights a problem with this approach to writing metafiction: “The author attempts desperately to hang on to his or her ‘real’ identity as creator of the text we are reading. What happens, however, when he or she enters it is that his or her own reality is also called into question” (133). The more the author places him/herself into the novel, the more the reader views the author as another construction of the text.²

Parody and intertextuality are metafictional traits that Gray uses frequently in his novels. These traits draw attention to authorship and the conventions which form fiction. Through parody in Gray’s novels, the conventional form and structure of well-known discourses are manipulated, in order to ask the reader to reconsider the ideas and implications of the texts and forms the novels parody. Gray creates a parody of *Frankenstein* in *Poor Things*. Bella Baxter is the creation of scientist Godwin Baxter, who combines the bodies of the dead Victoria Blessington and her unborn infant to bring about new life. Unlike Frankenstein’s creation, Bella is beautiful and loved. Mary Shelley’s novel positioned the contemporary reader to be fearful of the changing world around them. Gray, however, presents the creation of something new to be enticing. In terms of authorial

² Parts of this paragraph have been published in *Limina* in the article “Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*”. I drew from this paragraph to discuss Patricia Waugh’s approach to metafiction.

positioning the role of the author can also become a form of parody. Gray's novel includes epistolary style and frame narrative, creating a character called Alasdair Gray, an editor who is given the documents. By positioning himself as editor, the role of the author is brought into question, giving the novel several authorial positions. This is true also of intertextuality. The most significant use of intertextuality in Gray's work, apart from parody, is plagiarism. Through his use and acknowledgement of plagiarism, Gray illustrates that writing is contextualised by other writing; that texts do not stand alone. It also draws attention to the problem of singular authorial positioning. Through the act of plagiarism, the author is no longer the sole writer of the text.

Metafiction, although common to postmodern literature, is not exclusively postmodern and it is important to establish that for this thesis metafiction and postmodernism are spoken of separately. As the theoretical framework for this thesis, the concept of metafiction allows the use of both "postmodern" and "political" critical material discussing Gray's novels. The playful aspects of Gray's work are also used to discuss power and national identity. The postmodern trait of drawing attention to the construction of reality can also be used to demonstrate the construction of national identity, and in doing so can be used as a political tool to re-examine the identity of Scotland in a new way by proposing different political and national structures, and engaging the reader in a dialogue around identity and the nation. In Gray's novels these changes always favour an independent Scotland. Metafiction is often considered a genre or a style, however, metafiction, and the reflexive nature that defines it, is a central aspect of all literature (Waugh; Ommundsen). Gray's use of metafiction exposes the mechanics and displays the utility of this common literary device, as well as the conception of a new political circumstance in Scotland.

This thesis is not the first to address the metafictional elements of Alasdair Gray's work, with many scholars discussing this aspect of his novels (Lee; Stevenson; Todd; Witschi). Neil Rhind in "A Portrait of Bella Caledonia: Reading National Allegory in Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*" addresses criticism of *Poor Things* as lacking substance by stating, "the metafictional techniques of *Poor Things* are the necessary formal realisation of its thematic centring upon the interpretative" (1). David Leishman, in "True Nations and Half People: Rewriting Nationalism in Alasdair Gray's *Poor Things*" addresses the tension between the political and postmodern in Gray's work, writing:

In characteristic paradoxical manner, Gray as both novelist and polemicist embodies the inherent tensions that exist between political discourse with its totalising instincts and postmodernist metafiction which, through constant textual duplicity, undermines the ideologies it foregrounds (2).

Stephen Bernstein also positions metafiction as a postmodern trait. In discussing the Epilogue of *Lanark*, Bernstein writes of "the presence of the "author" within the structure of the novel and the postmodern, metafictional mode that that presence demonstrates" (*Alasdair Gray* 54). This attributes the metafictional presences of the author-figure as postmodern. My thesis discusses metafiction as a feature not exclusive to postmodernism. Rather than focus on the postmodern traits of Gray's novels, this thesis focuses on the self-conscious nature of his writing and how the text is able to draw attention to the construction of the author. This thesis considers the metafictional elements of Gray's novels. Considering these features outside of being postmodernist traits, Gray's own political, egalitarian aesthetic is highlighted. This aesthetic will be the focus of my thesis.

Patricia Waugh in *Metafiction* argues that modern writers are aware of theoretical concerns regarding the constructed nature of fiction, and through this are able to manipulate and draw attention to the formation of a text (2-5). Waugh also argues that metafictional writers “all explore a *theory* of fiction through the *practice* of writing fiction” (2). Alasdair Gray addresses his approach to structure and writing in the Epilogue of *Lanark*, writing, “I want *Lanark* to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another” (483). Here Gray is not only presenting an approach to writing, but also to reading. His suggestion of reconsidering the text in relation to its presented order can be applied to the body of his work. Metaphors, allegories and authorial figures can be reconsidered in light of their role in other texts. This thesis considers the influences of creating various authorial positions on the construction of the author in both an individual text and in a collection of works.³

In the interview, “Tailpiece: How *Lanark* Grew”, written in 2001 and included in post-2001 editions of *Lanark* (563-573), Gray addresses his approach to autobiographical elements of writing as “fictionalising reality”, whether through realistic portrayals or metaphorical ones. Answering his own question: “Q: Are you telling me that the fantastical and grotesque events in books 3 and 4 are also autobiographical? How can they be? Lanark becomes the Lord Provost of Unthank. You were never a figure in the local politics of Glasgow”, Gray writes, “experience allowed me to generalise” (571) and that “TV production taught me all about politics” (572). In this answer Gray presents autobiography and fiction as the same. The fantastical informs the construction of the

³ Parts of this paragraph have been published in *Limina* in the article “Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*”. I drew from this paragraph to discuss the significance of metafiction in my analysis of Gray’s writing.

author in the same manner as the autobiographical. I will not use this interview to establish authorial intent, but instead I will use it to examine how Gray influences the formation of author-function, creating an image of the author of the novels as a politically engaged figure with a significant voice in the Scottish political debate, even if this “autobiography” is fictionalised.

Through metafictional techniques, the text draws attention to forms of constructive manipulations, allowing for all aspects of the novels to be considered as part of the dialogue that constructs identity. Fictionalised “autobiography” enacts the construction of the author through the text. As the author is read into the text a new author figure is constructed. Rather than offering a single authorial figure, metafiction offers multiple textual authorities. Metafictional devices that draw attention to the construction of the author proposes a dialogue not only between the text and the reader, but also with each different construction of the authorial figure. The author, in his/her pluralism becomes polyphonic, offering a range of voices within the text.

Author and Author-function

When discussing the role of the author it is important to address the question: who is speaking? Roland Barthes in “The Death of the Author” gives an answer to this question. In discussing the disconnection between the text and authorial intention, Barthes argues:

As soon as a fact is narrated no longer with a view to act directly on reality but intransitively, that is to say, finally outside of any function other than that of the very practice of the symbol itself, this disconnection occurs, the

voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins (1322).

Barthes views the author as external to the text. The very act of writing brings about the author's metaphorical death. The author ceases to exist in the text as "it is language which speaks, not the author" (1323). According to Barthes:

Linguistically, the author is never more than the instance of writing, just as I is nothing other than the instance of saying I: language know a 'subject' not a 'person', and this subject, empty outside of the very enunciation which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together', suffices, that is to say, to exhaust it (1323).

Barthes argues that through the removal of the author from the text meaning is no longer a fixed aim of critical interpretation. In searching for the author, and his/her intentions, we attempt to confine the meaning of the text (1325). For Barthes it is only language that speaks, with the role of the author only being that of the process of writing itself.

For Barthes, the author holds no privileged presence in the text because through the process of writing the author gives up his/her authority over language, leaving only language to speak.⁴ This argument is not without flaws however, particularly when discussing texts in which the author is conspicuously present. The presence of the author brings into question Barthes' notion of authorial absence from the text. In what can be considered a response to Barthes' "Death of the Author", Michel Foucault's "What is an Author?" discusses the function of the author in the relationship between an author and a

⁴ Aspects of the following paragraphs that outline Foucault's author-function have been published in *Limina* in the article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*".

text. For Foucault, it is the name of the author that maintains its position of privilege over the text. He introduces the term author-function to describe the ways in which the idea or category of the author functions in discourse.

Foucault makes four key points about the author-function. First, the author's name binds him/her legally to the text they have produced. Second, author-function does not exist in all texts nor for all times. Third, the concept of the author allows the reader to construct consistencies across texts sharing an author's name. These consistencies include values, style and theoretical ideals. The fourth and final aspect is that when author-function exists in a text the use of the first-person personal pronoun does not refer to the writer of the text. He distinguishes between the author and the real person, writing,

these aspects of an individual, which we designate as an author (or which comprise an individual as an author) are projections, in terms always more or less psychological, of our way of handling texts: in the comparisons we make, the traits we extract as pertinent, the continuities we assign, or the exclusions we practice (1483).

Foucault considers the author to be a figure that is constituted by the reader, created by the handling of the text. The author is not simply the writer, but is instead a figure constructed in discourse that is not limited to the individual writer.

Foucault's concept of author-function emerges from a broadly sociological approach, addressing the role of the author, or more specifically the position of the author and the part it plays in society. It is not a feature of writing, but is instead a social construct that creates a form of discourse around the author. I argue, however, that in metafiction the writer has an awareness of this social function and is thereby able to manipulate it in order

to address ideas of the construction of the author. Using this concept somewhat against the grain, I bring to the interpretation of the texts the term author-function to discuss the influence of the name and discursive positions of the author. It is not a direct, definitive or singular influence, but is one that is created by the interaction of the reader's knowledge of the work and the author and particular discursive formations – beyond both reader and author - such as genre or field of content, or modes of distribution.

Adrian Wilson in "Foucault on the 'Question of the Author'" writes of Foucault's author-function, "The figure of the author no longer inheres in a text; rather, it is superimposed upon it. Or to put this the other way around, 'texts' have now been depicted as innocent raw materials, *to which* we apply those interpretative procedures which construct the author-function" (352). From this analysis of Foucault's "What is an Author?" we see the construction of the author as applied to the text. Although Wilson argues that "the author no longer inheres in a text" I argue that in Alasdair Gray's novels, the figure of the author constructed through author-function is just one way the author is constructed, and that through the implied author, the author-function is able to be manipulated and therefore becomes another authorial construction in the text.

An awareness of author-function allows the author to manipulate how the reader views the text and in turn the constructed self of the author. By calling attention to aspects of the text such as genre and mode of distribution, in this case the novel, the constructed nature of the text is highlighted. Gray manipulates genre, calling on tropes and structures that the reader is familiar with only to distort the expected outcomes. In doing so he highlights the manner in which genres are constructed, and by distorting this draws attention to the text's constituted nature.

Alasdair Gray is also able to call on his image as a public figure to construct authorial positions in his novels. Gray draws on this public figure on many levels, as both celebrated artist, and primarily in his novels, as a political public figure. As a known republican, Gray uses this established public image of himself to construct a political authorial position. The author-function created through this public figure is imposed onto the text, but through an awareness of this function the author is able to predict and manipulate this in the text. The text in turn then adds to the author-function, through presenting a constructed author that shares qualities with the public persona of the author. The author is able to do this not just through the narrative of the novel, but also through the other elements that make up the book. The author biography, in which he commonly describes himself as along the lines of “a fat old asthmatic Glaswegian who lives by painting and writing” (*A History Maker* 1), is an example of Gray influencing the information the reader brings to the text. As Alasdair Gray creates all aspects of his novels, he is able to use the author biography to present an image of “the real author”. However, this too is a construction, as we see in *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* where the author biography is not just that of Alasdair Gray but also of the fictional authors he creates for the novels. By controlling the information the reader has about the author, Gray is able to manipulate one aspect of the author-function. Presenting the fictional biographies of his character/authors along side his own draws attention to the constituted nature of the text, and the influence all aspects of the novel has on constructing the author.

The Implied author

The term “implied author” has become a contentious one with debates over its meaning and relevance.⁵ The implied author is a concept introduced by Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Most simply, the implied author is a “second self” of the writer that exists only in the text. Booth writes of the construction of the author, “The “implied author” chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices” (*Rhetoric of Fiction* 75). This process is unavoidable, as Booth points out, “However impersonal he may try to be, his reader will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner” (*Rhetoric of Fiction* 71). The text offers the reader a set of linguistic conventions and norms that are consistent throughout a text and from which a vision of the author is created. The implied author informs the beliefs, values, and purpose of a text. Critics have perceived the term to be ambiguous, but in this there is a correlation to Gray’s work in the ambiguous and shifting authorial positions.

The implied author is the product of the examination of the text that produces an image of the author who, in the same manner as characters, in the text holds particular beliefs, attitudes, and stances. The implied author however differs from a character as they are not explicitly present in the text but, as the name suggests, are implied through the text. The implied author is not just contained to a single text by an author but can be created over the author’s body of work. Booth refers to this implied author as the career author. This thesis will use ideas consistent with the career author, however I will discuss these

⁵ Some of the material in the following paragraphs that outline Booth’s implied author have been published in *Limina* in the article “Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* and 1982, *Janine*”.

ideas using the term implied author. The career author is the consistent figure of the implied author across a body of work. In this thesis, I argue that the implied author, while consistent in writing style and political views, is dynamic and influenced by author-function. The distinction between implied author and career author, therefore, is not relevant to this thesis and I have limited the term to implied author to avoid confusion. I will, however, unpack the term further in this chapter, to draw from Booth's idea of the implied author who is sustained over a body of work.

The "second self" is often referred to or implied when discussing the implied author. Dan Shen writes, "The implied author is the role-playing person making all the textual choices, and the real author is the same person in daily life out of the writing process" (143). Shen considers the implied author as the real author in a performance role that is captured in the text. This figure of the implied author however can be problematic due to its simplicity. The performative notion of the implied author, a "second self", can be confused with that of the role of the narrator, or characters sharing the name of the author. These roles can be perceived as role-playing versions of the author, however these roles differ from the implied author. John Killman in "The 'Second Self' in Novel Criticism" highlights the difficulty of the term "second self", writing: "Clearly the term 'second self' is going to be the source of continuous controversy when it is used to refer to both narrators and to total effects of novels" (281). For this reason, I will use the term implied author, a figure who is distinguished from the narrator but is also not the real-life person who wrote the text. Instead the implied author is the constructed figure of the author who does not have a direct voice in the novel.

Seymour Chatman, in *Coming to Terms* writes, "the implied author is not the 'voice': that is the immediate source of the text's transmission. 'Voice' belongs uniquely

to the narrator” (76). This distinction is an important one to make. As I have discussed, the implied author is not the real person who wrote the text. The implied author is instead the author inferred by the text. This can often be confused with the voice of the text, which as Chatman highlights, belongs to the narrator. The implied author differs from the narrator in that the implied author does not have a voice in the text in the manner that the narrator does. Instead the implied author is produced through the linguistic and stylistic choices, and consistencies in the text that produce meaning. Mieke Bal writes, “the *implied author* is the *result* of the investigation of the meaning of the text, and not the *source* of that meaning” (*Narratology* 120). In the case of unreliable narrators, it is the implied author that demonstrates to the reader that the narrator cannot be trusted. It is also the implied author that brings unity across a text, most simply seen through the use of consistent metaphors. The implied author develops the codes and conventions that the reader deciphers, and in doing so creates a consistent image of the author that the reader can recognise without knowledge of the author’s personal life (Chatman 90).

The implied author can be at odds with the narrator, not sharing beliefs or ideals. This is seen through the events that occur or through character development. In *1982, Janine* the narrator is a right-wing Thatcherist. It is evident, however, that the implied author is critical of this view. Jock McLeish’s political views add to his dissatisfaction in life and in his attempted suicide he reconsiders both his approach to life, and his political views, stating, “I have been taught that history was made in a few important places by a few important people who manufactured it for the good of the rest. But the Famous Few have no power now but the power to threaten and destroy and history is what we all made, everywhere” (330). There does not need to be any knowledge the public figure of Alasdair Gray to develop an image of the implied author as one who holds an anti-Thatcher attitude. The implied author constructs an image of the author that is held only within the text. This

positions the author as a textual authority and will be used in the following chapters to inform the construction of the multiple authors of Alasdair Gray's novels. Examining both the implied author and author-function within the same texts exposes the different forms of authority allocated to the author.

The implied author is not just contained to a single text.⁶ Booth addresses the issue of how the implied author can address a body of work by the same writer:

Criticism has no name for these sustained characters who somehow are the sum of the invented creators implied by all of the writer's particular works. For lack of a good name, I shall call such a sustained character (still different, of course, from the writer, with his quotidian concerns, his dandruff, his diverticulosis, her nightmares, her battles with the publisher) the career-author. The sustained creative centre implied by a sequence of implied authors (*Critical Understanding* 270).

The career-author allows for a text to be placed in the context of the author's other work. The career-author becomes a signifier for a set of consistent features. Unlike author-function, this knowledge, brought to the work by the reader, remains textual, containing no biographical knowledge, nor any of the other discursive preconceptions, such as the designation of the term "novelist". Significantly, this means that tropes and allegories can be seen to cross over in texts. In Alasdair Gray's work, the reader having read *1982*, *Janine* and having made a connection between sadomasochism and Scottish politics may

⁶ The following paragraphs, outlining my intended use of the terms implied author and author-function have been drawn from in the published article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*" in *Limina*.

then read Scottish politics into any of his further novels that contain sadomasochism. Without knowledge of the biographical Alasdair Gray the reader is able to construct an author of the works by Alasdair Gray who writes about the political state of Scotland.

Through analysing metafictional traits in Alasdair Gray's novels this thesis explores various authorial positions in the texts. The author is not a stable figure across a body of work, nor within a single text. Author-function and implied author both work to form the author. The implied author as the inventor of the text is able to manipulate the reader's preconceived notions of the figure of Alasdair Gray, and in doing so informs the author-function. In turn the reader will approach the next Gray novel they read with a stronger concept of the author-function and in turn read the implied author as one that shares political agendas. Through metafictional traits such as parody, metaphor and manipulation of literary form Gray is able to make the relationship between the implied author and author-function explicit in his novels.

The Polyphonic Novel

To bring together the somewhat conflicting ideas of authorship I have already discussed, author-function and the implied author, I will draw on Mikhail Bakhtin's terms polyphony, dialogic (dialogue) and monologic (monologue). These terms will be used to consider the political implications of authorship, and frame the discussion of textual authority. This thesis argues that Gray positions his texts as dialogical in their political engagement. Michael Holquist draws out the relationship between authorship and politics, writing, "Dialogically conceived, authorship is a form of governance, for both are implicated in the architectonics of responsibility, each is a way to adjudicate center/non-center relations between subjects" (33). Through the metafictional construction of authors

in Gray's novels a dialogue is formed that rethinks power structures and offers an egalitarian alternative to textual authority.

Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of the polyphonic novel views the novel as a form in which there can be multiple voices, separate from each other and with different views and ideas. In *Problems with Dostoevsky's Poetics* Bakhtin outlines these voices as both character and authorial voices. He writes that Dostoevsky's characters, which Bakhtin considers polyphonic, are "*not only objects of authorial discourse but also subjects of their own directly signifying discourse*" (Dostoevsky 7). Polyphonic voices can hold different views and ideologies, and present the complexities of human experience by presenting views that differ to those of the author. Michael Gardiner defines polyphony as "a plurality of unmerged consciousnesses, a mixture of 'valid voices' which are not completely subordinate to authorial intents or the heavy hand of the omniscient authorial voice/narrational voice. That is, the character's voice is equally important and 'fully weighted' as the author's own" (24). As I will explore in the second chapter, Gray creates various authorial voices, all of which are equally weighted. In polyphonic novels, the voice of the author is one of many developed voices. The author in Gray's novels is a character within the text, as well as remaining the external writing figure. Holquist views characters in the polyphonic novel as selves, writing, "The author of a novel[...] can manipulate the other not only as an other, but as a self" and that characters "have the status of an 'I' standing over against the claims of his own authorial other" (32). Each of the authorial characters Gray creates has a distinct and separate voice from the other, creating their own signifying discourse.

In creating a polyphonic spectrum of authorial positions, Gray positions the voice of the singular, external author beside, and equal to that of the other authorial positions. For the author this means their role as writer, and the authority that comes with that, is

diminished, as his/her role is pluralised and therefore relinquishes the kind of structural despotism of the singular narrating position. The author is instead placed beside equivalent and contesting voices. As Gray exposes the authority of the author, however, a form of anxiety can be seen by the reader to develop between authorial positions. This anxiety occurs due to the author's loss of sole authority over the text, derived from the notion of the monological novel and the authoritative discourse that the author is the singular and final authority on the text. Bakhtin describes monologism as "perceiving everything in a single closed context" ("The Problem of the Text" 120). In this monological frame, the text is considered to have a singular, definitive meaning. Bakhtin argues that there was a historical shift around the eighteenth century from the monologic to the polyphonic novel due to the breakdown of long held authorities, writing "The problem of the writer and his primary authorial position became especially acute in the eighteenth century (because of the decline of authorities and authoritarian forms, and the rejection of authoritarian forms of language)" ("Notes" 149). Prior to the polyphonic novel, texts were considered generally to have a singular, definitive authority, that of the author.

Authority, including that of the author, was also a concern of some poststructuralist theorists, including Roland Barthes. As I have already observed, in "The Death of the Author" Barthes writes of a closed context in terms of the author, "To give an Author to a text is to impose upon that text a stop clause, to furnish it with a final signification, to close the writing" (1325). The question was not what the text was saying, but what was the author trying to say through the text. Since "The Death of the Author" many critics may no longer consider the authors' intentions to be of great significance to the critical engagement with the text. Foucault, however, points out that the author's name still holds significance over the text. Gray draws on author-function in his text to call on his authority as public intellectual, in an attempt to regain the textual authority lost. This puts the

author-function at odds with the implied author/s constructed through the texts. We see Gray draw on his own discourse, as both author and public persona, to appear to gain a singular form of authority. Through the novels Gray attempts to reinforce the notion of the author's primary authority by consistently reminding the reader of his presence and authority in the text. Gray uses the claim of primary authority as a tool to expose both the implications of centralised authority, and the stability it appears to present.

Gray's novels are dialogical however, and in this thesis I will demonstrate that he uses monological aspects in his writing, particularly through genre, to establish the political implications of external governance models. Michael Gardnier understands Bakhtin's monologism to be "a condition wherein the matrix of ideological values, signifying practices, and creative impulses which constitute the living reality of language are subordinate to the hegemony of a single, unified consciousness or perspective" (26). Monologism presents a single world view, one that is reflective of the author's own views. Holquist discusses the political nature of this writing, arguing, "Totalitarian government always seeks the (utopian) condition of absolute monologue" and that totalitarianism has "as its aim the suppression of all otherness in the state so that its creator alone might flourish" (33). Using the connection between monologism and politics that Holquist has made, I argue in later chapters that Gray's use of monological language functions as a critique of the current political system held in Scotland, and consequentially, in any country with limited self-governance.

Gray's novels present themselves as dialogical through the use of the typographical sign off. Nearly all of Gray's novels end with "Goodbye", with the exception of *Poor Things* (see fig.1). This statement is highlighted through bold, large typography. Glyn Whyte writes "the 'goodbyes' that are the last words to be read in (almost) all Gray's texts, claims the entire book for the author as his own product" (161). I argue that this

“Goodbye” is not one of ownership but presents the texts as part of a dialogue. Under the sleeve of *Something Leather* the book is embossed with the word “hello”, on the front, and “goodbye” on the back, changing the content of the text into a conversation. Gray is presenting his texts as an aspect of the broader conversation around politics and authority. Each of the novels becomes yet another conversation the reader has with Gray, each conversation informing the others. In presenting his work as conversation Gray maintains a sense of hope at the conclusion of all his novels, regardless of the ending. The hope comes from opening the dialogue with the readers. As the authority and power of the author is destabilised in Gray’s novels, as we will see in the examples of authorial positions set out in the next chapter, he makes way for the reader to enact their own authority in the construction of the novels. Gray’s “Goodbye” invites the reader to further enact their authority in defining power structures by participating in the broader dialogue. Gray’s novels present the anxieties and possible conclusions around breaking down existing power structures, and this results in the empowerment of the people to enact the changes they want.

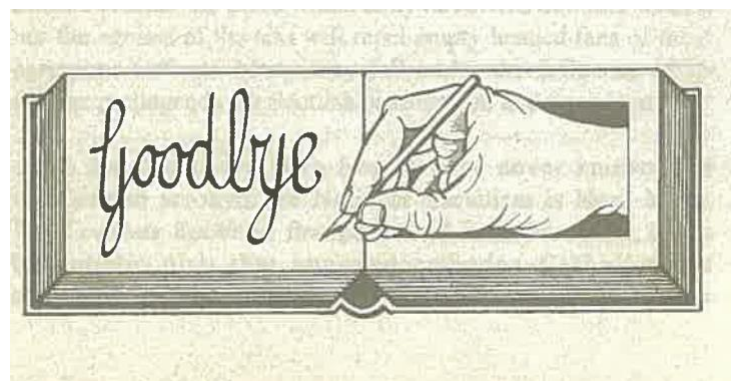


Figure 1. Example of "Goodbye" from *Old Men in Love*

The use of metafictional devices highlight the construction of the author. In the following chapters I will use the theories set out in this chapter, author-function and the implied author, to present a number of authorial roles, and thereby the pluralistic nature of

authority in Gray's novels. The author figures constructed in Gray's novels are fluid and dialogical, and establish an egalitarian aesthetic that informs the political discourse of the novels. The following chapters will discuss the polyphonic nature of the author in Gray's novels, as the multifaceted author suggests a destabilised textual authority. Through the conflicting genre conventions of fantasy and realism the roles of the implied author and author-function inform both a dialogical and monological approach to authorship.

CHAPTER TWO: COMPARTMENTALISED SELVES

Authors of metafiction address theoretical concerns and therefore their work can be seen as a form of theory in practice.⁷ This chapter will present Gray's approach to authorship and authority through his use of divided author figures. By compartmentalising the author into separate roles to create polyphonic authorial voices, Gray destabilises the assumed textual authority of the author. Texts presenting various authorial positions are not limited to modernist or postmodern writing. Both Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë break narration to discuss the nature of writing in *Northanger Abbey* and *Jane Eyre*, respectively. In these instances, the author not only manifests as an extratextual figure but, through their character roles in the narratives, are also compartmentalised selves of the author.

Alasdair Gray presents many authoritative voices in his novels that take on author-like roles. In doing so Gray is able to explore and make explicit the role and construction of the author in fiction. Through the incorporation of metafictional devices in his novels, Gray discusses the authority of authorship. In revealing the mechanics of authorship and the authority that accompanies it, Gray diminishes authority, which in turn allows for the reconstruction of power. Gray's polyphonic approach to authorship presents a more egalitarian approach to authority, as each authorial voice is presented as holding some textual authority.

In dividing the author into separate roles, Gray creates a multiplicity of varying and sometimes conflicting authorial positions in the novels, resulting in polyphonic authors.

⁷ I drew from some of the material in the following paragraphs discussing Gray's various authorial positions in the published article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*" in *Limina*.

The authorial roles I have identified in Gray's novels are: the intrusive author, the artist, the critic, the editor, and the alternative author. The different roles function as actualisations of the various authorial constructions produced by the text. By breaking down the author into single distinct roles that contribute to constructing the author, Gray makes the constructive process of the author explicit. These authorial roles, however, are complex, often crossing over, making them difficult at times to distinguish it from each other. The texts do not build these authorial positions from singular texts alone. Instead, each position requires examination of multiple texts that inform and develop upon each other. In this we see that the body of Gray's work functions together and as a whole allowing the individual novel to be re-examined in light of the other texts. This chapter will demonstrate that through compartmentalising the author, Gray reveals the mechanics of authorship, and the authority that accompanies it. Each of these authorial roles act to diminish the authority of the single author figure, allowing for the reconstruction of textual authority. This establishes an egalitarian aesthetic in Gray's novels, that influences the political engagement of the texts.

Intrusive author⁸

The intrusive author, specifically the author who makes his/her presence known to the characters of the novel, is a metafictional device that has been used by many authors, including John Fowles in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and is even parodied by Flann O'Brian in *At Swim-two-birds*. The construction of the author is highlighted by this conspicuous inclusion in the text. I use this authorial inclusion as a tool for analysing the

⁸ I drew from material in this section to discuss the role of the intrusive author in constructing the author in *Lanark* and *1982, Janine* in the published article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*" in *Limina*

various voices of the author as they appear in Gray's texts. Alasdair Gray uses this technique directly in *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*. Gray uses a similar technique in *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* in the role of the editor, though I address the intrusive author and the editor separately, as the intrusive editor role produces a different effect. In this thesis I limit the intrusive author to a character who claims to be the author, and interacts with other characters in the novel. The editor role differs from this in that, although the editor is a character, he does not claim to be the author. As metafiction presumes the author is aware of theoretical approaches to literature, the intrusive author is a mechanism that allows for the author's textual approach to be discussed openly in the text. *Lanark* presents this most prominently when the intrusive author states: "I want *Lanark* to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another" (483).

In *Lanark*, the intrusive author is neither the real author, nor the implied author but is instead a character taking on a role of an author named Nastler. The intrusive author often utilises author-function directly through the use of the author's name, or assumption of a shared name⁹. Nastler is apparently a childhood nickname of Gray's and has a phonetic similarity to the name Alasdair. McHale refers to Nastler as "a transparent distortion of Alasdair" (214). The manipulation of the name Alasdair highlights the author presented in the text as a created one, constituted by the writing process. The authorial position created through Nastler becomes transparent, as Gray reveals the role of the author's name in constructing the author figure.

⁹ Martin Amis' *Money* includes a character named 'Martin Amis' who is a screenwriter. Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* protagonist, Kilgour Trout meets his 'author'. The narrator in John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* intervenes in the story and appears as a character.

Gray's use of intertextuality draws attention to the constructed nature of the author. When Lanark meets his author, the author responds to Lanark's reaction, saying: "Please don't feel embarrassed. This isn't an unprecedented situation. Vonnegut has it in *Breakfast of Champions* and Jehovah in the books of Job and Jonah" (481). By referring to Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* Gray is alluding to the interaction between the character, Kilgour Trout and the "author" of *Breakfast of Champions* situated in the novel. Creed Greer, in "Kurt Vonnegut and the Character of Words" writes of this occurrence, "his interaction with the character seems to suggest the impossibility of an 'author' separate from the text" (313). Further to this, as the "author" gives Trout free will, the novel draws attention to the fact that free will in literature does not exist, that the characters, including that of the "author", are creations determined by the writer. Greer goes on to state, "*Breakfast of Champions* argues the impossibility of the real/unreal dichotomy" (315). This is not only true of the character of the author, but also the construction of the author. We are never able to know the real person/writer through the text and therefore the text can only offer a construction of the author, the implied author. Through this paradox the figure of the author remains the subject of the implied author. The implied author, however, is also constituted by the text. Furthermore, the author is not only constructed by the text, which gives the writer some control of how they may be constructed, but is also superimposed onto the text through the author-function. The writer has little or no control over how author-function will be superimposed onto the text by the reader. This demonstrates that the construction of the author is subject to the same real/unreal dichotomy, discussed by Greer.

While Trout is given supposed free will by his author, Job and Jonah have different experiences of free will. Job places himself in the hands of God, doing nothing to change his situation, and therefore never trying to implement his free will. Jonah, on the other

hand, has his free will taken away from him by God when he tries to escape the task set for him. Jehovah is neither the name of the author of those books, nor what Job and Jonah would have called him even if he were, instead it is a latinisation of יהוה (YHWH). Here, in the discrepancy of names, we see a connection to Gray's author figure. The author figure presents himself as Nastler. This presents an obvious discrepancy in the name of the author on the cover of the novel, Alasdair Gray, and the claimed author figure of Nastler. This may allude to the somewhat arbitrary nature of assigning an author's name to a text, which is, as Foucault points out, an effect of discourse. What connects the books of the bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, is not their authors but the figure of the creator, Jehovah, or God. This figure is not a participatory one, but instead is a legitimising figure. It is not Alasdair Gray who connects the four books of *Lanark*, or his body of work, but the implied author. The name of the author, however, functions to present an outward sign of this body of work. The role of the name that appears on the cover of the novel - Alasdair Gray - acts to legitimise the work.

The connection between Jehovah and the author, Nastler, suggests the intrusive author in Gray's novels take on the role of Author-God. Barthes argues that the role of the Author-God is obsolete, writing, "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (1324). Gray enacts his own version of this theoretical idea, demonstrating through the intrusive author that the Author-God is multi-dimensional. By creating the intrusive author as a character separate from Alasdair Gray, the Author-God is revealed as a construction, diminishing his/her power. The traditional authorial position of textual authority is exposed as no longer absolute. The connection between the intrusive author and Author-God in Gray's novels suggests that this traditional form of textual authority needs to be reconsidered, and

allows for an egalitarian aesthetic in the novels, reflecting a political position that calls for the reconsideration of currently held political structures, as Barthes had suggested in his critique of liberalism.

By using intertextualities, Gray presents multiple authors of the same writing, and in doing so highlights the singularity of authorship as a flawed representation of authorship. The author of the “Index of Plagiarisms” writes:

Epilogue, para. 1. “I am part
of that part which was once the
whole” is an Implag from
Mephistopheles’ speech in
Faust
Act I, Scene III: “*Ich bin ein
Theu des Theus, der Angango
alles
war*” (488-489)

The original text however is “Ich bin ein Teil des Teils, der anfangs alles war” (Goethe line 1349). Kristen Stirling writes of this: “the relevant quotation is distorted and incomprehensible in the Index, which I can only put down to a typesetting or proofreading error” (35). Stirling connects Nastler to the devil figure in *Faust*, Mephistopheles, giving Nastler as the creator “more devilish connotations” (35). The distortion of the quotation therefore may be more than a typesetting or proofreading error. *Faust* begins with Mephistopheles wagering with God as to whether or not Mephistopheles can lead Faust astray from his righteous pursuits of knowledge. The author of the Index acts in this manner not towards Lanark, but towards the reader. The translation may be an Implag

(Imbedded Plagiarism) but the direct quote is not. As Stirling points out, it is incomprehensible. By misquoting, Gray draws attention to the power given to the author in particular settings. The author, in admitting to borrowing material from other authors, and through this act of transparency, is assumed to be giving the correct information.

Misquoting the text shows that this material can still be manipulated, and through this the authority of the author as the provider of truth, both fictional and factual, is diminished. Therefore, we must consider that all material given in the text is subject to manipulation by the author. As Alasdair Gray creates all aspects of his novels, extra textual aspects must be considered constructions also, including author biographies, and critical reviews, and therefore should be approached with a cautious awareness of the questionable authority that is established through the list of plagiarisms.

The intrusive author also appears in *1982, Janine*, although not named as the author, but instead as “the creator”. The pages titled “The Ministry of Voices” present multiple voices split on the page (168-172) (see fig. 2). One of the voices claims to be Jock MacLeish’s maker, and has been attributed to god. Joseph Brooker, in “Sado-Monetarism: Thatcherite Subjects in Alasdair Gray and Martin Amis”, refers to the figure as “a version of the voice of God” (137). Nastler, the “author” in *Lanark*, also draws parallels between himself and god when Lanark asks, “Are you pretending to be God?” “Not nowadays. I used to be part of him, though. [...] Creation festers in me” (481). Nastler also names Jehovah, an alternative name for the Jewish God, as the author of the books of Job and Jonah.

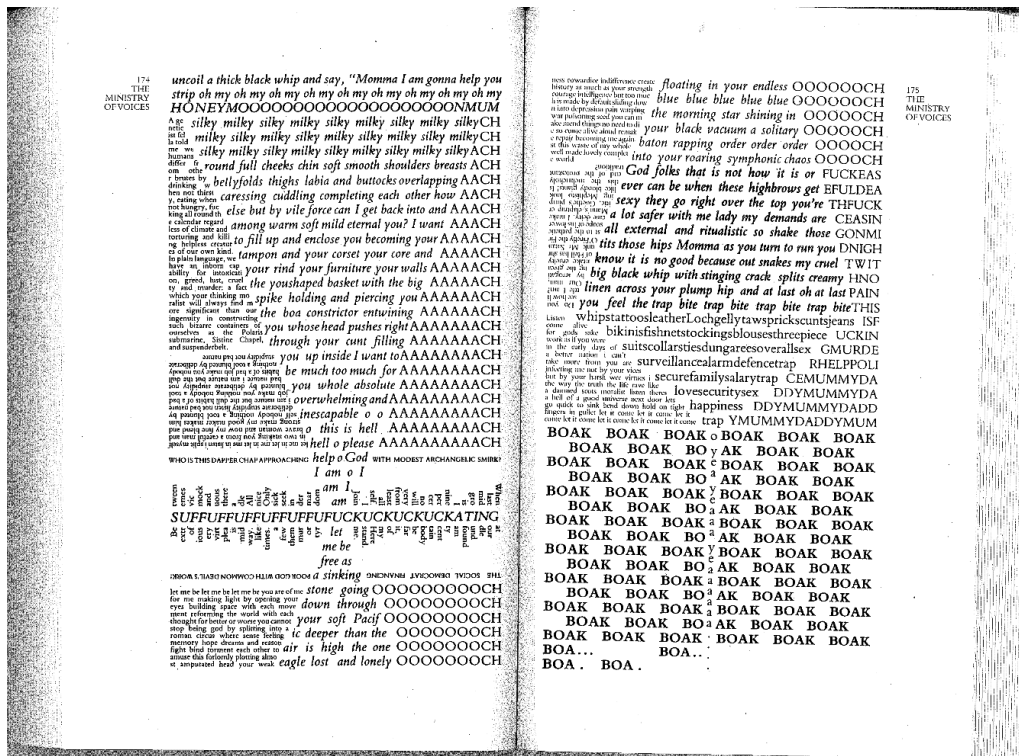


Figure 2. Example from “The Ministry of Voices” from 1982, Janine

Links between the words “god” and “creator” are also made evident in *Poor Things* with Bella Baxter’s creator Godwin Baxter referred to as God by Bella. In *1982, Janine* we can also attribute the voice of a sinking McLeish hears to an author figure, as we are aware through the visual text that McLeish is a construction of the author. At this moment the text has two “author-figures”, the voice and McLeish, while the latter is simultaneously creating a fantasy of Janine. Through the intrusive author, the creator, the text makes it explicit that there are multiple authorial voices within a text, and that each of these voices are constructions. By never naming the creator as the author, the creator becomes a detached figure, unknown outside of what is presented in the text. If we connect the figure of the author with the creator, or god, as *Lanark* suggests, we are presented with the notion that the author is also a detached figure, unknowable outside of what is presented in the text, and therefore always already a constructed figure, with authority and power.

A God character is also presented in *1982, Janine*, although preceding “The Ministry of Voices” in a more direct way. His presentation changes through typography, from columned voice to an in-text voice distinguished by brackets. In doing so the figure can be read as an internal voice of Jock MacLeish, as it was presented prior to “The Ministry of Voices”. Following his attempted suicide in “The Ministry of Voices”, McLeish addresses the reader as the author of the novel, writing, “The story of *how I went wrong* is called *From the Cage to the Trap*” (181), aligning with the title of Chapter 12 given in the table of contents. Upon McLeish’s first interactions with the god character it is not the figure who names himself as God, but McLeish. McLeish begins a conversation with this figure: “one solitary god is too few for me. I need more of you. (The Holy Trinity?) Too abstract and Episcopalian. (JesusMaryandJoseph?) Too catholic and familiar. Nor do I want you splitting into Jupiter, Mars, Venus etcetera, those Mediterranean aristos make me feel cheap and inhibited. Why should you be less to me than all mankind?” (185). If we consider the creator figure not as god but as an authorial creator, the notion of a singular authorial position is exposed as limited, and at the same time the divided authorial voices are too simple. Instead of the established god or gods, McLeish wants a figure who can encompass all mankind and therefore needs to be addressed at multiple levels. McLeish goes on to address this figure as “Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, My Lords, Ladies, Officers, Non-commissioned Officers and Men and Women of the World, and also, and especially, those who lay claim to none of these titles, particularly the punters north of the Tweed” (185). The creator figure therefore takes on multiple levels of authority. Through this mocking address to all of the orders of social classes the work is presented as one that is concerned with these class structures, particularly with how this class system impacts Scotland. In this we see the calling on and development of author-function to discuss socio-political ideas of legitimation and textual

authority. This discussion extends to political authority and acts to destabilise authority in general. These ideas that will be examined further in the following chapters which address the destabilisation of conservative political views and approaches in *1982, Janine* through the representation of sadomasochism.

By removing the name Alasdair Gray from the identity of the intrusive author, Gray is able to demonstrate the function of this device. The intrusive author acts to place the author into the text, as well as becoming another fictive element of the text. As already discussed in the previous chapter, this removes the author from the text. In not sharing an identity with the intrusive author, Gray manipulates this device, positioning the author as one of many polyphonic authors. By removing himself from the text he enacts the modernist idea of the “Exit Author”: an author who is “invisible and unobtrusive, above or behind but not *in* his creation” (McHale 199). McHale points out that, “Strategies of self-effacement, while ostensibly obliterating surface traces of the author, in fact call attention to the author as *strategist*” (199). The fictional intrusive author calls attention to the author, not as strategist but another fictional construction of the text.

The Artist

The visual art in Alasdair Gray’s novels is an integral aspect of his work. They are not merely illustration, but affect the interpretation of the text. Gray is known outside of his writing as a visual artist, which adds to the significance of the inclusion of art when discussing the role of the author. Gray’s role in society as an artist is an aspect of his author-function. The use of art in the novels draws attention to his role as a celebrated artist. As the work of an artist, the images and typography could be considered to hold significance and authority in the text. Art in Alasdair Gray’s novels is presented in several forms, including book title plates, character portraits and book covers. Through these inclusions, the novels become material objects that require all components of the books to

be considered. In many cases, the art work can be perceived as independent of the written text, functioning as a way of re-examining the text. The images included in the novels add multiple perspectives to the narrative, as well as inform the way the author is constructed. As the art plays a significant role in the text it is also important to consider the artist as an authorial position that is constructed within the text.

The images in *Poor Things* are attributed to the Scottish artist William Strang. In using an artist's name that is contemporary to the narrative setting, there is an attempt by Gray to apply a sense of truth to the contents of the novel, whilst at the same time drawing attention to its fictionality. Lynne Diamond-Nigh discusses the role of the image in *Poor Things*, "They are attributed to a Scottish portraitist, William Strang, but are in their caricaturesque reductions, pastiches of traditional portraits" (182). The images call on Strang's work, although the style remains that of Alasdair Gray's. Gray has not only created a different author for his novel, but also a different artist. This act of completely removing himself from the author/artist role is an actualisation of the "second self" that writes the text. In *Lanark*, we see in Books 3 and 4 the actualisation of metaphors. Characters turn into lizards and dragons as they cut off from people and emotions. This process is an actualisation of the metaphor, "cold-blooded". People are also used as food as a metaphor for capitalism's commodification and feeding off its people. In *Poor Things* the metaphors that are actualised are not only found in the narrative but also in the author. By taking on the role of William Strang, Gray is playing on the idea of author-function, or in this case, artist-function. Strang is known for his portraits, and was a contemporary artist at the time the narrative is set in. By maintaining his own artistic style, known through his public persona as a prominent artist, Gray is able to demonstrate that intertextuality extends to the art of the novels. It is not just the art work that is reminiscent of Strang but also the typography. William Strang also produced typography, as well as engravings for

literary works. These engravings are addressed in the acknowledgements, where the author thanks “Michael Roschlau for the gift of Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* (published in 1894 by MacLehose & Son, Glasgow, for the translator William Jacks, illustrated with etchings by William Strang) which suggested the form (not content) of the McCandless volume” (ii). The typography in *Poor Things* is similar to Strang’s work, although not identical.

William Strang is not the only work referenced in *Poor Things*. In the introduction, Alasdair Gray, the editor, writes, “I have illustrated the chapter notes with some nineteenth century engravings, but it was McCandless who filled spaces in his book with illustrations from the first edition of *Gray’s Anatomy*” (XVI). The nineteenth century engravings, claimed to be by William Strang, we know to be by Gray, however the images from *Gray’s Anatomy* are more ambiguous. The shared name of Gray adds to the complexity of discerning the artist/author behind the images of the anatomy. Regardless of whether it is Alasdair Gray or Henry Gray, by only ever referring to *Gray’s Anatomy* as the source of the images, the shared last name, Gray, becomes a form of shared authorship. Images from *Gray’s Anatomy* bring to the text an authority, however, as Diamond-Nigh notes, each image deals with a “specific body part (for example, the skull after a discussion of the crack in Bella’s skull) [which] places them in the category of tradition illustration” (183). In transforming the medical images into illustrations that accompany the narrative, their authority is broken down. They no longer hold the medical authority that Henry Gray brings to the images. The medical images no longer hold their authority as merely factual, scientific references, instead acting as accompaniments to the story and therefore should be considered with the same authority as any other illustration in the text.

Diamond-Nigh discusses degrees of authority through typeface, arguing “Gray exhibits and works the levels of pseudo authoritarianism by impressionistic hierarchies of typeface” (182). She identifies the hierarchy as follows: The Introduction and Chapter

Notes, Historical and Critical as “the highest degree of authority”, due to them being the only capitalised sections and the use of a bond sans serif type. The second in the hierarchy is Archie McCandless’ manuscript, “set in a traditional and plausible serif type”. Third are the letters of Bella and Wedderburn, “both in the italicized version of the same serif type; sections in these are played off of the more believable nonitalized exchanges between Godwin and McCandless”. Fourth is the letter from Victoria McCandless/Bella, in which the typeface is italicized. (Diamond-Nigh 182). Through the visual element of typeface, the level of authority can be determined. This can be said of the artwork in *Poor Things* as well. The William Strang portraits hold the least authority, as through their pastiche styling is distinctly not by William Strang. The images from *Gray’s Anatomy* are more ambiguous in their authorship, as the shared name means, regardless of the artist, the images remain that of “Gray’s”. Last are the images presented in “Chapter Notes, Historical and Critical”. These images are taken from historical sources, such as newspapers and maps. Whilst they are distant from the authorship of Alasdair Gray, they are in fact historical documents. The authority of the images correlate to the hierarchy of authority that Diamond-Nigh suggests, adding to the authority level of each of the sections. In “Chapter notes, Historical and Critical”, the authority of the editor, Alasdair Gray, attempts to influence the fictional truth by favouring McCandless’ account of Bella’s life. Alasdair Gray, the editor, is therefore exhibiting the authority that lies in the name of the author, Alasdair Gray.

Gray’s renown as an artist suggests that the art and illustrations in his novels should be considered as material that informs the narrative. The artist role in Gray’s novels is not merely a way of employing the author-function and authority of Alasdair Gray the artist, but also identifies the text as political. One of the most prominent visual political images in Gray’s work is that of Bella Caledonia, found in *Poor Things* (see fig. 3). The image of Bella Caledonia appears, at one level, to be a parody of the Mona Lisa. In this

parody, the image of Bella Caledonia evokes ideas attributed to the Mona Lisa, such as beauty and strength, and relocates these qualities to a different setting. This appropriation has a political function. The image links Bella Baxter with Scotland directly, Caledonia being the name given to Scotland by the Romans. This image works on several political levels. Most simply the name Bella Caledonia directly translates to mean “beautiful Scotland”. Later in the novel Victoria notes that she is not as beautiful as McCandless describes her. This suggests a renewed vision of Scotland, one that is not always considered beautiful and refined. The image itself is a renewed vision of the personification of Caledonia. When linking Bella with the personification of Scotland the novel is read very differently from the ordinary Frankenstein parody, becoming instead a political commentary. The grotesque becomes a symbol of power. Cristie March states that Bella’s “body becomes the site for a grotesque interplay between bodily and social conventions that unsettles the cultural perceptions of those men with whom she interacts and who have come to expect and rely on naïve and socially nonresistant women” (338). These political implications of the role of women in Gray’s novels will be addressed further in the following chapters, but for now I want to focus on Bella Caledonia as art. Art is an integral aspect of Gray’s novels, and the implied author is not limited to the written text, extending its development to the visual art in the texts. Through the image of Bella Caledonia we are presented with a consistent political idea that recurs across Gray’s body of work, that is, a renewed vision of Scotland. The role of the artist asks for the reader to view the author-function of Alasdair Gray beyond mere author, and to consider his role as political activist and commentator. In doing so we examine the art to reveal political ideas that are presented through the implied author. This, in turn, not only calls on the persona of Gray as public political intellectual, but also adds to this persona, using and building upon his political ideas. As a republican (*Independence* 2014), Gray envisages an independent

Scotland whose identity is not predetermined, but like the identity of the author, will be constantly formed and reformed through different perspectives. This Scottish identity is not singular, but is unified.



Figure 3. Bella Caledonia from *Poor Things*

Evoking the political through art occurs not only in *Poor Things* but also in *Lanark*. The title pages for both books are detailed pieces of art. Glyn White in *Reading the Graphic Surface* notes that “*Lanark*’s prose doesn’t imitate its illustrations, nor do the illustrations straightforwardly depict the content of the prose” (184). When the images are examined closely they serve as a political comment. The images require knowledge of philosophy, art, classical mythology, and biblical references. Through these allusions Gray presents political ideas. These political allusions also rely on the “Index of Plagiarisms”. Under Hobbes, the author writes:

HOBBS, THOMAS

Books 3 and 4 are Difflags of Hobbes's daemonic metaphor *Leviathan*, which starts with the words "By art is created that great Leviathan called a Commonwealth or State (in Latin, *Civitas*), which is but an articial man"

Describing a state or tribe as a single man is as old as society-Plutrach does it in his life of Coriolanus-but Hobbes deliberately makes the metaphor a monstrous one.

His state is the sort of creature Frankenstein made: mechanical yet lively; lacking ideas, yet directed by cunning brains; morally and physically clumsy, but full of

strength got from people forced to supply its belly, the market. In a famous title page this state is shown threatening the whole earth with the symbols of warfare

and religion. Hobbes named it from the verse drama *Job*, in which God describes it as a huge water beast he is specially proud to have made because it is "king of all

the children of pride" The author of *The Whale* thought it a relation of his hero.

(See MELVILLE)

(489-490)

When considering the Hobbes "Difflags" in terms of book plates, it is not only the content of Books 3 and 4 that reference these ideas. The book plates of Books 1 and 4 appear to directly call on these ideas, with the images of the water beast on the book plate of Book 1 and Book 4 containing a phrase that is very similar to that quoted above: "By Arts is formed that great Mechanical Man called a State, foremost of the Beasts of the Earth for Pride" (355) (see fig. 4 & 5). Artwork, to Gray, is also text, and therefore must also be considered when discussing the construction of the author. The images in *Lanark* function in a similar manner to the Table of Contents in *1982, Janine*, discussed previously. The images allow for an alternative reading of the text, one that is more political, and brings philosophical and socio-political ideas to the text. Through the book plates Gray deploys

the author-function, drawing on his public role as both artist and a political thinker. By including the artistically detailed images as book plates the public figure of Alasdair Gray is made explicit in the text, demonstrating the significant role author-function has on constructing authorship. The narrative can be influenced by the public figure of the author that the reader brings to the text. In continuing to address these political ideas he is able to inform the author-function, demonstrating the continuous constitution of the author rather than a stable, singular author.



Figure 4. Book One bookplate from *Lanark*

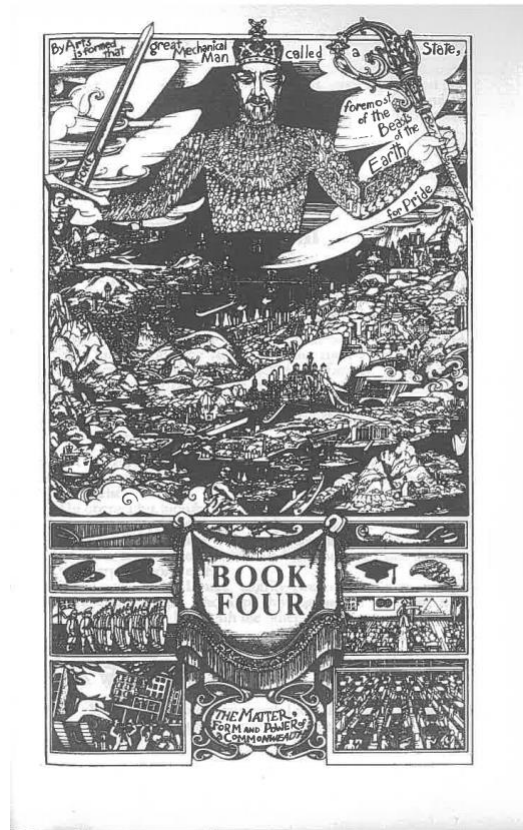


Figure 5. Book Four bookplate from *Lanark*

The artist figure in Gray's novels functions in the same manner as the author, using intertextuality to evoke political ideas. Intertextuality in the images, such as Hobbes' Leviathan whale, asks the reader to consider the nature of both art and literature. They do not stand alone in the novels but instead inform each other, allowing for broader ideas to be revealed in each. The artist demonstrates the way extra-textual authority can influence the interpretation of the narrative. Art and typography provide levels of authority in the texts, and act to change perceptions. Gray uses art as a medium to evoke political ideas in his text, making the connection between authority and politics explicit. The powers that need to be deconstructed are not only that of the author, but also of the socio-political authorities. The artwork emphasises place, specifically Scotland, which connects the physical and socio-political environment with the text. This is seen most prominently in *Bella Caledonia*, whose image has transcended the book, entering into the national political dialogue. The image has been used by First Minister of Scotland and Scottish

National Party leader, Alex Salmond, for Christmas cards (BBC), as well as the name and image being used by pro-independence online political magazine, *Bella Caledonia*. In turn the image and name has becoming a symbol of independence. As the image of Bella Caledonia circulates beyond the text, the idea of Bella Baxter as a symbol of an independent Scotland is reinforced. The reader may then come to the novel with this idea in mind, potentially influencing his/her interpretation of *Poor Things*. In this way, the image comes to reflect author-function, as its role external to the text, can be bought to the novel by the reader.

The Critic

The critical authorial voice presents itself in many ways in Alasdair Gray's novels. The most prominent of these is the figure of Sidney Workman, who first appears in *Lanark* and later appears again in *Old Men in Love*. However, Sidney Workman is not the only critical voice that Gray employs in his novels. *Something Leather* and *1982, Janine* present a critical response from Alasdair Gray regarding the novel, and *A History Maker* includes a fictional historical critic of the main text. The critical figure in Gray's novels presents an explicit relationship between the text and critical engagement, constructing the authorial voice as one that engages with critical material, both academic and cultural. The role of the critic serves multiple purposes, including acting as a compartmentalised autobiographical self. Alasdair Gray has been involved in the academic community, as teacher, writer in residence and later as Professor in creative writing. His public persona as intellectual, as discussed in the first chapter, contributes to the author-function. The critic also presents a different form of textual authority, one which is ostensibly external to the text.

The Epilogues of both *Lanark* and *1982, Janine* present a critical perspective on the text. As Richard Todd notes, "The role both Epilogues play is comparable in that what purports to be exegetical assistance serves to raise more questions than it answers" (130).

The critical voice brings to the text more intricacies, especially through the “plagiarisms”. The epilogue of *1982*, *Janine* claims, “The political part of Jock’s vomiting fit is from *The Spendthrifts*, a great Spanish novel in which Benito Pérez Galdós puts a social revolution into the stomach and imagination of a sick little girl” (334). This “plagiarism” suggests that McLeish’s personal rejection of his conservatism is an act of social revolution, and transforms McLeish from individual to nation. *Lanark*’s “Index of Plagiarisms” includes an

MONBODDO, LORD

Chap. 32, para. 3. The reference to James Burnette, Lord Monboddo, demonstrates the weakness of the fabulous and allegorical part of *Lanark*. The “institute” seems to represent that official body of learning which began with the ancient priesthoods and Athenian academics, was monopolized by the Catholic Church and later dispersed among universities and research foundations. But if the “council” represents government, then the most striking union of “council” and “institute” occurred in 1662 when Charles II chartered the Royal Society for the Advancement of the Arts and Sciences. James Burnett of Monboddo belonged to an Edinburgh Corresponding Society which advanced the cause of science quiet unofficially until granted a royal charter in 1782. He was a court of session judge, a friend of King George and an erudite metaphysician with a faith in satyrs and mermaids, but has only been saved from oblivion by the animadversions against his theory of human descent from the ape in Boswell’s *Life of Johnson*. By plagiarizing and annexing his name to a dynasty of scientific Caesars the author can only be motivated by Scottish chauvinism or a penchant for resounding

nomenclature. A more fitting embodiment of government, science, trade and religion would have been Robert Boyle, son of the Earl of Cork and father of modern chemistry (494).

Unlike the plagiarism in *1982, Janine*, which is signed off with the initials A.G., the critical voice here distances him/herself from the author. The act of listing the “plagiarism” in the novels makes explicit the implicit allusions, however, in the Monboddo entry the critic weakens the allusion to Lord Monboddo to symbolise the relationship between government and learning institutions, and offers a better alternative. Through plagiarisms the author of the text is no longer the sole author; instead the author’s work is placed into the context of other authors’ work.

¹⁰While intertextuality is a common trait of texts, by drawing attention to specific examples the authorial voice becomes divided into voices. *Lanark* calls on the implied authors of the plagiarised texts, as the critical voice of the Index of Plagiarisms asks us to consider the plagiarised authors and figures roles in constructing the novels. The implied author of Alasdair Gray’s work therefore is one which is defined not only by his own writing, but also by the writing of others. While the implied author is textual it is not only the individual author that determines how the implied author is constructed. Gray’s approach to authorship and authority can be viewed as part of a broader political commentary. Much like the identity of the authors in Gray’s novels, national identity is not formed through a single defining body, but is formed through the collective narrative of

¹⁰ Some of the material in the following discussion of the Index of Plagiarisms have been published in *Limina* in the article “Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*” in relation to the implied author.

those who reside in the nation. As I will explore further in the proceeding chapters, Gray's novels produce authors and character who are multiplicitous and fluid in their identity. I argue that through the relationship between the novel and the nation, Gray's authors also offer a way of considering the nation. National identity, like the author, is open to being constructed in multiple ways, producing a pluralistic approach to the nation.

As the Index of Plagiarisms in *Lanark* are not attributed to Sidney Workman they function as a separate role. Workman, in *Old Men in Love*, only takes credit for the footnotes only, and therefore it can be assumed that he is not the author of the Index of Plagiarisms. The index is therefore more akin to the critical role demonstrated in Gray's future prologues. In acknowledging and listing the "plagiarisms" in the text, the index takes on an academic critic role, exposing the allusions and intertextualities in the text. Unlike footnotes, which discuss the content and authors together, the index asks for the author's name to be considered before the content of the reference, literally putting the author before the text. The index therefore elicits the author-function of the other writers in much the same manner as presenting the name of the author on the cover of a novel. By doing so Gray is asking the reader to consider how each external text named in the Index of Plagiarisms adds to the narrative, and in turn highlights Barthes' idea, discussed earlier, that a text is a "multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (1324). The index also includes authors' names whose work has not been plagiarised. Examples of this include many authors, who according to the index, have been plagiarised after the forty-fourth (and final) chapter of the novel. This multi-authorial position is not only presented in *Lanark* but also *Poor Things*, *Something Leather*, *A History Maker* and *Old Men in Love*. *Poor Things* acknowledgement of "plagiarism" could be overlooked by many readers. The copyright page includes a note of

thanks from the author. This note includes specific mention of works from which Gray has taken suggestions or ideas. These include minor suggestions: “Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise* [...] which suggested the form (not content) of the McCandless volume”, as well as sentences taken from other work: “Three sentences from a letter to Sartre by Simone de Beauvoir, embedded in the third and fourth paragraphs of Chapter 18, are taken from Quentin Hoare’s translation of her letters published by Hutchinson in 1991” (i). The acknowledgement reinforces the idea of multiple authorship through intertextuality that was established in *Lanark*, by making explicit what is usually implicit in a novel. Drawing attention to the use of intertextuality in the novel, therefore, acts as the same critical voice as the author of *Lanark*’s Index of Plagiarisms.

Gray uses the critic as an opportunity to engage with the academic debates regarding his novels. In *A History Maker* he writes: “Postmodernists had no interest in the future, which they expect to be an amusing rearrangement of things they already knew” (203). Here we see a response to the discursive result of author-function. Gray has often rejected the notion that his work is postmodernist. In an interview Gray stated: “I have never found a definition of postmodernism that gives me a distinct idea of it. If the main characteristic is an author who describes himself as a character in his work, then Dante, Chaucer, Langland, and Wordsworth are as postmodern as James Joyce, who is merely modern” (Axlerod, 111). However, it remains a common label given to his work as the genre of his novels is difficult to define, often mixing genres, and blending science-fiction, erotica, fantasy and realism. This genre play can be considered pastiche, a trait of postmodernism (Jameson 159). In the role of critic Gray is able to respond to potential external critic’s evaluation of his work. This also impacts the author-function which can be conditioned by critical discussion of Gray’s work. He rejects postmodernism by defining it as at odds with his work, *A History Maker*. The futuristic setting of *A History Maker* puts

Gray's novel at odds with the eternal present of postmodernism. Without knowledge of Gray's dismissing the label of his work as postmodern, the setting of the novel suggests the implied author views the postmodernist label as limiting and restrictive. The reader, however, may still bring to Gray's novels the postmodernist label. This creates two separate author-functions, Gray the postmodernist and Gray, rejecter of postmodernism. Rejecting the postmodern label through the implied author attempts to validate the latter author-function. The reader then may bring to the novels Gray's rejection of his work as postmodern.

Sidney Workman's role in Gray's novels is undoubtedly that of cynical critic. Glyn White discusses Workman's role: "By placing a fictional critic in a conspicuously hostile position in *Old Men in Love*, Gray appears to try and guarantee that the response from readers and real critics is less hostile" ("Last Word" 141). White also argues that Workman's role establishes criticism as "a subjective exercise exerting no real control over the text" ("The Critic in the Text" 67). If Workman demonstrates that criticism has "no real control over the text", then Workman's authorial voice presents the author as having no control either. Through the implied author the text presents stylistic similarities between Workman and the narratives he appears in. Workman insists on his existence in *Old Men in Love*, writing, "Lecturers from other colleges began greeting me with surprise because they thought me a figment of Gray's imagination – thought the footnotes a device to deflect criticism, not a voice" (305). Through a shared writing style, however, the implied author presents Workman as simply another narratorial voice in the texts. The role of the critic becomes yet another position that needs to be considered alongside the other positions present, one which appears to address and respond to the text objectively. Gray acknowledges the authority the critic has over the text. This authority is normally external to the text, but in placing the critic into the novel Gray acknowledges the role that critical

engagement has on the construction of the text through both responding to criticism and engaging with theory.

The critic is not presented as merely academic or fictional in Alasdair Gray's novels. Many of the novels include a range of reviews, from both newspapers and personal responses. Although many of these are real reviews, fabricated reviews are also included. The reviews, both real and fictional, present a range of expressions, both positive and negative. The role of these paratextual critics serves as a reminder that the text is rarely entered into without some knowledge of the content, and therefore some prejudice as to what it shall contain. A positive or negative review can influence whether or not the novel is commercially successful. The fictive critical responses highlight the authority held by the reviews and the author of such reviews, and as a result we must consider the power of the writer behind the review, and how they influence the role that the author's name has in the success of the novel.

Glyn White argues that the critics' presence in Gray's novels, "Mak[es] clear that one view of the matter, critical or otherwise, is problematic and that a truer picture takes multiple views on board is something that emerges from the internal dynamics of these texts" ("Last Word" 133). The critic is one of many voices in Gray's polyphony of authorial positions which are in dialogue with each other. Each role presents a different view, and that only by considering each role and their relationship to each other do we get a "truer picture" of the author. Gray's dialogical authors suggest that an author is created through the relationship between the implied author and author-function. The figure of the author is not stable and must be considered, and reconsidered, through the body of work.

Through the critic Gray emulates discussion surrounding his work. This discussion acts as a metafictional critique of how society engages with literature as objectifiable

material. We see the novel as an academic object in *Old Men in Love*, as Workman discusses the dual narratives of *Lanark*, writing “One half was in the Scottish depressed working-class tradition, enlivened by elements from Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The other half was a Kafka-esque pilgrimage mingled with science fiction” (304). In 1982, Janine Gray includes a final section titled “1982 Criticism of the Foregoing Book” which includes both positive and negative reviews, for example this review by Peter Levi, “I recommend nobody read this book . . . it is sexually oppressive, the sentences are far too long and it is boring . . . hogwash. Radioactive hogwash” (336). The critic highlights that we bring external information to the text, such as other people’s responses to it, before engaging with it. It is not only the image of the author that is superimposed onto the text but also critical ideas and receptions of the novel. By playing with the notion of the critic Gray is not dismissing this role, but drawing attention to its influence. The authority of the text does not lie solely with the author, and we must consider the other authorities that work within and beyond a text. This acts to destabilise the power of the author over the text.

The Editor

In *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love*, Alasdair Gray is a character in the role of editor. Alasdair Gray’s editor role in ordering of the contents of *Poor Things*, which are structured as follows: McCandless’ manuscript, Victoria’s letter, Editor notes. White considers Alasdair Gray’s role as editor influential on the narrative, writing, “His editorial comment favours the [McCandless] account and provides evidence to support it” (“Last Word” 135). The editorial position in *Poor Things* demonstrates that the name of the author on the cover of the novel, Alasdair Gray, holds more authority than the claimed author, Archibald McCandless. The implied author presents a fictional work, however, in the role of editor, Alasdair Gray attempts to present the work as factual by positioning

himself as the recipient of the documents. The ordering of the text, and the editorial note presents the text as having a “true” story, and one that is fabricated. By using his own name, Gray draws on the authority held by the author-function in the construction of both the text and the author. We are asked to believe that McCandless is the author of the text, in much the same way we are asked to believe that Nastler is the author of *Lanark*. However, in both examples what we are presented with is the explicit notion that the author is a construct.

In taking on the role as editor in *Poor Things* the deliberate structuring of events by Gray is made explicit. White points out: “Gray uses his editorial role to place the four sections in an order where the most recent is placed first (4,1,2,3)” and goes on to argue “the non-chronological presentation of the sections assists in the creation of a structural polyphony between their component parts” (“Last Word” 135-136). *Lanark* also has a non-chronologically presented structure which has been discussed by scholars at length (McHale; Lee; White). Alison Lee writes in *Realism and Power: Postmodern British Fiction* of the structure: “Even the most cursory glance at the table of contents must, at the very least, make the reader aware of his or her normal expectations of the novel’s structure” (103). White, however, argues that the way in which this different structure is achieved is superficial, writing, “This arrangement is clearly accomplished through graphic means” (*Graphic Surface* 163). Gray is able to have the reader perceive the novel as fragmented, however if it were not for the table of contents and book title pages the novel would be perceived as cohesive. The prologue would not make sense to the reader without first knowing the events of Book 3, as this is where the Oracle first appears. Without knowing of the Oracle, the tale of how the Oracle came to be would be confusing. Instead of presenting a fragmented narrative, the book order achieves what Lanark’s author, Nastler, set out for it to achieve for the novel: “read in one order but eventually

thought of in another” (*Lanark*, 483). It is upon rethinking *Lanark*, through the context of *Poor Things*, that we can consider the structural choices as an editorial construction. By giving up the role of the author in *Poor Things* we are presented with the author in a different manner, a figure that is not explicitly present in the story but is the manipulator of the presentation and construction of the text.

Much like in *Lanark*, *Poor Things* presents the reader with multiple options of how to think of the novel. This allows for multiple readings of the text. In Victoria’s letter to her Grand- or Great-grandchild, she writes: “You, dear reader, have now two accounts to choose between and there can be no doubt which is most probable” (Gray *Poor Things* 272). Here the reader is addressed directly. The letter therefore has a dual audience, Victoria’s Grand- or Great-grandchild, and the reader of the novel. The reader is given the choice as to which account they wish to read as the truth, giving them the option to accept McCandless’ account despite not being probable. Gray, as editor, adds to this notion that both accounts can be believed, writing:

Dr. Victoria McCandless was found dead of a cerebral stroke on 3rd December 1946. Reckoning from the birth of her brain in the Humane Society mortuary on Glasgow Green, 18th February 1880, she was exactly sixty-six years, forty weeks and four days old. Reckoning from the birth of her body in a Manchester slum in 1854, she was ninety-two. (317)

Alasdair Gray here is a character based on the author, but it is difficult to separate the two, giving the impression that these lines express authorial intention. The name of the real author, Alasdair Gray, holds more weight than that of the fictional author, and as a result the reader may well be swayed to take McCandless’ account to be true. We see once again the power that the name of the author has, as expressed by Foucault, and by including this passage Gray is directing attention to author-function. By using his own

name as the editor, Gray is able to address the notion that the author is merely a construct, and that it is only the name that holds an authority. This creates a tension in the text between authorial positions, and between the writer and the author figure. Alasdair Gray, as editor gives the perception of authority, however the shared name also draws attention to the fictionality of the editor figure. The editor role, as one of the many textual authorities presented in Gray's novels, suggests an egalitarian aesthetic. The textual authority not only lies with the author, but also with the editor who influences the structure and content of the text. This gestures towards a pluralistic approach to authority. The shared author-editor name, however, draws attention back to the writer as a single authority. This tension will be explored further in the following chapter in relation to traditional and pluralistic authority through monological and dialogical approaches.

Alasdair Gray is presented as the editor again in *Old Men in Love*. Here Gray's editor role is visually present, with notes and edits throughout the text. In "Tunnock's Diary 2006" a dairy entry contains the margin note, "As editor I have been obliged to omit several of Tunnock's remarks that I have been advised would make me actionable at law" (255). Gray uses several asterisk symbols to denote omitted text, and in choosing this technique as opposed to the traditional ellipsis the reader is able to grasp the amount of text omitted. The beginning of the sentence also remains, allowing the reader to draw some conclusions regarding what may have been written from their own knowledge. The entry begins: "I am weary of unending news about British political corruption. It has been steadily increasing along with crime at street level and accidental shooting of innocent folk by armed police. In the 1960s" (see fig. 6). The reader is able to fill in the blanks to the level of their knowledge of the corruption of the 1960s. In blocking out some of the text the authorial position moves beyond the text. By filling in the blanks with the relevant information the reader becomes "the author", creating the missing text. Shifting the

authorial position demonstrates the multiplicity of the nature of authorship. Authorship is held not only by the writer, but also by the reader. Through the incomplete sentences Gray is relinquishing part of his role as author, and in turn relinquishes some of his conventional power over the text. The role of the editor furthers this loss of power, as the shared name distances Alasdair Gray from the text.

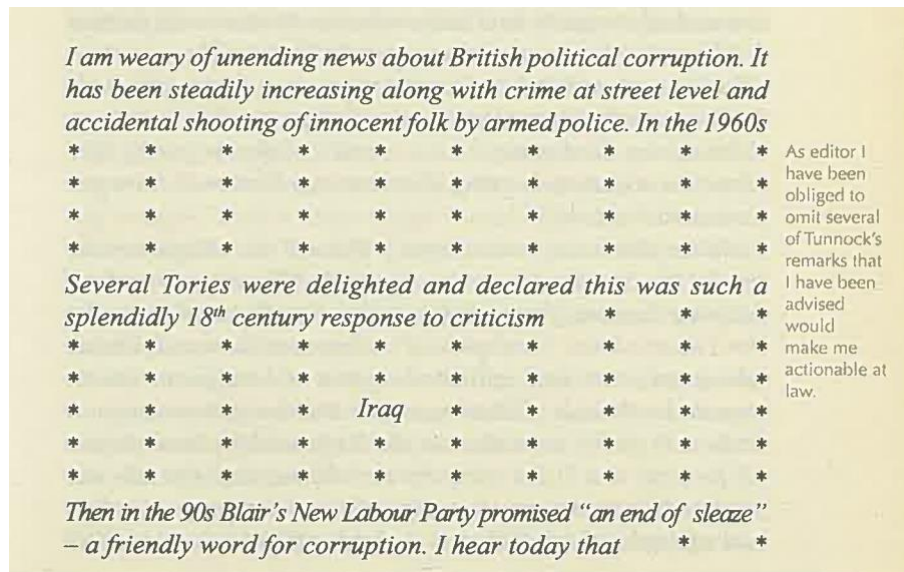


Figure 6. “The Diary 2006” typograph from *Old Men in Love*

In *Old Men in Love*, the editor determines structure of the text. If we apply this notion to the other texts in Gray’s body of work we are presented with the editor figure consistently throughout Gray’s novels. The most obvious representation of editorial structuring is in the table of contents. While the presence of a table of contents is not uncommon in a novel, Gray in *1982, Janine* plays with this convention. Each of the chapter titles is accompanied by a description of the chapter. This description is written from the perspective of the narrator, and details the events of the novel. In doing so the reader is exposed to the narrative before reading the text. To add to this Gray addresses each of the chapters in a way that will influence how the reader perceives the text. The best example of this is Chapter 12 which gives multiple options for titles that summarise the chapter: “FROM THE CAGE TO THE TRAP: or: *How I Reached and Lost Three*

Crowded Months of Glorious Life: or: How I Became Perfect, Married Two Wives Then Embraced Cowardice: or: Scotland 1952-82" (ix). The chapter contains each of these elements, however, unlike the other chapter summaries that would place these details in a list, Gray has chosen to give each of these elements equal weight over the chapter. The chapter can therefore be read from each of these perspectives. In presenting these details in the table of contents Gray is presenting a text that needs to be considered from multiple perspectives, which includes the role of the author. Jock MacLeish is presented as the author of *1982, Janine*. Unlike McCandless and Tunnock in *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love*, however, he is not credited as the author. McCandless has his own author biography, and both *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* contain introductions that detail how the editor, Alasdair Gray, came to have the manuscripts in his possession. As discussed previously, McLeish calls attention to the table of contents when stating, "The story of *how I went wrong* is called From the Cage to the Trap" (181). In doing so we are presented with the notion that McLeish may not be the sole author of the table of contents, as he only refers to Chapter 12 as "From the Cage to the Trap". Through this we can consider the authors of the table of contents to be both McLeish and another external figure, who I argue, due to the structuring role he/she takes on, is an editor figure. The alternative titles present different views of the chapter that do not contradict each other, yet seem somewhat unrelated. By placing the alternative titles in the table of contents, the reader is forewarned of the complexities of the chapter, asking them to consider it as multifaceted. The need for consideration of extratextual material is consistent throughout *1982, Janine*, as well as Gray's other novels. The table of contents in *1982, Janine* highlights the influence extratextual elements may have on the interpretation of the novel, including perceptions of the author that may be brought to the text.

The editor figures in Gray's novels manipulates the work of the author by determining structure, omissions, and marginal notes. Through the shared name of Alasdair Gray attention is drawn to Gray's use of literary devices to influence the text and discuss authorship, not just as editor but also as author. The editor, through introductions, notes, narrative structure and omissions can influence other elements of the text including thematic devices such as sex, fantasy and death. As the editor is normally an unnamed figure in the writing process the shared name of author and editor, Alasdair Gray, demonstrates the authority a name has over the text. The role of the editor in Gray's novels often does not stand alone, instead it works together with an alternative author, and as a result acts to undermine the authority held by the author's name. The conspicuous, named, editor provides a dialogical riposte to the monological tendencies of authorship.

Alternative authors

Poor Things and *Old Men in Love* are both attributed to fictional authors, Archibald McCandless and John Tunnock, respectively. As discussed earlier in the chapter, Gray instead takes on the role as the editor and presents a fictional author as the writer of the text. This differs from first person narrative, as the alternative author is explicitly given the role of the author. The forfeiting of this role presents the author role as an actualisation of the metaphor of Booth's second self. Gray presents the notion that the author known through the text is not the real author, and is therefore as fictional as the characters presented in the novels.

The first image the reader is presented with in *Old Men in Love* is a portrait of John Tunnock, the "author" of the novel. This portrait of Tunnock bares similarities to Alasdair Gray. Whilst Gray is claiming the novel to be John Tunnock's posthumous papers which he has edited, the image acts as a suggestive reminder that it is Gray who is the author. The image becomes a visual example of the "second self" metaphor. In this case, however, it

deploys the author-function Gray has created through the author image constructed in other novels. Gray's presence is consistent throughout the novel, giving margin notes to address editorial choices, additional facts or fact corrections. It is important to note here that like the author Nastler in *Lanark*, the editor of *Old Men in Love* is another character or voice in the text, but through the shared author/character name is able to act in a similar way to author intrusion. The reader becomes aware at each point a margin note appears that "Alasdair Gray" is speaking, and in turn is reminded of his authorship of the overall text.

The authorial positions of the alternative author and editor in *Old Men in Love* have a more complex relationship than in *Poor Things*. The editor plays a more significant role, with his presence consistent throughout the novel through marginal notes, as opposed to just a foreword and afterword. Tunnock's stories are incomplete and yet Gray, as both editor and author, has placed them in an order with the diary entries that allow for ideas and sentiments to flow. The political nature of the stories is presented alongside the political opinions of Tunnock. Tunnock's historical fiction plays out his political ideas through the historic figures. Through the fictive works and the political discussion by Tunnock, parallels may be drawn between Tunnock and Gray. The political ideas presented as Tunnock's can be viewed as those of Alasdair Gray. As editor, Gray appears to agree with the socio-political ideas of Tunnock, which may influence author-function, with the reader developing a broader image of the political Alasdair Gray. Through the editor, Tunnock's socio-political ideas are responded to and reinforced in the margin notes. This acts as a method for Gray to claim authority over the text through both the implied author who creates Tunnock, and the editor, Alasdair Gray, who reinforces Tunnock's ideas. Margin notes and omissions lay out the mechanics of the editor's role, revealing the dynamics of the many textual authorities.

Tunnock, McCandless and Dryhope are all claimed to be the posthumous authors of their respective works. Through their deaths, the authors are removed from the text. Unlike Sidney Workman they are never able to return to argue their existence. They are instead confined to the text. As the existence of the author is confined to the text, the deaths of Gray's fictional authors can be seen to reflect Barthes' "Death of the Author", as discussed in the previous chapter. We are unable to access the real author through the text, instead we create an image of the author. This image of the author does not transcend their work, instead it exists only within the text. The "authors" of *Poor Things*, *Old Men in Love* and *A History Maker* are confined to the constructions we make of them within the novels, and in doing so we are presented with the idea that all authors are confined to this constructive process. The relationship between death and the author is a topic that will be discussed at length in the final chapter of this thesis, where I will consider the role of death in constructing new identities, and the political implications of the fluidity of identity that comes with death in Gray's novels.

Alternative authors are also presented through the overt use of intertextuality, highlighted by Gray in the texts' notes, acknowledgements and, most explicitly *Lanark's* "Index of Plagiarisms". Gray uses intertextuality in *Poor Things* to call on a tradition of the epistolary novel. As there are many accounts of the story which are framed by the editor's comments, the "true story" is difficult to distinguish. This in turn creates several unreliable narrators. McCandless is unreliable due to the fantastical nature of his story, whilst Bella is unreliable due to the doubt placed on her story by the editor. This tension between fantasy and reality is a significant one, which will be explored further in the following chapter in relation to the authority of authors. Here, however, it is important to establish the role of the unreliable narrator as a tool for presenting authorial voices. Frank Zipfel in "Unreliable Narration and Fictional Truth" describes fictional truth as a "view

that readers respond to a fictional narration in taking for real for the time of their reading the states of affairs presented by the text although knowing that these states of affairs are not real in the actual world – and this on the basis of their recognizing the corresponding intention of the author” (109). Using the author’s name suggests the “intention of the author” is the same as that of the character, Alasdair Gray. Therefore, even though the events described by McCandless are implausible, and Victoria/Bella gives a more likely account of the events, the editor Alasdair Gray’s favouring of McCandless’ story present this version of accounts as the fictional truth. In doing so the fictional author is transitioned from an unreliable narrator to a reliable one, although this only occurs upon reading the final section of the novel. Through this we come back to Nastler’s preference that the novel is “to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another” (*Lanark* 483), although this time it is the author that is to be “eventually thought of in another” way.

Old Men in Love is the reworking of recycled material by Gray (Pittin-Hedon 229). In this, Gray gives the role of the author to Tunnock, despite originally being his own work. Authorship is once again presented through plagiarisms, except this time the plagiarism is neither acknowledged nor factual. Instead it poses questions of the importance of the name of the author presented to the reader. The “fictional truth” of the author is at odds with what the reader knows to be true, and therefore the authority of the author becomes unstable. It is important to note here the contradiction, in all of Gray’s novels attributed to fictional authors, that Alasdair Gray’s name remains on the cover in the position of the author. The name of the real author holds its significance in its role of identifying and categorising novels. Gray’s name being on the cover acts as a constant reminder of Tunnock’s fictionality. Through this we are asked to consider the fictionality of all authors, whether they hold the same name as the writer or not.

The role of the alternative author functions primarily as a binary with the role of the editor. In this binary we are presented with two constructed authority figures, that of the author -Tunnock or McCandless- and that of the editor, Alasdair Gray. While having Alasdair Gray function as an editor may add to the fictional truth of the alternative author, it also acts as a consistent reminder of the real authorship. The work of Tunnock and McCandless is transformed from manuscripts to novels through their deaths. It is only in their death that the editor comes to possess the manuscripts. Despite this it is through the work that they live, as they are creations of the writer Alasdair Gray. Transformation through death and rebirth is a significant political motif in Gray's novels, which will be explored at length in the fourth chapter. Here, however, we can see these as further iterations of Gray's dissection of authorial authority, a power he utilises and unmasks.

Each of these polyphonic authorial voices creates a tension between the constructed figure of the author and the real person behind the writing, establishing a dialogue within the texts regarding authority and power structures.¹¹ By consistently drawing attention to the author as constituted an anxiety of form appears. The traditional textual authority of the author is positioned against a new, unestablished authority. Gray presents this anxiety that occurs from this new, unknown, authority as part of the dialogue about national independence, which will be discussed in the proceeding chapter. The roles discussed in this chapter are compartmentalisations of the author figure, and by presenting them in this polyphonic manner Gray demonstrates that the author is not a singular figure but a

¹¹ I drew from some of the material in this paragraph in the published article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*" in *Limina* to discuss the impact of the implied author on the construction of the author.

multitude of authorial aspects in dialogue with each other. This identity is not always able to be controlled by the author, as authority does not lie solely with the author. Unlike the intrusive author, the editor shares a name with the real-life author, Alasdair Gray. This shared name places Gray the author into the text. However, by constantly drawing attention to the constructed nature of the author through multiple authorial figures the “real author” is also presented as a construction, and therefore, as discussed in the previous chapter, becomes removed from the text. Gray’s authors provide a political discussion of authority and the need for an egalitarian approach to power structures and national identity. The following chapter will discuss how, through the tension in the novels between reality and fantasy, the nature of the anxiety around changing models of power is able to be explored. The roles identified in this chapter expose textual authorities that may normally be implicit in the text or through the writing process. The compartmentalised authors are the beginning of Gray’s dialogue with the reader on authority. This dialogue Gray engages with in his novels offer a plethora of voices, not just those that reflect Gray’s own views and feelings. In the Epilogue of *1982*, *Janine* Gray writes, “Though Jock McLeish is an invention of mine I disagree with him” (335). Gray, in offering the reader multiple author figures, whose voices may reflect their own, invites the reader to share the textual authority. The author roles also work as a tool to consider the constructions of authority, as Gray creates polyphonic authors that deconstruct power structures in order to allow for an egalitarian reconstruction of authority. Considering authority in Gray’s multifaceted manner requires consistent reflection and dialogue. As the mechanics of differing textual authorities are made explicit, their influence on the text, and their relationship to each other, produces an ever-changing image of the author. Gray’s novels reflect various forms of textual authority, and in doing so suggests a new way of

considering political authority. This approach to political authority is reflective of the multitude of voices and figures that make up the nation.

CHAPTER THREE: GENRE AND POLITICS

Alasdair Gray is publicly outspoken on issues of Scottish independence and nationalism and is considered a national figure of the independence movement (Harvie 77). “Work as if you are in the early days of a better nation” (*Janine*, 175) has been engraved into Canongate wall, becoming part of Scottish political discourse. Christopher Harvie suggests that it “has become a slogan for the distinctive Scottish resistance to Thatcherism” (77). Despite his dissatisfaction with the current state of Scottish politics and Scotland's position in the United Kingdom, Gray has yet to articulate an alternative model, apart from one that is independent and is representative of the Scottish people. This chapter will explore the way Gray uses genre to address the politics of external governance and the uncertainty of a future without it. Through realism and fantasy Gray explores established and new models of authority. The novels critique models of authorship through these genres, aligning realism with the singular author and fantasy with multiple authors. Realism is a stable genre throughout the novels, in contrast to fantasy, that takes many forms, including science-fiction and erotic fantasy. Genre provides the reader with familiar conventions that follow structural and discursive patterns. These recognisable features form a textual authority. Foucault outlines genre as an element that contributes to forming author-function (1482-1483). Authors become known for genre, and therefore the reader brings an expectation of this genre to novels by the same author. From this I suggest that genre plays a significant role in textual authority. Genre can therefore be discussed in a similar manner to the authorial figures presented in the previous chapter. Genre is another tool Gray uses to consider the construction and reconsideration of power structures. By juxtaposing genre conventions, Gray provides a critique of the authority of genre, and in doing so the constructions of the nation.

The previous chapter explored the way compartmentalised authors destabilise of the authority of the author. As I argued, Gray compartmentalizes the author into different figures in the text to present the many voices and functions of the author, and the authority these positions hold. These authorities include authors and the artist, as well as external authorities such as critics and the editor. Dividing the author in this way exposes the various mechanisms of authorship, and shows authorship working both within the text and externally to the text. The author influences the reader, and yet at the same time is also a construction of the text. Compartmentalising the author role and presenting them as different figures in the novels exposes the elements that make up the textual authority that is often attributed solely to the author. Each of the authorial figures Gray has created reveals a different textual authority. By highlighting the manner in which authority is held by the author, the power they hold is potentially diminished. The author thereby becomes a critical position in the text, enabling a discussion of textual authority. Gray presents textual authority as one not held by a single “author figure”, but by multiple authorial positions, each enacting their own form of power.

This chapter will explore the relationship between authorship and genre in Gray's novels. It will examine established and new models of authorial power and how these power structures relate to non-textual authority. From this it will draw connections between genre, authorship and politics, and how their relationship to each other contributes to Gray's discussion of Scottish nationalism and politics. This chapter, will focus on Gray's novels, but will also draw on his nonfictional works to establish a political position in his fiction. This chapter will examine the ways author anxiety manifests in Alasdair Gray's novels, and the manner in which Gray attempts to regain textual authority. This author anxiety, which may appear to contradict Gray's egalitarian aesthetic, is used by Gray to acknowledge the concerns of people in the nation regarding replacing power structures. By

addressing the uncertainty that comes with reconsidering authority, Gray provides a dialogue that includes both those for and against national independence. How Gray resolves this tension is the focus of the final chapter of the thesis, which will analyse Gray's resolution of this anxiety through the theme of transformation. The final chapter will show that Gray's use of authorship is in line with his political ideas regarding Scottish independence and identity, and although not a conclusive political alternative, creates a broadened and egalitarian approach to authority.¹² This authority is transparent, multifaceted and interactive. The writer may remain the perceived central authority, however, s/he is not the sole authority on the text. The author is central as the writer of the text, but as demonstrated in the previous chapter, textual authority is held by a range of figures, including editors, critics and the reader.

Realism and Fantasy

Gray's novels are difficult to define by a single genre; rather they juxtapose and combine the conventions of several genres within the same novel. These conventions could be perceived as numerous genres, however for this thesis I have chosen to analyse them using two categories: realism and fantasy. The realist convention is to faithfully depict reality or provide a sense of fidelity to an actual way of life. For this thesis fantasy will include the fantastical, hallucinations and sexual fantasies. Each of these enact a distortion of the perceived reality. While separating the genre conventions of Gray's novels in this manner may seem simplistic, the multifaceted nature of fantasy is reflective of the

¹² I drew from some of the material in this paragraph in the published article "Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*" in *Limina* to discuss the political implications of the implied author in *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*.

aesthetic of Gray's novels, demonstrated in the previous chapter through multiple author figures. By discussing the genre conventions of realism and fantasy, and the textual authority that comes with these genres, I can further analyse the dialogical authority in Gray's novels. Gray's novels acknowledge the complexities that come with reconsidering established authority conventions.

Genre has a role in the construction of the author, as a discursive factor that influences author-function. The reader brings to the text expectations of the author, with genre influencing the reader's preconceived notions drawn from other texts by the same author. Mikhail Bakhtin discusses genre and authorship, writing, "The author's quest for his own words are basically quests for genre and style, quests for an authorial position" (149). Gray uses genre as another tool to examine authorial positions and to explore old and new models of authority in authorship. As mentioned, the author has in the past been central to the critical discussion of the text. The authority of the text was held by the author alone. This monologic approach to writing was considered by Bakhtin to be surpassed by the dialogic approach (*Dostoyevsky* 78). In this way monological authorship can be viewed as an established model of authority, and the dialogical a new form. I argue that Gray uses a monological approach to realism in his novels as a way to address the anxiety of the author in losing their authority over the text. Monological realism places the author as the central authority of the text. Realism, in its attempts to represent reality, limits the text to a single referential meaning. This meaning correlates to the author's intention for the text, and thus reinstates their authority over the text. Gray makes this explicit by employing author-function, drawing on the external figure of Alasdair Gray, the man, public intellectual and artist. Through the use of realism in his novels, Gray appears to be attempting to align the text with the discourse of the author. Characters that Gray constructs through the conventions of realism become "objects of authorial discourse" (Bakhtin *Dostoevsky* 7),

there to enact the author's views and ideologies. Gray's use of realist conventions in his novels operates in contrast to his use of fantasy conventions, within the same novel.

Fantasy is used in Gray's novels in a dialogical manner. Through science fiction, alternative worlds, and hallucinations, Gray presents a destabilized author. At times Gray enacts the dialogical author by placing the (fictionalized) author in dialogue with the characters, as seen with the intrusive author. This author-figure is presented as being as much a construction as the other characters in the novel and thereby the author becomes dialogical. This dialogical author can be considered in the same manner as the implied author. The dialogical author, much like the implied author, is only present through the text. Bakhtin writes of the author, "When we try to imagine the primary author figuratively, we ourselves are creating his image, that is, we ourselves become the primary author of the image" ("Notes" 148). Bakhtin refers to the author we create as the "secondary author" who, like the implied author, is a construction, as Bakhtin states, "The primary author cannot be an image. He eludes any figurative representation" ("Notes" 148). As we cannot access the author through the text, the author can only be implied by the text.

The contrast between monological realism and the dialogical nature of Gray's writing express a form of anxiety that results from the destabilisation of authorial power through the compartmentalisation of authorial roles. James Cresswell and Cor Baerveldt define monological realism, writing, "Monologic realism referred to the claim that there is a reality about the self that is finalized and complete" (265). One way an author may try and enact this form of monological realism is through the use of autobiographical content in the texts. The writer draws on their own life, and in doing so positions the reader to view the writer's reality as complete. This can occur in novels that are not strictly autobiographical. Philippe Lejeune argues the novel holds space within the text that allows

for an autobiographical reading, “The reader is thus invited to read novels not only as fictions referring to a truth of ‘human nature’, but also as revealing phantasms of the individual” (27). He refers to this agreement between author and reader “the phantasmatic pact” (27). When the author makes it explicit that the novel has a relationship with autobiography they enter a pact with the reader that the novel contains the “intimate truth of the author” (27). I argue that when this pact is entered into through realism this “truth” increases the authority of the text. The text is legitimised by personal mimesis. As the author is representing his/her own life within the text the autobiographical aspect of the text holds greater authority because only the author can know his/her own “intimate truth” and therefore is finalised and complete. In explicitly evoking the phantasmatic pact the author calls on author-function, inviting the reader into what the reader perceives to be the author's personal life.

Whilst Gray’s novels present multiple authors, as outlined in the previous chapter, the authorial positions are neither stable, nor consistent. By mixing modes, authorship is held in different and varied positions at different times within the text, creating an authorship that is dialogical. The genres form a dialogue around single and pluralistic authorities. This dialogue poses questions about the familiarity of the current system and the uncertainty of future, yet to be determined, models. The single author of the genre convention draws heavily on author-function. The author is perceived to be that of the author whose name appears on the cover, and it is therefore this figure who is deemed to hold the authority over the text. This attempts to create a single authority over the text, however this is always contradicted and juxtaposed in Gray’s novels with fantasy that features multiple authorial positions. It is through fantasy that the author figure is compartmentalised, and therefore becomes a multifaceted figure.

The multiplicity of authors in Alasdair Gray's novels exist in the fantastical: Lanark's interaction with Nastler, McLeish's fantasies and hallucinations, the manuscripts of McCandless and Tunnock. Fantasy acts to distort the "real" and in doing so draws attention to the "unreal" nature of realism. This creates a tension between the two genres, and the authorities they hold. By using both conventions in the novels, Gray enacts the social dialogue regarding national independence. The realist conventions may not achieve a monological author position, however, it does acknowledge the concerns of those opposed or wary of reconstructing the governing system. In Gray's egalitarian aesthetic all voices of those who constitute the nation should be heard. Fantasy also acts to distort the authority held by Gray's realism, and with it the singular authorial power. As fantasy presents various voices it allows for the exploration of new and different models of authority. These models however are not stable, never following the same conventions. The egalitarian aesthetic is pluralistic, but is also unpredictable. The instability of the genre of fantasy reflects the uncertainty of future governance.

In juxtaposing realism and fantasy Gray's novels highlight the relationship between monologic and dialogic that Bakhtin points out. The monological, single authorship model of realism, is complicated by the way realism is placed within Gray's novels. In *Lanark*, Books 1 and 2 follow the conventions of realism, however they are placed within the fantasy story of Books 3 and 4. The narrator of Books 1 and 2 is not an omnipresent narrator, but rather the Oracle, and therefore follows a multiple author model, with multiple authorial figures constructing the narrative. The monological voice is just one in the polyphonic structure of the text. Through this we see that despite the attempt to regain authority through the use of monological realism the author remains a dialogical figure. As mentioned, by enacting an attempt to retain centralised authority through realism, Gray is forming an egalitarian aesthetic that includes the voices of all those that form the nation,

not just those that seek independence. The authors in Alasdair Gray's novels are in constant dialogue with the rest of the text, as well as with texts external to the novels and simultaneously with the reader who will inevitably construct both the text and the image of the author.

Gray creates polyphonic texts, which are also in dialogue with each other as a body of work, to present the various approaches to authority. In this way, Gray uses realism and fantasy to examine the tension between established and new forms of authority. By positioning the monological realism in direct contrast to dialogical fantasy, Gray suggests the writer is reluctant to relinquish the centralised authority of the author. Viewed in terms of Gray's politics, for Scotland to become independent it would need to give up the political system that has been in place for centuries, as well as for many, a part of their civic or national identity. Independence may lead to a system that better represents the people of Scotland, however, there is wariness of the unknown. By placing realism and fantasy in contrast with each other this tension is enacted in the text. Presenting this tension Gray also offers an opportunity to suggest a way to resolve it. This resolution will be the focus of the proceeding chapter, arguing that transformative actions in Gray's novels suggest autonomy and dialogue are required to achieve an egalitarian political system.

Politics

Alasdair Gray's novels have been discussed at length regarding their political engagement (Lee; Stirling; March; Lehner). The connection between his writing and his politics moves beyond symbolic discussion of independence and nationalism. Authorship in Gray's novels addresses issues of authority and power structures within politics, and explores the complexities of national identity. Gray uses various devices to explore politics, including sadomasochism, illustrations and the use of Scots language. In

discussing the formation of a new nation, Gray is able to explore the anxieties that arise when the future political and national state is unknown. The use of fantasy and realism present a dialogue from which emerges Gray's political views on forming a new nation in a postmodernist society.

"The Ministry of Voices" in *1982, Janine* discussed in the previous chapter, is not only postmodernist play but can also be seen as political. This section of *1982, Janine* acts as a transition moment for McLeish, who feels helpless about his life and also about his country, stating earlier in the novel, "we are a poor little country, always have been, always will be" (56). He sees self-governance as a way to "blame ourselves" instead of Westminster. It is in "The Ministry of Voices" we find the quote: "work as if you were in the early days of a better nation" (Gray *1982, Janine* 175) which is spoken by the creator voice. Two scenes dominate the central voice. A fantasy of Superb, a character in McLeish's fantasies, and a memory of Hislop, a cruel teacher who McLeish suspects may be his real father. Each of these scenes present figures abusing power: McLeish over women through his sadomasochistic fantasy, and Hislop over his students. As the creator figure states "work as if you were in the early days of a better nation" in visual juxtaposition to McLeish's fantasy, the implied author makes the connection between the Scottish political state and sadomasochism explicit.

Donaldson and Lee discuss the use of sadomasochism in Gray's novels as a tool to discuss politics. They write of *1982, Janine*,

At the "crux" of the story Janine realizes "*it is her inescapable fate to be a character in a story by someone who dictates every one of her movements and emotions, someone she will never meet and cannot appeal to*" (332); here Janine and McLeish occupy a similar ontological

space. Author and character alike have been predictable actors in a script written by job, gender, country, and class (157).

Unlike Janine, McLeish is given an opportunity to meet his creator. Janine is destined to repeat her story arc over and over again, never completing her narrative. She is simply a tool to explore different fantasies for McLeish. This idea is important in terms of genre. Fantasy allows for the exploration of different ideas, whereas Gray's use of realism is more finalized. Both characters may occupy a similar ontological space, however, McLeish's narrative has a known ending. Fantasy offers no conclusion or stability. In juxtaposing these genres realism is presented with resolve, in contrast to the endless possibilities of fantasy.

Something Leather relies primarily on realism within its narrative framework. *Something Leather* follows four female characters, June, Sanga, Donaldda and Harry, exploring the different circumstances that lead them to their involvement in enacting Harry's sadomasochistic fantasy. The fantasy aspect of the novel is not fantastical or imaginary, as it is in *1982, Janine*, but is the enactment of sexual fantasy and sadomasochism. The desires of each of the characters are transformed into reality, contrasting with *1982, Janine*, in which fantasies are never completed, let alone become reality. However, the narrative of *Something Leather* is fragmented, divided into character perspectives. Nationality plays a significant role in characterization. The primary sadistic character is a wealthy English woman, who is assisted by two lower-class Scottish women. This power dynamic is reflective of the current British/Scottish situation. The power of the English, and the arguable abuse of this power, is only possible through the assistance of Scots. The back stories of these two women present the reality of the working class in Scotland. Their involvement with Harry is a result of their misfortune, as their role in

Harry's fantasies give them not only security, but also a sense of power. In this fantasy is presented as a false form of dialogue. Donaldson and Lee are critical of the use of sadomasochism in *Something Leather*, writing, "Unless the novel seriously intends to suggest that sadomasochistic lesbian rape leads to liberty, the role of ideology in making victims complicitous with their oppressors needs to be more apparent, since it may be argued that June's final victimization is that she believes her rape helps her" (156). Presenting rape in this problematic form, highlights problems with assuming egalitarian authority through dialogical fantasy. Although all women involved in fulfilling Harry's fantasy believe that they hold a position of authority, it is Harry who holds all the power. In presenting Senga and Donald's backstories, the realist form of the novel suggests that their narrative will continue to be determined by their social status. Fantasy in *Something Leather* only gives the appearance of egalitarian authority, used by the wealthy to reaffirm their own power. This suggests an implied author who is cautious of a national dialogue that may be controlled by the more powerful England. I take up this issue further in the following chapter, discussing the transformative role of rape in Gray's novels.

The political focus of Gray's work is centred on ideas of national and class identity, and much of the critical engagement with this regards his construction of Scottish identity, in opposition to British identity. Eleanor Bell in *Questioning Scotland* discusses the theoretical view of the nation in *Lanark*. Bell writes:

If *Lanark* in part represents life after the 1979 referendum, the spiralling and escalation into postmodern capitalism, then once again fiction is seen to evade overdefinition, problematizing the notion of an 'imagined community' whilst also paradoxically helping ground it. The text therefore self-consciously questions how a country might be imagined as a community (109)

Lanark creates two communities through Glasgow and Unthank. One that is reflective of the community of those shaped by the circumstances of the people of Glasgow, and the world events that contributed to these conditions. The other, a fantastical reality, whose community becomes aware of the flaws in the controlling governance, and attempts to change it. These communities allow for the discussion of the present community and the possible future communities. I argue that through Unthank, Gray is able to explore the ways Glasgow, and Scotland itself, are able to imagine their nationhood, and in doing so enters into a dialogue with the reader to encourage them to explore new forms of nationalism. Through this dialogue, I argue that Gray's nationalism and politics play significant roles in the construction of the author through both the implied author, and through author-function. The political tone of Gray's novels develops an implied author that is concerned with national identity and sovereignty, building an image of Alasdair Gray, the Scottish author. This also informs Gray's external role as public intellectual. In *Independence* Gray writes: "This book will end on a note of restrained Utopian hope" (15). This statement can be said to be true of Gray's novels as well. Gray never suggests a stable image of the Scottish nation; instead he creates possibilities to construct new and different ideas of nationhood. Each new conception comes from a new authorial position, at the same time creating a consistent implied author who believes Scotland can find its national identity through independence. Some examples of these authorial position are seen in *Poor Things* and *1982, Janine*. Victoria McCandless in *Poor Things* is openly socialist, writing in a booklet titled "A Loving Economy – A Mother's Recipe for the End of All National and Class Warfare", "I was (as I am) a radical socialist" (306). Gray, the editor, writes of her political engagement, "When Maclean did not join the newly formed British Communist Party but formed the Scottish Workers' Republican Party she offered him her home as a meeting place" (312). The Bella/Victoria connection suggests that an

independent Scotland should be a socialist workers' republic. 1982, *Janine* does not suggest a form of governance but through McLeish's rejection of his Tory political views he becomes optimistic about his future, stating, "I will have the poise of an acrobat about to step on to a high wire, of an actor about to take the stage in a wholly new play. Nobody will guess what I am going to do. I do not know it myself. But I will not do nothing" (331). Through an egalitarian aesthetic, authorial positions can be differing and equal. In this Gray suggests a pluralistic nationalism, in which national identity is consistently re-evaluated and reconsidered through dialogue.

While realism is used to be critical of the perceived dialogue of fantasy in *Something Leather*, fantasy in *Lanark* is positioned as rejecting monological realism. O'Gallagher points out the critical approach to realism in *Lanark*, writing,

the relationship between the forms of linguistic, generic and institutional authority within which Gray works and the association of his political and artistic project with groups of people traditionally denied access to such authority can be seen to drive the assaults that *Lanark* makes upon the form of the realist novel, a form increasingly associated with the rise of the mercantile bourgeoisie and the subsequent imperial expansion of the European powers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (536).

Gray's use of realism within fantasy distorts the authority that comes with realism. By using a genre associated with outdated class structures and imperialism as part of a fantasy narrative the authority that comes with realism is destabilised. This can be seen in the narrative of Duncan Thaw in *Lanark*. The realist style of Books One and Two follow the life of Thaw in post-war Glasgow, through his education, aspirations to become an artist and eventual madness resulting in his death. The monological realism of Thaw's narrative

is brought into question by its narrator. Within the narrative of *Lanark*, the Oracle narrates the life of Thaw. However, Lanark heard a male Oracle tell him Thaw's story, at the same time as Rima heard a female Oracle tell Rima her own story, suggesting that the Oracle is not a stable authority. Authority in the text is constantly in question. The association with genre and imperial governance suggested by O'Gallagher highlights the importance of rejecting monological power structures in favour of an egalitarian, dialogical politics.

Despite this rejection of realism through positioning it within the fantasy narrative, in the realist narrative we find the use of Scots. Lee writes of the use of Scots in *Lanark*,

the Glasgow chapters contain Scots words, and while Realist convention would assume that this use of language captures the true flavor of the locale, it in fact distances the reader unfamiliar with Scots just as much as do the non-referential words in *Unthank*. Words such as “dauner” (walk or stroll), “keeked” (peeked), and “midden-rakers” (garbage pickers) make Glasgow as distant and as fictional a world as *Unthank* (Lee, 103).

The use of Scots in Gray's novels, draws on a situated linguistic community and establishes the novels as a national form of literature. Benedict Anderson discusses the formation of nationalism through printed language shared by a community. Anderson writes, “print-capitalism created languages-of-power” (45). Establishing Scots as a print-language Gray empowers a national identity distinguished as Scotland's identity apart from the United Kingdom, as a separate regional community. While this suggests an independent nation, the use of a Glaswegian dialect in the novel to form a national literature remains monological. This identity is held above other Scottish identities, rather than equal to others.

In contrast, the use of place names as a common language is inclusive of all those who live in Scotland. Gray uses Scottish place names to name characters and places in the Lanark narrative. This knowledge requires some familiarity with Scotland's geography. Gray uses Scottish names as a device of a national literature. However, through genre he is able to play with the idea of national literature. The Thaw narrative also draws on Scottish familiarity, however the Lanark narrative makes the familiar unfamiliar. The Lanark narrative becomes a metaphor for the landscape of Scotland, although politically as opposed to geographically. This political landscape is presented in the power of The Institution, which feeds off people and exploits the misfortunes of others instead of helping them. The use of Scottish place names as a device of national literature, suggests a connection between Unthank/Institution and Scotland/England. This distortion of the known acts to highlight the uncertainty in breaking down known power structure. Unthank may be a dialogical reconsideration of Scotland, however it is reflective of the current political state, if not worse. The Thaw narrative might highlight the issues of the current system, however in its realism there is a sense of stability, through the seemingly fixed meaning the narrative.

Differing from the stark contrast of realism and fantasy in *Lanark, 1982, Janine*, weaves sexual fantasy into the realism narrative. In discussing these sexual fantasies Stefanie Lehner argues that "Gray exploits the political implications of sexual metaphors by appropriating the figure of an abused women as an allegory for Scotland [...] Jock is the representative of a panoptical system of regulation and control, which simultaneously emasculates him" and that "Jock seeks to compensate by asserting patriarchal dominance in his pornographic projections" (230). The interplay between fantasy and realism in *1982, Janine* presents the complexities of both established and new models of authority, exposing them both as flawed systems. McLeish's sexual fantasies are a direct response to

his own reality, creating a form of power he feels he does not have in his own life. However, these fantasies are incomplete, and constantly changing. Instead the issues of McLeish's reality inhibit his fantasies. He cannot settle on a single fantasy, or bring himself to conclude any of these fantasies. The conflicting genres expose the issue of proposed new power structures that might come with Scottish independence, as the pluralistic authority demonstrated through fantasy, although dialogical, is developed through the monologic realist narrative. Ultimately in *1982, Janine* the juxtaposed textual authorities present no fixed or determined alternative to the current system, and issues of the established system consistently arise.

Gray's use of illustration plays an important role in the politicization of his novels. As discussed previously, *Bella Caledonia* has become a significant image in the Scottish independence campaign. The book plates of *Lanark* also contribute to the political discussion in the novel. Lee writes that the book plates "point to parodic intertexts which give the novel its particular ontological status" (105). The book plate of Book Four provides a critique of the Commonwealth. The plate has written, "The matter, form and power of a commonwealth" in between two columns. One column presents the military services, underneath a baton, showing the Union Jack. The other column presents the education system, including a classroom and a factory. A king is represented at the top of the image, made out of people. It is with force and persuasion, the sword and the staff, that the king wields his power. The image suggests the control of the Commonwealth is held through the control of authority structures represented in the images of police, military and war, and the control of education and jobs. The top of the image suggests a different way of thinking about the nation, with the words, "By Arts is formed that Great Mechanical Man called a state" (355). The content of Book Four is set in fantastical Unthank as Lanark becomes Lord Provost of Unthank. The book plate positions the reader

to view the political contents of the fantastical with the real world. The novel, as art, proposes a new consideration of the nation. In proposing this idea through art, author-function is called on through Alasdair Gray the artist, and once again “Alasdair Gray” is positioned at the authority of the text.

Fantasy is the primary genre of *A History Maker*. The futuristic society in *A History Maker* combines medieval-like war with an intrusive media as a form of sport. The protagonist, Wat Dryhope becomes obsessed with twentieth century wars, which for him, is ancient history. Whilst battles have become entertainment, history is no longer considered. In framing the narrative with a letter from Wat Dryhope’s mother and a postscript from a student of folklore, Dryhope’s tale becomes history. *A History Maker* becomes a commentary on the importance of remembering and learning from history. Playing with the postmodernist idea that history has ended, Gray demonstrates the consistent occurrence of and need for history. Here Gray uses fantasy to call for new history to be made, and suggests that compliance with a system simply because it is historically the way things have been done is flawed. The power structure in *A History Maker* is seemingly different from the present structures, however, “the public eye” remains a controlling mechanism. Fantasy in Gray’s novel presents different forms of power structures, but also allows Gray to explore all alternatives, including those that may not be considered better than the current systems. The realism in *A History Maker* comes in the notes, which at times recall historical events or time periods. In dividing up history into historical time periods and power structures Gray highlights both the restrictiveness of defining these periods. The reader is aware of overlapping of these periods and the complexities of these histories. By placing this within the notes, history becomes viewed as important for understanding the text. The history in this text is presented as monological. It is its own form of authority, positioned as non-partisan. The authority of

the author of the notes determines the textual meaning through clarification and contextualisation.

Forms of Authority: Established v New

Gray's use of realism and fantasy in his novels correlate to Bakhtin's idea of the monological and dialogical novel. Through these correlations, the textual authority held by genre is exposed. The shift that Bakhtin identifies, from the monological to the polyphonic novel is reflected through the political shift that Gray presents in his egalitarian aesthetic. Drawing on the authorities that are held by genre conventions, Gray uses genre to highlight established power structures and the instability of forgoing it for an unknown system. Gray uses the novel form to engage in a dialogue around nationalism, and as part of this dialogue acknowledges the complexities of destabilising and restructuring authority. He uses authority models of authorship held in realism and fantasy to address the anxieties that may act as hurdles to reconsidering the nation.

Benedict Anderson's discussion of nationalism and its relation to the idea of the nation in *Imagined Communities* offers a way of thinking about the role of the nation in Gray's novels. He discusses the shift from sacred communities, those constructed around religion, to national communities. He argues that the novel and the newspaper are important devices in this shift as they "provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation" (25). The novel is representative of the imagined community of the nation, as all characters are bound within the novel, regardless of their knowledge of each other. The national community are similarly bound by time and space. The "nationalist" novel utilizes "a sociological landscape of a fixity that fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside" (30). In the case of Gray's novels this

means that a Scottish reader would recognize not only the landscapes, but also the social landscape of the historical period in which the novel is set. The reader becomes part of a group, or community who recognize these features as familiar. The role of the novel in forming national identity is significant for Gray's work. Gray suggests that Scottish identity is fluid, multifaceted and complex, and in reflecting the Scottish landscapes in his novels considers this identity as one that should be determined by those that consider themselves a part of the national community. In Gray's work the novel is again at the forefront of a shift in community.

Gray's novels focus on the political landscape of Scotland, however the politics of the novels is not specifically Scottish. In an interview with Glenda Norquay and Carol Anderson in 1983 Alasdair Gray was asked, "do you see Scotland as illustrative of more universal issues, or do you feel that your interests lies in the peculiarities of the Scottish situation?" In his response he states "Scottish material does not inhibit me – it is the most available". He continues, "A proper understanding and presentation of Scottish peculiarities will firstly, be handy for ourselves, and secondly to other folk, if our language is as skilfully exact and arresting as we can make it, while acquiring and begetting a temper that gives it smoothness" (Q6). Whilst Gray discusses authority and politics in terms of Scotland, Gray's novels reach further than the Scottish community. This thesis is not an exploration of Gray's commentary on Scotland's politics. Rather, it looks at Gray's own politics regarding authority and sovereignty. In his novels, the construction of self Gray draws on his own national identity as a Scot, however, his politics are not limited to the political landscape of Scotland. Instead, Gray's politics reflect the considerations necessary for any nation seeking independence. His novels explore the anticipated nation, one which is yet to be constructed. Through the novel and its reflection of the imagined community, Gray presents change in the condition of national movements in the 20th and

21st centuries, as globalism lends itself to transient national communities that consistently influence and restructure national identity.

In Gray's novels, realism is used to present established models of authority, and fantasy represents future models. This is most explicitly seen in *Lanark* between the Thaw and Lanark narratives. The Thaw narrative parallels with the life of Alasdair Gray, presenting a somewhat autobiographical narrative. Lanark's narrative however is set in a science-fictional, dystopian alternative world that in some ways mirrors the world of Thaw. In separating the narratives through Books and genre the two stories appear to be almost as standalone stories. This is emphasised by the visual structure of the novel. As addressed in the previous chapter, the structure of the books in *Lanark* has been discussed by scholars at length. McHale notes the unique structure of *Lanark* in *Postmodern Fiction* when discussing the ways of presenting readers with order choice in the reading of the novel:

This strategy gives the reader two alternatives, either to read the text in the order indicated by the numbering, or to read it in the order in which it is actually printed. I am aware of only one text that exploits this possibility: Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*, which begins with Book 3, followed by the Prologue, then Books 1 and 2, then Book 4, interrupted about two-thirds of the way through by the Epilogue. In fact, the out-of-order numbering of *Lanark* is not designed to give the reader a real choice among alternatives, but merely "lays bare" this novel's in medias res structure (193).

The novel appears to play on structural norms of the form although it remains structured with sequential chapters, creating a text that is both non-conventional and conventional at

once. This structural play is important when considering the use of genre in the novel. The novel appears to have an alternative reading, one which follows the sequential order to the Books and therefore places realism and fantasy side by side. The narrative, however, does not allow for that reading. O’Gallagher points out,

It is worth remembering, however, that it is the Duncan Thaw narrative, set in Glasgow, that is framed by the events narrated in books Three and Four of *Lanark*, not the other way around. Moreover, the fact that the narrator of the novel’s ‘realistic’ sections is a character within the wider narrative while no such device is employed in the Unthank sections, highlights the literary nature of Duncan Thaw’s story and undermines any claim it might make to primacy, or indeed, to realism (538).

Any authority given to Thaw’s narrative through realism is undermined by its placement within the Lanark narrative. Thaw’s narrative is therefore as much dialogical fantasy as the narrative of Lanark.

The undermining of authority is seen again in *Poor Things*, although this time it is realism that attempts to undermine fantasy. Victoria McCandless’ letter attempts to discredit Archibald McCandless’ account of her life, by addressing the plausibility of the story. As discussed in the previous chapter, the use of typography and art in *Poor Things* suggests various levels of authority. Victoria’s letter holds authority through both its visual appearance through the typographic hierarchy discussed in the previous chapter, and its rational and realistic perspective. Despite this, the name of the author, Alasdair Gray, in the role of editor holds ultimate authority over the text through his notes, as his final comments position McCandless’ narrative as fictional truth, giving Victoria McCandless two ages at the time of her death. Drawing on a device used in nonfictional texts, Alasdair

Gray makes notes on the text drawing McCandless' narrative into the reader's reality through the inclusion of historical facts. The shared name, Alasdair Gray, returns the authority of the text to the central figure of the author. The author's interpretation of the narrative is held above the others, including that of Victoria McCandless, who the story is about, and fictional historian Michael Donnelley. The fantastical tale of Bella Baxter provides multiple authors and authorities, although, it is Alasdair Gray that concludes the text.

Despite the placement of Thaw's narrative within Lanark's there appears to be an attempt by Gray to regain authorial authority over the text through Thaw's story. In Thaw's narrative, autobiographical reference to Alasdair Gray can be seen. Duncan Thaw is plagued throughout his narrative with asthma, a condition Gray suffers from and acknowledges in his author biographies. Chapter 18 of *Lanark*, titled "Nature", details a prolonged asthma attack which Ruth describes as "one of his wheezy spells" (180). Later Thaw is admitted to hospital with "a pronounced bronchial infection based on a chronic weakness" (300). Thaw is also an artist, producing a mural, which reflects Gray's own artist work. The physical and social landscape of Glasgow are also recognisable in the Thaw narrative. The autobiographical nature of Book One and Book Two of *Lanark* are acknowledged by scholars, with Stephen Bernstein describing *Lanark* as "a complex narrative that juxtaposes a semi-autobiographical portrait of a Glasgow artist in the 1940s and 1950s with a tale of his alter ego's travails in the dystopian Glasgow-like Unthank" (*Alasdair Gray* 18). Douglas Gifford in "Scottish Fiction 1980-81: The Importance of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*" notes: "one cannot go far into this novel without becoming aware of just how personal and autobiographical it is" (233). This is an interesting perspective because without knowledge of the man Alasdair Gray it is not possible to determine the autobiographical elements. However, as with many novels, brief biographical information

provided gives the reader some insight into the author's life. As Gray writes his own biographical "blurb" (King 117-18), he is able to control the information the reader has about his life. Gray describes himself, in the 2011 edition of *Lanark*, as "an old asthmatic Glaswegian who lives by painting, writing and book design" (third cover). By providing the information of his being an artist, an asthmatic and Glaswegian, the story of Duncan Thaw can be read as partially autobiographical. In this the phantasmatic pact is established and the narrative of Duncan Thaw can be read as holding an "intimate truth" of the author, Alasdair Gray. As the "intimate truth" of Alasdair Gray can only be known by the man himself, the authority of Thaw's narrative is solely Gray's.

Through the phantasmatic pact Book One and Book Two can be read as a *Künstlerroman*; Thaw's story of becoming an artist mirrors Gray's own. Although the reader is not introduced to Thaw until later in the novel, the reader is introduced to the idea of Thaw being a version of Gray in the first few pages of the novel, as Douglas Gifford states:

before "Lanark" is coined the nameless one "remembered a short word beginning with *Th* or *Gr*..." "Thaw" or "Gray" are obviously meant, the first being the name of the protagonist of the two middle books, the naturalistic and "autobiographical" central layers (*Scottish Fiction* 233).

While the autobiographical nature of the text is significant, the manner in which the Thaw narrative is juxtaposed against the fantastical character of Lanark demonstrates that Gray as the author is attempting to position himself as the centre of the text. The unconventional ordering of the Books, however, suggests that this centralisation of the realist and somewhat autobiographical narrative requires consideration. We can consider the books in their numerical order, as opposed to the order in which they are presented,

book three, one, two, four. In this order the author, Alasdair Gray, becomes more removed from the text as story progresses, allowing for Nastler to appear later in the novel and claim authorship of Lanark. The fantastical story of Lanark mirrors that of Thaw's in many ways. For example, both Thaw and Lanark refuse to eat the food provided to them. This mirroring however is distorted. The world of Lanark actualizes metaphors. Thaw refuses to eat his mother's shepherd's pie because he didn't like the look of it, but when forced to eat it enjoyed it. Lanark ate the food until he found that it was made of people, and then refused to eat. Thaw's experience is a relatively normal childhood experience, whereas Lanark's is literally a case of a government feeding off its people. Thaw's resistance was about autonomy, making decisions of his own based on his own judgment, whereas Lanark's was morally and politically driven.

Old Men in Love has an alternating structure, moving between the claimed author, John Tunner, attempting to write historical fiction and his diaries. In the diary sections the work is edited by the fictional Alasdair Gray. As with *Poor Things* the name of the author gives the text more authority. The diaries provided contemporary political commentary that juxtaposes the political aspects of the historical fiction. As Tunner is the author of these stories they are further distanced from reality, presenting distorted images of the past. Fantasy in Gray's novels does not always present an ideal future, and in the case of *Old Men in Love* fantasy can be used to expose fears of the unknown. The editor's comments throughout the novel proposes that there is a mistrust in the fictional truth of the text, drawing the authority back to Alasdair Gray.

Genre is determined by established conventions that are recognisable. In this way they follow traditions that can be repeated, and manipulated. Much like nationalistic traditions, genre traditions develop within systems. Gray draws on traditions in writing through parody. This is seen in the fantasy parody of *Frankenstein* in *Poor Things*, and

Lanark's philosophical parody of Hobbes' Leviathan as Lanark is swallowed into The Institute. Gray's minor novels *The Fall of Kelvin Walker* and *McGrotty and Ludmilla*, are also parodies of traditional children's fiction, nursery rhymes and fairy tales. *The Fall of Kelvin Walker*'s character Jake and Jill reflect the nursery rhyme character Jack and Jill. *McGrotty and Ludmilla* is a parody of Aladdin, which Gray draws the reader's attention to through the illustrated image of a lamp. In drawing on these narrative traditions, the reader comes to the text with a preconceived idea of the plot. Craig argues that traditions "are not the unitary voice of an organic whole but the dialectical engagement between opposing value systems that define each other precisely by their intertwined oppositions" (33). *Poor Things* combines different modes within a familiar narrative structure. Through a modernized parody of *Frankenstein* Gray presents a fantasy genre that is familiar: the formation of a new person through the use of dead people. This will be discussed further in the following chapter, regarding rebirth and rethinking the nation, however here it is interesting to look at how genre is used to explore authority. Parody offers a familiar form or narrative, but changes or distorts it. Bella is not a monster and *Poor Things* is not horror. In this sense the use of fantasy shows that reconsidered authorities may seem familiar and predictable, however, they can take on new and different forms. Multiple authors have influenced the story, adding to and changing the final product.

In contrast to the dialogical use of parody, realism in Gray's novels appears to attempt to centralise and contain authority, to enact the anxieties that occur when restructuring power structures. As polyphonic novels, Gray presents a variety of voices, including ones that are reluctant to diminish the authority of centralised governance. This does not mean that Gray is not critical of this approach to power structures. Donaldson and Lee consider Gray's position on the current social power structures as critical: "Less concerned with validating normalcy than with examining the lengths to which society will

go to preserve its illusion of normalcy, Gray's work comments on the structures of political, institutional, and sexual power that present themselves as 'normal'" (155). Through the use of realist conventions the normalcy of power structures is shown to be rigid and stagnant. By connecting the single author model with realism, centralized political power structures are also presented as rigid and stagnant. However, realism is consistent in its conventions across the novels, whereas fantasy takes on different conventions including science fiction, erotica and gothic fiction. This consistency highlights the stasis of realism and therefore its affinity with conventional power structures. Fantasy is a non-fixed convention within the novels, and therefore offers a pluralistic politics for the future.

Through genre Gray explores the tension between the familiar and the possible future. Genre is used as a critical tool to explore authority and its various models. By developing a monological approach to realism Gray examines a centralised, singular model of authority, which is familiar. Juxtaposing realism with fantasy, Gray explores different models of authority, although never a stable or single form. Using these contrasting genres side by side, the texts present a commentary on the anxiety and uncertainty in forming new political power structures, and how this will influence national identity. Gray does not, however, finish the novels without a hopeful future. The following chapter will explore how Gray reconciles contrasting authorities through the motifs of death and rebirth.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRANSFORMATIONS

Forms of rebirth reoccur throughout Alasdair Gray's novels. These novels include *Lanark*; *1982*, *Janine*; *Something Leather*; *Poor Things*; and *A History Maker*. In this chapter I discuss rebirth in terms of transformation as the result of an event, whether it be death, attempted suicide, or rape. Suicide and rape are significant in Gray's novels, acting as motifs. The transformations that occur from these events produce contrasting outcomes. The suicide, or attempted suicide, of characters in Gray's novels results in a form of rebirth. This rebirth can be physical, as with Thaw/Lanark in *Lanark* and Victoria/Bella in *Poor Things*, or psychological, as experienced by Jock McLeish in *1982*, *Janine*. The rebirth of the character results in the altering of their perception of the world around them. Rape, in contrast to suicide, produces a superficial transformation that ultimately maintains or reinforces the currently held perceptions. In Gray's novels transformative acts are often the link between the contrasting genres seen in the previous chapter. They act to resolve the conflicting monological and dialogical authorities. Through the contrasting transformations that result from suicide and rape, Gray presents multiple possible outcomes of reconsidering political power structures, including governance, sovereignty, and relationships.

This chapter brings together ideas and concepts of authority through authorial positions and genre from the previous chapters to consolidate my reading of the political ideas presented in the text through Gray's use of the theme of death, suicide and rebirth. The previous chapter outlined the anxiety felt by those who hold power and those who constitute the nation when considering relinquishing traditional authority for a more egalitarian approach. Gray enacts this anxiety to form a dialogue with those concerned about replacing current power structures. Gray uses genre conventions to position forms of authorship in terms of monological or dialogical authority. These contrasting models of

authority enact a power struggle between centralised and pluralistic authority. This chapter will analyse Gray's use of identity, paralleling the shifting identities of the characters with national identity. The transformative experiences of the characters in Gray's novels present identity as fluid, and suggests that the nation can be constructed in varying and multiply ways. The relationship between author and characters demonstrates how through characters Gray finds a form of resolution to the anxiety that results from the destabilisation of authority. Whilst Chapter 3 examines the juxtapositions of the genre conventions of fantasy and realism in Gray's novels, this chapter will consider the resolution of these tensions, demonstrating how ultimately all aspects of Gray's novels come together to provide a dialogue working towards an inclusive and egalitarian authority structure.

In this chapter the discussion shifts from authorship to a broader examination of self. As discussed in Chapter One, the polyphonic novel presents each character as his/her own self. The pluralistic aesthetic established by Gray through the various authorial voices is enacted through the characters. Each authorial figure has their own world view, which Gray uses to develop a variety of reactions to different governing systems and the consequences of those authority structures. In resolving the anxieties of an unknown political system, which were set out in the previous chapter, Gray does not present a single idea of governance. Instead he presents a range of conclusions that allow for an open dialogue of a future postcolonial society. Acts of transformation in Gray's novels suggest the actions required for change, most specifically autonomous action. In highlighting the constructed nature of writing, even the more dire conclusions of Gray's novels present a hopeful future as they allow for a dialogue regarding authority. In doing so Gray presents a future that is not bound to a set fate.

The Self and Nation

Identity plays a significant role in the novels of Alasdair Gray. The identities of the characters are questioned, constructed and redefined. *Lanark* and *Poor Things* makes these identity changes and reformations explicit. Lanark and Thaw are both separate and the same character; Victoria Blessington becomes Bella Baxter, who is also Victoria McCandless. The identity of these characters are fluid and complex. The shared identity of the characters provides a point of consolidation between fantasy and realism in the novels, as the fluidity of identity in the novels is informed through various textual authorities. Each of Gray's characters presents a range of imagined selves, and through these selves offers the possibility of various national identities. By presenting different selves who are transformative, Gray demonstrates the fluidity of identity and nationhood. Benedict Anderson discusses the relationship between identity and narration, writing:

All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives. [...] Out of this estrangement comes a conception of personhood, *identity* (yes, you and that naked baby are identical) which, because it can not be 'remembered,' must be narrated (204).

Anderson discuss this identity in terms of auto/biography, however, I extend this narrated identity to the characters of Gray's novels. As previously mentioned in the introduction, Gray states in the tailpiece that he views the fantastical narrative of *Lanark* as autobiographical. The identity of the characters can therefore be considered as narrative identities. The connection between characters and identity will be developed further in this section. Anderson goes on to draw a connection between this need for narrated identity and the nation. He writes, "As with modern persons, so it is with nations. Awareness of being

embedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of ‘forgetting’ the experience of this continuity – product of the raptures of the late eighteenth century – engenders the need for a narrative of identity” (205). If identity is constructed through narrative, then the individual, as well as the nation can form through the narrated self.

The previous two chapters have focused on the authority of the author. In this chapter the political discussion broadens to the self and more specifically the self of the characters. Douglas Gifford argues that “Gray himself insists on presenting clues which suggest he is talking about himself”. Gifford views this representation as “a final and therapeutic confession” (“Private Confession” 115). I contend, further to Gifford’s argument, that the function of this self-confession is related to author-function. The seemingly semi-autobiographical nature of the Duncan Thaw narrative in *Lanark* positions the fictional character of Thaw as a self of Alasdair Gray. The parallels between Thaw and Gray reach beyond both being Glaswegian artists. Thaw states his life aspiration: “I want to write a modern Divine Comedy with illustrations in the style of William Blake” (204). This aspiration is evidently shared with Gray, who worked on this project from October 2012 to May 2015, although not accompanied by Blake-style illustrations (“Dante’s Sublime Comedy: An Introduction”). The details of the mural Thaw paints at Cowlair Church, “Genesis” could also describe Gray’s mural, “The Seven Days of Creation”, at Greenhead Church. Thaw’s painting is discussed by Thaw, the minister, Mr. Smail, and journalist Penny Byres. The male figure is described as “more red than black” and the female as “Pearly pink” (325-326). Despite these similarities Thaw remains a fictional character, demonstrated through not only his name, but also his fate. By drawing on autobiographical material, Gray establishes a relationship between the self of the author, and the self of the character. This chapter will draw on this connection between the author

and the self, and in doing so will discuss the political conclusion Gray demonstrates through his characters.

Gray's identity partially shared with characters reveals itself not only through the individual narrative of Thaw in *Lanark* but also through the narratives of the other novels' protagonists. Gifford argues, "Jock is clearly an *alter ego* for the recurrent protagonists Gray has given us throughout. He's solid, shy, deliberate, sexually unsure, over-formal, highly intelligent. When given the chance (as when drunk after the success of the show) he pontificates with a mixture of genius and wild exaggeration, which reminds us of Sir Thomas Urquhart and Thaw and many others" ("Private Confession" 115). If we are to read Thaw as a version of Gray, then we can also read the other protagonists through a similar lens. Tamas Tukacs reads Jock McLeish as an allegory of Scotland. He writes, "Jock, as an allegory of Scotland in bondage in 1979, continues to be tormented by fantasies, dreams, stereotypes, being unable to break out of the situation of the failed referendum and the Thatcher era" (17). Gifford extends on McLeish as allegory, arguing, "Jock *is* Scotland *is* the world" ("Private Confession" 116). The politics Gray establishes in *1982, Janine* is not limited to Scotland, but extends globally. McLeish's personal breakdown is reflective of the social breakdown described in McLeish's political commentary. The consequences of external governance are not limited to Scotland, but extend to all nations that seek self-governance. From these critical approaches, I argue that we can view each of the characters not only as Scotland, but as representing a broader nationalistic politics.

In contrast to Gifford and Tukacs' view of a male figure representing Scotland, Stirling bases her argument on the tradition in Scottish literature to present the nation through the female body. She argues, "MacDiarmid and Gray both narrate the nation through the medium of the female body, and in so doing they are both drawing on a long

history of representing the nation in female form” (15). Stirling goes on to write, “the female body is also associated with the land itself, both aesthetically and in metaphors of fertility” (16). I argue that in Gray’s novels the representation is not limited to particular characters or genders, but is contained in a multitude of characters, simultaneously. Like the authorial roles outlined in Chapter One, each of these characters present a different, but equally significant role in the discussion of national identity. The connection between the female body and landscape is made explicit in *1982, Janine* when McLeish discusses the female body:

Women’s bodies do that for me when I am allowed to hold them and I stop being nervous. I am not referring to fucking, I am referring to THE LANDSCAPE OF HOME. Every woman has her own unique scale of proportions but the order of these warm soft slopes and declivities is the same, and whenever I am allowed to explore one of these landscapes I feel I have never been away from it. [...] the familiarity of Denny’s thighs, buttocks, stomach, glens, glades, banks and braes must have been mine when I was born (Gray 167).

Here the body is transformed from the individual to the landscape, exposing the metaphor of women as nation, in much the same way as the image of Bella Caledonia. Gray suggests here several ideas of home, including the physical landscape and the maternal home. In eliciting both of these images simultaneously the female body is transformed into a fertile, national landscape. One that produces both the familiar and the new. In *1982, Janine* McLeish ultimately rejects Denny because of her socio-economical position. Her value is politicised, and in this we see that the national landscape that women represent is not just the physical landscape but also the political and social landscape.

Gray uses the image of the fertile female as national landscape, however he does not limit the role of bringing forth new life to women. Through death and rebirth male characters are “born” with a new life, as seen through McLeish in *1982, Janine* and Thaw/Lanark in *Lanark*. The birth process is also not limited to female characters, as seen with Godwin Baxter’s creation of Bella Baxter in *Poor Things* Godwin achieves the birth of Bella through his plan to “take a discarded body and discarded brain from our social midden heap and unite them in new life” (34). In *Lanark* When Lanark first arrives in Unthank he is without identity. He is offered a name at Social Security but instead assigns his own: “The earliest name I could remember had been printed under a brown photograph of spires and tress on a hilltop on the compartment wall. I had seen it as I took down the knapsack. I told him my name was Lanark” (20). Through this Lanark creates his own identity. The character Lanark draws a direct relationship between the character and the land through a shared geographical name. Creating new life is an act of power and control, and by presenting both men and women as capable of providing new life the power of formation becomes a potentially universal act.

Suicide

The act of suicide recurs in several of Alasdair Gray’s novels. Suicide, as an act of ending one’s own life, can be viewed as symbolic of the nation ending its current existence through an act of autonomy. It is significant that for Gray’s central characters’ suicide never signifies the end of a life. Instead it is an act of transformation for the characters, whether through rebirth in the case of Thaw/Lanark in *Lanark* and Victoria/Bella in *Poor Things*, or a change in how they live their lives, as with Jock McLeish in *1982, Janine*. The characters hold on to traits of themselves, but are able to redefine themselves. Through narrative they remember their past, and construct their own identity. The autonomy

involved in suicide positions it as a meaningful transformation, reflecting the importance of self-determination in defining identity, both national and of the self.

In *1982, Janine* the “rebirth” of Jock McLeish is connected to the fragmentation of the author. The attempted suicide of McLeish brings about the appearance of the creator figure, God. “The Ministry of Voices” symbolises a shift in McLeish’s thinking. The experience of the attempted suicide can be seen as a rebirth, as the McLeish who makes it through is a changed man. The presence of God in the process draws the reader’s attention to the presence of the author in the text. The attempted suicide shifts from being solely the action of McLeish to becoming a metaphorical action implemented by the author. In this moment both the author and the character share accountability. If the presence of the author is symbolic of the constructed identity of the self then the “rebirth” of McLeish through this experience presents the opportunity to redefine the self. McLeish does not become a separate person, as Lanark at first appears to be, but rethinks how he lives his life and his place in the present social structure. The creator’s role in this rebirth presents the connection between death and rebirth, and notions of authority. By drawing attention to the construction of authority all forms of authority are shown to be able to be reconstructed. Suicide is significant in this process as it is an act that is self-inflicted. Reconstructing authority requires action from within the structure. Gray’s political discussion in *1982, Janine* and the transformation in McLeish’s political position suggests that change in national power structures require action for those who constitute the nation.

The previous chapter discussed genre and authority within “The Ministry of Voices”. The clash of genre does not end with the “rebirth” of McLeish; instead one acts to inform the other. In this, established and new models of authority sit beside each other. Neither is disregarded, instead they work together. *1982, Janine* employs the monological

model. Jock McLeish's fantasies of Janine shift after his attempted suicide. In the final chapter of the novel McLeish's fantasy of Janine has a similar set up to when the reader is first introduced to Janine. She is in a car being driven to a club of sorts. In McLeish's first rape fantasy of Janine he states, "If Janine is going to deserve what happens to her she must do more than wear a silk shirt shaped by the way it hangs from her etcetera" (4).

After the attempted suicide the creator figure helps shift McLeish's fantasy by interrupting:

I INSIST THAT YOU HEAR ME, DID WE RIDE THROUGH
 THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH JUST TO LET
 YOU TICKLE YOURSELF INTO ANOTHER WANK? Dear
 God, you know I need these absurd elaborations to fool myself
 into believing I can once again clasp the body of a woman. DID
 WE BREAK OUT OF THE DUNGEON OF DESPAIR JUST TO
 LET YOU TICKLE YOURSELF INTO ANOTHER WANK? I
 cannot change overnight, God. WRONG. WRONG. WRONG.

Wrong?

Yes, on second thoughts I certainly can change things overnight.

(311-312)

God's role here in redirecting McLeish's fantasy demonstrates the power structure involved in changing a narrative. Change does not come about simply because McLeish's creator insists on it. McLeish also has to be part of the process, and to realise that he has control of these imagined scenes. The transformation that occurs as a result of suicide is one of agency. Through the attempted suicide, McLeish realises the control he has in determining his own future.

The relationship between transformative suicide and the nation is most explicit in *Poor Things*, and the character of Bella Baxter. The image of Bella Caledonia is significant in connecting the self and the nation in Alasdair Gray's novels. Through this image Bella Baxter comes to embody the Scottish nation. Malecka discusses Bella's construction and the "idea of memory and fluid boundaries" (152), in which the mind-body relation is central. Bella's body has memory separate to that of the mind. One such memory is that of her accent. Godwin explains the presence of this characteristic, "The earliest habits we learn (and speech is one of them) must become instinct through the nerves and muscles of the whole body. We know instincts are not wholly seated in the brain [...] The muscles in Bella's throat, tongue and lips still move as they did in the first twenty-five years of their existence, which I think was nearer Manchester than Leeds" (34). Bella speaks in the same Yorkshire dialect as her body's previous owner Victoria Blessington. Her previous life's memories are held in the body, as seen with her reaction to Victoria Blessington's husband, as though her body holds an intuitive memory.

"You remember nothin at all about me?"

"Nothing certain," said Bella uneasily, "yet something in your voice and appearance *does* seem familiar, as if I once dreamed it or heard it or glimpsed it in a play. Let me hold your hand. It might remind me."

He wearily stretched out his hand but when her fingers touched it she gasped and pulled them back as if they had been scorched or stung.

"You are horrible!" she said, not accusingly but astonished.

"You said so on the day you fled from me" (216)

Through Bella, Gray suggests that a new nation does not forget its past, and is instead born out of it. The anxiety around rejecting current national identity is reconciled by

demonstrating that any new identities that are constructed do not exist only in the unknown, but form from the current nation.

The suicide of Victoria Blessington made way for the birth of Bella Baxter. As she was pregnant at the time of her suicide it is the infant's brain that is transferred into the skull of Victoria. Victoria's suicide attempts to end both the old and new life, making way for one that merges both into a new creation, Bella. Gray's portrait of Bella as "Bella Caledonia" suggests her character can be read as the nation, and through her conception Bella represents the possibilities of a new nation created from an established one. Bella maintains her past as Victoria, she is unable to escape it. Her body, as landscape, remains the same. It is her mind that changes, her way of thinking and of identifying herself. She is also unable to escape the events of Victoria, as demonstrated through the arrival of her husband. Kaczvinsky argues, "Bella's marriage to the English Blessington parallels the marriage of Scotland and England on a national level. With the Act of Union in 1707, England and Scotland have been wedded politically, economically, and culturally, and Scotland's distinct identity has been all but lost" (780), and that "Scotland's marriage to England establishes the crisis of national identity that is played out thematically in Scottish literature and literally in Bella's marriage to General Blessington" (781). The marriage of the Blessington's is symbolic of the union between England and Scotland, although I make a distinction between Victoria and Bella as characters. Victoria's suicide ends her life as Victoria Blessington, and all but ends her marriage. Bella is a new identity, one that is formed from, but different to Victoria. In Victoria's letter she explains the use of the name Bella, writing, "[Godwin] could not be honest about sheltering the runaway bride of an English Baronet and Great British General. To save us from awkward questions he invented the South American cousins, their death in a train crash and their amnesic daughter Bella Baxter, who was me" (262). Kaczvinsky writes of Bella Baxter and

national identity, “Bella’s loss of memory, the loss of her past, impedes any attempt to put together a clear coherent self, and her search for personal identity becomes a metaphor for Scotland’s postmodern search for a national identity, especially in the late twentieth century, as its ties to England are severed” (776). I argue that it is simplistic to suggest that Bella has lost her past. Through suicide her past was rejected, and her search for a new identity finds her having to balance the remnants of her previous life, her body and sexuality, and her husband, with her desire for a liberated identity. Through Bella, Gray acknowledges that in the formation of a postcolonial nation there is a need to balance identities. A new nation is not without the remnants of its past, but its future should be determined from within.

Lanark also presents a change in identity through suicide. Duncan Thaw commits suicide, only to be reborn into the fantastical world of Unthank. At first he is without a memory or identity. The name Lanark was picked randomly from a poster, naming himself after a place. There is significance in the choice of the name Lanark. New Lanark was a socialist town. The founder of this functioning socialist society, Robert Owen, viewed New Lanark as the start of a new way of structuring community within an industrial economy (Williams & Thompson 56). This successful society, at least for a period of time, demonstrated how an egalitarian, socialist society can function within the established governance system. Lanark, the character, at first rejects the society in which he finds himself. Through the reflection of his previous life he transforms this rejection into action. He brings along with him the knowledge of the past and learns from it. As discussed in the previous chapter, genre in *Lanark* is somewhat ambiguous. The Duncan Thaw narrative is presented as realism, however it is told by The Oracle, and therefore is structured within the fantastical narrative. The knowledge of Thaw’s past and death allows for Lanark to restructure his perceptions of his new-found dystopian society. In his encounter with his

author, Nastler tells Lanark, “The Thaw narrative shows a man dying because he is bad at loving. It is enclosed by your narrative which shows civilization collapsing for the same reason” (484). Here the intrusive author makes the connection between the self and the nation explicit. Lanark is aware of the flaws of Thaw, stating after hearing the oracle’s story, “I can respect a man who commits suicide after killing someone (it’s clearly the right thing to do) but not a man who drowns himself for a fantasy” (357). In the end Lanark sacrifices his own life for what could be argued to be a fantasy, a change in government power.

In Alasdair Gray’s novels suicide is the agency of change. However, the outcome of this change differs in each of the novels. Each novel is a different narrative, forming a different imagined identity. What they do have in common though is the notion of a hopeful future, of a new nation that is both new and matured. The characters of Gray's novels present identity as formed through dialogue. Gray does not settle on a single identity or outcome for his characters, and in turn Scotland, but uses them to play with different power models. Through authorship, and the destabilisation of its authority, the characters’ identities are shown also to be multifaceted, influenced by all the textual authorities.

Rape

Rape in Alasdair Gray’s novels act as a cautionary motif. Suicide is representative of the relationship a character has with themselves, and the transformation that occurs reflects their own identity. Rape, in contrast, is reflective of an individual’s relationship with others. The transformation that occurs through rape is not only one of identity, but also relationships. As discussed earlier, gender does not determine role in Gray’s novels. Rape is not only inflicted on women, nor is it only perpetrated by men. In *A History Maker*

the male protagonist, Wat Dryhope, is raped by a woman through the use of drugs. This is not the only example in Gray's novels in which a woman is the perpetrator of rape. *1982*, *Janine* and *Something Leather* both provide examples that I will discuss further in this chapter. Women perform the role of rapist in Gray's novels are often used to act on behalf of people higher in social power structures. These power structures include governance, wealth or nationality. The performance of the act of rape on behalf of another figure makes the motif complex.

Both rape and suicide produce violent rebirths in the novels of Alasdair Gray. These violent acts incite a change within the characters to do away with the constraints of their past selves. Through suicide Victoria Blessington is transformed into the liberal Bella Baxter; Jock McLeish rejects his conservative life; Duncan Thaw is transformed into the driven Lanark. The self is transformed into a new identity, however this new self is not a complete rejection of the past self. Rape, in contrast to suicide, acts as a warning regarding superficial transformation. In *Something Leather* the transformation of June, whilst physical and sexual, maintains the capitalist ideas and class systems she held previously. June and Harry reject and undermine Senga and Donalda, denying them both the financial gain they were previously promised and discarding their role in June and Harry's sexual relationship. The epilogue of *Something Leather* discusses the formation of the text. Gray writes, "There was a clear hint that having been liberated by the work of Senga and Donalda, June (the professional person) and Harry (the inherited wealth person) would cut themselves off from the poorer folk and have fun together. You need not believe that ending, but it is how we normally arrange things in Great Britain" (251). This final statement from Gray brings the author back into the text. Through both the implied author and author-function we are aware of Gray's criticism of the role of Scotland in Great Britain. June, Harry, Senga and Donalda presents the significance of class in determining

the relationships, not just in the novel, but as Gray points out, in Great Britain. The rape of June results in her transformation into “New June”, which June views as positive. The transformative experience, however, was one of manipulation and abuse. Stephen Baker writes, “the point of the creation of the New June is that it need not involve any transformation in class relations; in fact it is there to mask the absence of change, to divert attention from the continuing reproduction of class domination” (162). The transformation of June is superficial, unlike the transformations that come through death that also bring about changes in the character’s socio-political thinking.

In *1982, Janine*, identity plays a significant role in Jock McLeish’s fantasies of Janine, and Superb, whose real name is revealed to be Terry (30). In connecting his fantasies to the real women in his life, McLeish notes, “Sontag became Janine for me, briefly, but she refused to become Superb” (33). In his fantasy, however, McLeish made Superb become Janine, through deliberate mistaken identity. As Janine and Superb are fantasies their identities are determined by the figure who ultimately rapes them, Jock McLeish. The ability for these women, including Sontag, to determine their own identity is removed, and is instead constantly manipulated by an external figure. McLeish treats the characters he creates in his fantasies as others. They are subject to his views and ideals, contrasting with the polyphonic nature of Gray’s treatment of his characters.

The rape of women as fantasy in literature, and the subsequent implications of it are addressed in *Lanark*. Lanark reads to Rima as she turns into a “dragon”. Rima responds to the book she is being read:

"Oh, yes, I like this book! Crazy hopes of a glamorous, rich, colorful life and then abduction, rape, slavery. That book, at least, is true."

"It is not true. It is a male sex fantasy."

"And life for most women is just that, a performance in a male sex fantasy. The stupid ones don't notice, they've been trained for it since they were babies, so they're happy. And of course the writer of that book made things obvious by speeding them up.

What happens to the Blandish girl in a few weeks takes a lifetime for the rest of us" (83).

The notion of women in a performance role is a reoccurring theme throughout Gray's novels. Janine is the fantasy of McLeish; June is manipulated by Harry and her accomplices; Bella is the construction of either Godwin's science or McCandless' imagination. If, as Stirling suggests, women are to be considered as Scotland in Gray's novels, then we are presented with the idea that Scottish national identity is a performance. It is a role that is projected onto the nation by external figures. Gray suggests, through his characters, that national identity is currently determined by someone else's narrative. The implications of this are twofold: the performance can be manipulated and determined by others, but it also allows for the performance to be reclaimed. In *1982*, *Janine* Janine reclaims her performance role through ownership of her body, removing her own clothes to embrace the experience:

'Act calm,' thinks Janine. 'Pretend this is just an ordinary audition.' And then she thinks, 'Hell no! Surprise them. Shock them. Show them more than they ever expected to see.'

Standing easily astride she strips off her shirt and drops it, strips off her skirt and drops it, kicks off her shoes and stands naked but for her net stockings. I need the stockings. A wholly naked woman is too dazzling

so she stands naked but for fishnet stockings, hand on hips and feeling an excited melting warmth between her thighs. She is ready for anything.

She is no longer set up to be a victim of rape, but is transformed into an active participant of her own role in the fantasy. The final fantasy is therefore not rape, and by giving Janine autonomy over her own body Gray demonstrates the significance of self-determination. In suicide the outcome of change is positive because it is an autonomous act. Rape, in contrast, removes autonomy. This final fantasy of McLeish's is symbolic of his changing view of the nation, and unlike June in *Something Leather*, Janine does not do this at the expense of others.

Autonomy is not only removed from Gray's characters through forced sexual acts, but also through physical markings. Harry, Donald and Senga physically mark June with wasp tattoos during her rape. The infliction of this removes June's ability to have the autonomy over her body Janine is afforded in McLeish's final fantasy. June's new identity is not her own, but one she has chosen to embrace. The image of the wasp is repeated in the cover art of the second paperback edition, including in the formation of St Andrew's cross, the flag of Scotland. Stephen Baker argues of the image,

Symbolising Scottish nationhood and – probably – aspirations for Scottish independence, the cross is extremely ambivalent. [...] In the absence of any radical transformation in relations of production, Scottish independence might well, then, turn out to be yet another cruel sting in the service of Wasps (163).

Connecting these two images, June's fate is symbolic of Scotland's relationship with the British state, as one that is inflicted on Scotland, but with an acceptance and sense of a chosen identity.

The rape of men in Gray's novels differs from that of women. They do not take on a performative role, instead serve as a resource to be depleted. *A History Maker* details such a scene. After consensual sex, Puddock explains to Wat Dryhope that she is an agent of the Shigalyovite Revolution, whose aim is not to bring about the return of Russian Communism, but to "recreate the system which overpowered it, *the competitive exploitation of human resources*" (118). Although drugged Dryhope responds to this idea:

"You can only exploit folk . . . who depend on you for essential things like . . . food or ways of getting it . . . Landlords and merchants used to do that by removing food from folk who produced it . . . You could then deal it out to them in such wee amounts that . . . that poor folk grew too weak to grab it for themselves, especially when you employed a well-paid police force . . . Then . . . then the producers would lick your boots and c . . . cut each other's throats hoping you'll give them enough to let their w . . . wea . . . WEANS STAY ALIVE" (118-119)

Dryhope expresses a socialist political position that is contrasted with Puddock's capitalist ideas. Gray combines this political conversation with the act of rape. As Dryhope develops an erection from the drugs, Puddock says, "Time for more, my wee Sssscottish Resssource" (119). Dryhope is not considered, like women, as nation, but as a resource that can be exploited.

The rape of the male character also occurs in *1982, Janine*. Jock McLeish confesses, "I have been raped and it was pleasant at the time and afterward I felt like a miserable nothing, I wished I was dead. What depressed me was the impossibility of

gratitude” (48). Rape for McLeish is related to the emotion after sexual intercourse, rather than just the physical act of rape. McLeish goes on to explain this concept,

“I felt too empty and feeble, too raped to even go and buy another bottle of whiskey.

Of course I know why she had to chuck me out like that. If we had slept sweetly in her bed, and made love again in the morning, which is the best time, and she had seen me to the door, and we had parted after a farewell kiss, I would have made her feel a miserable nothing by not arranging to see her again [...] So the editor raped me three times to stop me raping her” (49).

This idea of rape as an emotional fallout may sit uneasily with the reader, however it promotes a dialogue around the motif of rape. The sexual act can be consensual and rape still occur. If, as Gifford and Tukacs suggest, we consider the reading of Jock McLeish as Scotland, then his rape can also be considered in light of the Scotland/Britain relationship. The rape of men in Gray’s novels is connected to resources. McLeish’s experience shows that consent does not extend to depletion.

Rape and suicide both bring about transformations in the characters that experience them. As addressed in this chapter, the autonomy of the action is the significant factor in the outcome of the transformations. Suicide, an autonomous act, presents the characters with hopeful futures. In contrast, the cautionary role of rape in the novels is critical of imposed systems that do not allow for change. Gray’s use of rape as a motif is complex, and in its complexities asks for a critical dialogue. It is not to be accepted as one thing, instead presents a range of

implications. Gray presents rape as cautionary in relation to political and authorial relationships. It warns against the perception of transformation that occurs when the transformative action is not autonomous. The characters who are transformed through rape have their identity determined by others. The rapist holds sole authority in the act. Presenting these contrasting transformative acts, suicide and rape, Gray suggests that transformation is limited when authority is held by a single, external entity, and that an egalitarian system can only be achieved through autonomy.

New Selves and Hopeful Futures

Suicide and rape may have differing outcomes of transformation, but they work together to fulfil a direction for the future in Alasdair Gray's novels. Both acts elicit a reconsideration of identity for the characters, whether as an individual or through their relationships. What the motifs of suicide and rape share is the demonstration of fluidity of identity. Gray uses these confronting acts to engage in a dialogue about the future of nations under external governance. Gray's novels never contain fruitions of Scottish independence, instead primarily function as critical dystopias, offering glimpses into what is, and what can be. Tom Moylan defines the term critical dystopia, "Albeit generally, and stubbornly utopian, they do not go easily toward that better world. Rather, they linger in the terrors of the present even as they exemplify what is needed to transform it" (199). *Lanark* is the most explicit example of critical dystopia amongst Gray's novels. *Lanark* is made up of Thaw's narrative of the present and the dystopian fantastical realm of Lanark's narrative. The transformation through suicide does not lead to a utopian fantasy, but rather transforms Lanark's political outlook, giving him the motivation to seek change. By not presenting change as utopian Gray highlights the issues within current society, and suggests that achieving a better world is best accomplished through active dialogue. In

demonstrating the need for change through dialogue, combined with Gray's egalitarian approach to textual authority, Gray's novels imply a hope for the future.

The future of the nation is symbolised in the birth of a new generation, one that's identity is not yet formed and therefore offers the possibility of self-determination. Cristie March argues that birth in *Lanark* is an act of subversion. She writes, "It is Rima's fertility, though, that offers the most subversive rewriting of the text. Her accelerated pregnancy, which her son Alexander inherits as an accelerated growth rate, confounds Nastler, the self-proclaimed author of the text, and disrupts his story, enabling an ending he does not anticipate" (337). Through the birth of Alexander, Nastler's pseudo control over the text as author is undermined. As discussed in Chapter Two, Nastler's role as intrusive author highlights the construction of the author, and therefore diminishes the authority he holds over the text. Through the birth of Alexander, the "author" is no longer the centralised authority. However, Nastler's role also draws attention to the constructed nature of the text, and therefore Alexander remains the creation of the author. Alexander becomes the embodiment of a new self born both within and outside of already established power structures. When considering the self and nation, Alexander's accelerated growth presents a self that is both new and matured.

As a result of understanding his transformation from Thaw, Lanark acts to empower change through the masses. Lanark's journey to change Unthank is not successful. Failing to achieve a utopia, Lanark's narrative provides an example of a critical dystopia. Critical dystopia provides a warning of the results if change does not occur. In the case of *Lanark* it is a political change that is required. A critique of how society approaches change is provided when Lanark speaks to Monboddoo. Monboddoo reacts to Lanark's complaints saying, "You suffer from the oldest delusion in politics. You think you can change the world by talking to a leader. Leaders are the effects, not the causes of

changes” (551). Lanark’s desire for change is not actioned due to his approach. Here Gray is providing a broader political message that change cannot come from political leaders. The reimagination of the nation requires the participation of the people, and the desire to move the nation forward. Lanark states,

Our nations are not built instinctively by our bodies, like beehives; they are works of art, like ships, carpets and gardens. The possible shapes of them are endless. It is bad habits, not bad natures, which makes us repeat the dull old shapes of poverty and war. Only greedy people who profit by these things believe they are *natural* (*Lanark*, 550).

The idea of nations being like works of art connects the artistic nature of Gray’s novels, and the possibilities the art opens for the readings of the narrative. The art positions the texts to be read as a contribution to a political dialogue that asks the reader to reconsider the power structures that they live within.

The significance of transformation in Gray’s novels is also evident in Sydney Workman’s epilogue for *Old Men in Love*. He writes,

The best criticism of Gray is to quote his own and believe it. In an 1990s epilogue to *Something Leather* he says all his stories are about *men who found life a task they never doubted until an unexpected collision opened their eyes and changes their habits. The collision was usually a woman, and the transformation often ended in death* (310).

The “critic” goes on to warn against the political aim of the novel, writing “Many may fall under the influence of its sinister propoganda for Scottish Nationalism and Socialism. [...] Far too many have forgotten or never known that the German acronym for National Socialism is Nazi” (310). Workman views the transformation of Gray’s characters as

political propaganda. He finishes his epilogue writing “racist hatred of the English is what the Scottish lust for an impossible independence feeds upon. This book should therefore not be read, or if read, swiftly forgotten. Goodbye, Mr Gray” (311). The hyperbolic nature of his statements draw attention to the critic of nationalism and socialism in Scotland. The word “goodbye” places it in the context of the external dialogue. On the next page is the image of a hand coming through a book having written the word “goodbye”, as though responding to Workman. Through this interaction the novel is positioned as an important aspect of forming identity through ideas. If the novel can present the nation, then *Old Men in Love* demonstrates how diversity can come together to form a united construction. Each of Tunnock’s stories maintain their identity as separate attempted novels, but are tied together through the diary. In Tunnock’s final diary entry he writes, “Can I also complete for this book my panoptic vision of Scotland from Genesis of the universe to the near future? If I did, would it not become the Bible of a new and independent Scotland? Perhaps” (298). Tunnock does not complete this task, but the presumption of an independent Scotland holds onto hope for the future.

The connection between the self and nation is explicitly suggested through the image of Bella Caledonia in *Poor Things*. Victoria’s rejection of McCandless’ claim at first appears to undermine the hopeful future through rebirth. However, McCandless’ story, whether fictional or real, maintains Bella Baxter as a constructed version of Victoria. The idea of Bella Baxter is what is significant in *Poor Things*. By positioning Victoria’s letter after McCandless’ narrative, Gray demonstrates the significance of believing something is possible. The contrasting functions of fantasy and realism discussed in the previous chapter are consolidated in the identity of Bella. She is both a fantastical figure and a realistic person within the narrative of *Poor Things*. As farfetched as Bella’s narrative may be, for much of the novel it is the “fictional truth”. Gray’s democratic

aesthetic allows the reader to choose which account, McCandless' or Victoria's, is true, and positions the reader to consider how they choose to construct both Bella Baxter and nation. The autonomy presented in the suicide of Bella is transferred to the reader through their ability to determine the construction of "Bella Caledonia". The relationship between novel and national identity is made explicit through Victoria's rebuttal of McCandless' construction of Bella. Victoria's letter is titled "A Letter to Posterity". This title suggests the letter is not only to Victoria's descendants, but also for all future generations of people. In positioning McCandless' tale as imagined, Victoria letter's presents Bella, and with her Bella Caledonia, as imagined. Bella becomes a figure that represents what could be, allowing for a reimagining of any future nation.

Unlike *Poor Things* that offers the reader a hopeful future by allowing the nation to be reimagined, the minor novels of Alasdair Gray (*Fall of Kelvin Walker; McGrotty and Ludmilla; Melvis Belfrage*) have a more pessimistic tone. The novels differ from his major novels in that they are based entirely in reality. Bernstein points out that character doubles occur in Gray's major novels, and writes, "Such doubles do not appear in the shorter novels, but the nearly obsessive emphasis on manipulation, on instrumentalism, on doing as you have been done by, takes their place" ("Scottish Enough"153). In contrast to the novels that contain fantasy, these realist novels do not offer hope to the characters. The pessimistic outlook of Gray's minor novels presents a form of critical dystopia. Through a sense of realism, Gray suggests the dystopia is one in which we are already living. The narratives offer a view of power structures as manipulative, and in doing so offers a critical lens in which to view the world. Using autobiographical experiences and the recycling of previous works, Gray suggests that each of these narratives is an altered construction of a previous reality. This demonstrates that although the current authority models should be viewed with pessimism, it is able to be rejected and replaced with a new model.

Through the motifs of suicide and rape Gray brings together the destabilisation and anxiety of rethinking power structures to offer hopeful futures of self-governance. Gray does not present a single approach to this form of governance, other than one that is self-ruling and reflective of the people. Through critical dystopia Gray's novels engage in a dialogue, and in doing so enact the egalitarian model of authority that Gray presents as a political solution. Gray is not dismissive of the past, or the influence it has on national identity. Instead, Gray views national independence as an opportunity to establish both a new and mature identity. Benedict Anderson's concepts regarding the book and the nation are reflected in Gray's novels. The author in Gray's novels is positioned as a governing figure in the text. Gray's metafictional approach to authorship uses textual authority as a tool to discuss a broader range of authorities, including political and nation authority, as well as creating a direct link to identity. The role of both individual and national identity plays a significant role in defining the nation.

CONCLUSION

The jacket cover of *Independence* reads, “Gray argues that a truly independent Scotland will only ever exist when people in every home, school, croft, farm, workshop, factory, island, glen, town and city feel that they too are at the centre of the world”. In Alasdair Gray’s novels, he attempts to do just that, place the people of the nation at the centre of the text. He achieves this by creating an egalitarian aesthetic across his novels that acknowledges the significant roles that make up textual authority, including that of the reader. The polyphonic voices of Gray’s authors and characters reflect the voices of those that constitute the nation, even if they are at odds with his own views.

Authorship and power are inherently related, and this is made explicit in Alasdair Gray’s novels. The author holds an authority over the text, whether through an implied figure in the writing, or a superimposed figure that the reader brings to the text. The author is able to draw attention to this relationship through metafictional devices. One possible outcome of the use of metafiction in writing is that it can establish a political aesthetic within the novels. Metafiction can be used to expose political constructs outside of the text, such as authority, national identity, and hierarchical socio-political structures. Alasdair Gray’s novels are examples of this. Gray destabilises the author by constructing multiple author figures in his novels that share textual authority. The authors that he constructs draw on a wide range of textual authorities, including paratextual figures such as the editor and critics, and in doing so present the reader as a contributor to the construction of the author figure. In this compartmentalisation and polyphony of the author Gray’s egalitarian aesthetic is established. In particular, Gray’s novels offer a dialogue on the need to reconstruct nationalist power structures. The political nature of the texts is suggested through a range of devices including art, such as the image of Bella Caledonia, metaphors, - Lanark being swallowed by “the Institute” - and political dialogue within the

narrative, which includes Jock McLeish's discussion of his conservative politics.

Authorship, and the metafictional devices that expose the nature of its authority, form an integral element of this dialogue.

The complexities of identity are acknowledged. Gray uses identity to develop a new approach to nationalism, one that is not simplistic, but rather considers the diversity of those that identify and live within the nation. Gray does not simply suggest that political change is needed and go on to offer a solution. Instead, through the use of genre, and the conflicting conventions Gray draws on, he acknowledges and addresses the voices of those who may be reluctant to embrace change in governing power systems. The complications of defining genre in Gray's novels reflect the challenges in defining national identity, particularly when sovereignty is also an element of the construction that identity.

Alasdair Gray's novels may not suggest an alternative to the current governing authority, but they do offer an optimistic outlook for the future of the nation. For Gray, positive change is achieved through autonomy, directed by dialogue amongst all those within the nation. This new nation is pluralistic, as its identity needs to be fluid and reflective of the people. Reconsidering identity allows for the nation to evolve and continue to move forward. Gray uses the novel form to enact this construction of identity, and that of the nation. The characters experience transformative acts that either reconstruct or reinforce their previously held ideas.

I have analysed Gray's key novels, demonstrating the way they interact with each other to form an egalitarian aesthetic. Each novel can be read individually and present the same aesthetic, however as a body of work this egalitarian aesthetic is strengthened. As acknowledged in the introduction, due to the scope of this thesis I have limited the analysis to Alasdair Gray's novels, however it would be interesting to examine the implications of

authorship in Gray's short stories, plays and poetry. These texts also deal with themes of identity and nationalism. Of particular interest would be Gray's "Dante's Sublime Comedy", which is published on his website. As each section is published on completion, the poem is able to reflect contemporary public and national issues. The author-function is therefore changing over the composition of the poem and the implied author may present different views in each section.

In this thesis, I draw on Barthes' idea that the author no longer holds exclusive privilege in the text and use Booth's implied author and an adaption of Foucault's author-function to analyse the authority and construction of the author in Gray's novels. Using Bakhtin's theory on dialogical novels, I argued that Gray employs polyphonic author-positions to create dialogical texts that address both textual and political authority. Gray uses intertextuality, drawing not only from other authors, but from his own work as well. This thesis has argued that Gray's novels are in dialogue with each other, but also with the broader community, of which the readership is a part. Bakhtin highlights this as the role of the dialogical novel. In this thesis, I draw on Gray's pamphlets to elaborate Gray's political position, however, they also warrant their own analysis. Each pamphlet reflects and builds on the previous. They are in direct dialogue with their reader and with a developing political position. Although they are political pieces, Gray uses creative writing techniques to engage the reader. In exposing the constituted nature of the novel, specifically the author, the reader's engagement with the novels gives them textual authority. The reader's role in constructing the text, along with the writer's and editor's, forms an egalitarian and collaborative aesthetic.

Gray's novels present a political discussion through an egalitarian aesthetic. The novels engage in a discussion of politics and governance by making explicit textual

authority, and enacting implications through identity. Due to the scope of this thesis, I have limited this analysis to the political implications of Gray's metafictional use of the author.

I argue in this thesis that Gray uses metafictional devices to create a ripple effect through his novels. Making explicit the multiple forms of textual authority in the novels allows for the analysis of genre as a tool to discuss authority and the anxiety that occurs when faced with an unknown alternative. Compartmentalising the author also brings into question the stability of identity in the novels. As the identity of the author is destabilised it has political consequences, such as a diminished authority. I have focused on the construction of the author, and the consequences of destabilising the authority of the author. As the authority of the author is diminished, an anxiety of form emerges. Other metafictional devices could be examined to provide a broader analysis of Gray's novels. The typography of the novels has been limited to their relationship with textual authority. The novels, especially *Lanark*, offer more examples of typography than those discussed in this thesis. Examples of this include road signs that give directions to chapters and warnings that reference the novel's numerical ordering highlight the constituted nature of the text. In broadening the discussion to other metafictional devices further research could examine the implications of drawing attention to the construction of the novels. These implications may include broader analysis of social constructions such as public institutions, such as educational systems, military and police forces, and the role they play in society.

In discussing rape, and to some degree gender, in Gray's novels I grappled with the idea of using a feminist approach. Gray uses gender and rape as tools to discuss power and politics, which lends itself to a feminist critique of the novels. In the thesis, I have addressed socio-political and national identities, and the role these identifiers play in abusing power in the novels. I have also discussed the performative role of women in

Gray's novels, which positions women as "other" in the male/female dichotomy. Gray both draws attention to and utilises this relationship. I view the complex, and arguably often problematic, motif of rape as a transformative act that contrasts with suicide, forming a component of the aesthetic politics of Gray's novels. The politics of the novels do not exclude feminist politics; however I argue they better serve a nationalistic agenda.

This thesis focuses on Gray's metafictional utilisation of the author to engage in a political dialogue with the reader. Scholars have engaged with both the political elements of Gray's novel and the metafictional writing, and in this thesis, I contribute to this discussion through the analysis of Gray's deployment of authorship to discuss authority. Gray's novels enact a national dialogue, portraying the many voices that constitute the nation, to expose authority and nationalism as constructions that are constituted by power structures, and in this they parallel the many positions of the author.

APPENDIX



**Rethinking author construction: the intrusive author in Alasdair Gray's
Lanark and 1982, *Janine***

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*With the proclamation of 'The Death of the Author' in 1968 by Roland Barthes came the rise of the notion that the author, along with the text s/he creates, is a construction.¹ Textual authority has shifted from authorial intention to the text, and with it the reader. This breakdown in authority has led to an anxiety of form in the author. In metafictional novels, novels that draw attention to their fictionality, this anxiety is made explicit through consistently highlighting the construction of the author. Alasdair Gray's novels, whilst varying in content and form, all include metafictional devices that consider the construction of the author. Patricia Waugh in *Metafiction* argues that modern writers are aware of theoretical concerns regarding the constructed nature of fiction, and through this are able to manipulate and draw attention to the formation of a text². Waugh also argues that metafictional writers 'all explore a theory of fiction through the practice of writing fiction.'³With this in mind, I argue that Alasdair Gray's novels are consistent with the idea raised in *Lanark*: 'I want *Lanark* to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another.'⁴ Each of his novels can be read as independent texts, but can also be thought of as a body of work that, when read as such, influences the reading of the individual novel. Whilst this is true of all bodies of work, I argue that Gray explores the influences of creating various authorial positions on the construction of the author in both an individual text and in a collection of works. Metafiction holds that the author engages with theoretical questions regarding literature and therefore manipulates theoretical ideas in the texts to address these questions.*

To discuss authorship in Alasdair Gray's novels I draw from two theories, Michel Foucault's author-function and Wayne Booth's implied author. In 'What is an Author?', Michel Foucault discusses the function of the author in the relationship between an author and a text. For Foucault, it is the name of the author that maintains its position of privilege over the text, and he introduces the term author-function to describe the ways in which the idea or category of author functions in discourse. Foucault's author-function is comprised of four aspects. First, the author's name binds them legally to the text they have produced. Second, author-function does not exist in all texts nor for all times. Third, the concept of the author allows the reader to construct consistencies across texts sharing an author's name. These consistencies include values, style and theoretical ideals. The fourth and final aspect

¹ R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in Leitch, V. B. (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed., New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, pp. 1322-26.

² P. Waugh, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*, London, New York, Routledge, 1990, pp. 2-5.

³ Waugh, p. 2.

⁴ A. Gray, *Lanark*, Edinburgh, Canongate, 2011, p. 483.

is that in a text that possesses author-function the use of the first-person personal pronoun does not refer to the writer of the text. He distinguishes between the author and the real person, writing, 'these aspects of an individual, which we designate as an author (or which comprise an individual as an author) are projections, in terms always more or less psychological, of our way of handling texts: in the comparisons we make, the traits we extract as pertinent, the continuities we assign, or the exclusions we practice.'⁵ The author is not simply the writer, but is instead a figure constructed in discourse that is not limited to the individual writer.

Foucault's concept of author-function emerges from a broadly sociological approach, addressing the role of the author, or more specifically the position of the author and the part it plays in society. It is not a feature of writing, but is instead a social construct that creates a form of discourse around the author. I argue, however that in metafiction the writer has an awareness of this social function and is thereby able to manipulate it in order to address ideas of the construction of the author. Using this concept somewhat against the grain, I bring to the interpretation of the texts the term author-function to discuss the influence of the name and discursive positions of the author. It is not a direct, definitive or singular influence, but is one that is created by the interaction of the reader's knowledge of the work and the author and particular discursive formations – beyond both reader and author - such as genre or field of content, or modes of distribution.

The term 'implied author' has become a contentious one in the scholarly community with debates over meaning and relevance. The implied author is a concept introduced by Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Most simply, the implied author is a 'second self' of the writer that exists only in the text. Booth writes of the construction of the author, 'The 'implied author' chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices.'⁶This process is unavoidable, as Booth points out, 'However impersonal he may try to be his reader will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner.'⁷ The text offers the reader a set of linguistic conventions and norms that are consistent throughout a text and from which a vision of the author is created. The implied author informs the beliefs, values and purpose of a text. The term has been perceived as ambiguous, but in this there is a correlation to Gray's work in the ambiguous and shifting authorial positions. The implied author is the product of the examination of the text that produces an image of the author, who in the same manner as characters in the text hold particular beliefs, attitudes and stances. The implied author however differs from characters as they are not explicitly present in the text but, as the name suggests, are implied through the text.

The implied author is not just contained to a single text. Booth addresses the issue of how the implied author can address a body of work by the same writer:

⁵ M. Foucault, 'What is an Author?', in Vincent B. Leitch (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed., New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, p. 1483.

⁶ W. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983, p. 75.

⁷ Booth, p. 71.

Criticism has no name for these sustained characters who somehow are the sum of the invented creators implied by all of the writer's particular works. For lack of a good name, I shall call such a sustained character (still different, of course, from the writer, with his quotidian concerns, his dandruff, his diverticulosis, her nightmares, her battles with the publisher) the career-author. The sustained creative centre implied by a sequence of implied authors.⁸

The career-author allows for a text to be placed in the context of the author's other work. The career-author becomes a signifier for a set of consistent features. Unlike author function this knowledge, brought to the work by the reader, remains textual, containing no biographical knowledge, nor any of the other discursive preconceptions, such as the designation of the term 'novelist'. Significantly, this means that tropes and allegories can be seen to cross over in texts. In Alasdair Gray's work, the reader having read *1982, Janine* and having made a connection between sadomasochism and Scottish politics may then read Scottish politics into any of his further novels that contain sadomasochism. Without knowledge of the biographical Alasdair Gray the reader is able to construct an author of the works by Alasdair Gray who writes about the political state of Scotland.

Through analysing metafictional traits in Alasdair Gray's novels, the various authorial positions in the texts are exposed. The author is not a stable figure across a body of work, nor within a single text. Author-function and implied author both work to form the author. The implied author as the inventor of the text is able to manipulate the reader's preconceived notions of the figure of Alasdair Gray, and in doing so adds to the author-function. In turn the reader will approach the next Gray novel they read with a stronger concept of the author-function and in turn read the implied author as one that shares political agendas. Through metafictional traits such as parody, metaphor and manipulation of literary form, Gray is able to make this relationship explicit in his novels.

Texts presenting various authorial positions are not limited to modernist or postmodern writing. Both Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte break narration to discuss the nature of writing in *Northanger Abbey* and *Jane Eyre*, respectively. In these authorial positions we see the self of the author not only manifests as an extratextual figure but also can be seen throughout the text in the form of compartmentalised selves. Alasdair Gray's novels present many authoritative voices that take on author-like roles. In doing so Gray is able to explore and make explicit the role and construction of the author in fiction. By focusing primarily on how Gray incorporates metafiction devices in his novels, we are presented with a discussion of the authority of authorship. In revealing the mechanics of authorship and the authority that accompanies it, Gray acts to diminish authority, which in turn allows for the reconstruction of power.

⁸ W. Booth, *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979, p.270

Through compartmentalised selves, Gray is able to demonstrate the multiplicity of authorial positions in novels. The different positions are able to function as an actualisation of the various authorial constitutions. By breaking down these positions into single roles the construction of the author is made explicit. For the purpose of my research, I have divided these positions into dominant roles within the text, these being the intrusive author, the artist, the critic, the editor and the alternative author. These positions, however, are complex, often crossing over, making it difficult at times to distinguish the role. Authorial positions are always multifaceted and contestable, demonstrating that multiple views of the text are necessary, and thereby multiple views of the author are also necessary. The texts do not build these authorial positions from singular texts alone. Instead, each position requires examination of multiple texts that inform and develop upon each other. In this we see that the body of Gray's work functions together allowing the individual novel to be re-examined in light of the other texts, despite order.

The intrusive author, specifically the author who makes his/her presence known to the characters of the novel, is a metafictional device that has been used by many authors, including John Fowles in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and is even parodied by Flann O'Brian in *At Swim-two-birds*. The constructed nature of the author is highlighted by this conspicuous inclusion in the text. Following this common element of the novels, I see this authorial inclusion as a tool for the analysis of the various voices of the author that appear in Gray's texts. Alasdair Gray calls upon this technique directly in *Lanark* and *1982, Janine*. Though the role of editor in *Poor Things* and *Old Men in Love* also uses authorial inclusion through the shared name of Alasdair Gray, I address the intrusive author and the editor separately, as the editor role brings about a slightly different effect. The intrusive author is limited to a character who claims to be the author, and interacts with other characters in the novel. The editor role differs from this in that, although the editor is a character, they do not claim to be the author. As metafiction allows for the assumption that the author has a form of awareness of theoretical approaches to literature, the intrusive author is a mechanism that allows for the author's theory to be discussed openly in the text. *Lanark* presents this most prominently when the intrusive author states: 'I want *Lanark* to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another.'⁹

The intrusive author is neither the real author, nor the implied author but is instead a character taking on a role of author. Alasdair Gray highlights this by not naming the author figure in *Lanark* Alasdair, choosing to name him Nastler instead. The intrusive author usually calls on author-function directly through the use of the author's name, or assumption of a shared name. Nastler is apparently a childhood nickname and has a phonetic similarity to the name Alasdair, which McHale refers to as 'a transparent distortion of Alasdair'.¹⁰ Douglas Gifford writes, 'Nastler (a nasty pet name for Alasdair?) plays complex games with the author's sense of being simultaneously victim and creator of life.'¹¹ This reflects the hostile nature of the

⁹ Gray, *Lanark*, p. 483.

¹⁰ B. McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, London, New York, Routledge, 1991, p. 214.

¹¹ D. Gifford, 'Private Confession and Public Satire in the Fiction of Alasdair Gray', vol. 10, no. 1, 1987, p. 102.

character that claims to be creator of Lanark. However, regardless of this distortion the effect remains the same, the character of the author is not Alasdair Gray. This highlights the author presented in the text is a created one, one manipulated by the writing process. The authorial position created through Nastler becomes a transparent one, as Gray reveals the mechanism that constructs the author figure.

Gray calls on intertextuality in order to draw attention to the constructed nature of the author. When Lanark meets his author, the author responds to Lanark's reaction, saying: 'Please don't feel embarrassed. This isn't an unprecedented situation. Vonnegut has it in *Breakfast of Champions* and Jehovah in the books of Job and Jonah.'¹² By referring to Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* Gray is alluding to the interaction between the character, Kilgour Trout and the 'author' of *Breakfast of Champions* situated in the novel. Creed Greer, in 'Kurt Vonnegut and the Character of Words' writes of this occurrence, 'his interaction with the character seems to suggest the impossibility of an 'author' separate from the text.'¹³ Further to this, as the 'author' gives Trout free will the text draws attention to the fact that free will in literature does not exist, that the characters, including that of the 'author', are creations determined by the writer. Greer goes on to state, '*Breakfast of Champions* argues the impossibility of the real/unreal dichotomy.'¹⁴ This is not only true of the character of the author, but also the construction of the author. We are never able to know the author through the text and therefore there is only ever the constructed author. Through this paradox the figure of the author remains the subject of the implied author, however the implied author is also a construction, constituted through the text. Furthermore, the author is not only constructed by the text, which gives the writer some control of how they may be constructed, but is also superimposed onto the text through author-function, of which the writer has little or no control, and therefore there is no true free will in the construction of the author.

Whilst Trout is given supposed free will by his author, Job and Jonah have different experiences of free will. Job places himself in the hands of God, doing nothing to change his situation, and therefore never trying to implement his free will. Jonah, on the other hand, has his free will taken away from him by God when he tries to escape the task set for him. Jehovah is neither the name of the author of those books, nor what Job and Jonah would have called him even if he were, instead it is a latinisation of יהוה (YHWH). Here, in the discrepancy of names, we see a connection to Gray's author figure. The author figure presents himself as Nastler, however if Lanark were to meet his real author would call him Alasdair. This may allude to the somewhat arbitrary nature of assigning an author's name to a text, which functions, as pointed out by Foucault, as a manner of creating a discourse. What connects the books of the bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, is not their authors but the figure of the creator, Jehovah, or God. This figure is not a participatory one, but instead is a legitimising figure. It is not Alasdair Gray who connects the four books of *Lanark*, or his body of work, but the implied author. The name of the author

¹² Gray, *Lanark*, p. 481.

¹³ C. Greer, 'Kurt Vonnegut and the Character of Words', *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1989, p. 313.

¹⁴ Greer, p. 315.

functions to create a body of work, however it is through the implied author the body of work is truly created. In this manner, the name that appears on the cover of the novel, Alasdair Gray, becomes an act of legitimising the work.

The connection between Jehovah and the author determines the intrusive author in Gray's novels as a figure taking on the role of Author-God. Barthes writes, 'We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash.'¹⁵ Gray is able to enact his own version of this theoretical idea, demonstrating through the intrusive author that the Author-God is him/herself multi-dimensional. By creating the intrusive author as a character separate from Alasdair Gray, the Author-God is revealed as a construction, diminishing his/her power.

By using intertextualities Gray presents multiple authors of the same writing, and in doing so highlights the singularity of authorship as a flawed representation of authorship. The author of the 'Index of Plagarisms' writes:

Epilogue, para. 1. 'I am
part
of that part which was
once the
whole' is an Implag from
Mephistopheles' speech in
Faust
Act I, Scene III: '*Ich bin ein
Theu des Theus, der Angango
alles
war.*'¹⁶

The original text however is 'Ich bin ein Teil des Teils, der anfangs alles war'¹⁷. Kristen Stirling writes of this: 'the relevant quotation is distorted and incomprehensible in the Index, which I can only put down to a typesetting or proofreading error.'¹⁸ Stirling connects Nastler to the devil figure in *Faust*, Mephistopheles, giving Nastler as the creator 'more devilish connotations.'¹⁹ The distortion of the quotation therefore may be more than a typesetting or proofreading error. *Faust* begins with Mephistopheles wagering with God as to whether or not Mephistopheles can lead Faust astray from his righteous pursuits of knowledge. The author of the Index acts in this manner not towards Lanark, but towards the reader. The translation may be an Implag (Imbedded Plagiarism) but the direct quote is not. As Stirling points out, it is incomprehensible. By misquoting, Gray draws attention to

¹⁵ Barthes, p. 1324.

¹⁶ Gray, *Lanark*, pp. 488-489.

¹⁷ J. Goethe, 'Faust', Berlin, <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/faust-eine-tragodie-3664/6>, 1808, (accessed 10 June 2015).

¹⁸ K. Stirling, "'Part of a Part Which Was Once a Whole": Mephistopheles and the Author-Figure in Lanark and Fleck' in Manfredi, O. (ed.), *Alasdair Gray: Ink for Worlds*, Hampshire, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2014, p. 35.

¹⁹ Stirling, p. 35.

the power given to the author in particular settings. The author in admitting to borrowing material from other authors, and through this act of seeming honesty is assumed to be giving the correct information. Misquoting the text shows that this material is still manipulated, and through this the authority of the author as the provider of truth, both fictional and factual, is diminished. Therefore we must consider that all material given in the text is subject to manipulation by the author. As Alasdair Gray creates all aspects of his novels, extra textual aspects must be considered construction also, including author biographies, and critical reviews, and therefore should be approached with the same diminished authority established in the list of plagiarisms.

In acknowledging and listing the 'plagiarisms' in the text, the singular author no longer holds authorship. By highlighting the intertextualities within the text by indexing the author's 'plagiarised', the text becomes the work of many authors. Unlike footnoting, the index asks for the author to be considered before the reference, literally putting the author before the text. The index therefore calls on author function of the other writers in much the same manner as presenting the name of the author on the cover of a novel. By doing so we are asked to consider how each external text adds to the narrative, and in turn highlights Barthes' idea, discussed earlier, that a text is a 'multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash'²⁰. The index also includes authors' names whose work has not been plagiarised, or whose plagiarisms have not been included, in the case of those that appear in chapters after the forty-ninth chapter of the novel. This multi-authorial position is not only presented in *Lanark* but also *Poor Things*, *Something Leather*, *A History Maker* and *Old Men in Love*. *Poor Things* acknowledgement of 'plagiarism' could be overlooked by many readers. The copyright page includes a note of thanks from the author. This note includes specific mention of works in which he takes suggestions or ideas. These include minor suggestions: 'Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* (published in 1894 by MacLehose & Son, Glasgow, for the translator William Jacks, illustrated with etchings by William Strang) which suggested the form (not content) of the McCandless volume', as well as sentences taken from other work: 'Three sentences from a letter to Sartre by Simone de Beauvoir, embedded in the third and fourth paragraphs of Chapter 18, are taken from Quentin Hoare's translation of her letters published by Hutchinson in 1991.'²¹ The acknowledgement reinforces the multiple authorship through intertextuality established in *Lanark*, destabilising the singularity of authorship through the fiction author McCandless. Through plagiarisms the author of the text is no longer the sole author, instead the author's work is placed into the context of other authors' work. Whilst intertextuality is a common trait of texts, by drawing attention to specific examples the authorial voice becomes divided into voices. The text calls upon the implied authors of the plagiarised texts, as the text asks us to consider their role and appearances in the novels. The implied author of Alasdair Gray's work therefore is one which is defined not only by his own writing, but also by the writing of others. Through this we see that whilst the implied author is textual

²⁰ Barthes, 'Death of the Author', p. 1324.

²¹ Gray, *Poor Things*, p.iv.

it is not only the individual author that determines how the implied author is constructed. As Alasdair Gray has also published non-fiction works regarding Scottish independence author-function can be formed through these works, and therefore can be drawn on by the reader to further the construction of the author, highlighting within the text, through authorship, a political commentary. The multifaceted construction of the author is demonstrative of Gray's cultural nationalism, in which the Scottish identity is not formed through a single defining body, but is formed through the collective narrative of those who reside in Scotland.²²

The intrusive author appears also in *1982, Janine*, however this time not named as the author, but instead as the creator. The pages titled 'Ministry of Voices' present multiple voices split on the page.²³ One of the voices claims to be Jock McLeish's maker, and is often attributed to god. The character of the author and god are first connected in *Lanark*. Nastler, the 'author', also draws parallels between himself and god when Lanark asks, 'Are you pretending to be God?' 'Not nowadays. I used to be part of him, though. [...] Creation festers in me.'²⁴ Nastler strengthens this connection by also naming Jehovah, an alternative name for the Jewish God, as the author of the books of Job and Jonah.

Links between the word god and creator are also made evident in *Poor Things* with Bella Baxter's creator Godwin Baxter being referred to as God by Bella. Through looking at the body of the text we can also attribute the voice Jock hears to an author figure, as we are aware through the visual text that Jock is a construction of the author. At this moment the text has two 'author-figures', the voice and Jock, while the latter is simultaneously creating a fantasy of Janine. Through the intrusive author, the creator, the text makes it explicit that there are multiple authorial voices within a text, and that all of these voices are constructions. By never naming the creator as the author, the creator becomes a detached figure, unknown outside of what is presented in the text. If we connect the figure of the author with the creator, or god, as *Lanark* suggests, we are presented with the notion that the author is also a detached figure, unknowable outside of what is presented in the text, and therefore always already a constructed figure, that is veiled with authority and power.

A God character is presented further in *1982, Janine*, although preceding 'The Ministry of Voices' in a more direct way. His presentation changes through typography, from columned voice to an in-text voice distinguished by brackets. In doing so the figure becomes one that can be read as an internal voice in Jock McLeish, as it was presented prior to 'The Ministry of Voices'. Following this scene Jock addresses the reader as the author of the novel, writing, 'The story of *how I went wrong* is called *From the Cage to the Trap*'²⁵, aligning with the title of Chapter 12 given in the table of contents. Upon Jock's first interactions with the god character it is not the figure who names himself as God, but Jock. Jock begins a conversation with this figure: 'one solitary god is too few for me. I need more of you. (The Holy

²² A. Gray, *Independence: An Argument for Home Rule*, Edinburgh, Canongate, 2014, p. 9.

²³ A. Gray, *1982, Janine*, Edinburgh, Canongate, 2003, pp.168-172

²⁴ Gray, *Lanark*, p. 481.

²⁵ Gray, *1982, Janine*, p. 181.

Trinity?) Too abstract and Episcopalian. (JesusMaryandJoseph?) Too catholic and familiar. Nor do I want you splitting into Jupiter, Mars, Venus etcetera, those Mediterranean aristos make me feel cheap and inhibited. Why should you be less to me than all mankind?' (185) If we consider the creator figure not as god but as an authorial creator, the notion of a singular authorial position is exposed as limited, and at the same time the divided authorial voices are also too simple. By presenting so many variations and interpretations of god or gods we see that the author is also subject to this limited approach. Instead, Jock wants a figure who can encompass all mankind and therefore needs to be addressed at multiple levels. Jock goes on to address this figure as 'Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, My Lords, Ladies, Officers, Non-commissioned Officers and Men and Women of the World, and also, and especially, those who lay claim to none of these titles, particularly the punters north of the Tweed' (185). The creator figure therefore takes on multiple levels of authority. Through this mocking address to all of the orders of social classes the work is presented as one that is concerned with these social class structures, particularly with how this class system impacts Scotland. In this we see the calling on and development of author-function to discuss socio-political ideas of legitimation and textual authority. This discussion also extends to political authority and acts to destabilise authority in general. Jock McLeash identifies himself throughout *1982, Janine*, as holding conservative political views, juxtaposing his narrative with the political context of Scotland. This further developed through the alternative chapter names given in the table of contents for Chapter 12: 'FROM THE CAGE TO THE TRAP: or: *How I Reached and Lost Three Crowded Months of Glorious Life: or: How I Became Perfect, Married Two Wives Then Embraced Cowardice: or: Scotland 1952-82.*'²⁶ By aligning one of the authors with a political context the development of another, divided author figure acts to shift political authority from a centralised body. The introduction of the creator in Jock's attempted suicide brings with it a change in his view of power, resulting in the rejection of his previously held conservative political views.

The inclusion of the author and the author's metafictional engagement in the text is discussed by Patricia Waugh, writing:

For some writers [...] the text may be a fictional construction, but the author is not. All else may be ontologically insecure and uncertain, but behind the uncertainty is a lone Creative Figure busily inventing and constructing, producing the text from His (*sic*) position in the Real World.²⁷

The writer is able to hold on to the notion that as author they are the inventor of the text, and in order to draw attention to this the 'Real Author' incorporates her/himself into the text. Waugh goes on to write of the author as a figure in the text, 'Instead of integrating the 'fictional' with the 'real' as in traditional omniscient narrative, he or she splits them apart by commenting not on the *content* of the story but on the act of narration itself, on the *construction* of the story.'²⁸ Waugh highlights

²⁶ Gray, *1982, Janine*, p.ix

²⁷ Waugh, *Metafiction*, p. 131.

²⁸ Waugh, p. 131.

a problem with this approach to writing metafiction: 'The author attempts desperately to hang on to his or her 'real' identity as creator of the text we are reading. What happens, however, when he or she enters it is that his or her own reality is also called into question.'²⁹ The more the author places him/herself into the novel, the more the reader views the author as another construction of the text.

By removing the name Alasdair Gray from the identity of the intrusive author, Gray is able to demonstrate the function of this device. The intrusive author acts to place the author into the text, however in doing so becomes another fictive element of the text. This removes the author from the text. In not sharing an identity with the intrusive author, Gray manipulates this device. By removing himself from the text he enacts the modernist idea of the 'Exit Author', that being an author who is 'invisible and unobtrusive, above or behind but not *in* his creation'³⁰. McHale points out that, 'Strategies of self-effacement, while ostensibly obliterating surface traces of the author, in fact call attention to the author as *strategist*.'³¹ By creating an intrusive author who is not the author Gray is engaging with the modernist idea of the 'Exit Author', which acts to remove the author from the text. The fictional intrusive author calls attention to the author, not as strategist but another fictional construction of the text.

By altering the conventional use of the intrusive author, that being holding a shared name or identity, Gray's author-characters enact the removal of the author. The intrusive author demonstrates the constituted nature of the author, and therefore further removes the author from the text. However, by removing Alasdair Gray as the named or assumed author figure Gray draws attention to the function of the device, and in doing so reminds the reader of Gray's authorship. This creates a tension within the texts between reality and fantasy. In 1982, *Janine* we see this played out in conjunction with Jock McLeish's sadomasochistic fantasy, presenting a connection between the tension of authorship, and that of fantasy and reality. The placement of the intrusive author in *Lanark* also highlights this tension, as the process of writing and the fantastical occur simultaneously. The author figure is presented as not only the author, but the creator. As creator he is responsible for the entire book, and therefore we must consider all aspects of the text, including visual art work.

The intrusive author is one of many authorial positions that Gray creates within his text. Each of these roles creates a tension between the constructed figure of the author and the real person behind the writing. By consistently drawing attention to the author as constituted, an anxiety of form appears to be present. By presenting them separately Gray is able to demonstrate that the author is not a singular figure. This identity is not always able to be controlled by the author, as authority does not lie solely with the author. The intrusive author acts to both remove and place the author into the text. The authority of the author is destabilised in the division of author roles. In revealing the mechanics of authorship and the authority that accompanies it, the act of diminishing authority also allows for the reconstruction of

²⁹ Waugh, p. 133.

³⁰ McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, p. 199.

³¹ McHale, p. 199.

power. Gray's use of authorship is in line with his political ideas regarding Scottish independence and identity, and whilst not conclusive, creates a broadened and egalitarian approach to authority. This authority is transparent, multifaceted and interactive. Whilst the author remains the inevitable central authority, s/he is not the sole authority on the text. If Scotland were to become independent they would inevitably have a government, a centralized authority, however whilst Gray never suggests an approach for this government he does urge it to be one that is reflective of and answerable to the people of Scotland.

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