Master Dissertation
Literature and Civilization

Temporal Refuge: Exploring Mental Displacement, Selfhood, and Otherness in Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* (2022)

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master Degree in Literature

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Academic Year: 2023-2024

DEDICATIONS

I am deeply grateful to Allah for blessing me with strength to finish my dissertation.

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents, who have been my foundation and my guiding

light. Your endless love, support, and sacrifices have not only shaped my life but have also

empowered me to pursue my dreams relentlessly. I am eternally grateful for both of you and

cherish every ounce of encouragement and wisdom you have imparted to me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Ben Abderrezak Abdelnacer for his guidance, unwavering support, and mentorship throughout the duration of this project. Your insightful feedback have been instrumental in shaping this research, and your encouragement has been a source of motivation during challenging times. I am immensely thankful for your dedication and the considerable time you invested in me.

Additionally, I extend my sincere thanks to all the members of the jury Dr. Karboua Salim,   Dr. Mohrem Boubakeur and Dr. Boumaraf Hanane . Your expertise and constructive comments have significantly contributed to the refinement of this work. I am grateful for your support and for standing by me, providing me with the encouragement and confidence needed to complete this journey.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines Georgi Gospodinov's novel Time Shelter (2022). It focuses on themes of mental displacement, selfhood, and otherness. The novel, set in a time clinic where patients with Alzheimer's disease find solace in recreated past eras. It serves as a profound exploration of the human psyche's struggle with temporal dislocation. Gospodinov uses the motif of time travel to delve into the fragmentation of selfhood, revealing how individuals reconstruct their identities amidst the disarray of lost memories and societal changes. By juxtaposing personal recollections with collective histories, the novel underscores the fluidity of self and the pervasive sense of otherness that emerges from the disintegration of temporal continuity. This study analyzes how Gospodinov's narrative techniques and characterizations reflect broader existential and philosophical questions about identity, memory, and the human condition. Through a close reading of Time Shelter, this paper contributes to the understanding of contemporary literature's engagement with temporal and psychological displacement, highlighting the intricate interplay between individual and collective experiences in the shaping of selfhood.

Keywords: identity, memory, mental displacement, otherness, temporal dislocation

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the content of this dissertation represents my own work which has been done after the registration for the Master's Degree at University of Mohammed Khider Biskra.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* presents a significant exploration of mental displacement, selfhood, and the concept of the 'Other'. This thesis aims to dissect these themes through the lens of the novel, using its narrative as a case study to delve into broader philosophical and psychological discussions. The story of a clinic designed to recreate past decades for patients with dementia serves as a metaphor for the more extensive examination of how memory and identity are interconnected, and how they shape our perceptions of self and others. By setting the stage in a fictional setting that allows characters to revisit their pasts, Gospodinov provides a unique framework to discuss how temporal displacement affects mental health, personal identity, and interpersonal relationships.

Overview of Georgi Gospodinov's Literary Significance

Georgi Gospodinov has emerged as a significant figure in contemporary literature, known for his innovative narrative techniques and deep philosophical inquiries. His works often challenge conventional storytelling methods, merging genres and playing with narrative structures to better examine complex themes. In *Time Shelter*, Gospodinov extends his exploration into the realms of memory, history, and the impacts of temporal perception on human consciousness. His approach not only captivates but also stimulates readers to contemplate their relationships with their pasts, making him a pivotal voice in modern literary discussions on memory and identity.

Relevance of *Time Shelter* in Contemporary Literary Discourses

Gospodivov's *Time Shelter* holds a critical place in contemporary literary discourse, particularly in discussions around the themes of memory and the construction of identity. It taps into the current interest in neuroscience and psychology, bringing literary insight into discussions typically dominated by scientific perspectives. The novel's exploration of a temporal refuge where characters escape their present by immersing themselves in recreated pasts speaks to contemporary issues of escapism, nostalgia, and the therapeutic uses of memory. Moreover, it raises pertinent questions about the ethical implications of manipulating memories, making it a significant work for examining the intersections of science, ethics, and literature in understanding human consciousness.

Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* serves as a multifaceted narrative that opens up various pathways for examining how our temporal experiences shape the fabric of our identity and our perceptions of the world. This thesis will explore these dimensions, aiming to contribute to the broader dialogues on how literature can intersect with, and enhance, our understanding of psychological and existential issues.

Rationale of the Study

Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* occupies a unique position in the literary canon, primarily due to its innovative exploration of temporality and identity. The novel stands out for its original approach in addressing how personal and collective pasts intersect with present realities. It challenges the traditional linear narrative structure, offering a complex and layered perspective on

time and memory. This departure from convention necessitates a deeper literary analysis, as current criticism may not fully encompass the novel's intricate exploration of these themes. There is a discernible gap in literary criticism regarding *Time Shelter* particularly in its handling of temporal displacement as a metaphor for existential and societal dilemmas. The novel's fresh perspective on how individuals construct their identities through memories and experiences in different temporal dimensions offers fertile ground for scholarly exploration. This research seeks to bridge this gap, providing comprehensive insights into Gospodinov's narrative techniques and thematic profundity, thus enriching the understanding of contemporary literature's engagement with time and identity.

Statement of the Problem

The central issue arising from Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* revolves around the novel's treatment of time and identity. The novel presents a unique perspective on how individuals grapple with their identities in the context of shifting timeframes, raising questions about the stability and continuity of selfhood. This issue is deeply relevant to broader literary and philosophical discussions, particularly in the realms of existentialism and memory studies. Exploring this problem could provide significant insights into how literature reflects and influences our understanding of personal and collective identity in a rapidly changing world. Resolving this issue or answering these questions could have a profound impact on the field of literary criticism, offering new ways to interpret narratives that challenge conventional notions of time and identity, and potentially reshaping our understanding of the human experience in relation to the past and the present.

Research Question

✔ To what extent does Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* conceptualize the themes of mental displacement, selfhood, and otherness through its narrative structure and character development?

Sub-Questions

✔ How does the novel portray the impact of nostalgia and memory on the construction and understanding of personal identity?

✔ What role do the interactions between characters play in highlighting themes of otherness and alienation in the narrative?

✔ In what ways does the narrative structure of *Time Shelter* contribute to the exploration of mental displacement and its effects on identity?

Research Methodology

Incorporating Homi Bhabha's assumptions on identity formation will enrich the methodology for this research. Bhabha's theory, which focuses on the concept of hybridity in identity formation, will be used to analyze how Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* depicts identities as fluid and constructed through cultural and temporal intersections. This theoretical framework will guide the thematic analysis, particularly in examining how characters' identities evolve in the context of mental displacement and otherness. Bhabha's ideas will provide a deeper understanding of the novel's exploration of identity as a dynamic and multifaceted concept, directly aligning with the research objectives of understanding the complex interplay between time, memory, and selfhood in *Time Shelter.*

Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this study might propose that Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* challenges conventional notions of linear temporality and stable identity. Drawing from Homi Bhabha's theories of identity formation and concepts of existentialism, it can be hypothesized that the novel uses temporal displacement as a means to explore the fluidity and fragmentation of selfhood. This study might reveal that Gospodivov's *Time Shelter* portrays identity as a dynamic construct, influenced by memories and historical contexts, contradicting the idea of a fixed, singular identity. This hypothesis is grounded in the existing literature on identity and temporality, suggesting that Gospodinov's narrative techniques and thematic choices offer new insights into the ongoing discourse about the nature of self and memory in contemporary literature.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives behind studying Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* are to:

1. Analyze how the novel conceptualizes and portrays temporal displacement and its impact on identity.

2. Examine the narrative and thematic strategies used to explore themes of selfhood, mental displacement, and otherness.

3. Apply Homi Bhabha's theories on identity formation to understand the novel's depiction of identity as fluid and culturally influenced.

4. Investigate the novel's contribution to contemporary discussions on memory, time, and existentialism.

Scope and Limitation

The study will focus on the analysis of Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* particularly its treatment of themes such as temporal displacement, identity, and otherness. It will employ literary criticism and thematic analysis, guided by theoretical frameworks like Homi Bhabha's theory of identity formation. However, the study will not extend to a comparative analysis with other works of Gospodinov or a broader survey of contemporary Bulgarian literature. Limitations include the scope of theoretical frameworks used, which may not encompass all possible interpretations of the novel. Additionally, the analysis will be constrained by the availability and accessibility of relevant literary criticism and theoretical materials.

Chapter One: Mental Displacement

in Time Shelter

1   Chapter one: *Mental Displacement in Time Shelter*

1.1   Introduction

Mental displacement theory provides a crucial conceptual framework for comprehending the complex ways in which people move across their cognitive environments. A concept with strong roots in cognitive psychology, mental displacement describes the ability of humans to go beyond their immediate physical environment and take intricate mental excursions through space, time,and imagination. Researchers can examine the temporal displacement shown in literary works like Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* via the lens of this theoretical construct. Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* is a powerful case study that sheds light on the subtleties of temporal displacement in literary contexts. Gospodinov skillfully interweaves a tapestry of temporal distinctions throughout the story, allowing readers to move across the borders of the past, present, and future. In addition to demonstrating the author's skill as a storyteller, *Time Shelter*'s examination of temporal displacement provides a wealth of opportunities to delve deeper into the relationship between temporal dimensions and individual consciousness.

1.2   Theoretical Framework of Mental Displacement

In order to comprehend the complexities of displacement events and their effects on people's mental health and well-being, the theoretical framework of mental displacement incorporates a variety of viewpoints, including psychoanalytical insights and educational theories. The idea of neurotic displacement is highlighted by Freud's psychoanalysis, which emphasizes the persistent influence of the unconscious mind on behavior. Neurotic displacement, in Freud's words, is the rerouting of emotional impulses from their intended aim to a different object or activity, frequently leading to illogical actions. This idea emphasizes how human

consciousness is ambiguous and how psychoanalytic interpretation is necessary to identify underlying conflicts and motivations (Lohmar, 2011).

Swisher (2021) suggests a theoretical framework for emancipatory education that is suited to youth who have been forcibly displaced in addition to psychoanalytic viewpoints. By addressing the larger Socio political aspects of displacement and going beyond simple shelter, this approach seeks to empower displaced people via social justice and education programs. Furthermore, ethical considerations are crucial in mental health studies among displaced populations . In their discussion of the moral dilemmas that arise when working with internally displaced people (IDPs), Siriwardhana et al. (2013) emphasize the importance of having a sophisticated grasp of ethical theory and applying it to real world situations. Vulnerability, trauma, and cultural sensitivity are among the primary ethical considerations that must be addressed in mental health research with displaced populations.

The theoretical framework of mental displacement addresses the psychological, social, and ethical aspects of displacement experiences in a thorough manner by drawing on psychoanalytic, educational, and ethical viewpoints. The subject of displacement, which is also known as migration, has become a major topic in Postcolonial literature because of the long-lasting psychological, physical, and cultural effects it has on people. This problem has been masterfully depicted by writers from a variety of geographic origins, exposing its intricate historical roots entwined with power relationships and human psychology.

Homi K. Bhabha, born in 1949 to a Parsi family in Mumbai, India, embarked on his academic journey with a B.A. from the University of Mumbai. Subsequently, he moved to the United Kingdom to pursue his M.A., M.Phil., and D.Phil. at Christ Church, Oxford. After a decade as a lecturer at Sussex University, he accepted a fellowship at Princeton University, transitioning to

the United States where he held visiting professorships at both Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania. In 1997, Bhabha was appointed the Chester D. Tripp Professor of the Humanities at the University of Chicago, and in 2001, he became the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of English and American Literature at Harvard University. Bhabha's seminal essay collections, *Nation and Narration* (1990) and *The Location of Culture* (1994), solidified his reputation as a preeminent postcolonial intellectual. His poststructuralist rhetoric, particularly the concept of hybridity, elucidates the critical fluidity and intersectionality within postcolonial binaries such as the colonizer and the colonized. This study will focus on Bhabha's exploration of postcolonial affect through an analysis of two essays from *The Location of Culture*: "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern" and "Sly Civility" (Robinson,138,139)

The origins of displacement can be traced back to the period of European colonization, particularly under British control, when colonial policies exacerbated the phenomena of mass displacement. This was especially prevalent in regions such as the Caribbean and Africa, where displacement was often a direct consequence of the slave trade. According to Murray, Davidson, and Schweitzer (2010), displacement comprises three phases: pre-flight, flight, and post-flight/resettlement. The pre-flight phase addresses the health and socioeconomic status of the displaced individual, while the flight phase centers on the event that precipitated the displacement, which is frequently associated with trauma. The post-flight phase, or the prolonged period of displacement, can have detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. Displaced populations are more susceptible to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and psychoses compared to stable communities.(Aroop Saha, 317–318)

Academic discourse has witnessed a rise in interest in geographic displacement ,which is frequently interpreted as a reaction to crime intervention strategies. The substantial deterrent effects of police patrols on crime rates in impacted areas have been demonstrated by studies . However, this enforcement may unintentionally result in displacement ,as criminals continually move from one possible target to another until they come upon a favorable opportunity . Although displacement can present obstacles to initiatives aimed at preventing crime , it can also have advantages. For example, fewer opportunities for crime as a result of increased enforcement may lead to a drop in the amount of relocated crime. Additionally, harm can be reduced by shifting the focus from more significant to less serious violations .However, there is a chance that displacement will make crimes more severe by focusing them on particular victims or areas, which will increase their impact on the community. (Wang 2)

In his article *Forced migration and mental health: prolonged internal displacement, return migration and resilience,* Siriwardhana said that there are two types of displacement. Internal displacement includes internally displaced people (IDPs) or rural-urban migrants within national borders. External displacement refers to refugees and economic migrants crossing national borders. Both types of displacement are increasing. This rise is mainly due to natural catastrophes and armed conflicts. Socioeconomic concerns also contribute. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), there are currently an estimated 27 million internally displaced individuals worldwide.The number of asylum seekers and refugees has also increased in recent decades, but forced internal movement or displacement—particularly as a result of conflict—is thought to have more negative consequences on population health and socioeconomic and cultural aspects.

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which were initially presented in 1998, serve as the central document even though the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presently use two primary methodologies to manage IDP concerns. Mooney also took into account the discussion among intellectual and humanitarian groups regarding whether the IDP designation or special status is necessary because there are many vulnerable groups that require particular assistance. Evidence from forced internal displacement situations around the world, however, indicates that internally displaced people (IDPs) deserve specific treatment as a distinct group that is more vulnerable and at risk for both physical and mental health issues. Depending on the pre-flight reason, forced internal displacement can terminate soon or last generations. The absence of legal status ingrained in the IDP "definition" contributes to the current lack of consensus over the facts determining the end of the status of internally displaced person. (02)

1.3 Analyzing Temporal Displacement in *Time Shelter*

Physicist Ernst Mach and physiologist Exner proposed one of the first convincing theories to explain temporal displacement. They argued that the threshold for distinguishing between two visual stimuli is significantly higher than for two auditory stimuli. Therefore, temporal displacement logically follows because visual sensations are more delayed than auditory sensations. More precisely, this is due to the unique physiological response to these inputs. However, this interpretation overlooks James McKeen Cattell's experimental findings. Cattell demonstrated that displacement could occur within a single sensory modality. Wundt's research program is closely connected to Cattell's interest in this phenomenon. Cattell has been working as one of Wundt's volunteer aides in Leipzig for the past three years (Sinico 75-79).

In his seminal work, *Psychologie der Zeitauffassung* (1913), Benussi delves deeply into the concept of temporal displacement (Zeitverschiebung), providing experimental evidence that

highlights a fascinating phenomenon: the physical sequence of events does not always align with perceptual time. This discrepancy is significant as it challenges our conventional understanding of temporal order and calls for a closer examination of how we perceive time. Benussi's exploration into this topic reveals that our experience of time can be influenced by various psychological factors, leading to a subjective perception that may differ from objective reality. This notion of temporal displacement is not only pivotal in psychological studies but also finds a significant application in the realm of literature.

In literary contexts, temporal displacement becomes a powerful narrative device that shifts the perspective from the present to another temporal realm. This technique is particularly prevalent in science fiction literature, including utopian and dystopian fiction, where authors manipulate time to explore different realities. While science fiction is predominantly associated with futuristic themes, the use of temporal displacement allows these narratives to transcend the boundaries of time, incorporating both future and past realms. This constructed temporal reality, whether it is utopian or dystopian, serves to create a stark contrast with the present, offering readers a reflective lens through which they can examine contemporary societal issues. By navigating through different temporal landscapes, these literary works challenge readers to question their perceptions of reality and time, ultimately enriching their understanding of both the fictional worlds they explore and the real world they inhabit. Thus, Benussi's insights into temporal displacement resonate beyond the field of psychology, illustrating its broader implications in literature and its capacity to shape human experience and perception.(Gilarek, 35).

Gospodinov's narrative method employs temporal displacement as a literary device, shifting views between current and other temporal realms, a typical aspect of science fiction literature. In his third novel, *Time Shelter*, Gospodinov extends beyond science fiction by using temporal displacement to investigate utopian and disappointing situations in both past and future contexts.

Despite its seeming focus on the past, *Time Shelter* is profoundly topical. The story revolves around Gaustine, a peculiar therapist who opens a clinic that heals Alzheimer's sufferers by recreating their most secure memories. This past-clinic includes meticulously prepared rooms and floors, featuring specific cigarette brands, lampshades, wallpaper, and historical publications. These therapeutic time-shelters allow patients to live in their temporal "safe spaces" decade after decade, effectively blending elements of temporal displacement with the exploration of memory and identity.(Anna,36)

The clinic is more than simply a location for Gaustine to treat patients; it is also the ideal setting for Gospodinov's narrator to study the twentieth century in Europe through the vanishing points of traumatized or damaged people. The fundamental subject in *Time Shelter* is whether our memories of the past, real or imagined, can shield us from the temporal chaos that surrounds our daily life. In reality, memories may not protect us from the chaos, but in Gospodinov's imagination, everything is conceivable.

1.4 The Role of Memory and Nostalgia in Shaping Perception

Perception involves several processes. It starts with the transduction of a physical signal into a sensory image. Next, it involves extracting relevant features from the sensory image. Finally, it identifies those features based on previously learned structures. Memory, on the other hand, consists of processes that maintain the material received from the perceptual system. (Norman 19-21) Memory and nostalgia play significant roles in shaping perception and identity. Memory, a fundamental cognitive process, helps construct a coherent sense of self and personal history by enabling individuals to connect past experiences with present circumstances and anticipate future actions. Our memories provide us with a sense of continuity, allowing us to link our past experiences with our current selves and plan for the future. This continuity assists in creating a

narrative of our lives, shaping our perception of who we are, what we value, and where we are going. When we recall past experiences, we use them to form a cohesive sense of ourselves, which helps us understand who we are and how we became the people we are today. Thus, memory is essential for developing our sense of self and identity.

However, memories are not always precise or dependable; they can become altered or forgotten over time. Our view of events can be shaped by our beliefs, emotions, and biases, indicating that our sense of self and identity is not static or permanent but constantly evolving and subject to change as we gain new experiences and insights. What appears to be a single memory is, in fact, a complex architecture. For instance, when you think of an object, such as a guitar, your brain remembers its name, shape, function, the sound it makes, and the feelings it evokes. Each aspect of the recollection of a "guitar" originates in a distinct portion of the brain, which actively reconstructs the complete picture of the guitar. This complexity of memory illustrates that our understanding of ourselves and our identities is continually being reconstructed from various cognitive and emotional components. (Naropa Møller, Yoga Indea, Mysore,01)

Memory shapes our identity, both individually and collectively. We are continually depending on our ability to retrieve information in order to address any given circumstance, interact with our fellow humans, or apply what we have learned. When we pay attention to information in our surroundings, like a red traffic light, it can enter short-term memory. However, focusing on one issue diverts attention away from others. If we are performing a task we have mastered, we can devote more attention to other things simultaneously. Most people can drive, have a conversation, and possibly eat an apple all at once. However, driving in a blizzard require full focus, making simultaneous apple eating impossible.

Attention significantly influences what gets stored in short-term memory. Due to selective attention, much of what we are exposed to never reaches the next memory level and is not

retrievable later. Many problems associated with memory deficits likely result from attention lapses. For instance, if asked what shoes a petrol station attendant was wearing after just leaving the station, we would be unable to respond unless we had noticed the shoes initially. Short-term memory is crucial as it contributes to conscious thought and acts as a gateway for information to enter long-term memory.(Loftus,17,18,20)

To avoid repeating mistakes and to learn from prior experiences, information from our surroundings must enter long-term memory. This process, known as "transfer," appears straightforward. Repeating or rehearsing new information in short-term memory helps it remain active. It is then connected with any relevant information already stored in long-term memory. The new information is thus integrated with existing knowledge.

Electric shock therapy offers insights into how memory functions. This therapy involves administering powerful electric shocks to the brain, typically to patients with severe depression. A significant negative effect of this treatment is memory loss. Patients often forget what they learned just before the shock. The jolt seems to erase memories, leaving little to be recognized later. However, if the shocks are delayed, allowing the information to settle into long-term memory, the likelihood of memory disruption decreases significantly. (Loftus, 20)

To form a true understanding of memory, we must first grasp its objects, where many misunderstandings occur. Remembering the future is impossible; it is an object of opinion or expectation. Additionally, there is no memory of the present, only sense awareness. Sense awareness provides knowledge of the now, not the future or past. Therefore, memory is inherently linked to the past, as no one would argue that they remember the present while it is occurring. Memory is neither perception nor conception; instead, it is a state or affection of one of these, conditioned by the passage of time. As previously stated, there is no memory of the

present while it is present. The present is merely the object of perception, while the future is the object of expectations.

Understanding this distinction clarifies that memory concerns what has already occurred. We perceive the present and expect the future, but memory is exclusively tied to the past. This differentiation is crucial in comprehending the nature and function of memory. By recognizing that memory is not a function of current perception or future expectation, but a distinct process anchored in past experiences, we can better appreciate how it shapes our understanding of ourselves and our history. This understanding underscores the importance of memory in constructing a coherent narrative of our lives, linking past experiences with our present selves and informing our future actions. Thus, memory serves as a foundational element in forming our identity and perception of the world. (Aristotle,1,2)

Perception is the interpretation of what we experience through our senses, distinguishing us from other creatures and from one another. Although perception is based on complex neural system operations, it appears effortless because this processing occurs outside of conscious awareness. Since the advent of experimental psychology in the nineteenth century, our understanding of perception has evolved through various approaches. Philosophical discussions about perception involve debates on whether sensory qualities such as sound, smell, or color exist objectively or only in the perceiver's mind. The brain's perceptual processes enable individuals to perceive the environment as stable, despite incomplete and rapidly changing sensory information.

Human and animal brains are modular in design, with separate sections processing different types of sensory information. Some modules form sensory maps, mapping specific features of the world onto the brain's surface. These components are interconnected and influence one another;

for instance, taste is significantly influenced by smell. Perception involves organizing, identifying, and interpreting sensory information to understand the environment, described as the active process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting information provided to the brain by the senses. This complex yet seemingly effortless process helps us make sense of the world around us, highlighting the intricate relationship between different sensory modalities and cognitive functions .(Chukwudi Ofurum)

Nostalgia began in the late 17th century as a medical condition characterized by despondency and an intense longing for home. During the 19th century, it evolved to encompass various cultural and aesthetic attitudes toward the self, home, and the past. This evolution continued until modernists like Proust, Joyce, and Woolf grounded it in the psychology of memory. Until the mid-20th century, colonialism caused physical and cultural displacements of both natives and settlers worldwide, making displacement a primary source of nostalgia. Nostalgia refers to fond feelings for the past, filled with happy recollections, excitement, and joy. It involves encounters that elicit warm emotions. For example, when we listen to nostalgic music, the experience is about past memories rather than the music itself. Music can evoke memories of good times, old neighborhoods, former love relationships, school experiences, and sporting events.

In moderation, these nostalgic experiences are healthy and contribute to a positive state of mind. Everyone experiences nostalgia at some point in their lives. Nostalgia is a universal feeling that creates a heightened mental state and an uplifting mood linked to past experiences. It also involves acknowledging that the past will never return, which can bring feelings of bittersweetness or even depression. However, the overall effect is one of excitement, creating a sense of infatuation and elation. This duality of nostalgia—bringing both joy and melancholy—highlights its complex nature as an emotional and psychological phenomenon. Nostalgia's ability to connect us with our personal histories and evoke strong emotional responses

underscores its significance in our lives and its enduring presence in human experience. (Walder,242)

Nostalgia and memories can be triggered by any of the senses, sometimes so intensely that it feels like we are reliving the past moment. As William Faulkner stated, "The past is not dead. It's not even past." At such times, we don't just remember the past; we relive it. This process shapes and changes our perception of both the past and the present. (Quora ,Tim-Lukeman)

Sensory stimuli, such as smells, sounds, and tastes, can evoke nostalgia and influence our memory of the past. Our senses are closely linked to memory and emotion, and certain sensory inputs can elicit intense memories and feelings from previous experiences.

These sensory cues make our perception of the past more vivid and multidimensional. They allow us to relive the emotions, feelings, and subtleties associated with particular memories. Nostalgia, triggered by sensory experiences, gives us a strong sense of connection to our personal history and helps us understand the present by drawing on our rich past experiences. It can also enhance our overall emotional well-being, as nostalgia often evokes happy and comforting memories that bring joy, peace, or a sense of belonging. (Quora, Aijaz)

1.4 Conclusion

We have explored the complex areas of mental displacement, temporal transitions in literature, and the impact of memory and nostalgia on perception. Using the theoretical framework of mental displacement, we examined the psychological processes that make individuals feel mentally or emotionally removed from their present reality. This analysis helped us understand the characters' experiences in Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*, where temporal displacement is a central theme. Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* delves into temporal displacement by creating a sanctuary where people can retreat into the past. The novel offers a poignant commentary on the role of memory and nostalgia in shaping our understanding of the present and ourselves. It shows

how nostalgia can be both a refuge and a prison, highlighting the characters' struggles with their personal histories and society's collective memory.

Memory and nostalgia are crucial in forming perception, influencing not only a longing for the past but also current behavior and attitudes. In Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*, characters reveal that nostalgia, while comforting, can distort reality, leading to a skewed perception of life viewed through the rose-tinted glasses of the past. The relationship between mental displacement, temporal transitions in literature, and the influence of memory and nostalgia provides deep insights into human behavior and societal dynamics. *Time Shelter* serves as a compelling case study, challenging us to reflect on how our past continuously shapes our present and future perceptions.

Chapter Two: The Quest for Selfhood in a Fractured Timeline

2   Chapter Two: The Quest for Selfhood in a Fractured Timeline

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Conceptualizing Selfhood in Literature

2.3 Character Analysis: Identity Formation in in Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*

2.4 Temporal Fragmentation and Its Impact on Self-Perception

2.5 Conclusion

2.1   **Introduction**

The concept of selfhood in postcolonial literature is complex, intertwined with the history of colonialism and its lasting impact on identity construction. Temporal fragmentation is a significant motif, reflecting and criticizing the breaks in individual and collective self-perception caused by colonial history. Georgi Gospodinov's book "Time Shelter" explores temporal displacement with a postcolonial resonance, providing a lens for understanding the complexities of identity amid the remnants of colonial dominance. Gospodinov's evocative prose invites us to explore the fractured temporalities that define postcolonial existence. The novel delves into the intersections between present realities and past traumas in the formation of selfhood. As we engage with this narrative, we must confront the enduring effects of colonialism and consider how the decolonization process has altered our perception of identity and place in the world.

2.2 Conceptualizing Selfhood in Literature

Post-colonial writers focus on reconstructing selfhood. Through their creative work, they strive to reclaim their lost identity. They view the resurgence of selfhood as the foundation of creative awareness and pure creativity. Post-colonial writings aim to reshape identity and selfhood. Frantz Fanon emphasized that achieving autonomy requires completely rejecting colonial influence. Selfhood is a unique identity that shapes one's ego and consciousness. It includes knowledge of one's own ideas, principles, and origins, evident in speech and actions.

Self-awareness frees individuals from internal anxieties and phobias, allowing independent thought and action. Colonizers have historically tried to control people by making them disguise their true selves. They disrupted the colonized's selfhood and cohesive identity through the effects of modernity. Even after decolonization, the impact of colonialism on language, culture,

and the lives of the oppressed remained significant. Colonizers attempted to destroy the integrity of the colonized by creating policies that elevated local elites to think, behave, and live like them.

These elites, who seemed native but governed in the manner of colonizers, allowed colonialism to persist even after decolonization. Over time, this led to neocolonialism, where the influence of the former colonizers continued to shape the governance and culture of the decolonized nations. (Raheela Akhtar ,161 ,162). Sigmund Freud divided mental life into three agencies: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the earliest and most basic part of the psyche. It represents the physiological basis of personality and drives the organism to seek pleasure, especially through sexual or libidinal drives. The id transforms into the ego as a result of external influences. The ego regulates the id's libidinal energies to satisfy reality's demands. It is the center of logic, practical judgment, and common sense. The ego employs various defensive techniques to manage irrational or unacceptable drives.

The superego develops within the ego and represents its ideal. It forms during the Oedipal drama when a child internalizes the authority and grandeur of parental figures through introjection. The superego commands the psyche to strive for perfection and idealistic goals. While the id pursues pleasure and the ego follows the reality principle, the superego is the source of conscience and moral restraint. Psychoanalysis is a rare intellectual achievement that significantly changed human self-understanding. Freudian ideas have influenced culture so deeply that even those unfamiliar with the details recognize its language. Poet W. H. Auden noted that Freud's influence is so pervasive that it shapes our entire perspective on life.

Freud believed that psychoanalysis completed the cognitive revolution begun by Copernicus and advanced by Darwin. Copernicus showed that Earth is not the center of the universe, and

Darwin demonstrated that humans are not above natural laws. Freud added to this by revealing that human psychology is driven by irrational unconscious motivations, and that human reason is flawed. Freud saw his findings about the unconscious as part of the same Newtonian dualism that distinguished between human sensory capacities and hidden physical realities understood through science. Psychoanalysis uses this framework to understand the mind, differentiating between conscious and unconscious mental existence. Like physics, which uses scientific methods to explore hidden aspects of the physical world, psychoanalysis employs clinical techniques to uncover unconscious realities. Freud viewed psychoanalysis as a natural science and a subspecialty of medicine, focused on studying mental life. (Lapsley 1-2).

Despite its shocking claims about unconscious mental processes and infantile sexuality, psychoanalysis was grounded in ideas common to 19th-century science. It outraged Victorian sensibilities, yet in a society moving towards Darwinian biology, Freud's explanation of instincts appeared natural. Freud's use of spatial models to identify mental structures aligned with neurology's efforts to locate brain activities. His view of psychological architecture as a mechanism for directing innate drive energies mirrored the energy mechanics of 19th-century physics.

However, despite Freud's adherence to scientific positivism, psychoanalysis faced significant opposition. The history of the psychoanalytic movement is marked by a struggle for respectability in academia, medicine, and popular culture—a battle that continues today. Freud himself worked to narrate this struggle in various writings, including sketches, encyclopedia articles, and biographies. He aimed to distinguish psychoanalysis from other depth psychologies, such as those of Jung and Adler, and to show that its controversial claims were based on rigorous

scientific investigation. One of Freud's main goals was to popularize the new science of mental life, even as he strove to prove its scientific legitimacy.

Freud argued that the hypothetical forces and entities in psychoanalysis were similar to those in more respected scientific disciplines. To understand Freud's theory of the tripartite personality, it is helpful to review the early history of psychoanalysis. The concepts of the id, ego, and superego are structural in nature and are recent theoretical advancements. Understanding these concepts requires knowledge of earlier theoretical changes. Freud believed these changes were necessary due to the evidence supporting them. (Lapsley,2)

In his Encyclopedia of human behavior *Id, Ego, and Superego*, Lapsley said that Freud was first drawn to depth psychology due to the neurological community's inability to address hysteria. Hysterics reported various somatic ailments, such as motor paralysis and glove anesthesia, without evident neurological causes. Hypnosis emerged as an effective therapeutic method. Freud's colleague, Josef Breuer, used this method to treat a female patient named Anna O, who exhibited hysterical symptoms. In their 1895 work *Studies on Hysteria*, Breuer and Freud provided case studies and theoretical writings on the causes of hysteria and the use of hypnosis as treatment. They suggested that patients were unaware of the symbolic meaning of their hysterical symptoms. Trauma diverted mental acts from their normal course, causing the associated affect to become "strangulated" and manifest as physical symptoms, a process they called "conversion."

Patients under hypnosis often recalled "psychic traumas" from the distant past, sometimes from early childhood, which they had repressed. This recollection process suggested to Breuer and Freud that hysterics suffer from recollections, meaning their symptoms were tied to unresolved past experiences. The hypnotic state created a conducive environment for these buried traumas to be expressed verbally, thus releasing the strangulated affect and directing it toward normal consciousness. This discharge of pent-up emotions was crucial for symptom relief and

emotional healing. By revisiting and processing these traumatic memories, patients could re-integrate these experiences into their conscious mind, thereby alleviating their physical symptoms and achieving a therapeutic breakthrough. This understanding laid the groundwork for future psychoanalytic techniques and underscored the deep impact of early life experiences on mental health.

Freud considered abandoning hypnosis because not all patients responded well to it, and he noticed that the patient-analyst interaction had a greater impact on symptom improvement. Symptoms often returned if this interaction was disrupted, leading to the concept of transference, where patients project feelings from past relationships onto the analyst. Many regard this as one of Freud's greatest discoveries. In response, Freud replaced hypnosis with the free association method, in which patients freely share their thoughts and memories without shame or judgment. This approach is based on the idea that thoughts and memories are not random but connected by an underlying, often suppressed, unconscious mental trend. The analyst's job is to interpret these free associations to uncover the hidden meanings behind symptoms.

Freud named this treatment as psychoanalysis; to distinguish it from the cathartic approach. He believed the shift from catharsis to psychoanalysis brought two major innovations: applying psychoanalytic ideas to normal behavior and recognizing the importance of infantile sexuality in the development of neuroses. Through psychoanalysis, Freud sought to delve deeper into the unconscious mind, understanding that early childhood experiences and repressed emotions significantly influence adult behavior and mental health. By emphasizing the role of the unconscious and the formative impact of early life, Freud's psychoanalysis provided a comprehensive framework for exploring the complexities of human psychology, establishing a foundational approach that has significantly influenced the field of mental health.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), Freud expanded the idea of mental determinism. He included not only the symbolic nature of neurotic free associations but also everyday parapraxes (like self-harm and Freudian slips) and dreams. Freud argued that these, like neurotic symptoms, have meanings that can be understood through analysis. This revealed that the gap between neurosis and normalcy was smaller than previously thought. The interpretation of dreams was especially crucial for understanding the unconscious and the development of symptoms .(3)

Freud distinguished between the visible and hidden contents of dreams. The part we recall upon waking, often strange and bizarre, forms the visible content. The hidden meaning, unraveled through analytical interpretation, originates from condensed, distorted remnants of daily experiences. These remnants are organized for visual representation and linked together through a process Freud termed "secondary revision." Dreams stem from a deep, unconscious desire seeking satisfaction, a phenomenon Freud described as "wish fulfillment." Dreams serve as a covert means to fulfill these unmet desires, disguised by the mind's censoring forces, such as the ego, which deem them unacceptable. This dynamic of suppression and expression mirrors the daytime suppression of these wishes, leading to a mental compromise. This compromise manifests as symptoms in neurosis and as dreams in normalcy, reflecting the ongoing struggle between the censoring ego and the unconscious desires in both scenarios. (3)

Freud's *The Ego and the Id* explores the development of the ego and superego, starting from a psychological system that is initially an undifferentiated mix of id and ego. Part of the id is positioned close to external perceptual systems, allowing it to be influenced by external stimuli and becoming capable of consciousness, which leads to the formation of the ego. Although primarily unconscious, the ego is the portion of the id that has been modified by sensory experiences and proximity to conscious awareness. The ego serves various functions and requires

deliberate action. It navigates both the internal desires emanating from the id and external pressures, focusing on self-preservation. By adapting to environmental challenges, avoiding threats, retaining memories, and maintaining awareness, the ego manages external stimuli. Internally, it intelligently decides whether to satisfy or regulate instinctual impulses based on the reality principle.(5)

In this framework, the ego strives to control innate libidinal urges to conform them to reality, acting as the center of rationality, common sense, and defensive mechanisms. Unlike the id, which is a reservoir of raw, passionate impulses, the ego and id are not completely separate entities; the lower portion of the ego resides within the id, where it encounters and resists repressed material. The formation of the superego both clarifies and complicates the ego's functions. Freud's analysis of melancholy hinted at the origins of the superego through "identification," a process where lost personal relationships are internally revived within the ego as "introjections." This transformation occurs when the ego relinquishes a sexual object, incorporating the former libidinal object within itself, thus strengthening its structure or "character." Freud theorized that the ego is essentially a precipitate of these abandoned object-cathexes, with the id relinquishing its objects through such identifications. (6)

Ajvazi in his *Freud's Id, Ego and Superego-Irfan Ajvazi. (2021)* asserted that Freud's contributions greatly enhanced comprehension of the psyche. His pivotal work, *The Ego and the Id*, delineates three fundamental components of personality: the id, ego, and superego. These structures exert significant influence on behavior, cognition, and internal conflicts. The id, residing in the unconscious, drives basic needs, desires, and seeks immediate gratification, including the libido which significantly influences our personality. Meanwhile, the ego, functioning on the reality principle, strives to satisfy these needs realistically and socially acceptably to maximize pleasure and minimize pain, constantly influenced by the external

environment. This mediation requires balancing personal desires with societal expectations and constraints.(1.2)

The superego, representing moral and ethical standards, functions as an idealized self, shaped by lifelong moral teachings and expectations. The ongoing struggle of the ego involves maintaining equilibrium between the primal desires of the id and the lofty ideals of the superego. Freud highlighted that the fundamental division of mental life into conscious and unconscious realms underpins all psychoanalytic theory, with conflicts like hysteria and melancholia emerging from these dynamic interactions. His psychoanalytic techniques aim to unearth these unconscious elements, bringing them to consciousness and allowing them to be verbalized, facilitating a deeper understanding of the self and potentially resolving internal conflicts. The ego, therefore, not only mediates between the id and the superego but also navigates the complex interactions with the external world, embodying the central force in Freud's depiction of human psychology.

Sigmund Freud significantly influenced the study of individual personality through his theories on personality, memory, sexuality, and therapeutic approaches. His psychoanalysis explored human complexities, relationships, and existential challenges. In "The Ego and The Id," Freud presented a model of the psyche comprising the Id (basic desires), the Superego (moral judge), and the Ego (mediator). He suggested the Superego could dominate the Ego, causing guilt or repression influenced by discipline, religion, and education. Freud's structural model of the psyche and earlier topographical model of the unconscious, pre-conscious, and conscious mind aimed to explain conscious behaviors.(3.4)

One of the key challenges in psychoanalysis, as Freud saw it, was how the unconscious moves to the pre-conscious. This transition implies some form of internal censorship, likely an unconscious process itself. Integrating this with his structural model, the Id seeks pleasure,

restrained by the Ego, which operates under the reality principle. The Ego works to satisfy both the Id's desires and the demands of the external world, enduring discomfort if it anticipates future pleasure. This complex interaction underscores the intricate balance between conscious and unconscious processes in human psychology. (5)

2.3 Character Analysis : Identity Formation in Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*

Various scholars have deeply explored how identities are shaped, particularly in contexts influenced by postcolonial theories, as illustrated in Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*. Frantz Fanon's critical work focuses on the significant and lasting effects that colonial legacies have on identity construction. He discusses how colonialism insightfully alters the self-perception of the colonized by imposing foreign norms and values (Richards, 2011). Fanon vividly describes this process as the colonized putting on "white masks," symbolizing the rejection of their authentic selves to conform to oppressive colonial standards (Ryan, 2012).

Edward Said, building upon Michel Foucault's theories of power and knowledge, delves into the dynamics of power that underpin Western colonialism. In his seminal work, Said argues that a Eurocentric perspective dominated the West's approach to colonialism, leading to the imposition of specific identity constructs on the colonized (Said, 1978). He posits that the West has controlled the narrative of knowledge and truth, promoting a hegemonic story that relegates colonized people to the margins, confined to Orientalist stereotypes. This dominance of Western discourse restricts the colonized from developing and expressing their identities independently of Western influences.

Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* intricately blends personal narratives from Bulgaria with broader European historical and cultural themes. The protagonist, Gaustin, is portrayed as a

"vagrant in time," who innovates a therapeutic method based on recreating historical memories for Alzheimer's patients. This method later morphs into a wider European initiative aimed at addressing the existential crises facing the European Union (Gospodinov, year). The novel's narrator, likely a fictional stand-in for the author, serves as Gaustin's assistant. Together, they journey across Europe, collecting artifacts that help Alzheimer's patients relive and engage with past periods, thereby experiencing a temporary respite from their condition within the walls of the clinic.

Through its rich narrative, Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* offers a subtle examination of identity and memory. The novel provides significant insights into the complexities of individual and collective identity as influenced by historical traumas and modern-day challenges. Gospodinov's work reflects on how past events shape our present understanding and expression of identity, emphasizing the relationship between personal history and broader societal changes. (Dizayi,80.82)

2.4 Temporal Fragmentation and its impact on Self-Perception

The concept of narrative identity suggests that a person's past, present, and future are interconnected. This idea assumes that individuals have the capability to integrate their diverse traits and desires into a unified and comprehensive self-understanding. In cases of severe neurotic disorders, this integration is only achieved at the cost of suppressing significant desires and potential for personal growth. For example, patients with borderline personality disorder (BPD) find it difficult to maintain a consistent self-image. They often adopt what can be described as a

'post-modernist' perspective, shifting focus frequently and identifying completely with their current emotional state. Rather than using repression, their defense mechanism involves dividing their self-concept over time, dismissing the past and future. This results in a lack of enduring connections such as bonds, commitments, responsibilities, or feelings of guilt. Such temporal division of self helps them avoid the discomfort associated with the uncertainties of social interactions, but it comes at a high cost: a significant sense of emptiness due to their inability to integrate their past and future experiences into a coherent present identity.

Cognitive psychology's insights into context-dependent memory further illuminate the problem of identity fragmentation. Each setting acts like a cue that triggers specific memories and associated images. For instance, at home, one might focus on personal goals, while at work, these goals are often overshadowed by immediate tasks. Mood also plays a crucial role as a contextual variable. The stronger the emotional state, the more it brings up memories associated with that specific mood. In the case of BPD, the rapid fluctuations in mood and affect lead to inconsistent memories and self-concepts. These extreme mood swings can make individuals feel as though they are multiple distinct persons, each tied to a particular emotional state.

Additionally, people with BPD often struggle to maintain stable, long-term relationships. Their lives are characterized by a series of short-lived and fragmented interactions. As these relationships dissolve, even the most basic elements of their identities begin to vanish. This instability contributes to a fragile sense of identity, which in turn fuels fears of abandonment. These fears are so intense that they can lead to desperate behaviors, including suicidal attempts to forestall perceived abandonment. The absence of continuous, shared memories, which help gradually shape one's self-concept, is a significant factor in this identity instability. Therefore, the inability to keep close social relationships not only undermines their sense of self but also intensifies their dependency on others to maintain whatever semblance of identity they have. This reliance is fraught with difficulty, as the threat of losing significant others can evoke fears of losing one's very essence.

Research in cognitive psychology has illustrated that our memories are significantly influenced by the contexts in which we find ourselves, shedding light on the phenomenon of identity fragmentation. Different environments activate different sets of memories—for instance, at home, one might focus on personal goals, but these can easily be forgotten when transitioning to a workplace setting. Additionally, emotions and moods serve as powerful contextual factors that influence memory; the stronger the emotion, the more vivid and specific the memories recalled that are associated with that emotional state.

This is particularly relevant for individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), who often experience rapid and intense fluctuations in mood. These mood swings can be so extreme that individuals feel as if they are different people in different emotional states, contributing to a fragmented sense of self. Moreover, people with BPD typically struggle to maintain long-term relationships. Their interactions with others tend to be transient, leading to a life marked by a series of unconnected experiences. The frequent changes in relationships mean that consistent and shared memories, crucial for developing and maintaining a stable identity, are often lacking. When relationships that have helped define their identity end, even fundamental self-concepts can become unstable or lost.

This unstable sense of identity often results in deep fears of abandonment. For someone with BPD, the potential loss of another person is not just the loss of a relationship but a threat to their own identity. In extreme cases, this fear can drive individuals to desperate behaviors, including suicidal attempts, as a way to prevent abandonment. These behaviors are often a misguided effort to preserve a sense of continuity and coherence in their lives, which they otherwise struggle to maintain.

The idea of narrative identity hinges on the assumption that there is an 'other'—someone who listens to and understands our life stories. This relationship is essential not only for validating our experiences but also for helping us to make sense of our actions and endeavors.

However, establishing such a narrative identity requires a history of stable relationships and secure attachments, which are often absent in the lives of those with BPD. This lack of stable relational experiences impedes their ability to feel connected and understood by others, further complicating their ability to develop a coherent sense of self.(Fuchs, 379,383)

2.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of conceptualizing selfhood in literature, as observed through the lens of *Time Shelter*, offers a compelling exploration of identity formation and the significant role of temporal fragmentation on self-perception. Through a detailed character analysis, it is evident how the protagonists undergo significant transformations, their identities intricately woven by the threads of their experiences and the temporal contexts in which they unfold. This examination not only illuminates the characters' journeys within the narrative but also reflects broader psychological and existential themes relevant to understanding human identity.

Moreover, the impact of temporal fragmentation, as discussed,significantly influences how characters perceive themselves and their place in the world. This dissection of time's role within the narrative structure of *Time Shelter* provides a deeper understanding of the fluidity of identity and its susceptibility to the ravages and reconstructions of time. The convergence of these thematic explorations within the literature offers invaluable insights into the complexities of selfhood, highlighting the dynamic relationship between an individual's evolving identity and the temporal dimensions that contour it. Through such scholarly endeavors, literature continues to serve as a vital medium for dissecting and interpreting the elusive nature of self-perception and identity in the human experience.

Chapter Three: Otherness and Alienation in a Temporal Context

3   **Chapter Three: Otherness and Alienation in a Temporal Context**

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Understanding Otherness and Alienation

3.3 Portrayals of Otherness in *Time Shelter*

3.4 The Interplay Between Time, Memory, and Alienation

3.5 Conclusion

3.1   **Introduction**

This final chapter examines segments of the novel and connects them to earlier chapters.*Time Shelter* by Georgi Gospodinov probes the complex themes of otherness and alienation. First, understanding otherness and alienation, conceptualizes these phenomena as existential states and social constructs influencing individual and group interactions. The second element offers a critical examination of literary techniques Gospodinov uses to depict societal alienation through character and setting analyses. The relationship between time, memory, and alienation, is the subject of the final title. It discusses the dynamic influence of memory and time on the characters' sense of alienation. Quotations from the book have been used to support each argument and statement.The protagonist of the novel Gaustine—have received the most attention in the study.

3.2 Understanding Otherness and Alienation

In Georgi Gospodinov's novel *Time Shelter*, the exploration of themes such as otherness and alienation is significantly articulated through the experiences and reflections of the characters navigating their fragmented memories and identities. One particularly striking passage occurs early in the novel:

> "If we are not in someone else's memory, do we even exist at all? Sometimes random people tell him stories in which he appears, but he doesn't remember any of them, they seem made up to him, as if they had happened to someone else."(Gospodinov 37)

It encapsulates the existential dilemma faced by Mr. N., a character struggling with memory loss. His sense of self is destabilized as he realizes that his existence is tenuous, contingent on

being remembered by others. This reflects a significant sense of alienation, as Mr. N. becomes a stranger to his own life, unable to anchor his identity in his own memories. This notion challenges the very essence of identity, suggesting that existence is validated through communal memory. The character's alienation is amplified by his failure to recognize himself in others' recollections, underscoring a deep sense of detachment from his own lived experiences and highlighting the novel's inquiry into the nature of selfhood and communal belonging.

The narrative further intensifies its exploration of alienation by delving into the pain associated with forming attachments within transient communities. As stated:

> "Becoming attached to people here is painful, because you realize you're becoming attached to someone who will soon leave you. I feel especially close to Mr. N. He has only just come to the clinic, and the agent follows him like a shadow, visiting twice a week"(Gospodinov39)

The setting of a clinic, where individuals with fleeting memories converge, serves as a microcosm for the broader human experience of impermanence and loss. The inevitability of departure, whether through the deterioration of memory or physical absence, exemplifies the temporal nature of relationships and the inherent otherness felt when those connections are severed. In this environment, the characters are acutely aware of the transient nature of their connections, fostering a sense of isolation and disconnection.

This sense of alienation is further compounded by the characters' awareness that their attachments are temporary and ultimately doomed to end. The quote illustrates the emotional burden of forming bonds with individuals who are gradually slipping away, either mentally or physically. The agent's persistent presence, shadowing Mr. N., underscores the inevitability of

loss, making it clear that these relationships are as ephemeral as the memories the patients are trying to hold onto. This transient nature of connections within the clinic mirrors the broader existential reality that human relationships are inherently fragile and temporary.

The clinic thus becomes a poignant symbol of the broader human condition, where individuals constantly grapple with the impermanence of relationships and the alienation that arises from it. The setting amplifies the characters' struggles with their own sense of self and belonging, as they navigate a world where memories are fleeting and connections are fragile. This heightened awareness of impermanence forces the characters to confront their own existential isolation, deepening their sense of otherness as they realize that their attachments are inevitably transient.

The novel's depiction of the clinic as a transient community poignantly highlights the themes of otherness and alienation. The characters' painful experiences of forming attachments in an environment where loss is a constant presence underscore the inherent fragility of human connections. This exploration serves as a powerful commentary on the broader human experience of navigating relationships and identities in a world marked by impermanence and loss.

In Georgi Gospodinov's *Time Shelter,* the themes of otherness and alienation are explored through the fragmentation of shared experiences. The novel articulates this with the poignant observation:

> When people with whom you've shared a common past leave, they take half of it
> with them. Actually, they take the whole thing, since there's no such thing as half

a past. It's as if you've torn a page in half lengthwise and you're reading the lines

only to the middle, and the other person is reading the ends." (Gaustine 150)

This metaphor of a torn page vividly highlights the inherent alienation that arises when our

past is severed. When individuals with whom we have shared significant moments depart from

our lives, it disrupts the continuity of our narrative, leaving us with incomplete memories and a

significant sense of loss and isolation.

The idea that "they take the whole thing" underscores the significant impact of losing shared

history. Without the presence of those who co-created our past, our memories become disjointed,

lacking the full context and shared understanding that once gave them meaning. This alienation

from our own history reflects a broader existential crisis, where the departure of significant others

not only removes them physically but also erases parts of our identity that were intertwined with

their presence. The notion of reading only half the lines while the other person reads the ends

signifies an incomplete narrative, emphasizing the alienation felt when the continuity of shared

experiences is broken.

The novel introduces a clinic of the past as a crucial setting, serving as a metaphor for the

human compulsion to cling to and reconstruct fragmented histories. This facility's purpose to

replicate past environments for individuals with dementia exemplifies the battle against alienation

resulting from memory loss and the disintegration of collective experiences. The narrative

portrays the clinic not merely as a medical facility but as a sanctuary. Here, fragmented pasts are

reconstructed, emphasizing the significant human need to address the alienation accompanying

the erosion of shared history and identity. This thematic exploration highlights the broader

societal implications of memory and identity preservation within the context of progressive cognitive decline.

Gospodinov's narrative weaves together these themes of otherness and alienation by emphasizing the intrinsic link between memory, identity, and human connections. The characters' efforts to preserve and relive their pasts in the clinic underscore the universal human struggle to maintain a coherent sense of self in the face of disintegration. The novel poignantly portrays how the loss of shared experiences not only alienates us from others but also from our own selves, as our identities are inextricably linked to the narratives we share with those around us.

3.3 Portrayals of Otherness in *Time Shelter*

Gospodinov's novel *Time Shelter* explores otherness through temporal and cultural dislocations. The narrative transports readers into anachronistic settings, challenging identity and belonging. The following passage encapsulates the novel's theme of disorientation when faced with 'otherness:

> "If an uninitiated person were to set out on a trip, they could unexpectedly find themselves in a different time, one not marked in any guidebook: an Eastern European village that had broken away into early socialism, with collective farms and old tractors, a town with late nineteenth-century Bulgarian Revival–era houses where preparations for rebellion were in full swing, or a forest with wigwams, Trabants, and East German Indians straight out of 1960s Red Westerns" (Gospodinov 182).

The journey of an uninitiated person into different times highlights historical and cultural otherness. The settings—a socialist village, a Bulgarian Revival-era town, and a forest with East German Indians—symbolize cultural divergence. These are not just backgrounds; they are crucial to exploring identity. They force characters and readers to confront the unfamiliar, destabilizing fixed notions of belonging. The uninitiated traveler represents an outsider, examining the complexities of encountering otherness.

Gospodinov also examines memory and history as shelters and prisons, showing memory's fluidity and the subjective nature of history through temporal dislocations. Characters escaping to the past often feel loss and disconnection from their present identities, revealing the link between historical context and personal identity. The novel suggests our self-understanding is influenced by temporal and cultural environments, questioning identity's stability amid historical changes. The narrative critiques nostalgic views of the past by juxtaposing idealized memories with harsh historical realities, inviting reflection on how nostalgia can obscure true understanding of the 'other.' Gospodinov advocates for a subtle approach to history and identity, recognizing cultural and temporal complexities. This theme is relevant in a world where historical and cultural interactions are shaped by personal and collective memories.

Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* uses temporal travel to explore otherness, memory, and identity. The historical and cultural references challenge readers to consider the constructed nature of self and other. Temporal dislocations are both narrative devices and explorations of the human condition. Gospodinov's novel prompts deeper engagement with how we perceive and interact with the unfamiliar. The journey through time becomes a journey into identity and historical consciousness, inviting readers to rethink the past's impact on the present.

In *Time Shelter*, Gospodinov uses the characters of Mr. A. and Mr. N. to explore the theme of mundane existence and its implications for self-perception and historical memory.

Mr. A. states: "Sometimes I wondered what to write, Mr. A. admits, because nothing interesting happened" (Gospodinov 42). This admission highlights the contrast between anticipated excitement and the reality of ordinary life. The lack of remarkable events in Mr. N.'s life causes him anxiety, feeling that his uneventful existence might be a source of trouble for Mr. A., who is tasked with documenting it. This sentiment reflects a broader commentary on how individuals often feel pressured to live up to dramatic narratives, even when their lives are characterized by routine and banality. The portrayal of Mr. N.'s life as "boring" and the resultant anxiety he feels underscores the societal expectation that lives should be eventful and noteworthy. This perceived failure to conform to a narrative of significance and action reveals a deep-seated societal bias against the mundane, suggesting that there is a tendency to undervalue the ordinary in favor of the extraordinary. Gospodinov uses this dynamic to critique how history is often recorded and remembered, favoring exceptional events and figures over the everyday experiences that constitute the majority of human life.

This perspective values the minutiae of daily existence, suggesting that these details form the fabric of personal and collective history. Gospodinov's narrative invites readers to reconsider the importance of ordinary experiences in shaping identity and historical memory. By documenting the seemingly insignificant aspects of life, *Time Shelter* offers a significant meditation on the nature of existence and the ways in which we construct and remember our past. The attention to everyday details highlights how personal histories are composed of small, often overlooked moments that collectively shape an individual's life story. This focus on the mundane challenges the traditional emphasis on major events as the primary subjects of historical documentation, advocating instead for a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to recording human experiences.

In *Time Shelter,* the portrayal of mundane life serves as a vehicle for broader reflections on identity, memory, and historical value. Gospodinov uses the characters' reflections on their uneventful lives to critique societal expectations and the undervaluing of ordinary experiences. This sophisticated approach encourages a deeper appreciation for the everyday aspects of human life, presenting a richer, more inclusive understanding of history and personal identity. Through the lens of Mr. A. and Mr. N., Gospodinov reveals the deep impact of the mundane on our collective memory and self-perception.

By elevating the ordinary and highlighting its significance, *Time Shelter* challenges readers to rethink the criteria by which we judge the worth of a life and the ways in which we remember and record our histories. The novel suggests that true understanding of human existence requires acknowledging the importance of the everyday and recognizing that every individual's experiences, no matter how mundane, contribute to the broader tapestry of human history.

The novel, which delves deep into the intricacies of identity shaped by the past, uses the framework of a clinic that enables patients to live in reconstructed pasts of various decades. This setting allows Gospodinov to explore the concept of otherness not only through the lens of social or cultural differences but through the estrangement from one's own lived experiences. As noted in the text:

> "The less memory, the more past. As long as you remember, you hold at bay the times gone by. Like lighting a fire in the middle of a forest at night. Demons and wolves are crouching all around, the beasts of the past are tightening the circle, but they still don't dare step into it" (Gospodinov 211).

This text reveals the dual role of memory in both connecting and distancing individuals from their pasts. It suggests that memory serves as a shield against the strangeness of forgotten

experiences. The novel probes the concept of otherness through characters' interactions within an environment where the past is artificially reconstructed. These temporal reconstructions evoke a unique form of otherness—feeling estranged in one's own time. Patients at the clinic, experiencing varying degrees of memory loss, feel detached from their current reality. They instead resonate with the eras recreated within the clinic's walls. This sense of displacement underscores a key aspect of otherness in *Time Shelter*: estrangement from the present, which feels unfamiliar and alien compared to the artificially familiar past.

Furthermore, Gospodinov introduces the character Gaustine, who runs the clinic, as a central figure in exploring the ethical implications of manipulating memory to alleviate the discomfort of otherness. Gaustine's manipulation of patients' time and memory perceptions offers deep insights into the human desire to flee from present alienation. Through Gaustine's actions, the narrative critically assesses the morality of deepening the patients' disconnection from their actual temporal context. The ethical dilemmas posed by Gaustine's actions metaphorically reflect societal attempts to idealize or sanitize history. This creates a collective otherness, transforming the past into a sanitized refuge from contemporary problems.

Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* presents a complex interrelationship of themes linked to otherness, time, and memory. The novel challenges notions of identity and belonging and critiques the societal yearning for a frequently nonexistent past. By exploring the ethical consequences of retreating into reconstructed memories, Gospodinov underscores the inherent otherness of living in a past that isolates individuals from their current realities. Thus, the novel serves as a significant examination of the human condition, exploring how memories mold and sometimes distort our sense of self and otherness amid the relentless progression of time.

3.4 The Interplay Between Time, Memory, and Alienation

The intricate relationship between time, memory, and alienation is a central theme in Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*. This relationship is poignantly encapsulated in the question:

"If we are not in someone else's memory, do we even exist at all?" (Mr. N 37).

This line invites a deep reflection on the role of memory in defining existence. Without memory, both personal and collective, one's sense of self and continuity can become fragmented. This fragmentation often leads to a significant sense of alienation, as individuals struggle to connect with a past that feels increasingly elusive. Memory serves not only as a repository of personal history but also as a means of validation and identity affirmation. In the absence of such a repository, individuals are left to grapple with an existential void, questioning the reality of their experiences and the authenticity of their being. This questioning underscores the essential nature of memory in establishing a coherent self-narrative that situates individuals within a broader temporal and social context. When memory is compromised, this narrative is disrupted, leading to a dislocation that is both temporal and existential.

Memory serves as the glue that holds the narrative of our lives together. It provides continuity and context, grounding us in a temporal and spatial reality. In Gospodinov's novel, the characters' reliance on memory to validate their existence underscores the vulnerability of human identity. When memory fails or is absent, individuals are left in a liminal space, questioning their place in the world. This existential uncertainty is a form of alienation, where the past becomes a series of disjointed moments rather than a cohesive story. The alienation experienced by characters in the novel reflects a broader human condition, where the erosion of memory equates to the erosion of self. The fragmentation of memory leads to a fragmented identity, where individuals can no longer draw a clear line connecting their past, present, and future. This liminality is disorienting and distressing, as it strips away the comforting illusion of a stable and continuous self, leaving individuals adrift in a sea of temporal disarray.

Alienation is further exacerbated by the passage of time. As time progresses, memories fade, and the connection to one's past weakens. Gospodinov's exploration of this theme suggests that time, in its relentless march forward, erodes the foundation of our identity. The notion

emphasizes the need for external validation to anchor one's sense of self. Without others remembering us, our experiences and existence feel less real. This amplifies the sense of isolation. Depending on others' memories shows the social aspect of identity. Human existence is deeply communal. The fear of being forgotten drives much of human behavior. It influences actions and decisions. People seek to leave a lasting impression. The communal aspect of memory is crucial for affirming our identity. It gives our lives significance and permanence. Collective memory significantly impacts our sense of self and belonging. As time progresses and social bonds weaken, the sense of alienation intensifies, revealing the intricate link between temporal progression, memory decay, and social disconnection. The novel portrays this dynamic vividly, illustrating how the passing of time can isolate individuals not only from their own past but also from the collective memory that sustains communal ties.

Memory acts as a critical link to our past, providing continuity in the face of time's inexorable advance. However, when memory is unreliable or absent, individuals confront a significant sense of alienation, questioning their very existence. Gospodinov's novel thus offers a poignant commentary on the human condition, highlighting the essential role of memory in mitigating the alienating effects of time. By emphasizing the dependence on external validation through others' memories, the narrative underscores the communal aspect of identity and the significant impact of time on social and personal continuity. The novel's exploration of these themes resonates deeply, offering insights into the human struggle to maintain a coherent sense of self amid the ceaseless flow of time and the inevitable decay of memory. It's power to hold and freeze individuals within the fixed outlines of a solitary self is a central theme in Gospodinov's *Time Shelter*. The narrative illustrates how

> "Memory holds you, freezes you within the fixed outlines of a single, solitary person whom you cannot leave" (Gaustine191).

This framework for self-perception can become rigid and confining, trapping individuals in the person they once were. As characters in the novel struggle to reconcile their past with their

present, they often feel a sense of stagnation. The past dominates their present, leaving little room for growth or change. This tension between time and memory creates a sense of alienation from their evolving selves, as the characters find it difficult to move forward.

Oblivion, or the act of forgetting, is portrayed as a means of liberation from the constraints of memory. The quote continues : "Oblivion comes to liberate you" (Gaustine192) forgetting allows for a fresh start and frees individuals from the burdens of their past. This notion is both terrifying and liberating, as it offers a blank slate to redefine oneself while simultaneously erasing significant parts of one's history. In *Time Shelter,* this duality of forgetting is explored through characters who view it as both a loss and an opportunity. Forgetting past traumas and mistakes provides a chance to escape from a confining identity, yet it also risks losing the essence of who they are. This complexity underscores the intricate relationship between time, memory, and identity in the novel.

The alienation experienced by the characters in *Time Shelter* often stems from the conflict between their past and present. When memory exerts a strong influence, it can create a disconnect with the present moment. This disconnect leads to feelings of isolation, as individuals feel out of sync with the world around them. The novel portrays characters who are alienated from the present due to their inability to move beyond their memories. Gaustine's words highlights this form of alienation, where individuals are stuck in their past selves. This form of alienation is a recurring theme, highlighting the struggle to reconcile the pull of the past with the flow of time. The characters' sense of dislocation reflects a broader existential crisis, where the past's grip on their identity prevents them from fully engaging with the present.

Memory is shown to define and confine individuals, holding them within a rigid framework that can stifle growth. Oblivion offers a potential escape from this confinement, though it comes with its own challenges. The tension between remembering and forgetting leads to alienation, as characters struggle to balance their past with their present. Through its exploration of these

themes, *Time Shelter* provides a poignant commentary on the human condition, emphasizing the essential role of memory in shaping identity and the complex emotions surrounding the act of forgetting.

Gospodinov's novel *Time Shelter,* the exploration of memory, time, and alienation is vividly portrayed through the idea that humans are constantly producing the past. This concept shows the cyclical nature of existence. The novel explores how people and societies create and recreate their histories. This process shapes their identities and sense of belonging. The protagonist reflects on this continuous engagement with the past and highlights how the past is always being made: "We are constantly producing the past. We are factories for the past. Living past-making machines, what else? We eat time and produce the past." (Gospodinov82)

The process of producing the past is not merely a passive act but an active and ongoing engagement with time. The novel suggests that every moment lived contributes to the accumulation of memories, which are then integrated into the larger narrative of one's life. This constant production of the past can lead to a form of alienation, as individuals become trapped in the endless cycle of reliving and reinterpreting their memories. The act of "eating time" and converting it into the past highlights a consumption of experiences that are inevitably transformed into memories, underscoring the transient nature of the present and the enduring weight of the past.

Furthermore, Gospodinov's depiction of humans as "factories for the past" implies a mechanistic and perhaps dehumanizing aspect to the way we process time. This metaphor suggests that individuals are almost industrial in their capacity to generate memories, which can become overwhelming and burdensome. The relentless creation of the past can result in a sense of disconnection from the present and future, as the past dominates one's consciousness. This alienation is a central theme in *Time Shelter,* where characters often struggle with their relationship to their memories and the implications for their current lives and identities.

In the novel, the protagonist's reflections on memory and time are intertwined with a broader commentary on societal and historical processes. The idea that: "even death doesn't put a stop to this" (Gaustine82) He points to the enduring nature of the past, which persists beyond individual lifespans and continues to influence future generations. This perpetual production of the past raises questions about the possibility of escaping the cyclical nature of time and finding liberation from the constraints of memory. *Time Shelter* thus presents a significant exploration of how time, memory, and alienation intersect, shaping both personal and collective human experiences.

3.5 Conclusion

This final chapter provides a general analysis of the novel in which Gospodinov presents a unique clinic where patients with memory loss find solace in meticulously recreated pasts. This concept highlights how the interaction between time and memory functions both as a refuge and as a source of alienation. Characters like Gaustine, who navigate through different eras, embody the complex relationship between time and identity, showcasing how the past continuously shapes and reshapes the present self. Through its rich narrative, *Time Shelter* invites readers to reflect on the nature of memory, the pain of alienation, and the quest for belonging in a rapidly changing world. The novel's exploration of otherness extends beyond individual experiences, touching upon broader societal themes and the universal human condition. By immersing readers in a world where the past is both a sanctuary and a prison, Gospodinov's work poignantly captures the timeless struggle of understanding and embracing one's identity amidst the relentless flow of time.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The dissertation opens off in the first chapter by the study delves into the theme of mental displacement in *Time Shelter*. The novel's unique narrative structure, which allows characters to relive moments from the past, serves as a powerful metaphor for mental displacement. This chapter explores how Gospodinov uses the concept of a temporal clinic to examine the characters' yearning for a simpler, more familiar time amidst the chaos of contemporary life. By immersing themselves in nostalgic memories, the characters navigate the complexities of identity formation, revealing how past experiences continuously shape and reshape their sense of self. The analysis highlights the fluidity of identity and the significant impact of memory on personal development.

In the second chapter, the focus shifts to the theme of selfhood in a fractured timeline. The chapter analyzes how Gospodinov conceptualizes selfhood through the novel's non-linear narrative and fragmented storytelling. By portraying characters who traverse different temporal realms, the novel challenges traditional notions of a stable, linear identity. This chapter explores the dynamic relationship between time, memory, and self-perception, illustrating how characters reconstruct their identities through their interactions with both past and present experiences. The narrative's disjointed structure mirrors the characters' fragmented selfhood, emphasizing the ever-evolving nature of identity.

The third chapter addresses the themes of otherness and alienation in a temporal context. Gospodinov's portrayal of characters who grapple with feelings of alienation and displacement underscores the societal and cultural forces that shape their identities. This chapter examines how the interactions between characters highlight the tensions between self-perception and societal expectations. By presenting characters as both insiders and outsiders within their own memories,

the novel provides a critical lens through which to examine contemporary issues of belonging and identity. The exploration of otherness and alienation enriches the narrative's depth, offering insights into the universal human struggle for self-understanding and acceptance.

Overall, the study reveals that Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* significantly contributes to contemporary literary discussions on memory, time, and identity. The novel's innovative approach to these themes challenges readers to rethink conventional notions of selfhood and temporality. Gospodinov's narrative techniques, including the use of a non-linear structure and fragmented storytelling, effectively convey the disorienting effects of temporal displacement. This participatory aspect of the novel invites readers to explore their own connections to time and memory, making the narrative a shared journey of self-discovery.

Gospodinov's *Time Shelter* serves as a temporal refuge, offering a space for both characters and readers to explore the multifaceted dimensions of identity and otherness. Through its intricate narrative and thematic exploration, the novel underscores the importance of understanding identity as a dynamic, ever-evolving construct shaped by the intricate dance of time and memory. This study reaffirms the novel's place in contemporary literary canon, highlighting its contributions to our ongoing quest to understand the human condition in a temporally fragmented world.

The novel intricately conceptualizes mental displacement through its narrative structure and character development. The temporal clinic, a central motif in the novel, allows characters to escape present-day troubles by immersing themselves in recreated pasts. This retreat into nostalgia serves as a coping mechanism for the characters, reflecting their deep-seated need to find solace in familiar memories. Mental displacement is portrayed as both a refuge and a prison, highlighting the paradox of seeking comfort in the past while remaining trapped by it. Characters

like Gaustine and the unnamed narrator navigate their fragmented identities through these temporal displacements, revealing the intricate connections between memory, time, and selfhood.

The theme of selfhood is central to *Time Shelter*, with Gospodinov exploring the fluidity and fragmentation of identity through his characters' experiences. The novel's non-linear narrative structure effectively mirrors the disjointed nature of the characters' self-perception. Characters continuously reconstruct their identities by traversing different temporal realms, illustrating the dynamic interaction between past and present. The portrayal of selfhood in the novel challenges the notion of a stable, singular identity, presenting it instead as a composite of various temporal experiences. This exploration of identity is enriched by Gospodinov's intricate character development, which delves into the psychological complexities of his protagonists.

Gospodinov skillfully addresses themes of otherness and alienation, portraying characters who grapple with feelings of estrangement within their own memories and societal contexts. The novel highlights the interactions between characters as a means of exploring these themes, emphasizing the societal and cultural forces that shape their identities. Characters such as the elderly residents of the temporal clinic experience alienation, both from their present selves and from the society around them. This sense of otherness is exacerbated by the temporal dislocations they undergo, revealing the deep-seated tensions between self-perception and external expectations. Through these interactions, *Time Shelter* offers a poignant commentary on the universal human struggle for belonging and identity.

The novel vividly portrays the impact of nostalgia and memory on the construction and understanding of personal identity. Gospodinov delves into the characters' longing for the past, illustrating how nostalgic memories shape their present identities. The temporal clinic serves as a space where characters can relive their cherished moments, emphasizing the powerful role of memory in identity formation. This exploration of nostalgia is nuanced, acknowledging both its comforting and imprisoning aspects. Characters are shown to reconstruct their identities through

their engagement with nostalgic memories, highlighting the intricate connections between past experiences and self-perception.

The narrative structure of *Time Shelter* significantly contributes to the exploration of mental displacement and its effects on identity. Gospodinov employs a fragmented, non-linear storytelling approach that mirrors the disjointed experiences of his characters. This narrative technique effectively conveys the disorienting effects of temporal displacement, immersing readers in the characters' fractured mental landscapes. The use of shifting perspectives and temporal jumps enhances the thematic depth of the novel, inviting readers to reflect on their own relationships with time and memory. Through this innovative narrative structure, *Time Shelter* offers a significant exploration of the complexities of identity and temporality.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A: Georgi Gospodinov

https://www.wiko-berlin.de/en/fellows/academic-year/2011/gospodinov-georgi

Appendix B: **Time Shelter Book Cover**

Image 2 "Time Shelter" Paperback

https://www.amazon.fr/Time-Shelter-Winner-Premio-Europeo/dp/1474623077
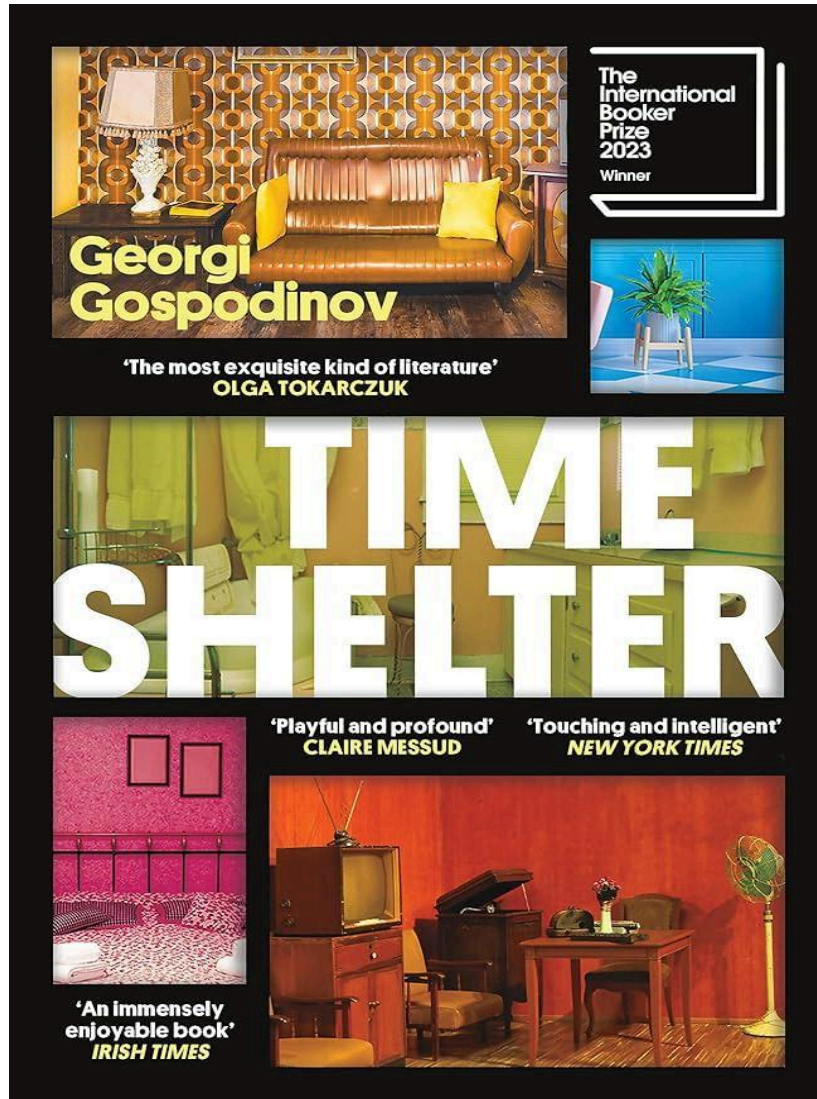
Glossary

Glossary

Existential Alienation: A significant sense of disconnection from the world and one's own existence. It is often associated with feelings of meaninglessness, isolation, and a questioning of one's place in the universe.

Existential Memory: The memories that significantly impact one's sense of existence and identity. These memories are often tied to pivotal life events and shape how individuals perceive themselves and their place in the world. In the novel, characters' existential memories are crucial in their search for identity and meaning.

Identity Formation: The process through which individuals develop a distinct personality and sense of self. This involves the integration of personal experiences, memories, and social interactions, shaping how one perceives oneself and is perceived by others.

Mental Displacement: A psychological state where an individual feels out of place or disconnected from their current environment or reality. This can result from trauma, nostalgia, or a significant change in life circumstances, leading to a longing for a different time or place.

Narrative Structure: The organizational framework of a story, including the sequence of events, character development, and thematic progression. In *Time Shelter*, the non-linear

and fragmented narrative structure reflects the characters' mental displacement and temporal confusion.

Nostalgia: A sentimental longing for the past, often idealized and viewed as a time of happiness or simplicity. Nostalgia can be a powerful emotional force that influences characters' decisions and perceptions of the present.

Otherness: The concept of perceiving or being perceived as different or alien, often in relation to cultural, social, or temporal norms. It involves the identification of an individual or group as fundamentally distinct from the dominant identity or group.

Selfhood: The sense of one's identity and individuality. It encompasses the awareness of personal existence, continuity, and distinctiveness from others, often explored in literature through characters' introspection and self-discovery.

Temporal Displacement: The experience of feeling out of sync with the present time, often due to an intense focus on past events or memories. This can lead to a sense of alienation and difficulty in adapting to current realities.

Temporal Fragmentation: The breaking up of time into disjointed segments, leading to a non-linear experience of past, present, and future. This concept is evident in *Time Shelter*, where the narrative and characters' experiences are marked by fragmented and overlapping temporalities.

Temporal Refuge: A conceptual or physical space where individuals seek solace by immersing themselves in past time periods. In literature, it often refers to the use of nostalgic or historical settings as a means of escaping present difficulties or uncertainties.

ملخص

يوضع عمل جورجي جوسبودينوف في سياق الخطاب الأدبي المعاصر، مشدًدا على أهميته في النقاشات حول الذاكرة، الهوية، والصحة النفسية. يتم فحص "ملجأ الزمن" لجوسبودينوف باستخدام نظرية ما بعد الإستعمار، وبشكل خاص مفاهيم هوية التعددية الثقافية وتكوين الهوية لهومي بهابها. يُصور رواية العيادة التي تعيد إنشاء العقود الماضية لمرضى الخرف كمجاز لاستكشاف كيفية تشكيل الذاكرة والهوية لتصورات الذات والآخرين. يتحدى هذا الإعداد الأفكار التقليدية عن الزمن الخطي والهوية الثابتة، مشيًرا إلى أن الهوية هي بناء ديناميكي يتأثر بالسياقات الثقافية والزمنية.

تسلط الدراسة الضوء على تقنيات جوسبودينوف السردية المبتكرة وعمق الموضوعات، و تسد الفجوات في النقد الأدبي من خلال تقديم تحليل شامل لـ"ملجأ الزمن". تُظهر الأطروحة كيف يؤثر استكشاف الرواية للنزوح الزمني، الحنين إلى الماضي، والذاكرة على تشكيل الهوية. كما تدرس الأطروحة مفاهيم النزوح العقلي، الذاتية، والاخرية ضمن إطار الهجنة الثقافية. تساهم مقدمةً رؤى حول سيولة وتفكك الذات في الأدب في الحوارات الأوسع حول كيفية تقاطع الأدب مع القضايا النفسية والوجودية، المعاصر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النزوح العقلي ، الذاتية، الآخرية، النزوح الزمني، التعددية الثقافية