

Jan Pellar – Literary Techniques in the Works of Carson McCullers.

The reference to currently absent entities and its reflection and evocation in the works of Carson McCullers

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The aims of the work: Describe the literary techniques and style constituents of the American authoress Carson McCullers.

Set the works in the context of the world literature (compare with the works of the Russian realists Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Tolstoy, French existentialists) and the contemporary American literature (Faulkner, the authors of Southern Renaissance, O'Connor, and Welty).

Statistically quantify the occurrence of the verbs dicendi and cogitandi introducing currently absent persons and objects to the mental scene of the literary heroes and the reader.

Statistically quantify the occurrence of semantic relations of the situational components in the accompanying circumstances thematized by absolute participles.

Introductory hypotheses:

1. The inner contradictoriness of the novel *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* establishes the aesthetic tension. (for further reference see Mukařovský, Jan: *Studie z estetiky*, Estetická funkce, norma a hodnota jako sociální fakty 62)
2. The quality of the output of Carson McCullers decreases with the rising first-plan explainability (for further reference see Mukařovský, Jan: *Studie z estetiky*)

Summary

The main aim of this work is to understand the technique of the description of the situation when a person or a thing appears currently beyond the scene and it is evoked by various means in the text. Typically, it happens through the reflection of the past which was experienced with that entity. The relevant text usually includes a verb *dicendi* or *cogitandi* introducing the passage which evokes the missing entity. The work also deals with (not only) the modern literary techniques used mainly in the novel by Carson McCullers *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*. The characters possess their deep psychology dimension which is reflected in the text. Their time flows subjectively; a figure or figures from whose perspective the story is currently perceived serve as a kind of camera for their angle of the narration. Apart from the mental acts and real process or the one that is dreamed the narration also includes the realistic time parameters or events in which the flow of the narration is set. The authoress also experiments with the psychological distance and/or nearness of the persons and objects being imagined. The characters have not only their associations in the past but also they imagine themselves in a relatively unreal future.

The declaration of the authorship of the work

Herewith I declare I wrote the work completely by myself, without using any forbidden plagiarism. The work includes my original thoughts to the works of Carson McCullers. The work deals exclusively with the literature mentioned later and other (electronic) sources.

I agree with making the work available for the study purposes in the school library.

Prague 2011-06-06 the name of the author:

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1. The reference to the absent persons and objects

1.1 The reference to the absent persons

Symptomatically, the novel *The Heart* is a Lonely Hunter starts with the depiction of the past of two mute persons, mutual friends John Singer and a Greek Spiros Antonapoulos till the moment of their having to split up, because Antonapoulos, whose behaviour was problematic, travels to a psychiatric hospital. Upon parting, Antonapoulos behaves as if he were already miles away.

His smile signals it, which creates a special tension in the description.

The verbs of mental perception prevail here.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 10) "The weeks that followed didn't seem real at all. All day Singer worked over his bench in the back of the jewelry store, and then at night he returned to the house alone. More than anything he wanted to sleep. As soon as he came home from work he would lie on his cot and try to doze awhile."

Singer's perception is deformed by his deep sorrow. Verbs of mental and perception process prevail here very distinctly.

"Dreams came to him when he lay there half asleep. And in all of them Antonapoulos was there." There is a direct mediation of the contact with the absent person through dream (the so called virtual presence). "His hands would jerk nervously, for in his dreams he was talking to his friend and Antonapoulos was watching him."

Singer's friend is made almost completely "present" in his imagination.

Singer tries to recall the time before he had known his friend. What crosses his mind it is unimportant to him. Allegedly he was an excellent pupil, but he did not learn to speak with his lips. The feeling of dwelling beyond the real world is particularly strong when Antonapoulos departs.

"Nothing seemed real except the ten years with Antonapoulos. In his half-dreams he saw his friend very vividly, and when he awakened a great aching loneliness would be in him." The act of packing up a box for Antonapoulos becomes a link with Singer's absent friend. (McCullers, *The Heart* 11) "Occasionally he would pack up a box for Antonapoulos, but he never received any reply. "There is a subjective flow of time again, different from the real physical time. "And so the months passed in this empty, dreaming way."



There are further cases of verbs which describe psychical states and acts, or its paraphrases.

"In the spring a change came over Singer. He could not sleep and his body was very restless."

"His inner experience is revealed in his external acts.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 12) "He could no longer stand the rooms where Antonapoulos had lived, and he rented a place in a shambling boardinghouse not far from the center of the town."

The descriptions in the book show how Singer releases his tension caused by the absence of his friend

Antonopoulos. "In his face there came to be a brooding peace that is seen most often in the faces of the very sorrowful or the very wise. But still he wandered through the streets of the town, always silent and alone."

The writer uses the technique of referencing and evocation of the currently absent entities very often and successfully, so the novel proceeds as the characters imagine at the moment. The ritual of drinking the mute Singer's beer is being watched by the owner of the restaurant Biff Brannon and he himself has just finished drinking a glass of beer. Then he loses himself in remembering the girl Mick. The moment of this remembering is framed in the act of drinking beer.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 22) "Biff stared at him idly and shook the few remaining drops of beer around in the bottom of his glass. Then he finished his drink in one slow swallow and went back to the newspaper spread out on the counter.

This time he could not KEEP HIS MIND ON the words before him." In the Czech translation there is HE THOUGHT about Mick (in the American original version there is even He REMEMBERED Mick. (it means he recalled Mick, the picture of Mick came into his mind) but the translator G. Gössel preferred the repetition of the verb think, which when being used the thought operations flow as certain cuts more set in the present, the verb remember evokes the transition to the past more than the more modern and general verb think (McCullers, *The Heart* ibid 22) "He WONDERED if he should have sold her the pack of cigarettes and if it were really harmful for kids to smoke. He THOUGHT of the way Mick narrowed her eyes and pushed back the bangs of her hair with the palm of her hand. He THOUGHT of her hoarse, boyish voice and of her habit of hitching up her khaki shorts and swaggering like a cowboy in the picture show. A FEELING of tenderness came in him. He was uneasy." (The description of almost bodily experience, neuropsychology of the character, subjective flow of time) (see ibid) "Restlessly Biff turned his attention to Singer. The mute sat with his hands in his pockets and the half-finished glass of beer before him had become warm and stagnant." There is expression of objective time flowing in "half-finished, warm and stagnant glass of beer". (McCullers, *The Heart* ibid 22) "He would offer to treat Singer to a slug of whiskey before he left." (The Czech version adds he THOUGHT here to signal the free indirect speech) (a fluent transition from mental acts and experience to the inner speech)

1.2. The reference to absent objects

When Biff Brannon's wife Alice dies in the hospital, Biff starts dreaming. One nucleus clauses in the introduction of the passage of the text about this escape from reality structurally resemble a film shot. (McCullers, *The Heart* 122) "Then gradually as he sat there his thoughts turned to a picture that had long been stored inside him.

The cold green ocean and a hot gold strip of sand. The little children playing on the edge of the silky line of foam." As Biff ponders on suicide, (McCullers, *The Heart* 123) "each second swells to an unlimited amount of time" It shows his specific subjective experience of time or rather expressive utterance of his feelings.

There is the characterization of the absent girl by choice of components, in this case it is situational anaphora and metonymy.¹

² Other components are the activities of the described girl.

The attention and perception of the hero in those passages functions as a camera of the narration.³

2. Subjective experience of time and space

2.1 . Subjective experience of time

Obviously, the time of the narration does not correspond to the real flow of time. Some days, weeks and even months seem longer or shorter to the characters.

The authoress is well-informed of the relativity of time and space in the characters' experience; she even mentions it explicitly in the description of intensive experiencing of music by the heroine Mick: (McCullers, *The Heart* 118)

"This music did not take a long time or a short time. It did not have anything to do with time going by at all. She sat with her arms held tight around her legs (again a description of bodily functions) biting her salty knee very hard.) It might have been five minutes she listened or half the night."

2.2 Subjective experience of space

The space in McCullers's books is filtered by the characters' perception. In changing light the space can give an impression of movement.

The world of McCullers is seen from a general perspective and also filtered by the experience of each particular figure. (McCullers, *The Heart* 116)

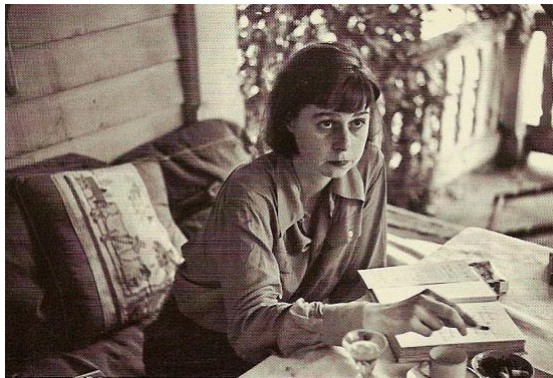
"In the quiet, secret night she was by herself again. It was not late – yellow squares of light showed in the windows of the houses along the streets. (points of reference for thinking of time and space before a passage subjectified further) ... Then the houses were far apart from each other..."

The characters modify the images in their minds; they react to it and live it through. (McCullers, *The Heart* 90) "Doctor Copeland turned off the lights in his house and sat in the dark before the stove. But peace would not come to him. He wanted to remove Hamilton and William from his

The deaf and Singer creates a part of and dreams of a lot of surrounding him. Heart 91) "This man from any person of the Doctor Copeland had encountered.

pondered about this time. Then later, had been invited in a cordial manner to return, he made another visit." The authoress masterfully achieves to connect the inner processes of the characters with the other parts of the text. There is also the description of what somebody usually does or what has happened just now in a particular time (in relation to the time mentioned). (McCullers, *The Heart* 92) "Singer spent all his summer vacation in the town where Antonopoulos was being kept in the asylum. For months he had planned this trip and imagined about each moment they would have together. Two weeks beforehand his hotel reservation had been made and for a long time he had carried his railroad ticket in an envelope in his pocket.

Antonopoulos was not changed at all. When Singer came into his room he ambled placidly to meet his friend."



Karl Marx and mind." dumb man, John the inner world people (McCullers, *The* was different white race whom ever

Afterward he white man a long inasmuch as he

Mick dreams very often and intensely. The authoress also works with the magic of the unsaid when she describes the hidden mysteries of her characters. (McCullers, *The Heart* 101) "These nights were secret, and of the whole summer they were the most important time. In the dark she walked by herself and it was like she was the only person in the town. Almost every street came to be as plain to her in the night-time as her own block. Some kids were afraid to walk through strange places in the dark, but she wasn't." The dreaming is well incorporated into the attributes of reality. On numerous occasions the characters get in their experience and thoughts somewhere beyond their everyday reality.

The world of images mingles with the real world of what evokes the images. (McCullers, *The Heart* 98) "Sometimes it was like she was out in Switzerland and all the mountains were covered with snow and she was skating on cold, greenish-colored ice. Mister Singer would be skating with her.

3.1 The penetration of associations into the past and the future

The penetration of associations into the past is a classical pattern of modern literary techniques. The association serves here as a means of connecting the current situation of the flow of the text with the recollection. Here again the recollection is skilfully incorporated in the situation of the current flow of the time of the text. (McCullers, *The Heart* 133) "Then suddenly he looked up with a surprised expression. His mouth had been open for a yawn and he snapped it shut. The radio swung into an old song that dated back to the time when he and Alice were engaged. 'Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight.' They had taken the streetcar one Sunday to Old Sardis Lake and had rented a rowboat. At sunset he played on the mandolin while she sang. She had on a sailor hat, and when he put his arm around her waist she – Alice –

A dragnet for lost feelings. Biff folded the newspapers and put them back under the counter."

The verbs of mental processing are repeated frequently, which makes the text hold together well. The digression into dreaming sometimes even does not occur.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 135) "During this time he (doctor Copeland) did not see Portia or William or Highboy, but often he thought of them."

"



Other technique of referring to the events beyond its progress is dialogue (narration through dialogue). Daughter Portia tells her father doctor Copeland how her brother William fought with another young man because of a girl. Doctor Copeland heightens the tension in her depiction by asking her to omit all unimportant details.

Doctor Copeland then falls into a reverie and he remembers the distant past of his childhood. Next day he comes to the meeting of his family. Grandpapa is wearing the same greenish-black suit that he had worn thirty years before at his daughter's wedding with doctor Copeland, who is a widower now. This associative similarity makes the situation more

remarkable rather than it increased the cohesion of the text.

Doctor Copeland has a feeling of being unfulfilled and not well understood in his family. (McCullers 130) (McCullers, *The Heart* 147) "These are my people, he tried to tell himself – but because he was dumb this thought did not help him now. He sat tense and sullen." The verb of mental activity creates here a kind of contrast, it is not only a cohesive means in this case which would by being repeated only further unite the texture. (McCullers, *The Heart* 148) "Doctor Copeland clamped his teeth down hard. He had thought so much about Hamilton and Karl Marx and William and Portia, about the real true purpose he had had for them, that the sight of their faces made a black swollen feeling in him."

Thinking about the other people in the room creates tension; a certain imaginary inner conflict is shown here which also touches the sphere of deep psychology. The next chapter contains a dialogue of Jake Blount with the mute John Singer. In fact it is a one-sided monologue in which the mute Singer nods in agreement from time to time, which increases the tension felt because of Jake Blount's loneliness. What Jake would usually do mingles with what he did that time.

He talks about his effort to become a priest and at the moment of speaking he is drinking beer. At dusk the world is perceived through the lights and shadows playing. Thus Jake is gradually falling into dreams and sleep. (McCullers, *The Heart* 159) "The fire shadows lapped against the walls. The dark, shadowy waves rose higher and the room took on motion.

The room rose and fell and all balance was gone."

Dreaming appears in the next chapter as well. Mick dreams of Singer, music, and foreign distant countries. The writer experiments with psychological distance of both persons and things. When Bobin shoots and wounds Baby, he is supposed to run away far by all except Mick, who knows he is hiding himself in a near oak tree. It brings tension. Mick does not know, however, that Bobin actually did escape.

Certain evidence on people who are absent is a medical report on a boy named Lancy Davis, who is a bit extreme case in his behaviour.

Nevertheless, he will have to receive the price for the essay 'My Ambition: How I can Better the Position of the Negro Race in Society', no matter how poor it is, because there is no other better. This medical card is in fact very personal even though it is written in quite impersonal medical style: (McCullers, *The Heart* 184) "thirteen years old – past puberty. Unsuccessful attempt self-emasculatation. Oversexed and hyperthyroid. Wept boisterously during two visits, though little pain. Voluble – very glad to talk though paranoiac..."

The gifts for the visitors of the party refer to them and give some message without their being present. (McCullers, *The Heart* 185) "The sacks were piled on the floor. There were about forty of them, each one depending in size on the need of the receiver. Some gifts were only small packages of nuts and raisins and others were boxes almost too heavy for a man to lift..."

'I think you done right well this year.'

'Folks certainly have been kindly.'"

The mediation of the remembrance of Willie is given this time even in direct speech, by which there is emphasis on the fact of Portia missing the imprisoned young man.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 186) "But I keep thinking about my Willie. I sure do wish he could enjoy this here party today. And sure I do wish I could get a letter from him." Doctor Copeland tries to visualize even if a bit forcibly the legacy of Karl Marx to

his Black companions.

He also named one of his sons after Karl Marx. (McCullers, *The Heart* 188) "This man understood as did Jesus... His mission was for us, and the name of this man was Karl Marx."

In contrast to absence and emotional barrenness there is then full concentration given to the impassioned speech of doctor Copeland, who lives it through by all his soul. (McCullers, *The Heart* 191) "The grievous love he felt within him was too much." (deep psychology) Then the people disperse and there is another contrast here in the description. (McCullers, *The Heart* 195) "After the festivity the rooms had a bare, ruined look."

"(McCullers, *The Heart* 197) "The words left unsaid were heavier on his heart." In the mind of doctor Copeland strong emotional experience comes to be revealed.

The beginning of the next chapter depicts the escalating tension of the Black. The mute white Singer, who is close to a lot of people wanders around the town and by getting familiar to diverse people he seeks to overcome his loneliness after his absent friend Antonapoulos, who stays at mental hospital. (McCullers, *The Heart* 200) "Antonapoulos! Within Singer there was always the memory of his friend. At night when he closed his eyes the Greek's face was there in the darkness – round and oily, with a wise and gentle smile. In his dreams they were always together." There is subjective experience of time revealed. (McCullers 201) "It was more than a year now since his friend has gone away. This year seemed neither long nor short. Rather it was removed from the ordinary sense of time – as when one is drunk or half-asleep. Behind each hour there was always his friend." In the following text recollections to Antonapoulos are given, dating back the time when they had another mute friend named Carl.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 202) "It was a pale winter evening, and their breath clouded in the cold air as they walked with their arms interlocked down the street." The situation is made present (visualized) here by this natural phenomenon, which causes that it seems very close. Singer then tries to remember just what was good in his life with his friend. (McCullers 206) "Singer stood in the street before the house where he and Antonapoulos had lived." The house with the things in it and its surroundings evokes to Singer his previous life with his friend. In his imagination he comes closer to him.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 207)

"Singer shut his eyes and tried to think of the asylum and the room that Antonapoulos was in tonight."

"

Singer can also remember by means of letters to his friend, which he hides unsent. His writing letters is basically a kind of soliloquy without any real effect, because Antonapoulos cannot read anyway and Singer hides those letters in his pockets and he destroys it afterwards. After having written his last letter, he falls into dreaming. Then he sets out for a journey to his friend. The communication gap, the fact that Singer can not immediately react to the spoken form of speech else than by talking by hands, which can be understood by the mute only, or by writing on paper, it causes that there area lot of rumours circulating, which he cannot immediately dispel. This is a case of certain public solitude, another form of absence of commentary on his part.

3.2 Self-projection into the unreal future

Another popular means of literary techniques apart from recollections is also self-projection into the future. The wistful adolescent girl sees herself in the future for a while. An important moment of the writer's literary technique is the fact of incorporating of the passage on remembering into a frame of a current action or activity, to which the text returns right after the recollection of the absent entity fades away.

In other words, the action in the past is framed in another current activity, this time it is smoking.

(McCullers, *The Heart* 34) "She took from the pocket of her shorts the package of cigarettes she had bought the night before. (an associative link to Biff Brannon and his thinking) She breathed in the smoke slowly. The cigarette gave her a drunk feeling so that her head seemed heavy and loose on her shoulders, but she had to finish it.

M. K. – That was what she would have written on everything when she was seventeen years old and very famous. She would ride back home in a red-and-white Packard automobile with her initials on the doors. She would have M. K. written in red on her handkerchiefs and underclothes. Maybe she would be a great inventor. She would invent little tiny radios the size of a green pea that people could carry around and stick in their ears." (unreal future imagination; such like cases of a sort of dreaming of the future occur in many places of the American dramas of the 20th century.

For example, the two poor men from the novel *Of Mice and Men*, one of which is mentally retarded in addition to their poverty, they dream of having their own house, which is highly improbable to ever happen.)

"When Mick had finished half of the cigarette..."(frame)

In her analysis of the novel, Carson McCullers points out that (McCullers, *Illumination and Night Glare* 166-7) "her (Mick's) plans are always definite in a certain way".

The deep psychology of the characters in the novel

4.1 The positive and negative variables

The variables can be both positive (doctor Copeland's love of his Negro race) and negative (doctor Copeland's anger of not being understood enough).

4.1.1 The positive variables

It is also Biff Brannon who remembers his wife Alice who has died recently, even though there is nothing in the room which would make him remember her. The recollection comes when he opens a bottle of perfume *Agua Florida*.

It evokes her to him. Although the bedroom was done over, there is also the lemon rinse which Alice had always used for her hair. There are several paragraphs devoted to the listing of things that occur there.

There are photographs taken before their marriage and a large bone hairpin that had belonged to his mother. The deep psychological content of Biff's dreaming of Mick is projected into the description. (McCullers, *The Heart* 233) "Always he wanted to set her up to something, to give to her. And not only a sundae or some sweet to eat – but something real. That was all he wanted for himself – to give to her. Biff's mouth hardened. He had done nothing wrong but in him he felt a strange guilt. Why? The dark guilt in all men, unreckoned and without a name."

After talking to Jake Blount and a new employee in his restaurant, the boy Harry Minowitz, Biff withdraws to his room downstairs, where his files, stacks of newspapers, a pair of shears, a dictionary and a mandolin are stored. He sings by himself and he dreams of adopting a little boy and a girl, who would call him "our father".

The main heroine, young girl Mick Kelly also dreams with music. She dreams that she would be a big composer. She has an outer and inner space of her personality. In her inner space there is apart from music also Mr Singer.

William loses his legs in prison. When doctor Copeland pronounces his name he bits his tongue deeply. It is as if the name of William, who was harmed, was linked with deep pain. Portia pours her coffee into a saucer – it signals that something is wrong with William. William's fate affects doctor Copeland both psychically and physically. (McCullers, *The Heart* 260) "He thought of every lawyer, every judge, every public official with whose name he was familiar – but the thought of each one of these white men was bitter in his heart."

Doctor Copeland goes to his acquaintance, a judge but he is taken to prison by some whites. There is again a description of subjective perception. (McCullers, *The Heart* 262)

"He closed his eyes and immediately he must have slept, for when he looked up again the small barred window was black and a bright light burned in the hall."

"

Subjective experience is shown with Jake Blount as well. In the following text, his imagination mingles with the determination of time. (McCullers, *The Heart* 279)

"The air was sultry. Jake Blount hated this weather. He thought dizzily of the long, burning summer months ahead. He did not feel well."

"

4.1.2 The negative variables

The book ranks among Southern Gothic novels, there are some elements of horror, too. The characters suffer from gloomy feelings and the Black people fight. Once Jake Blount finds a corpse of a Blackman who was murdered. (McCullers, *The Heart* 286) "Beneath the gaudy gaiety of the show, the bright lights, and the lazy laughter, he felt something sullen and dangerous." Jake Blount is haunted with deep psychological demons.

John Singer is somewhat an eerie figure and he also ends in a strange way. After his friend's Antonapoulos death, the mute commits suicide. It becomes his habit to think about currently absent people, especially his friend. (McCullers, *The Heart* 320) "For a while his thoughts lingered in the town he was leaving behind him, He saw Mick and doctor Copeland and Jake Blount and Biff Brannon. The faces crowded in on him out of the darkness so that he felt smothered".

Singer remembers Antonapoulos again. (McCullers, *The Heart* 322) "Singer had written many letters to Antonapoulos, but he had not posted them. He surrendered himself wholly to thoughts of his friend.

The half-year since he had last been with him seemed neither a long nor a short span of time. Behind each waking moment there had always been his friend.

And this submerged communion with Antonapoulos had grown and changed as though

they were together in the flesh.” Here again time passes in a different way than in reality – it flows subjectively for Singer.

Doctor Copeland has to think about the dead Singer, the idea of phenomenological being with those who are not alive anymore occurs here, another form of remembering the absent entities. (McCullers, *The Heart* 333) ”And how can the dead be truly dead when they still live in the souls of those who are left behind? But of all this he must not think. He must thrust it from him now. ”

The next depiction contains reference to deep psychology. (ibid.) ”there had been in him a murderous darkness“, there is also Jake Blount’s association of ideas to an absent entity (McCullers, *The Heart* 348) ”The sound of the rain was like the swelling sound of the sea.” Biff Brannon experiences burden (McCullers, *The Heart* 358) ”And the riddle was still in him, so that he could not be tranquil.” But afterwards Biff eventually recovers from his weakness and his relief comes. (McCullers, *The Heart* 359) ”And how could this terror throttle him like this when he didn’t even know what caused it? And would he just stand here like a jittery ninny or would he pull himself together and be reasonable? For after all was he a sensible man or was he not? Biff wet his handkerchief beneath the water tap and patted his drawn, tense face. Somehow he remembered that the awning had not yet been raised. As he went to the door his walk gained steadiness. And when at last he was inside again he composed himself soberly to await the morning sun.” So at the end of the novel a healthy defence of ego of one of the partial protagonists wins over his strange grief.

5.1 A brief summary of the research carried on the works of Carson McCullers

The authoress herself describes how she attains the goal of the work holding together. She compares each of the main heroes to a voice of fugue; those voices are contrasted mutually. (Cook, Richard M. Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* 21) ”This book is planned according to a definite and balanced design. The form is contrapuntal throughout.” The border in between a genial conception and intuitive unintentional writing style is blurred here. This statement does not hold for the novel *Clock Without Hands*, which seems to be thoroughly planned from its beginning to the end. Basically, the authoress was not able to draw on the incidental play of meanings accompanying the juxtaposition of contrapuntal themes. In connection with this fact there is the hypothesis relating to the decreasing quality of her works, with the rising measure of their first-plan explainability. (for further reference see Mukařovský, Jan: *Studie z estetiky*) According to this maxim, the works which are really well-written and possessing undisputed qualities, typically defy unambiguous interpretation. Jan Mukařovský also pronounces the fact that ”the inner contradictoriness of a work creates aesthetic tension.” Murders and dark thoughts enrich the profile of the figures in the novel.”. The construction of the work can be highly rational, and yet have a very emotive impact. In his study ”Deliberativeness and undeliberativeness in art” (the author remarks that the ”knowledge of art, thus deliberative knowledge, is not sufficient, what is needed, is madness, participation of the subconsciousness; this first adds perfection to the work”.

It is no accidental concordance, that in her essay ”The Russian Realists and Southern Literature” McCullers says in fact the same what Jan Mukařovský found in his analyses, to whom once works of Russian classic authors and their formalism served as the theoretical base of the structuralism. (Cook 102) Cook cites McCullers: ”that the

strange and the incongruous can be extremely helpful in exposing irrational and inexplicable patterns in all human behaviour, that the grotesque can serve the purposes of a more exact moral and psychological realism in art." The grotesque contrasts of the characteristics of the heroes of her novel *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* thus agglutinate the impact of the work with their bold juxtapositions.

The use of antinomies (comparison/contrast) as one of the literary techniques can be found both on the level of the narration of the action, but also on the level of the description of the character themselves (*The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* 53). *The Ballad of the Sad Café* 420) "Henry Macy, who is so opposite to his brother is the kindest and gentlest man in town...But he a shy man, and he has the look of one who has a swollen heart and suffers." Marvin Macy, HOWEVER, grew to be bold and fearless and cruel... But love REVERSED the character of Marvin Macy."

5.2 Stories by Carson McCullers. Shortly about the techniques used in other novels.

In her stories, the authoress tries out techniques which she will later apply in her novels. The work with the perceiver of the story occurs, functioning as a sort of camera, a filtering agents of the perspective in which the reality is seen. (McCullers 73) "And as she thought of following the empty sounds of the footsteps they grew softer, softer - until there was only black left." The characters also define themselves relatively in relation to the presence or to the narration time respectively.

In the work, text pieces appear which surprise by their sensuality and flesh connotations; the reader nearly can touch the bodies of the characters. (McCullers 75) "His knees urged close to hers in the darkness and she felt his body contract to a shivering little ball. Tiredly she reached out for his head and drew it to her. Her fingers soothed the little hollow at the top of his neck..."

Some of the stories have been repeatedly rejected by the journal editors. In the story *Wunderkind*, the authoress profits from her musical experience with piano lessons. Namely, she wanted to become a pianist originally, but as she lost her savings which she wanted to use for her university studies, she became a writer.

In the text, absolute participial constructions are used to designate accompanying phenomena in characters. (McCullers 81): "She was as far over the edge of the bed as she could get, her legs stretched out stiff and her hands holding tight to the edge and her face on one arm." An independent research would be needed for the statistical evaluation of the situational components in the clauses with an absolute participial construction and their main clauses including the analysis of semantic relations between semantic fields of the terms contained the so called sense relationships (e. g. body parts, meronymy, hypo/hyperonymy etc.) The question is how the situation components take part in the mental representation and the construction of the picture.

Another thematic field is formed by the question, which verbs and with which frequency they appear in the presentation of the recollection on the stage..

In the story *Like that*, the narrator experiences analogous feelings of desolation and seclusion (from intimate persons who departed, as for instance Frances in the novel *Member of the Wedding* after her brother and his wife departed and did not take her with them, as she had hoped. (Mc Cullers 85): "It's not at all like it was last fall, though." Also the novel *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* begins and with a description of a half live of the past into the present.

Retrospective techniques set in the cadre of the narration appear in the story *Untitled Piece*. A young man remembers in a restaurant at a halt, what he experienced during the

past years. After his remembrances, he returns back into the presence. Namely he travels back home after some years. As far as the stock of shared knowledge is concerned, gaps appear in the thinking of the hero. For instance, he does not know what the name of the town is where he is at the moment, or what the time is exactly. The reader can in this manner imagine the town on the base of indistinct allusions /references/ about it. By giving picture, where something is missing, McCullers achieves a stronger plausibility of her descriptions.

The long-short story *Reflections in a Golden Eye* narrates a story of a military base on the American South in a time of peace. There is the impotent homosexual captain Penderton who lurks under the identity of the uniform. His wife Leonora - a comparatively fat person - has a lover, major Langdon. Major's wife gave birth to a malformed child and is most of the time ill. She dies in a hospital. Another soldier, Private Ellgee Williams, flirts with the captain's wife. The captain feels attracted by him, but when he sees him cast about his wife, he shoots him dead. Unfortunately, the authoress did not avoid platitude both of the environment, as of the characters. Her description itself is somewhat plat.

The framework of the whole novel *Clock Without Hands* is formed by the dying of the main hero J. T. Malon. In this, the authoress is near to the work of the existentialists at that time progressive.

On many places of the work of the writer, descriptions of changes or weather duration states appear, complementing as a picture or even commenting the action on the narration stage. They are thus a sort of an active coulisse mirroring the processes. In her essay, "The Russian Realists and Southern Literature", McCullers rightly observes, that the Southern literature would profit from „assuming a philosophical responsibility". (McCullers, *The Mortgaged Heart* 264); in her first novel, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, the authoress undoubtedly puts more deeper philosophical questions, see the reflections of doctor Copeland about the black race and also the thoughts of Jake Blount about God.

As a leitmotiv, in her novels the theme of desire of overcoming solitude can be traced. (*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*) The deaf-mute John Singer commits suicide, when he gets knowledge that his life-friend Antonapoulos died in a hospital. (*The Member of the Wedding*) Frances craves to belong to her brother and his bride; she looks for "the we of me". (*The Ballad of the Sad Cafe*) The commercially efficient, but lonely Miss Amelia falls in love with the dwarf cousin Lymon. McCullers speaks about loneliness in her essay *Loneliness...an American Malady*. She notes here that even though "Americans as a nation we are an outgoing people, reaching always for immediate contacts (...) we tend to seek out things as individuals, alone." (*The Mortgaged Heart* 266).

It seems that the unconscious tendencies to which the authoress refers in the essay *The Flowering Dream Notes on Writing* (*The Mortgaged Heart* 281) intuitively contribute to the cohesion of her texts. Details are said to be more evocative and moving than any generality (ibid 282), the authoress "becomes the characters she writes about". Her thin poetry deals with the spiritual questions, the problems of love, time and god as well.

A successful novel *The Member of the Wedding* also contains some dream passages with the imagination of the heroine Frankie (*The Member of the Wedding*, McCullers *Complete Novels* 461) "Frankie sat at the table with her eyes half closed, and she thought about a wedding. (*verbum cogitandi*, thematisation of the vision of the wedding) She saw a silent church, a strange snow slanting down against the colored windows. The groom in the wedding was her brother, and there was brightness where

his face should be. The bride was there in a long white train, and the bride also was faceless. There was something about this wedding that gave Frankie a feeling she could not name." Through an analysis of the situational components a conclusion can be drawn that apart from the synonymic repetition of the expression for mental activities (she thought, saw, evoked a feeling in F.) and hyperonyms describing a situation (wedding) also contains common meronyms characterizing this situation in the common world, thus not only in the dream vision (church, bridegroom = brother, bride). A distinct example of the dream character is the fact, that the bride and the bridegroom don't have any face. The last word completing the picture is "snow"

. The hero Frankie also dreams about Alaska, the land where her brother serves as a soldier. The technique of the visualisation of this dream landscape is similar to that the authoress commonly uses. (The Member of the Wedding 464). "But Alaska! Frankie had dreamed of it constantly, and especially this summer it was very real. She saw the snow and frozen sea and ice glaciers. Esquimau igloos and polar bears and the beautiful Northern lights." (Again, association meronyms are used, expressions paraphrasing *verba cogitandi*).

The twelve year old Frankie dreams of taking part at her brother's wedding and so to get a place in the world. When she is not accepted there, as she imagined, she leaves her home. Her father nevertheless takes her back. Her cousin and friend John Henry dies in ten days on meningitis. There is a ring of the bell at the door, and Frankie, now a little bit more adult, looks forward that somebody would liberate her from her solitude. The question is, to which extent the feelings, emotions and experience of the main heroine are projected into the depiction of external circumstances, changes of the weather. It is certain, that her views change in the course of the development of the story and with this, also her position, as she feels it and her relation to the other people, changes, as Frankie grows. Richard M. Cook in his study on Carson McCullers' novels points out, that the reviewers reproached to the authoress that she neglected social problems in this novel that occur in her first novel *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*. I share the opinion of the author that if these problems would appear in this work which is conceived from a subjective point of view of an adolescent girl which prevails above any political involvement.

McCullers also describes how the adolescent Frankie reflects upon her identity. Sometimes it seems strange to her that with the course of the years, it is always her, at other times she wishes to be someone else. She wants to change her name to F. Jasmine, by which she would escape for the trap of her identity. (The Member of the Wedding 110) "I wish I was somebody else except me." (The Member of the Wedding 237) "Doesn't it strike you as strange that I am I, and you are you? I am F. Jasmine Addams. And you are Berenice Sadie Brown. And we can look at each other, and touch each other, and stay together year in and year out in the same room. Yet always I am I, and you are you. And I can't ever be anything else but me, and can't ever be anything else but you. Have you ever thought of that? And does it seem to you strange?"

The last novel of the authoress *Clock Without Hands* is criticized by a lot of reviewers. Those reviewers point to the fact that the fates of the novel characters are connected just loosely, the integrity of the work is threatened by it. The split of personality spheres in a particular hero is said to be unconvincing.

On the other hand, the reviewer Richard M. Cook claims that the deepest, most interesting and genuine of the book are those which depict the suffering and doubts of the pharmacist J. T. Malone, who is dying. Facing the death he realizes that he has

never truly lived. He married his wife because it was advantageous so that he could hand over the pharmacy after her father.

It is highly controversial whether Malone complies with the principles of existentialism by starting to be involved in some issues while knowing about his finality he would start to be in existence. By refusing to kill the blue-eyed Negro, another significant character of the story, he fulfills the goal of not burdening his soul by sin before his death. The message of his nearly approaching death leads him to being occasionally tender to his wife, whom he ceased to love a long time ago and from time to time he takes a day off from his pharmacy and the adjacent shop.

5.3 The assessment of the writer's achievements

Richard M. Cook in the chapter Carson McCullers' Career (Cook 123) briefly evaluates the authoress's achievements and disappointments. In his view, the writer is not "intellectual" but only "lyrical". Even though one of the themes of her creative work became the thoughts processed by both society and individuals. Doctor Copeland in the novel *Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* is a Lonely Hunter suffers from isolation which springs from his intellectual superiority over the average in the Negro race. The hero J. T. Malone from the authoress's last novel *Clock Without Hands* who is deadly ill seeks to find out the meaning of death in the local church in the company of trustworthy and successful people.

Another problem of the authoress according to R. M. Cook is the fact that her topics are quite limited and with borders. The authoress writes about the South of her childhood even though she had not continued living there. In the novel *Clock Without Hands* she does return to the South but to the 50ties, an era she could not understand much.

Her play *Square Root of Wonderful* was a failure on Broadway. Cook mentions the fact that according to her own words the authoress never came to terms with the fame she received when she was just 23 years old with the publication of *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*. When she was in her thirties her health was weakened, she suffered several strokes. Last but not least her marriage with the alcoholic Reeves did not suit her. Her husband committed suicide in 1953.

The authoress depicts her life story in the unfinished autobiography *Illumination and Night Glare*. The Second World War letters exchanged between her and her husband who served in the army outlived.

A certain disadvantage of the authoress's creative development is that she has learnt to explain her figures and their motives in the works perhaps too much; the literary facts are too motivated by the consciousness, which could lead even to schematic character. The Russian Classics, especially F. M. Dostoyevsky had a sorrowful advantage in comparison with her: the sorrow and hopelessness of the Russian soul and the local situation is boundless. In her work the authoress uses a whole scale of synonymic expressions of verbs of mental acts.

What could seem accidental in the first reading, it emerges as a relative constant in the second reading: (McCullers, *The Heart* There were two mutes in the town, and there were always together. The fact that they were always together means on another level as though they were remembered by the reader like that. Their virtual presence described by the authoress from the view of the sane Singer, represents a manifestation of that sentence.

6. Concerning the psychological aspect of the experience of processes.

The researchers pose the question of which process is perceived by man as closer in time: Whether it is the process to which they return from the presence in the direction to the past or this when the movement goes from a certain point in the past in the direction of the present. The point of the respondents entering the university was used as the point in the past.' The first progression seemed closer in time to the respondents.

7.1 The Situational Components in Semantic Relationships - Linguistic Analysis

The town-situationally defined town two mutes – introduces the main heroes of the chapter always together- temporal definition, totality, every morning – temporal definition, totality, repeatedness come -verb the house – meronymy of town, situation lived - verb arm in arm – in other words means together, synecdoche work - activity

two friends, very different – from the point of view of literary techniques a contrast is advantageous, it enables to distinguish and remember the dissimilar features

the one – nominal substitution steer the way- ac

obese and dreamy – common personal attributes

Greek, the summer – temporal sea, a yellow or green polo shirt, trousers, colder, a gray sweater – meronymy of dresses, characterization by parts of the whole stuffed sloppily, hanging loose blind, his face , round and oily, half-closed eyelids, lips, gentle, stupid smile- attributes a bodily displays/features

the other mute – nominal substitution, comparison in row, tall, his eyes, a quick, intelligent expression- attributes parallel to the previous hero, always immaculate, very soberly dressed – repeatedness in time, attributes to clothing (further parallelism in the description of the hero)

every morning- repeatedness, totality in time, universal quantifier, the two friends – definite reference, known or identified referent, repetition, silently – adjunct of manner ,together, the main street of the town – a bigger whole, the progression to the detail of the store- more specified

The author's perspective works like a camera, the closer the picture, the bigger details.

A certain food and candy store, the sidewalk outsider

The description gets more specific. The description gets more and more specific.

The Greek, Spiros Antonopoulos, worked for his cousin, who owned this fruit store.

7.2 *The statistical occurrence of semantic primitives of the mental act*

as a means of thematization of currently absent entities. The statistical occurrence of situational components works as a means of characterization of the environment, the role of the situational components in their semantic relationships especially after absolute participle construction expressing the accompanying circumstances. It is used in framing the reflected and evoked in the narration.

8. Statistical evaluation

The most frequent word in chapter 1 is the definite article the (5, 96%). It implies that the objects and persons are situationally defined (the concrete town is considered). 135 occurrences (3, 51%) of the personal pronoun he and 119 occurrences of possessive form in personal reference testifies to the fact that the introductory chapter treats the masculine gender exclusively. The high occurrence of the conjunction and (134 occurrences) signals on the one side the co-ordination of the clause elements and also the relation of parataxis. The names of the two main protagonists occur in roughly the same proportion (Singer 46, Antonapoulos 45)

Word	Frequency	%
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Appendix 1

the	229	5.96
.	214	5.57
he	135	3.51
and	134	3.49
his	119	3.09
to	103	2.68
,	95	2.47
of	81	2.11
was	76	1.98
in	68	1.77
a	68	1.77
Singer	46	1.20
Antonapoulos	45	1.17
had	39	1.01
for	38	0.99
that	36	0.94
him	35	0.91
with	34	0.88
at	32	0.83
would	30	0.78
were	30	0.78
not	28	0.73
on	26	0.68
but	26	0.68
very	25	0.65
they	22	0.57
always	21	0.55
there	20	0.52
all	19	0.49
this	18	0.47
friend	18	0.47
it	16	0.42
hands	16	0.42
then	15	0.39
or	15	0.39
one	15	0.39
did	15	0.39
could	15	0.39

town	14	0.36
from	14	0.36
day	14	0.36
store	13	0.34
over	13	0.34
be	13	0.34
when	12	0.31
out	12	0.31
before	12	0.31
two	11	0.29
Greek	11	0.29

The technique of description here is basically the same as in traditional literature, only there are more occurrences of the verbs *dicendi* and *cogitandi*, the reality is perceived when being introduced by those verbs. Also there are frequent paraphrases of those verbs with the substantives like *dream*, *sleep*.

9. Comparison of the style of writing of Carson McCullers with the style of Flannery O'Connor/ Eudora Welty

In the book of American literature *From Puritanism to Postmodernism* the three names are quoted together at various instances. The first two were both of Catholic religion. All the three authoresses share their relation towards the American South, where they were born and lived there a part of their lives. The book called *The Narrators of the American South* destroys a lot of myths about the lonely exclusiveness of this region and it seeks to interpret the works of the authors of the South more from the perspective of the mainstream.

Both Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor treat the naturalistic elements of horror and they get as far as towards the grotesque. They tell the stories of ruthless murders and dubious individuals (*A Good Man Is Hard to Find*).

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