

## FOOTPRINTS OF THE CLASSICAL WORKS IN MODERN TEXTS

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**Abstract:** Classic novels have predominantly influenced contemporary writing by prompting reinterpretation of their ideological, aesthetic, and moral legacies. Classic works serve as an artistic foundation, a societal norm, and a repository of cultural memory for current texts. Any literal text is considered to have an intertextual footprint from former texts. This research aims to analyze the intertextual connection of the classic literature *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee with *Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey. The analysis done by the researcher reveals that motif of telling the truth in *To Kill a Mockingbird* opposed to the motif of keeping silent *Jasper Jones*. This paper uses the intertextual analysis method to find mirroring motifs, symbols and metaphors from the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* into the novel *Jasper Jones*.

**Keywords:** intertextuality, symbol of *Mockingbird*, motif.

### Introduction

In the history of the literary process, the question of the interconnection of texts, their influence on each other at the semantic and aesthetic level, has always been one of the central scientific problems. Especially since the second half of the 20th century, with the emergence of the concept of “intertextuality” in literary criticism and theory, this issue began to be interpreted on a deeper philosophical and theoretical basis. The term “intertextuality” was first introduced into scientific discourse in the 1960s by the French scholar Julia Kristeva, who defined the text as a dynamic structure that exists in interconnection with previous texts (Kristeva, 1969). As Kristeva emphasizes, any text is “an intertextual field that enters into a dialogue with preceding and contemporary texts, embodying their traces.” From this perspective, a text is never an absolutely independent phenomenon but always exists in interaction with other texts, through which it completes its meaning. This research aims to decode the motifs and metaphors of the novels *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee and *Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey, which are connected intertextually.

### Literature Review

The theory of intertextuality, after being coined by J. Kristeva, was later deepened through the scholarly research of figures such as R. Barthes, M. Bakhtin, G. Genette, L. Jenny, and U. Eco. R. Barthes interprets the text not as a closed system, but as an “open network of entangled meanings” (1973). In this approach, the text is viewed as a dynamic process that exists in relation to other texts. M. Bakhtin (1975/1981), in turn, explains intertextual connection through the concept of “dialogism”. In his view, every text lives by absorbing the tone and content of other texts, creating a new system of meanings in the

process of this dialogue. At the center of intertextual analysis lies not the text itself, but rather how it relates to other texts and how their traces are reprocessed on an aesthetic and ideological level.

It can be asserted on a scholarly basis that intertextuality is not merely concerned with quotations or allusions between texts; rather, it is a broad concept that encompasses the interaction of texts on ideological, generic, stylistic, and aesthetic levels. In an attempt to classify this process more precisely, G. Genette (1997) identified several key types of intertextual relations: intertextual (direct quotation or allusion), paratextual (connection through a text's title or epigraph), metatextual (commentary or interpretation of another text), hypotextual (using one text as a basis for another), and architextual (connection at the genre level). This approach allows intertextuality to be understood as a broader literary process and necessitates the analysis of textual interconnections not only on a formal level but also on semantic and philosophical levels.

The theoretical and practical significance of the intertextual approach in modern literature is primarily manifested in the ability to reinterpret cultural and historical heritage and integrate it into a new artistic system. Each new text enters into a creative dialogue with previously established literary traditions, reinterpreting them within a new social, cultural, and philosophical context. Intertextuality reveals itself not only as a formal mechanism of linkage between texts but also as a trans-temporal dialogue between cultural memory and literary thought. In the course of such dialogue, classical texts do not lose their semantic potential; on the contrary, by adapting to the spirit of the times, they are enriched with new artistic layers and their conceptual value is enhanced (Bakhtin, 1975/1981).

### **Methodology**

This research utilizes the intertextual analysis method in order to identify paralyzing motives, symbols and metaphors between the two novels, namely *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee and *Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey. It depicts the motif of telling the truth versus the motif of keeping silent. By revealing the truth in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch persuades the jury in the courtroom to see the truth which was told, to release fair verdict towards Tom Robinson, an innocent African American who was blamed to rape white woman, Mayella Ewell. In contrast, in *Jasper Jones*, a boy who has a mixed-race background, Jasper is arrested and questioned about the crime, which had nothing to do with him. By keeping silent about hiding the dead body of Laura Wishart, Jasper Jones wanted to protect himself from suspicion. In addition to that, the typological analysis method is also implemented to identify the symbol of mockingbird in two selected novels as well as

### **Motives in Literary Texts**

On the basis of the analysis conducted by the researcher, it can be stated that the modern text uses the classical work not only as a source of inspiration but also as a conceptual basis necessary to create an independent artistic and philosophical system. The intertextual process ensures aesthetic consistency and semantic coherence in the new text, raising it to a new philosophical level and significantly expanding the theoretical and artistic

potential of modern literature. It leads to the concept of literary dialogue. The current concept does not only imply thematic or plot similarities between texts - it primarily represents the mutual echo of thoughts, tones, and moral paradigms. The novels *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Jasper Jones* enter into such an aesthetic dialogue, in which writers do not repeat each other's artistic experience, but use it as a mechanism for internal renewal. While Harper Lee shows the injustice in society through the eyes of a child, Silvey expands this view, enriching it with a person's mental crisis and an ethic of silence. In Harper Lee's work, the motifs of silence and word play a central semantic role. For a Scout, telling the truth is always associated with danger - it symbolizes a person standing between social conformity and inner conscience. There is a scene where Scout says, "Atticus, he was real nice." Atticus answers: "Most people are, Scout, when you finally see them." (Lee, 1960, p. 323) By telling her so, Atticus explains to his daughter that some people are not heard even though they try to tell the truth, in this situation, Arthur Boo Radley. Readers can observe the intertextual parallelism in characters like Arthur Boo Radley to Mad Jack Lionel in *Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey. Each new text enters into a creative dialogue with previously established literary traditions, reinterpreting them within a new social, cultural, and philosophical context.

Intertextualism reveals itself not only as a formal mechanism of linkage between texts but also as a trans-temporal dialogue between cultural memory and literary thought. In the course of such dialogue, classical texts do not lose their semantic potential; on the contrary, by adapting to the spirit of the times, they are enriched with new artistic layers and their conceptual value is enhanced. By being recognized as an Australian *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the novel *Jasper Jones* develops the ideological concept of the classic novel even further. This dialogue defines the essence of the novel: to comprehend the truth, one must learn to "see" the inner essence beyond the outer appearance. This aesthetic principle is continued in a new form in *Jasper Jones*. Charlie's inner monologue also reflects this process of "seeing": "It's hard to see things for what they are, when you're stuck inside them." (Silvey, 2009, p. 188) This idea builds upon Harper Lee's concept, but elevates it to a new philosophical level—for Silvey, truth is no longer an external observation, but an inner realization, a process of self-discovery. The aesthetic connection between these two texts is the evolution of human consciousness, explored through the metaphor of "seeing".

Another important aspect is the motif of silence and unspoken truth concerned Tom Robinson. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, society does not want to hear Tom Robinson's truth. His voice "disappears" amidst social stereotypes, but through Atticus's speech, he becomes a symbol of justice. The famous speech during the trial concludes as follows: "But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal... That institution, gentlemen, is a court." (Lee, 1960, p.205) Silvey, however, elevates this motif to an internal, subjective level. In "*Jasper Jones*," there is no societal courtroom; instead, people experience an "internal trial" within their own minds, before their conscience. Jasper does not justify himself; he remains silent, but this silence becomes a form of self-preservation: "Sometimes silence is safest. Sometimes it's the only way to survive." (Silvey, 2009, p. 203) For Harper Lee, silence is a

truth suppressed by society; for Craig Silvey, it is an internal survival instinct, a person's psychological defense mechanism. In this sense, Jasper Jones elevates the metaphor of silence from *To Kill a Mockingbird* to a new existential and psychological level.

### **Symbols and Metaphors in Literary Texts**

This aesthetic dialogue also continues through a system of symbols. Harper Lee's novel is famous for its mockingbird symbol. Atticus says: "It's a sin to kill a mockingbird because they don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy." This symbol is an allegory of innocence, purity, and human goodness. Silvey replaces this symbol in his own context with the image of a body hidden in the dimness of night. In "*Jasper Jones*," every truth exists in darkness, in silence, in hiding—which signifies the "loss of innocence" concept in modern literature. Jasper hides the truth to protect himself, which is the moral dilemma of a new generation. Literary analysis shows that Craig Silvey preserves Harper Lee's core aesthetic principles—the metaphors of seeing, silence, and innocence, but uses them in a new spiritual context. For Harper Lee, truth is found through social struggle, whereas for Silvey, it is reached through inner pain, remorse, and silence. The aesthetic dialogue between these two works represents a transition from society to the psyche, from external justice to internal consciousness. In this regard, Harper Lee interprets justice not only as a sign of social stability but also as an internal state of human consciousness. The novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* transcends the boundaries of realism and becomes a moral-philosophical manifesto. Justice in this work refers not to external reality, but to a person's loyalty to their conscience. In Craig Silvey's novel *Jasper Jones*, however, this concept rises to a completely new philosophical dimension. Justice is no longer determined by external institutions, law, or society, but by a person's own conscience and the process of self-awareness. During his internal struggle, Charlie says, "It's like there's something rotten in Corrigan. Something that seeped into you. Makes you doubt, makes you small." (Silvey, 2009, p 247) These lines express Silvey's main philosophical thesis – that injustice in society is no longer the result of an unhealthy external order, but the result of the internal "rottenness" of the human soul. The outer court in Harper Lee becomes the inner "court of conscience" in Silvey. Based on this, it can be noted that the novel *Jasper Jones* represents the transition of human moral choice from an external norm to an internal metaphysical criterion.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, the influence of classic novels on 21st-century literature is primarily manifested through the reinterpretation of their ideological, aesthetic, and philosophical legacies. Classic works serve as an artistic foundation, a moral benchmark, and a source of cultural memory for contemporary texts. Intertextual mechanisms in literature enable this heritage to be re-read within a new historical and cultural context. Through this process, the modern writer not only engages in a dialogue with the past but also renews its philosophical content, thereby continuing the evolution of literary thought. For instance, in the novel *Jasper Jones*, the reference to *To Kill a Mockingbird* is realized through multi-layered intertextual mechanisms. There is an ideological, thematic, and aesthetic connection between Harper

Lee's classic novel and Craig Silvey's contemporary work, and Silvey elevates this connection to a new psychological and philosophical level. Intertextualism allows the modern writer to comprehend past ideas on a new philosophical level and harmonize them with the moral dilemmas of the present. Based on this, it can be concluded that modern literature, through its aesthetic and philosophical dialogue with the classical heritage, has ensured not only artistic renewal but also the continuous development of human thought.

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