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The Conditions of Self-Knowledge: Memory, Interpretation, and Identity in Susanna Clarke's Piranesi

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Abstract - Susanna Clarke's *Piranesi* explores the relationship between memory, knowledge, and personal identity through a narrator whose understanding of his past has been shaped by manipulation and prolonged confinement. This article examines the conditions under which an individual can regain interpretive authority over personal experience when memory and access to knowledge have been compromised. Through qualitative close textual analysis, it investigates the role of diary-keeping, documentary evidence, naming, chronological inconsistencies, damaged records, and fragmented recollections in the narrator's gradual reassessment of his identity. Drawing on philosophical discussions of epistemic self-trust, and epistemic injustice, alongside theories of diary-writing and narrative identity, the study argues that the preservation of personal records does not, in itself, guarantee resistance or self-recovery. Rather, their significance emerges through the narrator's developing ability to compare conflicting accounts, question established explanations, and reconsider evidence from different temporal perspectives. The analysis also examines the distinction between Ketterley's use of knowledge as a means of control and Raphael's provision of knowledge in a manner that respects personal autonomy. Ultimately, the article argues that the recovery of identity in Piranesi does not entail a complete return to a former self. Instead, it involves establishing a critical relationship between past and present experiences, through which the narrator acquires greater interpretive independence and the capacity to determine his own future. Clarke's novel thus presents self-knowledge not as the simple recovery of forgotten information, but as an ongoing process of interpretation, judgment, and personal agency.

Keywords: Susanna Clarke*; Piranesi*; Personal Identity; Epistemic Self-Trust; Epistemic Agency; Memory; Self-Knowledge; Narrative Identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Susanna Clarke's *Piranesi*, the narrator describes his environment in great detail while failing to grasp the circumstances of his own existence. He registers the tides, keeps a catalogue of statues, maintains a calendar, but fails at first to recognize the historical connection between him and the Other. This imbalance makes the format of journals crucial for the issue of manipulation in the book since an entry can record facts whose significance the writer was not able to grasp. Further reading will show what earlier records contain even though their author had not been able to comprehend them. The period between recording and interpretation becomes an opportunity to challenge an imposed story of identity.

Journals serve both to organize daily life and to save information about Matthew Rose Sorensen, the scholar kept in the House by Valentine Ketterley. Their presence provides an encounter between two worlds distinguished by amnesia. However, it turns out to be quite problematic because the language of the earlier records differs from the current one, and it is up to the narrator to decide if their incomprehensibility results from mistakes or illness, or if they convey something the writer had forgotten. The issue is not only about remembering but also about judging the history.

Existing scholarship highlights the importance of tradition of fantasy literature, of different worlds, and of documentary memory. The abduction into fairyland and internalizing experience of fantastic in Błaszkiewicz's paper (111, 127–28). Dugger analyzes the rewriting of Platonic hierarchy in the work by Clarke (76–78), and Locatelli uses the idea of palimpsest and the recreation of identity to interpret the journals (124–27). Following these scholars, this paper examines how records become an instrument for challenging the dominant interpretation of the narrator's identity.

The key question of the research is how writing and re-reading can provide the narrator with interpretive agency over identity. Secondary questions include Ketterley's transformation of forgetting into dependence, the power of discrepancies, and the continued validity of identity formed in the House. The idea of the paper is that writing allows resisting through comparison and correction. Taking into account that the House has a real impact on memory, and that there are errors and corrections in the journals, resistance requires discriminating between observation and explanation. Therefore, recovery means gaining the capacity for judgment and choice in addition to accounting for changes that knowledge of the earlier name does not change. It starts with the literature review and conceptual framework, continues with the methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusions.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Secondary Worlds and the Politics of Knowledge

Placing the novel in the context of fairy abduction stories and portal fantasy in general, Błaszkiewicz examines the transformation of the fantastic experience into the internal space, connecting the secondary world to transformations of its denizens and the differentiation of their narrative identities toward the end (pp. 111, 127-28). From the generic perspective, this gives another reason to see the impossibility of the comprehension of confinement based solely on geography. In the current study, the issue is expanded to the realm of narrative practice: how can a person whose comprehension has changed find out the conditions for his/her transformation? The journal entries make this problem investigable because the information they contain survives any change in the interpreter.

According to Dugger, Clarke reevaluates the concept of Platonic relationship between the originals and copies, breaking away from the hierarchy in which the House would necessarily remain inferior to any other reality. Dugger's reading of the inverted cave is valuable in regard to Ketterley, as being informed about the external world does not give one the right to claim any kind of ethical superiority (pp. 76-78). In addition, Bakshi sees the house's enclosure as a reflection of struggles for knowledge, memory and identity (pp. 4-6). Combining these two perspectives highlights the issue of differential access: Ketterley gains information from his/her travels between worlds, but its significance cannot easily be verified.

In her critical note Agee proposes another intertextual framework using the work of Michael Ward, who understands the Narnia planet-wise. She sees *Piranesi* associated with Neptune, linking its watery environment with forgetfulness, but still emphasizing the difference between textual interpretation and the author's intentions (pp. 267, 274). Her stress brings the atmospheric aspect into discussion of memory. The current argument is focused on the processes that make this uncertainty possible to handle: finding an entrance, comparing a series of events and restoring an interrupted story.

2.2. Memory and the Revision of Narrative

The most relevant precedents for the present paper come from Locatelli, who treats the journals as a palimpsest in which the disrupted layers connect writing, traumatic memory, and identity. Her interpretation uses the index, the manipulation of records, and a conclusion that helps construct the self rather than restore an earlier version (124–27). The contribution presented herein is specific since it explores the evolution of the authority of a record in this process. It is possible for the passage initially interpreted as an indicator of instability to become something that challenges the explanation according to which instability was inevitable. What changes is the relationship between the record and the assumptions brought to it.

Harrison offers a formal framework through which one may analyze such transformations by providing a stylistic reading of *Piranesi*'s works that focuses on precise spatial description, atypical dates, and the lack of the narrator's identity information; her explanation of reconstrual covers alterations of specification and perspective that make it possible for an account to acquire a new meaning (6–8). This paper applies this distinction in the case of rereading as opposed to regarding each rediscovered fragment as a new piece of information. A journal entry survives because its reader understands it in a new way. Hence, documentary continuity may go hand-in-hand with interpretation.

Ursa's overview of the interpretations of the psychological and philosophical perspectives of the novel emphasizes the diversity of the approaches to the work under consideration. Its introduction discusses links to mental and chronic illnesses but does not forget enchantment, perception, and the conflict between knowledge and emotions as general topics (299). This diversity makes it impossible to accept Ketterley's descriptions of instability as neutral and objective since his explanations were actions in a certain relationship that must be evaluated accordingly. The current interpretation questions who benefit from ignoring unfamiliar information but still makes a distinction between literature and medicine.

2.3. Belonging and the Identity Formed in the House

The ecocritical analysis of Myśliwiec highlights the connection between animism, wonder, and environmental interactions and regards the narrator’s engagement with the House as an ethical practice (pp. 107, 110–112). In turn, Marlina and Yulianto compare intrinsic value of environment with usefulness and define survival in terms of attentiveness (p. 8653). In both cases, the capacities that do not lose their meaning in captivity are identified. Their relevance for the research is that they allow understanding why the process of recovery does not have to presuppose rejection of everything that has been learned in the House; the same attitudes that help to survive can be employed when one examines the records of a terrifying nature.

Clarkson’s discussion of enchantment adds a complication to the entirely positive perspective on the novel. According to her key argument, the novel describes the dangers that are connected with re-enchantment project which may result in alienation of inner and outer worlds (p. 605). In consequence, being attached to something or someone does not mean freedom in itself. Nyary Gamboa’s essay on belonging is based on the opposition of personality and persona and contrasts exploitation by Ketterley with the supportive attitude of Raphael (pp. 3–5). The perspective chosen in the current research considers what is to be done with attachment.

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2.4. Conceptual Framework

The framework connects manipulation, documentary practice, and narrative identity. Abramson's explanation of gaslighting differs from dismissal; gaslighting is the attempt to force a person to stop taking herself seriously as a result of repetitive interactions and thus to destroy the independent standpoint of objecting (2, 10-11). Meanwhile, Spear attaches more importance to victim's reasoning, testimony, evidence, and epistemic self-trust (1-3). The difference is relevant to the current context. First of all, Ketterley should be discussed both as a case of coercion and as a chain of persuasive claims. The existence of a disagreement or the fallibility of the narrator is not a justification for giving up on judgment.

According to Fricker, epistemic injustice is wrong done to people as knowers. The author separates reasonable credibility assessments and prejudiced ones (1, 3-4). Thus, the ethical language explains the implications of controlling the capacity to interpret. The inequality of information is not equivalent to an identity-prejudicial testimonial injustice by default. The sociological concept of manipulation by Sweet proves how much manipulations rely on power relations and vulnerabilities of individuals (851-855). The topic of her research is gender-related domestic violence, which is not related to the case of Clarke's captive and captor. The connection between them in this context is limited since she studies the material and social factors that make the person's statement hard to challenge because of the isolation, dependency, and limited access to alternatives.

According to Trächtler, the difference between ordinary doubt, which can contribute to investigations, and self-doubts, which destroy the skills to investigate something. The description of the process of shifting from doubting a certain fact to doubting a person's cognitive capacity makes clear the difference between the acceptance of objections and the acceptance of manipulations (75-76, 94-95). In this regard, the narrator's questioning whose memory is right can restore the possibility of investigation. Ketterley's reference to the general inability is aimed to shut down the process. The key question is whether the doubt causes the necessity of examining the evidence or destroys someone's right to do that.

Diary theory helps to identify the ways of examination of evidence. First of all, according to Martens, the fictional diary is characterized by its serial structure and the possible identity of the narrator and the reader (4-5). Lejeune's notion of dated traces and the management through record-keeping directs attention to the chronological order and preservation (51, 61). This helps to understand why chronology, indexing, and rereading should be analyzed along with statements about identity. The theory treats the diary as the practice of creating revisitable texts without the assumption that their sincerity ensures their accuracy and that the preservation of texts ensures their comprehension.

Finally, the concept of narrative identity provides a description of developing life narrative connecting the reconstructed past and projected future (McAdams & McLean 233). It helps to distinguish between access to biographical information and its integration in the life narrative. It helps to provide an understanding of recovery as the selective continuity but not the restoration of the previous personality. Together, the concepts mentioned above suggest three relevant questions for a close reading: the mechanism of making judgment dependent, the way of making this dependence examinable through records, and the responsibility of the narrator for the revision of himself.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this paper, qualitative close reading was used to explore the form and process of journal writing and identity recovery in *Piranesi*. Three related processes were examined: (1) use of claims to memory by the Other in establishing his own authority; (2) the discovery of inconsistencies by the narrator in his own records; (3) the meaning that the narrator gives to his earlier selves following imprisonment. The passages chosen referred to issues such as naming, dating, index references, changes in numbering, loss of pages, reconstructed memories, and remembering of identity.

The passages were considered in their immediate contexts and later developments which transform their meanings. This kind of analysis would identify the distinctions between observations, accepted explanations, and revised interpretations. This meant that the narrator could be sincerely mistaken regarding what his records prove. This also meant that Ketterley's version would be distinguished from the story told in the novel. The claims made by Ketterley would be judged in terms of the way that particular facts and omissions limit another person's options. In other words, these claims would not be judged to be merely an explanation of the facts nor completely rejected because of their source.

The analysis would take note of any evidence which challenges the main argument. Memories may be preserved in error, may be changed by the author of the records, and may even cause distress. One's attachment to the House may foster self-care and at the same time make one's leaving problematic. These were cases in which it is difficult to consider writing as liberating. Theory was used to interpret these conflicts, but conclusions concerning the narrator are based upon the novel.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Manipulation and the Loss of Identity

The issue of naming, first of all, shows the discrepancy between the narrator's ability to record his experience and the right to define himself. While he acknowledges that *Piranesi* is the name people give me " as far as I remember it is not my name" (Clarke 12), the hesitation is quite modest. Nonetheless, he keeps in mind a gap between being designated with a name by others and

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remembering one's own name. He does not have another name or the explanation how it appeared. However, the diary, despite the narrator's trust to the Other, keeps in mind the gap between these concepts.

Such an uncertainty becomes an essential point for Ketterley to control their relationship. He claims that " the fact that you forget while I remember – that's why it's so vital that I set our objectives. Me. Not you" (Clarke 51). The progression from the difference in memory to the right to set objectives is the crucial moment in Ketterley's logic. Even if remembering more may be the reason for informing another person about some facts, it does not grant him the right to make the decisions for others. By presenting his authority as the necessity, Ketterley hides this important difference. The emphasized final pronouns limit the narrator's role to only following.

Moreover, the narrative proves later that there was the genuine difference in the degree of their acquaintance with the House: The Other goes away and the narrator stays there. In other words, the manipulation exploits the actual weakness and gives the justification for controlling another person's will based on such an artificial conclusion.

The same approach to the manipulation governs the range of permitted relations. Ketterley says: " 16 is my enemy. And so, by extension, yours too" (Clarke 54). By stating that, he transforms the personal enemy into the enemy of the narrator before the latter can meet that person independently. The warning prevents the narrator from asking questions about his interests and desires by transforming the inquiry into danger. The limited social circle of the narrator increases the power of the statement, since refusal from the warning becomes a rejection of the only known friendly relation. However, the warning becomes the part of the diary as the statement made by the Other. Thus, the diary keeps in mind the distinction between the enemy that the narrator has seen and that whom he has been told about.

It means that the manipulation becomes the domination over the way of interpreting the events. Ketterley makes the help conditional on obedience and defines the friendship as the condition of the mutual hostility. Despite the precise familiarity with the House, the narrator cannot resist the conclusions in the spheres inaccessible to his own verification. Such an absence of self makes the narrator unable to connect his experience to the historical background going beyond his immediate surrounding. The fact lost is also the practical ability to decide which explanations should be verified and which relational opportunities to seek.

4.2. Diary Keeping and Resistance

The narrator describes writing as a practice based on observation: " Writing inculcates habits of precision and carefulness" (Clarke 14). The stress is placed upon the development of habits and not on some immediate enlightenment. To write means to take notice of details, and details may prove themselves resistant to the writer's changing understanding of things. In other words, not everything that the writer puts down is necessarily right. On the contrary, an erroneous or inadequate observation may create a record that contains valuable information that is currently unavailable to the recorder. Documentation of this kind has an intrinsic value due to the possibility of separating it from its initial context in the course of subsequent readings. The diary, therefore, allows for cross-temporal comparison.

The possibility of such comparisons becomes clear when the narrator becomes aware of the fact that he has used inconsistent systems of dating: " Reading over what I have just written, I have realized something" (Clarke 15). In the process of reviewing his most recent entry, the narrator has made a discovery, which he would not have made otherwise. The distinction between numerical and experiential years marks a trace of discontinuity within a practice designed to impose order. At first, the narrator responds to this trace with a simple complaint about his carelessness, which fails to reveal its historical causes. Nevertheless, the trace separates present understanding and past documentation. Thus, the diary may offer its owner a surprise, which is a certain form of resistance since the record ceases to be an extension of his current belief.

Later on, the narrator offers a different way of resolving the problem of conflicting accounts: " whose memory is at fault? Mine or his?" (Clarke 52). By formulating the problem in the form of equally weighted questions, the narrator momentarily restores the balance of power between two people with different memories. However, these questions do not prove the correctness of either account. Instead, their value lies in reformulation of the problem, which transforms the notion of correctness into an object of inquiry. Documentation offers the opportunity to pursue such an inquiry through the juxtaposition of present impressions and earlier account. In addition, this procedure may prove that the account in question is wrong, and thus, its value can not be derived from automatic support of the narrator's account.

An examination of the index extends the process of comparison to entries whose content is not readily comprehensible to the narrator. The references to volumes, which, according to him, do not exist, force him to inspect the journal as a material artifact. Upon examining the damaged numbers of the volume, the narrator finds out that " I could still make out the ghostly form of the '2'" (Clarke 74). The trace of the attempted correction remains and proves the fact of its existence. The inconsistency between the index and the damaged numbers creates a gap, which may serve as an investigative pathway. Neither the index nor the number gives an answer by itself, but their correlation makes it possible to infer the sequence that is missing. Therefore, relevant knowledge comes not from the narratives alone, but from their organization as well. In other words, organization, usually seen as ancillary to memory, serves as a tool for its recovery.

The documentary evidence does not have intelligibility from the very beginning. Faced with the inconsistency, which he cannot comprehend, the narrator says that " I could see the strangeness with my eyes, but I could not think it with my mind" (Clarke

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73). The distinction between perception and understanding marks an active interpretive framework, which excludes what he sees before him. Merely material survival is not enough to overcome the barrier created by it. Initially, the unfamiliar names corroborate the Other's version of mental disturbance. Thus, the diary may increase dependency prior to decreasing it. This moment, therefore, challenges any simplistic interpretation of the index as a mere key. There is a pathway, but the one who pursues it should be able to accept its implications. Resistance, therefore, implies the modification of the conditions of signification.

The narrator's anxiety does not preclude the truth of his reading. He characterizes his new impressions as yielding " more madness or else understanding" (Clarke 76), and thus leaves both explanations provisionally open. Whatever is alarming may mean disintegration, but may also mean the reemergence of a context which was excluded from his current consciousness. This distinction prevents the discomfort from becoming sufficient grounds for dismissing his discoveries. Moreover, his subsequent reflections point to the fact that he himself altered the archive: " I must have done it Myself" (Clarke 78). This statement has both ethical and epistemological significance. The instability of the record cannot be fully explained by the intervention of an external enemy. The frightened subject may destroy evidence of his own experience. To recover authority, therefore, implies the acceptance of his own destructive actions.

This acceptance implies the change of the pace of inquiry. He concludes that " I must proceed cautiously and only read small portions at a time" (Clarke 79). This limitation represents a procedural condition of his own research, not some external injunction. Food, rest, and routine tasks play the role of conditions making the process possible. The pause does not mean that all his current interpretations are necessarily correct. However, he still has doubts concerning the origin of his experiences. Nevertheless, the pause does not allow the distress to terminate the process of investigation by destroying the diary or neglecting it. Clarke portrays self-care as an important element of the work of maintaining judgment. The resistant capacity of the diary is contingent upon the ability of a reader to return to it after the interruption.

The missing pages become a part of the pattern, which the narrator is able to discern. Upon examining the index references under Ketterley, the narrator realizes that " The thirty-two pages with information about Ketterley were gone" (Clarke 117). The selective nature of this absence raises a question, which the narrator cannot answer relying solely on the praise of the Other. The index sustains the connection between the subject and his location, even when the latter is no longer there. As a consequence, an omission becomes evident because of the record of what is supposed to be present. This finding explains why the consistent current account may still be wrong: it is consistent because the relevant material has been removed. The narrator begins to read the archive as the history of its exclusion, shifting his focus from the content to its organization.

The recovered fragments become the material for further reconstruction, and he describes himself as " Quickly – almost feverishly – I began to put the pieces together" (Clarke 118). This description implies effort and haste, but does not exclude the necessity of assembly. Unlike the former account, the earlier self's record is neither recalled from memory, nor confirmed by somebody else. It must be reconstructed from the damaged pieces. Later on, the narrator attributes this damage to Matthew Rose Sorensen, who " had torn into pieces the description of his enslavement that he had written in his Journal" (Clarke 131). It is still his reconstruction of events, but it definitively destroys the notion of writing as an invulnerable refuge. The diary recorded his captivity, but became unbearable to the one who recorded it. It survives, in part, because of the persistence of its fragments.

The reconstruction leads to the explicit correction of the relation which sustained his captivity: " I was mistaken. The Other is not my friend. He has never been my friend. He is my enemy" (Clarke 129). These brief statements reevaluate the moral status of the Other. Their value lies in the fact that the recovered account makes it possible to bring together all the pieces of prior confusion, including the imposed name and the tests of memory. Consequently, this change involves more than emotional transformation. The account of friendship becomes ineffective in organizing the evidence as well as an account of exploitation. At the same time, the subsequent rage of the narrator shows that discovery does not guarantee immediate composure and stability. The correct recognition may coexist with the unstable reaction. The diary allows him to record both.

Finally, the fear of forgetting transmutes writing into a prospective safeguard. The narrator decides "I will write in letters a metre high!" (Clarke 130) to cover the House with warnings. This scale takes into consideration the vulnerability of the memory which may fail in the future. The imaginary reader is himself in his future self who may again interpret things incorrectly. The extension beyond the notebook turns the environment into the potential surface of accountability. However, the subsequent sequence shifts toward the fantasies of vengeance. This reminds the reader that having a justified accusation does not solve the problem of what one should do. Resistance implies not only the preservation of knowledge, but also its proper use.

4.3. The Recovery of Identity

The address given by the narrator to his former distressed self-changes the focus of the evaluative judgement: "I will take care of us both" (Clarke 131). The use of the same pronoun allows caring about the sufferer while there is no need for an agreement about the speaker's identity at once. This reaction retains a skill developed in the House, attentiveness to vulnerability, and projects it upon the recovered past. Identity thus gains an ability to contain relationships with competing self-representations. The passage also tempers the triumphalist tone of discovery: knowledge of what happened does not guarantee an undisturbed consciousness; it means taking care of the consequences of such knowledge for the addressee of it.

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The dialogue with Raphael distinguishes the recognition of body from the memory of identity: "But I haven't got his mind and I haven't got his memories" (Clarke 146). The limitation explains why identification by external signs cannot be the ground for self-understanding. Family resemblance, recognizable face, and a name recovered from the past may create a continuous picture for the observer but fail to give any experience of being connected with the former self. The journals fill this gap, providing the access to the expressions that the current reader cannot recognize as his own. Their worth consists in maintaining a relation with those expressions rather than erasing any distance. The narrator's reluctance to recognize himself immediately corresponds to the interpretation of recovery as an interpretive activity, even though it remains difficult for those waiting for him.

Raphael offers another kind of help when she says: "Whether you come back with me or not, it's up to you" (Clarke 153). She has information about the past unknown to him but does not treat it as some kind of permission to control his future. Her offer adds knowledge to the relationship, which allows the reader the refusal of this knowledge. It represents a considerable change in the role of journals: evidence helps to preserve autonomy when the reader gets time and possibility to evaluate the consequences of such evidence. Raphael's approach does not make the past optional or decrease the strength of familial claims but makes them talkable without reproducing the Ketterley's practice of turning knowledge difference into domination. Thus, recovery acquires the relational and documentary character.

The conclusion contains a constant proximity to one of the identities and constant distance to the other: "*Piranesi* is always with me, but of Rose Sorensen I have only hints and shadows" (Clarke 163). Rewritten text:

Earlier journals retrieved from the storage add to the evidentiary basis for reconstruction but do not result in the autobiographical ownership. Partial identification of the speaker does not show the lack of recovered information; it shows the process of incorporating the information into life after the transformation. Another relevant self-definition, "I, who am not *Piranesi*—or at least not only him" (Clarke 164), resists the final equivalence of the present narrator with any of the prior selves. This limiting qualification keeps the sense of openness of identity but locates this openness in the identifiable speaker. Writing preserves the connections through the difference but does not turn this difference into something illusory retrospectively.

The recovered ability to travel between different worlds brings the practical consequence of this transformation: "I can come and go as I please" (Clarke 164). In this case, freedom includes not only the control over the process of transition but also the ownership of the remembered name. The House is available but the attachment to it no longer implies being confined. The decision to write a book about Arne-Sayles integrates the former intellectual project into the new goal (Clarke 164). The future is no longer organized by the Other's research but by the narrator's intentions. The choice of what to preserve and what to abandon is now possible for the narrator because the journals give him the resources for making this choice.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings reveal documentary comparison as the condition of resistance, the efficacy of which depends on interpretation. Delineation of an event, its previous explanation, and uses of this explanation changes the position of the narrator in relation to the archive. Locatelli demonstrates the significance of multiple layers of memory and self-reconstruction (124-27); this particular analysis shows how reconstruction of a sequence leads to redistribution of interpretive power. The narrator finds a reason to analyze an explanation that relied, among other things, on suppressing alternatives.

These findings limit any reference to manipulation in terms of falsehood. Emphasis of Spear on self-reliance and motivation to resist justifies an accurate assessment of fallibility without calling for abandoning judgment (19-20). The analysis of Abramson about the disappearance of an independent standpoint explains the consequences of such abandonment (10-11). While both Ketterley and Raphael have knowledge that is missing in the narrator, their positions vary according to the possibilities of investigation and resistance. This difference supports the insistence of Fricker on the distinction between the influence of power and reasonable grounds for evaluating testimonies (3-4). Assistance becomes emancipatory when the recipient gains knowledge that increases the possibilities of decision.

From a theoretical point of view, this aspect finds its explanation in the discussion by Harrison about construal and reconstrual (6-8). Earlier records remain intact while their evidentiary relations change. An account by Martens about the role of the diarist as a potential reader is useful to characterize this process (4-5). The distance between different moments of record making grows through amnesia provided by Clarke. The rereading thus makes it possible to correct the earlier statement without dismissing the person who made it as entirely false. The distinction of Trächtler between productive doubt and undermining the ability to judge shows the stakes involved in this process (75-76, 94-95).

The ending reveals the place of this revision in the continuing relationship with the place. Ecocritical approaches acknowledge the importance of attentiveness of the narrator (Myśliwiec 110-12; Marlina and Yulianto 8653), while Clarkson warns against the assumption that enchantment alone solves the problem of constraint (605). In this case, the findings indicate that attachment becomes compatible with autonomy when its continuance becomes a choice. It is in agreement with the challenge of Dugger to the hierarchy of worlds (76-78). Narrative identity provides the vocabulary of continuity through change (McAdams and McLean 233), without presupposing the House or a particular personality as the final criteria of authenticity.

This particular analysis stays limited to the representation of archives and agency in the novel. Writing can establish dependency, distress its reader, or become compromised by its author; recovery requires assistance allowing further investigation.

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Such limitations make the survival of the documentary records insufficient by itself. The diary is significant because it allows analysis under changing circumstances, comparison to other evidence, and use by a person acquiring the freedom to make decisions based on the reading. Thus, recovery appears as the ability to perform these processes while taking responsibility for the future that cannot be predetermined by the archive.

6. CONCLUSION

In *Piranesi*, keeping a diary becomes the key to recovering one's identity through the development of the role of evidence. While using the narrator's amnesia to its advantage, the Other insists on relying on his judgments as indispensable. However, while keeping him dependent on his judgment, the journals make him vulnerable to critical evaluation due to their dating, indexing, manipulation of numerals, and gaps. Revising allows to compare different versions from different temporal periods and to discover the explanations that are no longer valid in view of the evidence. Resistance arises in the process of making judgments rather than in writing itself.

However, the process is incomplete in a productive way. The narrator learns about his previous life but does not abandon the attachments and abilities that he acquired in prison. It is necessary for him to interpret himself both ways, using evidence and help that respects his agency. Thus, Clarke's novel shows the importance of the diary as the tool of preserving the possibility of revision. A self can remain the same and change its perception of reality. The narrator's independence lies in the ability to take responsibility for the change and choose what aspects of his life can be used for his future.

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