# Anti-Mimeticism, Autonomy of the World of Literary Discourse

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The central discussion of this paper proceeds as a counterargument to Johansen's (2002) discursal view of literature. Our premise is that literature can be appraised rather as an autonomous composite of discourses not reducible to the idea of mimetic representation of a reality. In line with such a postulation, we duly present four main perspectives to counter granularity, mimeticity, linearity, and institutionalization of literature as advocated by Johansen. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) notion of the virtual, we further take the world of literature as a virtual macrocosm setting up a paradoxical relation with the actual world. This feature leads us to approach literature not as a discourse but as a metadiscourse. The discussion on the metadiscursivity of literature features it with interdiscursivity and intertextuality. The paper concludes that far from analogizing the actual world, the virtual metadiscourse of literature runs parallel to the real world in an attempt to otherwise it.

## Introduction

Officially, discourse analysis was realized as a new systematic contextualized discipline in language studies in the 1970s (Van Dijk 1985, 5-7). Thenceforth, language scholars studied the relations between textual and contextual components of discourse within more developed conjoining perspectives, namely, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, semiolinguistics, and pragmalinguistics. However, contributions to literary discourse analysis have been so far both insubstantial and slippery. Leafing through the books and studies by discourse analysts like Fairclough (2006), Halliday and Hasan (1976), Van Dijk (1985), Van Leeuwen (2008), Wodak (2013), and so on proves how literature suffers marginalization in the field. Even when Coulthard (1985) devotes a chapter to literature—significantly enough, the last chapter of his *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*—he carries out a detailed analysis of the stylistic features of a literary text stringently within a linguistic fabric. Literary discourse analysis, as Maingueneau (2010) contends, though claimed

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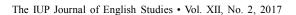
otherwise, is the less attended-to type of analysis in real practice. The problem, he furthers, lies in the claimants' casual slipping up on the fact that literary texts function, of necessity, differently from nonliterary texts and thus must be differently viewed through. Literary texts, by essence, accede to multiple tentative interpretive configurations, aesthetic appreciations, and judgments by their experientially divergent readership. Thus, contouring literature prescriptively with the metrics of a single or a dual perspective, whatever it could be, and persuasively avowing it to be the whole tends to create a simulacrum rather far off from originality and taste. As a case in point, the complex hierarchical relations of micro-macro contextual circumstances of production and perception of a work might be overlooked by an analyzer renouncing a polyperspective approach (Sell 1991). This may arise, indeed, anytime we are at work with either bottom-up or top-down codification of the breadth of knowledge array in a piece of literary material. Quite interestingly, the rise of any trend in discourse analysis might raise an urge for its experimentation on a literary piece. While appropriate on a granular scale, it yields, by and large, an unfitted demonstration of the quality of the piece as a composite world.

The main argument of this paper, hence, emerges as additive responses alongside Johansen's (2002) discursal view of literature in *Literary Discourse: A Semiotic-Pragmatic Approach to Literature*. The postulation is that literature should be appraised rather as an autonomous composite of discourses not reducible to the idea of mimetic representation of a reality. It is a polyvalence calling on linear, nonlinear, interactive, and transactional treatment (Miall 2003; and Rosenblatt 1978). In line with such a postulation and repurposing, and Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) notion, we will fitly present four main argumentations to counter granularity and mimeticity of literature as advocated by Johansen (2002).

## Contention of the Granular View of Literary Discourse

Granular view of literary discourse, as we term it, no matter what school of language study may feed it, could assent more to linearity, conventional significations, definitive labels, formal distinctive forms, representative features, and lines of demarcation for discoursal constitutive elements, and less to fuzzy commixture of limits of any type, concerns for nonlinear transactional processes, and overall perception of a literary work. While granular view is effectual for magnifying parts, it is insufficient by itself. In actual communicative context, literary discourse can easily detach itself from any illusory formality and manifest in more than one form (Fish 1980; and Miall 2003). A reason is that we cannot affix certain distinctive internal quality to language; accordingly, a piece of work might be both literary to some and nonliterary to some others (Eagleton 2008; and Miall 2003). Moreover, we could regard a literary text as a composite, a multiplicity, functioning differently from its individual parts and from one context of interpretation to another.

Johansen (2002, 95) argues, following Habermas's (1971) line of thought, for a limited number of discourses in an ideal society: theoretical, technical, practical, and historical. For Johansen, these discourses are interrelated, "always influencing one another."

Nevertheless, they are distinguishable as to "their subject, purpose, and objective." He contends that these four main discourses collaborate with, and sometimes parallel, each other. Johansen (2002, 99) further itemizes five features of literature: fictionality of its universe, poeticity of its language, inquiry into norms and values by assuming an exemplary function, the noncommittal expressiveness of its utterer, and the noncommittal contemplation of its interpreter. Johansen (2002, 99-100) echoes Aristotle when he separates literature from these four governing discourses, dubbing the latter "mimetic discourse":

> The mimetic nature of literature is understood as its representation of reality. . . . There is, in addition, the external influence on literature, namely, the fact that literary discourse imitates other discourses: less often technical discourse . . . but certain kinds of theoretical discourse, for instance, mythical discourse. Furthermore a good deal of literature contains . . . ethical debate or legal proceedings. Finally, the imitation of historical discourse by literary discourse is obvious.

Johansen's (2002, 114) mimeticity argument chiefly relies on granular view that the main function of language is to represent and to signify "states of affairs in the world, certainly, but also to represent the parties of a dialogue to one another, to communicate and explicate meanings."

Counterarguing Johansen's reasoning, it should be mentioned that the medium of literature is language, but not language as a representational instrument, rather as a non-representational system providing many possibilities for creativity. Even by the virtue of fictionality, he characterizes, though not necessarily an idiosyncrasy of literary discourses, that mimetic representation of reality may not be the raison d'être of literature. A literary text can comprise diverse circumstances, objects, and subjects not having a root in the actual world and can function in its entirety anti-mimetically and independently from the truth value of its individual propositions (Pavel 1986). Therefore, in a literary discourse, the conventional established duality between a text and context in rather a one-to-one fashion of signification shatters since meaning is created in contingent contexts prior to formation, during formation, and post formation (Anderson and Harrison 2010).

Drawing upon this grand potential of language, literature celebrates its multiplicities. It would be pertinent to mention Deleuze and Guattari (1994, 176) on the way the artist pushes language to its limits; "the writer," they state, "uses words, but by creating a syntax that makes them pass into sensation that makes the standard language stammer, tremble, cry, or even sing: this is the style, the 'tone,' the language of sensations, or the foreign language within language." Thus, in contrast to Johansen's (2002) "mimetic" notion of literature, it is argued that the discourse of literature could be nothing other than innovative, performative, and processual.

It is processual in view of the fact that what literary discourses communicate, to some degree, entails evolutionary recreation, remolding, and shifting from their original circumstances of imparting to the coincidental dynamics affecting readers' receptivity. This is by no means rejecting the in-depth core aesthetic value of literary works that is

both non-inferential and unalterable endowing them with an air of uniqueness in the world, but rather emphasizing on various degrees of accessibility and receptivity of literary works by readers. Indeed, readers of a literary work, whoever may be, at any moment tend to create their own appropriations rather than the tour de force itself. In this sense, even any analysis of a literary work—of which Johansens' (2002) is an example—has no way to present it, but opens a way to understand it under a perspective (Nyrnes 2006). Mimetical perception of a literary discourse is resultantly only one of the processual liabilities that could take effect as a function of interaction between the readers' intuitive, spontaneous, non-discursive cognizance and their mediated, discursive mode of thinking.

## Anti-Mimetic Literary Linear-Nonlinear Fuzzy Commingle

Through the lens of a reader not specially equipped with the pastology or the pre-formative conditions of producing a piece of work by an artist, that work is likely to be read in the light of the reader's background knowledge which is hardly supposed to be a linear contextual reconstruction.

Even in real-life situations, meaning making cleaves less to linearity since appreciation of observers develops in rather nonlinear "curved pathways" tending to engage productive, dynamic, transactive, and transformational processes (Fromberg 2001, 96). On the other hand, various studies have assigned interdiscursivity as an integral quality to literature, which means, on many accounts, literary discourse can amalgamate linearity and nonlinearity in an authoritative manner (Bakhtin 1981 and 1986; Bradford 1997; Collins1989; and Hutcheon 1989).

Through mixing and switching genres or interdiscursivity in both poetry and prose (Bakhtin 1981 and 1986), literary discourse can practically exert the dichotomy of linear analytic and nonlinear intuitive thought jointly in a fuzzy blend as shown in Table 1.

| Table 1: Fromberg's Dichotomy of Analytic Thought Versus Intuitive Thought | |
|---|---|
| **Analytic Thought** | **Intuitive Thought** |
| Linearity | Nonlinearity |
| Mind | Heart |
| Pragmatic | Romantic |
| Realistic | Modeled- imagined |
| Prose | Poetry |
| Factual | Mysterious |
| Verbalization | Visualization-imagery |
| Formal | Informal |
| Explicit-overt | Implicit-covert |
| *Source: Fromberg (2001, 97)* | |

Antipodal to Johansen's (2012) mimeticity perception, these virtues make literature, indwelling in us, entitled to authenticity and authority as the state of being. Literature should be aptly seen as the shaper, formulator, transformer, and director of human life, availing us of different ways to understand how things are and how to reinvigorate our existence (Bruner 1990; Cairney 2004; Kelly 1955; Langer 1995; and Rosen 1983). The plausibility of its numerous worlds with their ingrained person-related versus people-related features and their touching sensibilities gives way to further new perspectives on who we can be and what should stand where. The emanations that come through the bond of mind-heart, pragmatism-fantasy, factuality-mystery, and overt-covert all aim to mold our character in both individual and social scope. We are, in fact, so fine-tuned into such emanations from the world of literature since our earliest portion of literary dose or our lullaby that we sometimes forget we may be interpreting what is outside along the lines of what we have internalized inside. As McGrath (1999) remarks, artists have made people identify the things outside through artistic manifestations. This sounds logical since from the time of cave dwellers to early folkloric societies, most human expositions such as religiosity, spirituality, traditions, customs, and laws were mainly morphed by intuitive literary mentalities. Literature, thus, far from being labelized as being mimetic, has added to and educated our ways of life throughout the historical course of our development.

On the flip side, the reality outside cannot be taken for granted in walking us through the routes we can easily construe as a tangible fixity. The world outside is motley and intangible since the uncertain and the certain, much in a disproportionate way, make it complex. However, we are innerly armed with the gift of thought and imagination to resolve what is complex, diverse, and unpredictable. A copious portion of human history, in all dimensions, is composed of consecutive discarded theories, assumptions, and approaches, proving that the reality is, at times, beyond reach and what we appreciate beyond representation. This challenge has not thwarted us as we have the capacity to tolerate the incompleteness and the fuzziness of what is beyond with the aid of reasoned approximation. What is seen de facto is set in juxtaposition with what has previously been collated in our memory to either add to or discard from the incongruous inner receivings to ensure believability and understandability, at least for ourselves. Such subconscious capacities and attributes are universal to the literary-minded and the nonliterary-minded individuals who are world makers and transformers, reality seekers, interpreters, and falsifiers acting both on mind and heart.

## The Virtual World of Literature

The world of literature is virtual. Literature brings into play different aspects of language in multiple ways to create or simulate its own world. The virtual world of literature may strike similarities with the empirical world or may not. It is acknowledged that the virtual cannot be envisioned "without an eye on the real" (Ryan 2001, 12); yet this does not imply reducing literature to a mere mimetic discourse. We use "virtual" here in its philosophical sense, which leads us to a better appreciation of its scholastic sense, the virtual as the potential. Deleuze and Guattari's (1994) philosophy of the virtual helps us justify the

factual dimension of literature—the aspect that has led many critics and thinkers such as Johansen to adopt a mimetic approach to literary works.

From a Proustian perspective, the virtual is "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract" (Bogue 1989, 59). The virtual does not stand in contrast to the real, but to the actual. There reigns a difference-based relation between the virtual and the actual. In Deleuze and Guattari's (quoted in Porter 2009, 78) own words, "the characteristic of virtuality is to exist in such a way that it is actualized by being differentiated and is forced to differentiate itself, to create its lines of differentiation in order to be actualized." This view implies two pertinent points. First, to the actual, there lies a virtual side in which there are many unexploited possibilities and potentialities. This makes the actual susceptible to constant variation, hence potential. The second point concerns the contrast between the actual and the virtual which does not render the virtual separable from, or grant it priority over, the actual. The virtual is immanent within the actual (Bogue 2010, 22). It is the immanence of the virtual that makes it "transcendental." This, however, does not accord it an "ideal" side in a Platonic tone. Rather, the virtual becomes the realm of "problems" (Bogue 2010, 24), since it shows how the actual could be, or become, otherwise under certain circumstances. Otherwising the actual proves not only the vulnerability of the actual to constant change, but also the metastability and "metamorphic, individuating self-differentiation" of the virtual (ibid.).

In Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, the virtual is not only a site of coexisting possibilities but also a site of continuous variation. This variation occurs both spatially and temporally. Its occurrence is spatial as a "continuum of coexisting possibilities," and it is temporal as "a timeline of that continuum" (ibid.). The explication that the entire continuum is "always immanent within every one of its sequential actualizations" (ibid.) puts the actual as a "plane of organization" in contrast to the virtual which is a "plane of immanence." For Deleuze and Guattari, the plane of immanence, marked by constant variation, is the domain of pure becomings. Thus, multiplicity is immanent within each actualization. The plane of organization is no more fixed and stable, rather, having a locus of multiple transformations within itself, it is prone to infinite variation. The actual is deterritorialized and reterritorialized each time it undergoes, under certain conditions, a variation and "becomes" otherwise. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 32) define, "Lines of flight or of deterritorialization, becoming-wolf, becoming-inhuman, deterritorialized intensities: that is what multiplicity is." As the quotation implies, becoming is potential; yet it is not potential in the Aristotelian restricted and logic-bound sense: an acorn has the potential to become a tree. Deleuze and Guattari's potential goes beyond all territorialities, thus becoming-wolf, becoming-particle, becoming-insect, etc.

It is on the lines of flight immanent within the real world that literature is located and works. This renders literature paradoxical. On the one hand, it exists as it sounds similar to the actual world and thereby familiar to us. On the other hand, it is virtual as it does not exist the way the actual does, but it is real. Envisaged thus, the conflicts over the factuality or fictionality of literature seem senseless.

From a Deleuzian-Guattarian perspective (1987), literature is the locus of "problems" as it works on the plane of consistency immanent within the actual, mobilizes its territorialities, or deterritorializes it, and thus exposes it to an inevitable process of reterritorialization as its "flipside or compliment." Deleuzian-Guattarian notion of boundless potential, multiplicity, and becoming well justifies the infinite variations that literature brings to the actual. Addressing the territorialities, literature challenges the claims to stability and authority of the actual and destabilizes and detotalizes them.

The mimetic approach to literature, unable to justify the fictional side of literature, emphasizes the secondary stance of literature to the actual world. Accordingly, Johansen (2002, 227) suffices to describe literature as an analogy: "Literature itself claims that, by analogy, we should make inferences concerning our world from the states of affairs and minds within the universe of the text. On that account, analogy is the form of reasoning par excellence that ensures a bidirectional fit, a two way-traffic, between literature and lifeworld." Johansen (2002, 224) goes on further to call literature an "existential analogy." He argues that the significance of the literary text lies in its

> becoming related to us by similarity or by contrast, that is, by analogy. . . . Literature is analogical because what is represented is different from but, at the same time, similar to what we have experienced in action or in conscious or unconscious thought. Thus, the text is an analogue of parts of our life. It is existential, because in making sense of the literary text we necessarily bring to it all the dimensions of our being: understanding, emotions, desires, and even bodily sensations and responses.

No doubt, analogizing text-world relation renders the former subservient to the latter, hence mimesis. Johansen's (2002) explication on the analogical nature of literature sounds apt for its virtuality: "what is represented is different from but, at the same time, similar to what we have experienced." Literature sets up this paradoxical relation with the actual world because it is virtual; it resembles the lifeworld because it reaches the virtual by way of the actual world; it differs from the lifeworld because it works on the lines of flight immanent within the actual world; and because in every actualization or individuation of itself, it deterritorializes the actual world and itself gets reterritorialized, and hence prone to multiple variations.

Johansen (2002, 99; emphasis in the original) accords literature "a relative autonomy" and acknowledges, "It goes without saying, however, that even if literature is mediately, not immediately, related to our lifeworld and to our actions, it is not valuable because it bears no relation to our world, but because of the specific way it *is* related to it." Johansen (2002, 99; emphasis added), however, negates himself when, immediately after this, he changes his stand: "Most often the mimetic nature of literature is understood as its representation of reality. I *certainly subscribe to this understanding of literature*." This sudden turn in his stance somehow reminds us of the dilemmatic situation Plato had to grapple with. Like Plato the philosopher, Johansen vouches for the actual side of the real world and ignores the virtual dimension of the real. The virtuality of the world of

literature nullifies his view that literature replicates the discourses of a human society. It is not mere replication; rather, it goes through the actual discourses and/or territorialities of society to decode or deterritorialize them and make them prone to another state of reterritorialization.

What singles out a literary text from others is that a literary text situates itself within the virtual side and tackles the actual by working on the difference between the actual and the virtual. The result is an otherwise way of thinking, speaking, and looking at the world. Yet the interesting point is that the literary text, which upon being written down becomes an actualized version of the virtual, itself rises out of a difference it sets up with the virtual. This difference testifies to its delimitations and, on the other hand, renders it open to variation, hence the inexhaustibility and dynamism of literature. Moreover, deploying the possibilities of language, literature unravels many other sides which have remained unheard and unread of thanks to the monopoly of the actual world. This characterizes the world of literature as a site of "problem." Far from standing as an analogue to the real world, the virtuality of literature takes issue with the actual world and "otherwises" it. Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhetorical question—"How could movements of deterritorialization and processes of reterritorialization not be relative, always connected, always caught up in one another?"—implies nothing other than intertextuality and interdiscursivity which are aptly applicable to the world of literature.

The virtuality of literature does not imply uprooting it from its sociocultural context. Above all, a literary work is produced by an author and addressed to a reader. Neither the writer nor the reader lives in a vacuum. Both arise from a contextual setting and both have their own responses to the demands of their environments. From a poststructuralist perspective, a literary work comes from a consciousness which is itself constructed by its milieu and is received by a consciousness which is similarly a construct of its own context. This binds the realm of literature to the actual world, hence its similarities to the empirical life. However, as mentioned in the theoretical part of the paper, there is a virtual side to every actualized entity and literature owes its dynamism to its potential of addressing that virtual side. The following part of the paper attends to this issue and investigates the interrelationships between the virtual world of literature and its producer, that is, the writer, and its receiver, the reader.

## The Virtual and the Writer

The writer is an individual with a sense of belonging to some place and some time. The spatio-temporal bases of his identity construct his consciousness and unconsciousness. While as an individual the writer is a construct of his context, he is not totally deprived of his power to maneuver his volition at least over his own choices. This will to act and choose is relative and restricted, but thanks to it, the individual can secure himself, albeit relatively, against the sweeping waves of the discourses of his context. Contra-responsive to Foucault (1969) who announces the death of the self and of the individual in the discursive field, we vote for Bakhtin (1981) who procures sort of relative freedom for the individual.

Alert to the demands of the clashing discourses of his context, the writer knows the arbitrariness and limitations of these discourses which seek his allegiance. Unlike others, he sees and seeks many sides to a situation, a narrative, an ideology, an entity, a phenomenon, etc.

Opening up different windows on a subject comprises the core of the writer's literary attempts. He sees and locates himself not within well-charted and secured structures, but on borders, the borderlines that zero in on the structure itself. Looking for, and at times improvising, unheard sides to the subject is nothing other than going beyond the actual and stepping into the virtual realm. This renders the writer an inhabitant of spaces, holes, or pores through which relativity and arbitrariness of the subject leak. The dominating discourses adopt different strategies to fight these cracks back. They may hide these pores, justify them, try to present them as otherwise, if necessary modify them; yet they cannot wipe them out entirely. The writer goes for these holes as they otherwise the seemingly authoritative actual world. Therefore, when we claim that literature is a world of the potential, we mean it concerns itself with multiple coexisting possibilities within the actual, or the holes within the apparently whole.

Envisaged as such, writing gains some other significance. Literary writing is not writing per se; rather it is a process of writing spaces, spaces that accord many other dimensions to the actual. And the writer cannot be reduced to a mere construct; if it were so, how could one be distinguished from a programmed robot?

It is true the basics of one's identity is constructed by the environment, but speaking in Deleuzian-Guattarian terminology, even to this actualized identity, there are many other possibilities. Not only does the literary writer write of pores in the actual world but also in his own identity. This may justify why for a writer of different works there can be found different and at times contradictory identities. The versatility of figures like William Shakespeare, John Milton, James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, etc. which emanates from their works can be taken as a testimony to this potentiality of literature.

Far from idealizing the role of literature and romanticizing the writer, Deleuzian-Guattarian philosophy pins them down to the realm of the actual, albeit an otherwised actual. Deleuze and Guattari's notions on the interrelation between the actual and the virtual discussed above alert us to an unavoidable fact. The fact is that as soon as the writer targets the pores in the actual, dismantles its totalitarian voice, and presents it otherwise, the redeeming act of writing becomes self-restrictive. If we take writing of spaces as a process of individuation or actualization which is fueled by the virtual, the written work as the actualized has claims of authenticity just as it suffers its own cracks. The actualized text bears no resemblance to the virtual from which it has emerged. This difference makes pores or holes within the text and renders it susceptible to multiple variations and thus relativizes it. Now is the time for the reader to move onstage to show the text's relativity.

But before we move on to the role of the reader in the next part, one point should be mentioned and that is the interdiscursivity of literature. One whole part is dedicated to this

issue; yet just as a hint, it would be pertinent to say literature is interdiscursive; it interacts with the dominant discourses of its time and tries to open up different horizons on them. This approves of the way Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the virtual as the site of problem. Literature reveals the delimitations of the dominant discourses of a specific setting (time and place) and thus becomes a site of problem itself just as it works on the problematic spaces of the actual world and its discourses.

## The Virtual and the Reader

All literary works are written in order to be read. They seek readership and thus make an interpersonal relation between the reader and the writer. Like the writer, the reader does not live in a vacuum; his/her consciousness and unconsciousness are constructed by his/her context giving him/her certain expectations based on some well-defined structures; concurrently, there remains a relative sense of freedom for the individual. This freedom, although mostly repressed, comes to the surface when the individual exposes himself/herself to a literary text. We said a literary text is an individuated entity which has been the product of the writer's attempt to deterritorialize the actual. As a reterritorialized presentation which comes to the reader, the text shows the otherwised realm to the reader, works on his/her horizons of expectations, takes them to their extremes, and confirms or rejects them. However, this should not mean the reader is a passive receiver of the text. Deploying his/her relative sense of volition, the reader steps into the world of the text first to realize it by getting immersed in its virtual world and then to seek its pores, to work on those cracks in order to multiply its dynamism and concurrently to show its limitations. As an actualized and reterritorialized work, the literary text differs from the virtual from which it has emerged. Yet the virtual does not stand apart from the actual but remains immanent within it. It is then for the reader to seek the immanent virtual inside the actualized text by way of its cracks. In a way, one may claim, what the reader does to the text resembles what the writer does to the actual world.

However, this is not a one-way relation; rather it is mutual. Like the writer, the reader, as an individuated entity, a construct of society and biology, bears holes and pores in himself/herself, and the literary text touches on those spaces, modifies the lines of identity, charts and re-charts them, deterritorializes and reterritorializes them. Such is the way a literary text proves influential on readers. Having an otherwised way of thinking, a literary text poses a "problem" for the reader, challenges the reader's ideas, beliefs, and emotions, takes them to their extremes, and opens up new horizons on him/her. Exposing the reader to multiple other ways of perceiving oneself and one's world equates with opening a virtual realm onto the reader and acquainting him/her with many un-attempted ways of life. This renders the world of literature an exciting one, immersing in which delights the reader. The claim to a literary text's interdiscursivity can also be raised here. As the text addresses the reader and the discourses on which he/she has based his/her notions of identity, in all respects, social, political, religious, cultural, economic, etc., it cannot be other than interdiscursive.

Since each individual has his/her own specific inner world and approaches the world in his/her own way, each reader's response to a text differs from others'. Some

resemblances are there when a single text is read, but no single reader experiences, interacts with, or immerses in the same text like another one. Responses to a text differ from one reader to another and thereby interpretations vary. Sometimes, a reader's response to a particular text culminates in the fabrication of another text, hence parody. This point can be a hint to the text's intertextuality which will be discussed fully in the following sections.

The potential a literary text provides the reader with is being written otherwise by the reader. Far from being a passive recipient of the text, sometimes the reader is invited by the text to write or rewrite it. As mentioned before, a literary text is an actualized entity in which the virtual remains immanent. This exposes the text to continuous variations. The reader's response to the text, the way he/she decides to interpret the text and even rewrite the text testifies to this vulnerability. Such susceptibility is far from being a weakness, proves the inexhaustibility of the literary realm and hence its dynamism. In the following sections, we take up these points and base our claim to literature's metadiscursivity on the way the reader interacts with a literary text.

## Metadiscourse

We go on to contend that literature owes its inexhaustibility and creativity to its power and potential to mobilize not only the discourses of human society but also its own discourses. Writing in Deleuzian-Guattarian terminology, a literary text is the individuated or actualized variation in which the virtual as the continuum of coexisting possibilities is "always immanent as an unexhausted remainder, as that which could have been, or might in the future be, actualized" (Bogue 2010, 25). The literary text that functions as a site of problem for other discourses itself remains susceptible to constant variation for its virtual side. Situated on the borderline between fact and fiction, literature targets discourses of both realms. In this sense, we take a step further, calling literature not just a discourse but a "metadiscourse."

It would be pertinent to refer to Foucault's (Freundlieb 1995, 305) calling literature "one of a number of 'counter-discourses' partly associated with the experience of madness and opposed to the rigidities of an all-encompassing Reason – literature as an 'Other' of Reason." Foucault's description of literature includes the modernist and postmodernist texts which dismantle everything, including language itself. Thus the traditional texts remain marginalized in Foucault's analysis. The idea of "metadiscourse," however, encompasses all literary texts, even those that conform to the rules of Reason. Metadiscourse claims even such texts tackle some discourses of literature and/or social life, albeit in a much more restricted sense.

Literature is "meta" discoursal for two reasons: first, it challenges the normalizing discourses of the real world, displaying their discursivity and partiality. It is exactly this function that politicizes literature. Second, it casts a critical light on its own discourses and takes them to their limits; this is most manifest in Modernists' works with their nonrepresentational approach to literature. This notion is somehow echoed in "metafiction" defined by Waugh (1984, 2) as "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically

draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality . . . such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text." Following Hjelmslev's view of metalanguage, Waugh (1984, 4) contends metafiction targets two languages: the language of the literary system itself and the language of everyday discourse. While Waugh's clarification on metafiction is confined to novelistic practice and like Foucault's counter-discourse encompasses only the postmodernist literary works, the concept of literary metadiscourse embodies the whole realm of literature, including all of its genres. This renders the metadiscourse of language interdiscursive.

It would be pertinent to approach the notion of "metadiscourse" from a linguistic perspective as well. The objective here is to evince that the linguistic concept of metadiscourse backs up, and lies in line with, its literary counterpart. Initially coined by Zelling Harris in 1959, metadiscourse, in Hyland's (2005, 3) words, offers "a way of understanding language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text." Thus, metadiscourse goes beyond merely communicating information and involves "the personalities, attitudes, and assumptions of those who are communicating." Envisaged as such, metadiscourse is intertwined with pragmatics. Merging this notion with the way we tried to justify literature's metadiscursivity culminates in the same interpretation. As mentioned before, literature is claimed to be a metadiscourse, in that, first, it takes issue with its own discourses, and second, it shows the delimitations of the discourses of the real world. Achieving this goal entails the author to deploy language in such a way not only to "negotiate with others," but also to negotiate discourses (both literary and social) and to make decisions about what kind of effects one is to leave on the audience (Hyland 2005, 3). Doing this also enables the author to relate his/her text to "a given context and convey his or her personality, credibility, audience-sensitivity, and relationship to message" (Hyland 2005, 4). In this sense, just as no act of meaning is neutral, no literary product is impartial. This leads to indispensable politicization that lies at the core of acts of reading and writing, as the writer attempts to influence the reader by dialogizing with, persuading, and helping him/her in making the "suitable" or the "desired" decisions with regard to the targeted discourses (both literary and social). Thus, the creative metadiscourse of literature proves to be both restrictive in that it sticks to an aim trying to influence the audience in a specific way, and simultaneously, counter-restrictive as it sets out in play, or zeroes in on, the targeted discourses in an attempt to actualize other ways of looking at the world—its own world and the real world.

As mentioned before, the metadiscourse of literature is interdiscursive. This feature renders it intertextual. The term "intertextual" was first coined by Kristeva in the late 1960s in her explications on Bakhtin. Although the term is not Bakhtin's, his oeuvre testifies to his intertextual approach in text analysis. For Bakhtin (Fairclough 2006, 101), all texts and utterances are shaped by prior texts that they are "responding to" and by subsequent texts that they "anticipate." This definition of the intertextual echoes Johansen's (2002, 91) view that in human society, "in collaboration with theoretical discourse, historical

discourse may also reveal the destiny of human community and thus teach about future action." Johansen (ibid.) is of the view that historical discourse "regulates texts concerning tribes, clans, families, and texts about events and places in the surrounding world" and they "include chronologies, genealogies, topographical descriptions, and chronicles relating the past of community." The same features are detectable in intertextuality, which, in Kristeva's (quoted in Fairclough 2006, 102) words, implies "the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history." Kristeva's observation testifies to the metadiscursivity of literature. This point can be elaborated through Fairclough's elucidations on Kristeva's point. Fairclough (2006, 102) writes,

> By "the insertion of history into text," she means that the text absorbs and is built out of texts from the past texts (being the major artefacts that constitute history). By "the insertion of text into history," she means that the text responds to, reaccentuates, and reworks past texts, and in so doing helps to make history and contributes to wider processes of change, as well as anticipating and trying to shape subsequent texts.

The idea that the text "responds to, reaccentuates, and reworks past texts" evinces the metadiscursive approach of any literary text with regard to other literary texts as well as other discourses outside the literary realm, that is, the discourses of the real world. Envisaged as such, the intertextuality of literature justifies its interdiscursivity, just as the other way round. Fairclough (2006, 47) draws a distinction between intertextuality which comprises relations between texts, and interdisursivity which are "relations between discursive formations or more loosely between types of discourse." It should be noted that based on the aforementioned justifications, the metadiscourse of literature is simultaneously intertextual and interdiscursive.

The other moot point which is raised by Johansen and which could be counteragued is his institutionalizing literature. Johansen (2002, 290) defines institution as "a complex social organism that consists of agents holding different, often hierarchically ranked, offices and acting intentionally and/or routinely according to a set of rules in order to fulfill certain functions, achieve certain goals, and serve a number of (integrated) purposes." Johansen (2002, 293) then goes on to justify his claim, stating:

> Calling literature an institution is based on the fact that it is a public form of communication in which, at least in principle, the community at large is addressed. Thus literature . . . is dependent upon the means of production used for public communication and upon the existence of frames and settings allowing such a communication to take place.

In Foucault's analysis, institutions are visible sites of power, that is, they are centers of authority which limit and distribute power in the society, such as family, school, academic centers, and hospitals. The important feature of an institution which is missing in Johansen's institutionalizing attempt is that "institutions are usually 'places of visibility'" (Kendall and Wickham 2003, 27-28). Institutionalization has been the target of all (wo)men of letters

who have proved to be breakthroughs. Literature as an inventive metadiscourse runs against all institutions, takes issue with their disciplines, and shows the contingency of their discourses. Thus, it cannot be confined to an institution. The self-reflexivity of metadiscourse of literature renders it quite elusive, invisible, hence not only undetectable but also unpredictable. Institutions, however, as sites of specific disciplines would not appreciate any unpredictability. Furthermore, the virtuality and multiple possibilities that literature cherishes have rendered it and its performers either as writers or readers incompatible with the disciplined and disciplining norms of an institution. The other function of an institution is "normalization." Metadiscourse of literature owes its dynamism to its attempts throughout ages to denormalize the "natural." This could be taken as the raison d'être (for the inexhaustibility) of literature. Locating itself on the borderline between the real and the fictional, literature mobilizes the monopolizing codes of not only its own discourses (theoretical, technical, practical, and social) but of all institutions in the community. Regarding literature as an institution could mean only one thing and that is bending it to the interests of the ruling party/class/gender in society. The examples Johansen refers to from the time when poets and writers were seeking patrons to the present time when artists look for publishers and demand readership, all testify to the reductive view he as a semiotician has with respect to literature. Literature as a detotalizing and de-defining force in human society has always been at odds with such monopolies.

## Conclusion

This paper has set up a critical dialogue with Johansen's semiotic approach to literature and has tried to prove literature cannot be limited to representation, institution, and analogue. More than being a mere mimetic discourse, literature is introduced as a metadiscourse which takes issue with the discourses of both itself and those of the social world. Viewed from a Deleuzian-Guattarian perspective, every literary text becomes itself an event, a line of flight which is prone to multiple other ways of actualization in the processes of writing and reading. This approves of the redeeming potential of literature, which unlike other discourses is fueled up by non-allegiance.

More than being a mimesis of lifeworld, confined to disciplines of an institution, we conclude, metadiscourse of literature is inventive, protean, inexhaustible, and highly creative. Thanks to its virtuality, metadiscourse of literature commingles the linear and the nonlinear authoritatively in order to shed critical lights on the discourses of the actual world and those of the literary system itself. Every actualized literary text emerges out of a complementary process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, and concurrently, itself is susceptible to constant variation, and this testifies to its dynamism and inexhaustibility.■

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