Narrative, Memory and Self

An Exegesis to accompany the Artefact

The Inheritance

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to meet the requirements of the PhD by artefact and exegesis

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Abstract

This exegesis considers narrative theory and practice and how they impact upon our memories which are at least partly what builds the concept of self, meaning and identity.

The basis of what follows is taken from narrative theory with a psychological and philosophical influence.   The investigation reviews how narratives construct personal meaning and identity, and shows that there will be always be an "incommensurability" (Bruner 1986, 1990, 2004) between society and the individual. Narrative meaning and identity is discussed throughout the paper via the ideas of master and personal narratives and how these differ, interact and direct lives. There are conflicts between the various master narratives we all imbibe from culture and society. It is from these master narratives that each of us build our personal narratives, which build meaning and personal identity. Our narratives are known or unknown - often hidden from one's own view - and may clash with master narratives and with our other personal narratives.

Since this exegesis accompanies an artefact, the novel *The Inheritance*, I considered all my material in light of the art of writing a novel and/or an autobiography. The artefact is called an "auto-bio-fiction" so the issue of what is autobiographical (and even autoethnographical) as compared to fiction is tackled throughout the paper.

My initial research took me to other, perhaps at times peripheral, although associated, areas of study. For example, I found that I had to explore areas such as the use of humour, and the more serious question - also tackled in the story of the artefact – of whether present pasts might be partially re-written into a more current narrative. This led to an exploration of creativity in the writing process, and particularly the idea of 'sub selves' or sub-personalities as a possible explanation for how memories and identity, imagination, meaning and our inevitable narrative nature of these might result in creative writing and in some personal resolution of present pasts.

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Declaration by Candidate

I declare that this exegesis, and the accompanying artefact:
- contain no material which has been accepted for the award to me of any other degree or diploma
- to the best of my knowledge contain no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text

Edward (Ted) Todd

Contents

The Inheritance is the creative companion of this PhD study, and it needs to be read before the exegesis is considered.

Preface

I have written a book that combines the lived reality of my life with imagined (yet also somehow lived) yearnings for my lost family, particularly my father. I call this an 'autobiofiction'. This genre became necessary as I realized that the impact on me of the Holocaust made it impossible for me to write a non-fiction narrative autobiography claiming to be the facts. So I combined my life story and my imagined life story in a baroque and complex intertwining of known experiences and dreamt possibilities. The former are painful, so the latter enabled more extravagant and even hopeful views such as when the Stalinist camp commander saves my father or my father saves a Nazi soldier.

My artefact, *The Inheritance* is multi-layered. The main character (Tim) in the artefact is based on myself, although it is also greatly fictionalized. This presented interesting challenges to me as an author. The artefact is built in such a way that a reader might question who the writer-narrator is, because it is written as a story within a story; the eventual outcome being as if the two main characters had written the artefact: this surfaces only very late in the story.

The Inheritance has two main plot components that interact; indeed they show each other the way to proceed. One plot aspect is about a found and then lost inheritance. The loss, as great as it is in financial terms, is alleviated by the characters finding that there is a lot more than money one might inherit. The other plot aspect shows that personal roots, history, culture and the unearthing of one's stories are very much an 'inheritance'.

The overall plot is facilitated by the two main protagonists telling stories from their lives, recalling and thinking about their embedded narratives, and seeing the conflicts and incongruities arising from these.

Humour and irony, particularly as it is used by Jewish people, surfaced in the artefact almost unavoidably, and are explored in the exegesis as a separate chapter because using humour became an important counterpoint to the tale. A related issue was my reluctance to write about the Holocaust; this also became part of the research, and was found to be a strong underlying dynamo for the artefact.

In 1957 I arrived in this country and could speak only a few words of English. Every morning, on the way to work, my train chugged past a huge painted advertisement on a factory wall that said, "What you eat today walks and talks tomorrow". The reference was to meat pies. After several attempts, I finally understood the message to be similar to what I now understand about 'narratives'. It was my own narratives that walked and talked in the past and will do so in the future. The narratives I have heard and accepted became 'me' and will always be part of me. I do not mean this in a deterministic manner, but rather in a more hopeful sense; that our narratives need to be known, and can be re-written, re-understood and investigated in an exegetical sense.

My exegesis considers several areas of research, but mainly that of narrative theory and practice, and accompanies the artefact, referring to various parts of it. This process led to research of narratives and the self, including identity, meaning, the creative effort, sub-selves and narratives, and the idea of 'past presents' acting in the writing process.

The exegesis aims to investigate how narratives construct personal meaning and identity, showing that, likely, there will always be an "incommensurability" (Bruner 1986, 1990, 2004) between society and individuals. The conflict is between master and personal narratives, as well as between owned personal narratives. *Our Inner Conflicts* (Horney 1999) and other works attest to such a clash, but importantly *The Remembered Self* (Neisser & Fivush 1994) and Neisser's *The Perceived Self* (2006) are major contributors to my thinking in this aspect of the exegesis.

Exploring my autobiofiction and other views of the purpose of narratives quickly led me to the exploration of not only 'self' but 'selves' – I use the term 'sub-selves'. The question arising was: 'who' is the writer? I look at sub-selves as an idea that might serve to explore the 'who' and what of writing, particularly of fiction. I investigate my proposition that each sub-self might have a 'voice' that fuels the creative endeavor. This study led to changes in the artefact, allowing characters and even situations to be variously less or more predictable. I take up admittedly risky ideas about how sub-selves are formed by - and may actually be - narratives, and what their effects and affects might be. This forms a speculative chapter demonstrating that I was willing to take some risks in the exegesis material.

The whole process of the PhD has been tough and enlightening, challenging and invigorating. All along I kept in mind that I wish to see my artefact published. Therefore, it had to be a narrative of interest that readers might relate and respond to. At the same time the exegesis and artefact ought to add to the knowledge base of the process of creative writing.

I have found many links where the exegesis and artefact do indeed speak to one another. Although the exegesis may well stand alone as research, the creative artefact element has directed that research. The limited scope of the exegesis did not allow me to go as deeply as I wished into the relationship between exegesis and artefact, but I have indicated this wherever appropriate.

Introduction

This exegesis makes multiple references to events, thoughts and feelings from the artefact as it explores my writing and my 'narratising' process from early childhood until now. The process of turning what I 'knew', or thought I knew, into fact or fiction is an issue for, "In each present past, one then sees past presents - with their specific pasts and futures" (Luhmann 2005 p40). Such "Present Pasts" (Cooke 2005) certainly affected the writing of my artefact.

I am Jewish by birth and thus *The Inheritance* and my process of writing emanates from the underlying theme and thrust of the Holocaust, an event that has affected my life and many other lives drastically. "The Holocaust itself may very well have outstripped the human power to understand." (Braiterman 2010 p8) Some time ago I made the decision to no longer study the Holocaust. I wanted to lessen its power, to begin to forget it even more; I have had enough of its effect and affect, even though I know it fuels who I am. Yet I found myself writing a novel that is very much the outcome of my personal Holocaust, told via private stories and wishes. I did not want to, but had to face my history, memories, and people long gone yet again in this writing process. Although my 'active Holocaust' experience took place during my first 4 years, I have felt and dealt with the outcomes of it. Recognising that I am "vulnerable to memory distortion…" (Nourkova et al 2004 p68) is important to note, given that many of my memories were 'inherited'.

I labeled my artefact as an 'autobiofiction'. By this I mean that it is part autobiography and yet much of it is fiction. I recognise that, "the relationship between fiction and autobiography has never been an easy one" (Doring 2006 p1). The genre of the artefact now is that of a novel; that the autobiofiction formula as announced on page one is noted by the reader is important to the author.

As a 68 year old 'child' of the Holocaust I have examined a great deal within and without for many years. I carry no survival guilt. Rather, I carry bafflement, fear and the unfairness of my destroyed family. I still have anger; not shame nor a need for

revenge - just the bitter feeling that because one is born a Jew, or into a minority group, one may be persecuted. Anti-Semitism is written into world history (Langer 1995; Stein 1984). The things that are hardest for me to express as a survivor are the thoughts and feelings that much of humanity, whether of religious or secular morality, excluded Jews; most of the world allowed what happened. "Broken Silence" (Stein 1984 p86) presents a dialogue with the "spectators" who stood by and did little or nothing. "Know that in my heart you are a murderer's accomplice." (Stein 1984 p97) What dialogue can be had now? What can I say to the world, what could it say to me? The world lied to us, the four year old me and the eight year old cousin who was raped, his mother and our family murdered.

My artefact is a protest and yet a testimony for hope. Initially it was to be a memoir, but I did not want the 'facts' just as they were, so I fictionalised to create a different story. As I began to write the artefact I had a strong urge to change and lighten the feel of the story by the use of the very survival mechanisms I have always lived by: humour, and a wish for a better and thus necessarily fictionalised outcome. The artefact aimed to explore memories of old embedded stories from childhood and since, whilst offering a better ending or continuation of life, for the main characters. I wanted to write a 'feel good' Holocaust story where tragedy and the fictional outcomes appeal to the reader's heart more than to their intellect (Popkin 2003).

Some of my challenges in writing became:
- How will my people read my biographical-fictional story?
- What will it mean to readers now, so long after the Holocaust?
- How will readers make sense of my old and yet new stories today in 2011, and what sense will they make of it?

The more I wrote the more important the question became of what readers might bring to my narrative. I can well imagine a reader who is sympathetic, or one who is not, may read my book very differently. In this context I refer to the ways in which textuality changes over time - as Roland Barthes (2000) articulated, that readers interpret or ascribe meaning to what is written. I wrote the artefact with all my

experiences of life, but needed to consider readers and their possible interpretation of what I offered. Writing is a complex form of consciousness; a way of being both passive and active, social and asocial, present and absent in one's own life (Sontag 2000). Barthes said that, "…The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author" (Barthes 1977 p143). I will further consider the question of readers, ideal and implied, later, in section 2.

This exegesis is Practice Led Research (PLR) (Arnold 2007; Hecq 2009; Schon 1987; Scrivener 2000; Sullivan 2009) leading me from the artefact, employing psychological, philosophical, sociological and autoethnographical ideas as the tools of research-exploration. By autoethnography I mean *The Ethnographic I* of Carolyn Ellis (2004). It is, "the first person voice, the vulnerability of the observer, the performative voice…that blurs the line between researcher and participant, writer and reader" (Bochner & Ellis 2003 p509). To impart my performative voice, feelings and thoughts, I had, after much hesitation, included descriptions of feelings, often wondering whether I had over-written or had not given sufficient weight to emotions. Yet there are parts in the book where I use more of a reporting voice, such as in the Father chapter. There is, in the end, a mixed range of highly emotive and other voices, including that of humour.

<u>I propose to explore two major and some associated issues via this exegesis</u>

- Narratives are given, culturally inscribed from an early life stage and it is from these master/meta narratives that we construct our personal ones. (Bamberg & Andrews 2004; Bruner 1986; Lyotard 2006; Polkinghorne 1988, 1995). Narratives 'inscribe' meaning and identity in human lives and affairs. I will use the term 'master narrative' for what are variously termed as universal, meta, global or grand narratives. I will contrast the master with the internal, personal narratives each of us actually have, or even are. (Bruner 2004; Daily & Corey 1998; McAdams 2008). Narratives can and do conflict, bringing change and force to lives and to the writing process.

- The preceding demands a consideration of the 'self' and how the self may be not a singular or unified affair when in action. Where do writers' voices come from and how? When I started writing I did so as an 'observer', a re-caller of my stories. Later, various other parts of me, I might say 'voices', emerged - often with surprising energy. Assagioli (1972), Kessel, Cole and Johnson (1995), Neisser and Fivush (1994), Schwartz (1987) and Stone and Winkelman (1985) all had an influence on my thinking in this way.

Narratives are an identity-forming, dynamic, meaning-making mental event.

Exclusion and alienation from one's community threatens the sense of personal identity (Popkin 2003, Wajnryb 2001). This is one major feature the artefact explores.

The input and output of narratives is a dynamic movement directing our lives from day one and forever after. Examining one's inherent narratives is the means for making sense of the world and of life. It is our "primary form by which human experience is made meaningful" (Polkinghorne 1988 p1). Our stories are our very lives; as McAdams situates it, "identity is life story", though each of us has direct access only to our own realm of meaning by relationship to others and to society and culture (McAdams 1993 pp1-10). Daniel Dennett and Paul Ricoeur agree and "…conclude that the preferred way of viewing the problem of the unity and continuity of the self is to cast the self in narrative terms" (MCarthy 2007 pp112-113).

In exploring narrative theory I will investigate effects and outcomes on my life, and point to the wider social world and the conflicts that are due to embedded narratives held as absolute truths. This exploration will be the main focus of the exegesis, considering how master and personal narratives clash and conflict, and how this affected the writing of my artefact. Narratives can bring ambiguity and confusion and peace and harmony all at once to every child, or adult. The clashes and conflicts may

be great, or else banal, as Bruner (1986) thought. I will return to these important issues later in more detail.

As a study, 'narratives' is a vast area and I had to restrict myself to exploring the subject via a number of filtering points that respond to my artefact, and show the relationship between artefact and exegesis.

1. Genre and the relationship of artefact and exegesis.
2. Truth as fiction, fiction as truth; memory, self, emotion.
3. The clash and conflict of personal and master narratives. How master and personal narratives directly affected the artefact.
4. Where creative writing comes from; sub-selves and multiple voices.
5. Humour as attack and defense in the artefact.
6. Present pasts; finding present truths and personal resolution by exploring past and current narratives.

While the urge to write comes from various places in my experience, the writer's psyche is the main contributor. To write my story, or yours, or any fantasy, involves not just imagination or ability but also a need that may well be a biological and/or psychological one. For, as Linda Williams says, "we are born into stories" (Williams 1995 p1). All we know, recall or experience or act on is done via verbal constructions, words, sentences and stories (Ricoeur 1991, Wajnryb 2011). Writing creates "formative relations between being and acting" and "between who we are and how we act" and this, for my research, is what Max Van Manen calls the phenomenology of practice (Van Manen 2007 pp13-15).

You are your narrative and your narrative is you. Apologies to Khrishnamurti who actually said, "You are the world and the world is you", a similar meaning in any case (Khrishnamurti 1972 p1). The reference is that everything is interconnected, and that one makes the world as the world makes one, to be how we are. This is particularly salient for writers, since all writing of fiction draws from previous narratives. Umberto Eco said that, "books talk to each other" (Eco 2006 p122). He explores his debt to Jorge

Luis Borges who may have been influenced by Franz Kafka, without whose writing Eco's may not be what it is. Such intertextuality is unavoidable. I am aware of the influence of Italo Calvino (1982) and Borges (1979, 1981) for the artefact chapter titled "Josef at the door", and of the influence of Milan Kundera (1984, 1988) for the stories of the Son chapter. Much of my humour and usage of the ironic was influenced by John Irving's and Woody Allen's writing and movies over many years.

I kept in mind that, "given the distortions of memory and the mediation of language, narrative is always a story about the past and not the past itself" (Bochner 2000 p745). "Story telling is 'world making' and as we know, it always starts from worlds already on hand: the making is a remaking." (Goodman 1978 pp7-16) "Sometimes the most profound influence is the one you discover afterwards." (Eco 2006 p133) And so I noted my initially 'automatic' use of humour, and began to inject more humour and irony, now on purpose, to illuminate my artefact with contrariness and counterpoints. "Irony irritates. Not because it mocks or attacks but because it denies us our certainties by unmasking the world as an ambiguity." (Kundera 1988 p134) Indeed, seeing the funny side of ambiguity was all young Tim could, and was fortunate enough to be able to do, in his confused world.

In the next section I shall discuss my research methodology. Section 2 reflects on the reasons for and the process of writing the artefact. Then I shall explore genre, followed by the relationship of artefact and exegesis and fictional truths. Narratives are explored in sections 5 and 6, and are a major part of the exegesis, as are the ideas that creative writing might be fuelled by sub-selves (sections 7 and 8). Humour and present pasts are considered in sections 9 and 10.

Section 1. Methodology

My methodology for this exegesis is a mixed one, though it is broadly based on PLR with an autoethnographical and somewhat psychological orientation. Such methodologies suited the artefact that was already inclined towards story telling in an autoethnographic manner. The exegetical work as a "personal construction" (Allen 2011 p3) places itself within the context of the artefact, wishing to unite theory and practice.

PLR means that "the practice both underpins and interacts with the research" (Arnold 2007 p3). The practitioner's work and insights, relevant works of others and insight into their practice, together with texts and theories, enliven and enrich the practice so that, the practice leads the research (Arnold 2007 pp3-5; Eisner 1997; Hill 1987; Scrivener & Chapman 2004). Additionally, PLR is "evocative" research (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2009), arising through practice via an ongoing dialogue between practice and theory, topic and context; a dynamic interplay between artefact and research leading to the exegesis. And this interplay was what first led me to question the power of narratives.

Discovering that it is not a question or problem-setting that one does in PLR, but rather, a 'messy' form of research, like the roots of a rhizomatic plant, where the connections are endless, (Deleuze & Guattari 1983) further enlightened my thinking. Such messy forms might challenge accepted academic paradigms, but may be clearly seen in fiction writing. Writing fact or fiction then, may be seen as a 'rhizomatic' process, for the connections are not always linear or in a hierarchical fashion like a tree, but rather, occur in a chaotic manner like the rhizome analogy (Colebrook 2002 p76-77; Deleuze & Guattari 1983). One might say the same for human lives.

My core data for research are my memories, reflections, feelings and experiences, all of which are narratives of sorts (Bruner 2004; Eakin 1999; McAdams 1993). Some of these are long, detailed and dearly held, some a picture or just a word or two, but all tell stories of sadness, anger, puzzlement, and even some hilarity, with either much or

little depth. Tim's (my) mother's pronouncements and memories were always dramatic, and often incorrect. Many of my early memories are hers; some mixed with my direct ones. Experience is always cultural and laid over the background of the experiencer's embedded cultural suppositions (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). In the artefact, the mother's experiences interpreted events in her way, keeping memories differently from the son, even when such memories were shared (Eakin 1999; Neisser & Fivush 1994).

I kept a working writer's journal from the beginning of this PhD candidacy in order to interrogate the production of the artefact as data for research. Particularly in the early stages of artefact writing, I noted my constant reference to the journal work where my increasing dissatisfaction with my storyline became more obvious. This influenced and decided - although 'decided' came after I 'found' that I had already injected humour in order to point out some of the absurdity of what happened to Tim (me) in the artefact (Attardo 2001; Fludernik 1996). It was the feeling of writing a dark and gloomy memoir that propelled the work to change to a novel genre I called autobiofiction.

The journal work re-debated all I wrote: words and events, which stories to include and what to leave out, questioning memories and feelings about them. Sometimes the journal took the form of an 'interview' where 'I' and 'Tibor' (my original name) argued and cajoled or made fun of one another. After some months this sort of dialogue ceased. There appeared instead a more integrated voice. I had accepted that the writer was me, plus all those past re-membered selves I could access (Neisser & Fivush 1994). I began to tackle the exegesis by trying to understand what an exegesis might be in relationship to my own practice.

In my journal, looking for a centre of attention (Kerrigan 2010; Kroll 2004b), I found repeated questions about how or why I was writing, asking constantly, 'who' was doing the writing. Not a schizoid breakdown this, just an underlying intuition that came to me for the first time after many years of scribing mainly short stories. 'Who is 'me' as the writer?' came as a surprise question. Was it the now older self, recalling past events, or was it coming partly from past 'selves' who had not, until now, unpacked

history and feelings? Also, who was I writing for? These questions inevitably led toward investigating narratives and how they affect not only text, but the life and actions, meaning and identity of my *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Bruner 1986), and the pervasive all-encompassing nature of narratives that are, *The Stories We Live By* (McAdams 1993).

These issues by their very nature affected my methodology. I researched narrative theory widely, including the works of Nelson Goodman (1978), Jerome Bruner (1986, 1990, 1996, 2004), Sara Worth (2008), David Herman (2009, 2003), Ulric Neisser (1994, 2006), Donald Polkinghorne (1988), Umberto Eco (1997, 2006), Milan Kundera (1988) and many others. The study explained a great deal about my own embedded, but often only partly known (or even unknown) narratives.

I emphasize that I use the term 'narrative' in a wider sense than just story, and need to state what master and personal narratives are, at this point. Socio-cultural inputs (such as say, the Ten Commandments), ethical, moral and political rules (such as Hungarian-style communism in 1950's) and importantly, those ideas given by family and schooling as the things one ought to, or should not think, do or say, are the "principles embodied", (Bourdieu 1977 p94), the very 'master narratives' discussed in this exegesis (Bruner 1986; Ellis 2004; Herman 2009; Polkinghorne 1988). However, as I entered the wide world of the narrative, I began to understand and consider the differences between the master and the personal narratives, for the two are related, but not the same, and in fact are often in conflict. This became a large issue and a central focus of the exegesis (Bruner 1986; Eagleman 2011; Mc Adams 2008; Polkinghorne 1988).

The exploration of narrative theory led me to consider and write about memory, self, identity, feelings, and character development as a reflective practice; a qualitative inquiry. Without the above, my novel may have become a mere reporting of events (Bochner & Ellis 2006; Eisner 1997; Russell 2001). And it was the study of narratives that led me to the format of this particular PhD. Scrivener's suggestion that the artefact that embodies the research is not meant to be the solution to a problem but,

"contributes to human experience more broadly" (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2009 p4) helped the understanding and progress of the exegesis.

It was via analytical insights and the reflective practice of looking at my known or "tacit" knowledge (Hamilton & Jaaniste 2009; Schon 1983) that the artefact and exegesis was constructed. My 'evocative' research also involved me intuitively via feelings and ideas, interests and questions about my personal, and the wider, questions of life. Scrivener notes that, "we experience these insights as possibilities rather than conclusions" and that art making provides "ways of being in relation to what is, was, or might be" (Scrivener 2002 p12). Such ideas fit and sharpen what I intended, particularly when fictionalising memories in order to point out the possibility that lives may have been lived differently.

I said that much of the methodology for the exegesis, and for the artefact, is a qualitative and autoethnographic research. It is a form of personal narrative inquiry, focusing on the writer's subjective experience. It is a method for understanding one's own life and representing research findings as personal experiences (Bochner 2003 p506). This is evident in the artefact. Autoethnography is the first person voice, the enactment of meaning, a voice that resists jargon, blurring the line between researchers and participants, writers and readers (Bochner & Ellis 1996). This is the case for me as author, narrator and participant. Further, Arthur Bochner states that the goal is "self-understanding and narrative truth" (Bochner 2001 p 510). This is what I aimed for first in the artefact and now also for the exegesis. According to Bochner, one has to continually look for the "other" who is, and will remain, when written about "…unfinished and endless" (Bochner 2003 p511). The process of writing about self and others has, for me, this endless quality; we rarely know what went on before or after a story starts or ends.

My artefact is perhaps a slightly unusual form, but I feel no constraint in what I *might* say in it and I believe my form and content interact and drive one another. "Form and content cannot be severed, how one chooses to describe something imposes constraints on what can be described" (Eisner 1997 p2). I am uncertain about this,

although I see that I must not suddenly turn a novel into a scientific tome. However, anything might be said by a novelist, if always with some risk. The fact that I invented fiction to turn what started as a memoir into a novel may argue Eisner's point. I see my artefact as a, "self-fashioning in which the ethnographer comes to represent himself as a fiction" (Russell 1999 p2).

I have experienced the effects on my life of studying, and of taking an active part in psychology, sociology and philosophy as specific schools of thought, following the work of Daniel Dennett (1991), Irvin Yalom (2002), Roland Barthes (1975, 1977, 2000), Jerome Bruner (1986, 1990),Ulric Neisser (1994, 2006), Sara Worth (2008), Arthur S Bochner (2001, 2003) Umberto Eco (1997, 2006), Carolyn Ellis (2000) and many others. I found these inputs vital for the methodology and for the entire exegesis. The psychoanalytic, sociological and philosophical parts of my methodology come from many years of study and working as a counselor both in groups and with individuals. I draw on the widest dynamic, psychological schools of thought. "The autoethnographer records events and conversations at times nearly schizophrenic in its frenzied multiple focus." (Adler & Adler 1987 p67) This is the sense in which I used psychology on self, and on that 'other' who perhaps wrote the artefact; a personal reflexive view of self and of the stories within (Anderson 2006 p380).

Alfonso Montuori suggested that academic inquiry is, and ought to be, an opportunity for self-inquiry; it is a psychodynamic inquiry (Montuori 2005). That proposition is close to my thinking, and I believe my exegesis and the methodology used tend to be framed overall, as Hamilton and Jaaniste (2009) suggest, from within the philosophical, psychological and literary traditions. Finally, I accept that, "the choice of methodology is implicitly the choice of an ideology" (Galtung 1967 p40) and there is not a universal methodology; we are free to make our own.

Writing brings about, perhaps has to contain, an element of anxiety; of not knowing where the writing will take one (Eco 2006; Goldberg 1986). The often picked up and put down pen, the feelings and thoughts rising in a chaotic way rather than 'properly' and as easily as one would wish, are part of the process. Thus, given my approach, I

tended to write mainly in an emotional and psychological frame, as I constructed my story. I found that I was indeed *re-writing* some of my 'self as stories', particularly the unacceptable ones. The talking cure of psychology may be considered as "being the author of one's life" and "psychotherapeutic models are a way of influencing stories people construct of themselves through the process of intertextuality" (Wyile & Pare 2001 p5). In *'Re-authoring lives'* (White 1995) and *Story Re-visions* (Parry & Doan 1994) the authors refer to the therapeutic idea of re-writing personal narratives as a major tool of modern psychology. "Contemporary psychotherapy has taken a *textual turn"* (Wyile & Pare 2001 p12). Writing fiction might create an imagined alternative world and story, and facilitate understanding of how the "reality we live is similarly constructed, similarly written" to fictional lives (Waugh 1984 p18). For me, in this PLR situation, this means that the artefact's theme is indeed an "existential inquiry" (Kundera 1988 p84), favoring the "existential quality of personal experience" (Van Manen 1990 p178).

My practice of writing the artefact brought up many questions, most of which I resolved by creating fictions. As I wrote, aims became clearer, or alternatively more dubious. Umberto Eco's book *On literature* (2006), Milan Kundera's *The art of the novel* (1990), *Writing down the bones* (Goldberg 1986) and many others, contributed to my insights into the writing process. The process was planned, but not orderly. Rather, it seemed to move forward inspired by my research, or by the emotional parts of writing the artefact. When I reflected on this inspiration, and once I began the exegesis, the artefact often had to be carefully re-considered in light of my research into narratives, myself and the act of narrating. The task was confusing and yet needed, and it has, I believe worked. Barthes said that, "language is a kind of natural ambiance wholly pervading the writers' expression, yet without endowing it with form or content" and it is "an abstract circle of truths" (Barthes 2000 p31-32). And I might add, lies and unreliable memories, and experiences.

The side by side creating of artefact and exegesis brought questions about style and content which are, I agree, "never anything but a metaphor" (Barthes 2000 p33). In the same book Barthes wrote that, "evil does not punish, good does not reward" (Barthes

2000 p153). This spoke to the core of my artefact for there is the Holocaust, and my later life, and the possibility of a world open yet to change.

My autobiographical sections ought to seamlessly integrate with the fictional parts. I agree with Stanislaw Lem that, "Every sentence in a book means something, even when pulled out of context and "within the context it mingles and explains, or points to other parts of the writing, so that some "fusion" eventuates; a total that is a plot and narrative of what one wished to write" (Lem 1983 pp128-129). And that fusion is what my artefact wishes to achieve.

To explain, interrogate and enlarge the process of writing, the artefact includes all the decisions needed to be made by the writer. "This is in fact the impetus of the exegesis, whereas its aim is to locate the work within the wider fields of practice and theory." (Hecq 2009 p42) I also found that experiencing the experience is different from reflecting on it, as noted by Donald Schon (1987) and it is with this in mind that I prepared the exegesis.

Section 2. An outline of the artefact *The Inheritance*: the process of writing.

In this section I will consider

    A.   Personal background to writing the artefact

    B.   The artefact's theme

    C.   *The Inheritance* and the ideal/implied reader

    D.   Narration, plot and coincidence

    E.   Truth and Fiction in my autobiographical novel

A. Personal background to writing the story

Writing stories started on a 'dark and stormy night' at the age of 52. I was divorced, life seemed shallow and empty. I'd had one or two drinks and thought about life - mine mostly.

Whenever I do self-reflection, sooner or later dark thoughts arise; memories of stories about childhood horrors and the like. This particular night, the old story, the pain of a missing father and family arose and told itself to me, yet again. An obsession. At my age I should have given it up; I had actually, or so I thought, and yet it was re-igniting yet again as it has done since childhood, surprising and unacceptable, both in a personal and a social sense (Hanninen 2007).

The emotional nature of my deeply embedded narrative gave birth to the character of Tim, for the missing father story underlies Tim's story in the artefact (Palmer 2004). My "turn back to past self/selves explain, contradict, evaluate and analyze …the actions of the experiencing self" (Hanninen 2007 p4). The push to write at the time was powerful, with an underlying need of wanting coherence, some sort of sense and meaning-making of my life stories (Herman 2009; McAdams 1993).

Emotions can be rational, irrational, in awareness, or unconscious; likely a mix of all these (Eagleman 2011; White 1993). On this emotionally stormy night, I realised that something was different from all other times. Perhaps because I was doing my B.A. and I was working on creative writing. Our tutor asked us to write a story in the vein of a famous writer or in a specific genre. I chose Italo Calvino, whose writing both fascinated and frustrated me. That evening, I wrote a short story somewhat (I hoped) like Calvino might have. It was called "Josef at the Door" (artefact p190). It was easy to write, it just flowed out of me. The idea came powerfully, wanting to breathe itself out; 'I'll write about my father, the one I never knew, but always expected to return'. Without stopping to be surprised, I wrote the short story and liked it, for its content and voice, flavor, and the mysterious, almost magical realism that flowed as if it was meant to. What fell out of me was an old narrative I have evidently identified with, as *my story*, as me (McAdams 2008). My need to write came into consciousness, not in isolation but as part of other "complex ideas already in my consciousness" (Eagleman 2011 p14). Josef was the long-lost cousin invented as the messenger who showed up at my door to tell me about my father, and about the inheritance he had left us.

Years later, when I launched into the PhD work, I considered writing a book of short stories, or an autobiography or memoir, of my early years. I could not decide what genre to aim at, so I started by adding old stories to one another, adding thoughts and feelings about the past, but from today's perspective. As the compiled stories grew in volume, I grew gloomier; my stories were sad, dead-end stories. There was something wrong with the whole narrative because I did not like my story being so bad and sad. My writing was a lament, a complaint, an impossibly un-ending one. It was not how I wanted Tim's (my) story to be. I realised that my early personal and master narratives were acting, motivating and doing the writing. I had to ask myself, 'are these the narratives now writing, as it were, who I was, who I am, and who Tim (or I) may yet become?' (Eakin 1999). The bitter idea surfaced at this time that I had inherited nothing, except these sad stories, unlike my partner, who had inherited a farm and 52 cousins, and a place to bury her dog at the farm, next to her father's and his grandfather's dog. She inherited a continuance, roots and relatives, something where one could make sense of lives past, and into the future. But surely I had inherited all

sorts of things, I told myself; at least genetically. 'And you inherited - like it or not - all these horror stories,' came the reply. Gloomy, but these thoughts gave birth to the idea that I am at liberty to re-write, invent, disrupt facts; to fictionalise as I like. This meant writing a novel; the autobiofiction.

When the first draft was finished, I automatically signed it with my original Hungarian name. I stared at that name, asking 'am I that person?' Was my need to write a need to re-do past narratives that were meaningless, and worse, unless I re-examined them? Or was it the want to create something that would be an inheritance for my family, or perhaps even for others? Or was it written to the child self who thought himself stupid and yet smart at once? Or perhaps it was written just for the challenge? More yet, as it emerged; it was the need for an 'inheritance' only I can now leave for myself; a resolution of sorts.

B. The artefact's theme

I have always seen my life as a progression of short stories that sometimes did, or else did not, fit together to make sense or meaning (Eisner 1997). I now think that the artefact's theme is "an existential inquiry" (Kundera 1988 p84). All my adult life has been spent in search of existential and emotional clarity, as is Tim's life in the artefact; his constant search and questioning of his life and of his past. Writing brings about, perhaps has to contain an element of anxiety, of not knowing where the writing will take one. Given my rather psychological and philosophical approach, I tended to write mainly in such frames of mind, exploring and constructing the story; "a life story model of identity" (McAdams 2008 p243) and yet now, a novel.

Conflicting self-expressions and stories may sit uneasily with each other. There is difficulty of personal integration within an ever changing world and self. Instructions on how to live or what life means are unclear in modern society (Giddens 1991; McAdams 1993; Polkinghorne 1988). I consider my overall artefact theme as an existential, social, and even as a therapeutic inquiry. The talking cure of psychology is akin, as Michael White said, to being the author or editor of one's life. "Writing fiction

might create an imagined alternative world and story and help to understand how the reality we live in is similarly constructed, similarly written." (Waugh 1984 p18)

Characters in the artefact tell stories, testing whose memories they are recalling, and this points to the idea mentioned earlier that particular periods in a person's life may well be vulnerable to memory distortion: this is particularly the case with one's early years and memories, which are important in the formation of identity (Nourkova et al 2004). I aimed to present my protagonist's struggles with such questions. A note from these authors is that a novelist's autobiographical memory may be vulnerable to contamination by the creation of fictional characters. I found this to be true, as I watched my own work where fact and fiction are mixed.

C. *The Inheritance* and the ideal/implied reader

Who then indeed, is my ideal reader? Anthony Burgess says that "The ideal reader of my novels is a lapsed Catholic and a failed musician, short-sighted, color-blind, auditory biased, who has read the books that I have read" (Burgess 2011). This is not only good fun. It is clearly useful to have a similar cultural background in order to relate to a story. Therefore, perhaps people my age, with a Jewish background will be my target, but I also wanted to aim my narrative at younger, non-Jewish readers. Not only because I want them to know what happened in the past, but also because the 'pasts' have partly designed much of the future. And, perhaps there's no such thing as an old joke, to new people every joke is new. Notably, I see no gender divide for my ideal reader; that seems irrelevant. Still, I assume that Jewish readers will be closer to being both my ideal and implied readers.

In addition to ideal readers, Wolfgang Iser (1978) coined the term 'the implied reader', a hypothetical reader to whom a given work is designed to address itself. Any text might presuppose an 'ideal' or an implied reader, one who has the particular attitudes (moral, cultural, etc.) that will facilitate the reading of a text to achieve the effect the writer intended. It is with an uneasy feeling that I differentiate the implied from the

ideal reader, thinking that the implied readers may or may not be ideal readers, and yet the ideal reader is, perhaps always implied.

In writing the artefact I have tried to involve the reader, but have I allowed the reader to co-write the story as Jan Mollin (2006) suggests? I found myself reluctant to allow the reader to co-author my story, and yet I realised that readers will interpret as they will. I wish my writing to be understood as closely as possible to my intentions. The question arose about who might be my ideal reader. Paul Kay (1982) said that the main experience of an ideal reader, while reading a text, is an 'envisionment' of that text, a representation in the reader's mind of the content of the text. The envisionment grows and sometimes changes as the reader progresses through the text. The ideal reader not only updates and supplements the envisionment of the world the text is describing, but also formulates hypotheses, asks questions, notes evidence, and generally accomplishes a variety of processing operations. Kay offers three properties that an ideal reader uses to construct the envisionment of a text. The first is the ability to "read between the lines", to draw indirect inferences that are needed to derive a coherent envisionment. The second property includes the ideal or sophisticated reader; one who knows, or expects to be manipulated by the author and the text. The third property involves the organisation of the envisionment, its expectations and inferences, resulting in the readers arranging the simplest, or perhaps the wanted scenario of the reader (Kay 1982).

Writers cannot escape considering what readers might make of a story. I wrote with my ideal readers in mind, but one had to be vigilant not to do so at the cost of not saying what I wanted to say, or predict what might, or might not work, all difficult issues. The ideal reader is a translator who may well read *The Inheritance* and think that what I have offered is a good thing. Some readers will, others won't, dissect the text, or peel back the "onion skins" (Grass 2007) and then set on its feet a whole new sentient being; my novel. However I agree with Eco that the reader is not necessarily a taxidermist or a deconstructionist by trade or need. Some ideal readers do not desire to negotiate a text. There really are limits to readers' interpretations of a story. "Although literature allows much interpretation we must be moved by a profound

respect for the intention of the text." (Eco 2006 p5) I agree and hope that be the case for my novel.

I certainly want to publish, to turn my book "into merchandise" (Barthes 2000 p191). By this I mean that I kept in mind the connection between the creative and mercantile possibilities. I did not write this artefact just for the family; it is publish or perish! Although I find the idea of the 'Holocaust industry' distasteful, it is clearly of much interest to readers, and is a necessary endeavor because such an event cannot and should not be forgotten, now that the original witnesses are largely gone (Braiterman 2010; Popkin 2003).

D. Narration, plot and serendipity

Most of the story in the artefact is told by Tim as his story, but some of it is written by an unknown narrator. For Tim, the story turns into a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy in the end: that is what I as the author wanted. The book proceeds by telling awful stories from the early years and some comic ones, and hopeful stories invented to make the novel flow. There is an element of tension regarding whether a large inheritance will be won, and a discovery that much is inherited even if the money is lost. Eventually Tim and Josef, the long-lost and newly found cousins, lose the inheritance money, but write a book about their newly shared lives and experience, and publish it. This is the happy ending make-believe, as are most of the more positive, hopeful parts. Behind, under, and pervading the story, is Tim's search for meaning, identity and a plausible explanation - or is it a reason - for the Holocaust, and why his life has turned out the way it has.

Eventually, I had settled on the plot, style and writing voice. It seemed to have been a good choice to go the way I had. A choice? It was more like the choices I made chose me to write them in this way, and not otherwise (Eagleman 2011). "Sometimes the most profound influence is the one you discover afterwards…" (Eco 2006 p133) The plot is facilitated by the use of many coincidental happenings that finally forge together. Many of the events are true, but many are imaginary. Serendipity happens if

only we see the connections. Tim's (my) meeting of a woman called Edith in California, who was possibly a long lost and distant relative, was true (artefact p151), but the rest of what happened with her is fiction. When creating characters, I have often drawn from people I knew, but usually I added fiction to these personalities to fit the story's needs.

Writing is a reflexive activity facilitating self-exploration and the element of surprise in finding contradictions, paradoxes and various emotions we may not have thought we had (Bochner & Ellis 2003; Russell 2001). Discovering my various personal narratives affected my writing of the artefact and changed the way I now see some of the old narratives. These in turn influence and may re-write one another in "a never ending process of discovery of the subject, object and of the self" (Lincoln & Guba 2000).

E. Truth and fiction

Because of my wish for a refurbished life story for Tim, I aimed to inject, mainly via the plot coincidences, a feeling approaching magical realism. I discovered the need in me for a self-fulfilling prophecy, not just for the one I held (artefact Chapter 1) of becoming aware of my deeply-held story about my father. My *magical reality* would like to write a good book, a self-fulfilling prophecy that gets published and turned into a great movie. That is how my artefact ends; the story is turned into a movie, perhaps because stories are often also held as images (Braiterman 2010).

Some of what I tried to say in *The Inheritance* is that life is indeed an 'autobiographical fiction'; an affair where things never happen or they do, where there is always a story one wishes to change, continue, finalise and/or re-write. As I wrote, I found that truth and fiction merged and served each other well. I note that while language may be "an abstract circle of truths" (Barthes 2000 pp31-32) it can also be lies and unreliable memories (Arnold 2007), for the nature of truth and fiction tend to be rather subjective. The mother's 'truth', the Nazis 'truth' were often a 'fiction', while the 'fiction' that terrible things were happening, (artefact p44) was often denied by many incredulous victims (Braiterman 2010; Herf 2006; Stein 1984, 1995).

The side-by-side creation of artefact and exegesis brought questions about style and content, and about truth and fiction as I presented them. What is presented in a novel is "never anything but a metaphor" (Barthes 2000 p33), or, as Kundera so elegantly said, "man has always harbored a desire to rewrite his own biography, *to change the past*, (my italics) to wipe out tracks, both his own and others." (Kundera 2005 p130)

In other words, to see fiction where the truth was worse, or to see the truth, where previous fictions did not serve well. This was also part of my mission. When writing biographies, what is written about is little more than a *hypothesis* (Lem 1983).That may become the total that is a plot and narrative of what one wished to write.

In this section I have considered the process of writing the artefact by looking at my personal background to story writing. I have considered my personal background to writing the artefact and the artefact's theme as well as the ideal/implied reader, narration, plot and coincidence, and Truth and Fiction in my autobiofiction novel. I have shown some of the relationship between the artefact, the exegesis and PLR, and looked at utilising the self-as-data to create new knowledge, and will further investigate these issues in later sections.

Section 3. The relationship and interaction of artefact and exegesis

This section reviews how, after several drafts of the exegesis, I began to further consider the relationship between exegesis and artefact; how the two should interact, illuminate or challenge one another. The journal work helped with writing the artefact as it showed various themes I was obviously interested in, such as the alternative lives one may have lived. At the same time the journal also pointed to - for me - murky academic waters, where I also needed to go. Amongst others, one such was 'present pasts', another, the veracity of memories and of fictional truths. I had to develop insights into the relationship of fact and fiction in literature. Research needed for these areas widened the exegesis, pointing toward ever broader areas of interest as mentioned before: narrative theory as a way of constructing and re-constructing meaning and personal identity, authoethnograpy as qualitative and evocative research and so on. This is evident for example in Tim and Josef's conversations about some of these issues (artefact p205). As the exegesis progressed and unfolded, the artefact had to be carefully re-considered in light of my research into myself, and thus into the act of my style of narrating/writing. All this was at first confusing, yet necessary, and it has worked. Writing the artefact and the exegesis side by side showed where weakness in one was, compared to the other.

At this time I figured I was on the right track: William James said that "personal identity is an idea that a person constructs from social selves" (Polkinghorne 1988 p149). Bruner refers to Freud, Vygotsky and Piaget, to endorse his "Developmental Theory as Culture" (Bruner 1986). Paraphrasing Jeffrey Cox and Shelton Stromquist (1998), self-awareness - in this context, and in the research of narratives - begins with knowing our explicit narrative strategies; and continues by open consideration and evaluation of them (Eakin 1999; Herman 2007; McAdams 1993, 2007; Neisser 1994). There appears to be much agreement by these writers that narratives are identity and the self, and this being the case my creative writing is driven by them.

Autoethnographic thinking powerfully facilitated ways of thinking about the relationship of exegesis and artefact (Eisner 1997; Ellis & Bocher 2003). The artefact already showed layers of autoethnographic themes: the Holocaust, self-identity, meaning, memory, psychological and philosophical emotional disturbance, and relationships to others. There is now also hope, as a major theme. Hope that pasts that are presently still active, may be transformed. In this context I refer to the odd feeling of fictionalising one's life, and note that not only my authoring self has been changed by this PhD work.

The exegesis refers to various stories and events from the artefact as it explores how master narratives shape and construct the personal ones (Bruner 1990; Ellis & Bochner 2000; McAdams 2008; Polkinghorne 1988). My thinking first led me to consider the conflicts of master narratives (Cox & Stromquist 1998). For example, in my own experience, the Nazi master narrative ruled Hungarian society until liberation day (1945), after which, within a few days, the Hungarian master narrative turned officially to a socialist one, and within four years (1949) to a rabidly communist one. Due to my research, finding the powerful input of the master narratives, I decided to give more space to such matters in the artefact. Not only the master narratives clash. Each of us constructs our personal narratives (meaning, identity and active membership of the society we live in) from the local-global master narratives of our day (Daily & Corey 1998; Neisser & Fivush 1994). Our personal narratives also conflict with the ever-changing socio-cultural master narratives - and with our owned personal ones - the ones we hold as the way, often the only way, to be a member of our society (Daily & Corey 1998; McAdams 2009). These ideas brought major changes to some sections in the artefact, but I am mindful that it was the artefact that had led me to research such ideas.

Another of my research aims was to examine 'who' actually writes. I suggest that it may be the *sub-selves* (Dennett 1995; Stone & Winkelman 1985, 1993) each of us have - or are. This will be explored in section 6, in some detail. Suffice to say that there are enough references in qualitative thinking, narrative theory and psychological/ philosophical research to suggest the possibility that, though the self may be not much

more than an abstraction, we might speak of several 'selves' at work in respect to the 'me' as personality (Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1995; Schwartz 1987). Bruner says that, "It would seem, indeed, that we construct not just a single or main self-narrative, but a set of them- something like 'a cast of characters' as Freud once suggested" (Bruner, cited in Neisser & Fivush 1994 p46). Perhaps the cast may be likened to that of a play; the play is the individual, the cast are the actors who perform the whole message. This is the sense in which I tackle this issue in some depth in section 6. And as such, sub-selves may be salient to the consideration of the relationship of artefact and exegesis.

That "past realities are always being constructed anew" and "even if some accuracy is possible, memory is a reconstruction rather than reappearance" of actual facts (Winograd, cited in Neisser & Fivush 1994 p243)fits with my overall thinking. Research into these matters changed the thinking of my fictional characters in the artefact. Tim (me) reflects on his narratives; on what he has heard, read or seen in life, theatre, books and culture, and struggles to explain that these do not actually represent his day-to-day reality. There were serious breakdowns between what Tim was told, or shown (the master narratives) and his experience. Thus, within the personal narratives Tim built, held, and tried to understand, there were many lacunae as well as false memories. The power of the narrative all around one is like swimming in the immensity of the ocean. As soon as one wave passes, another washes over you.

Margaret R Somers and Gloria D Gibson speak of 'The War on Terror' as a recent master-public narrative that has become, or is in danger of becoming a myth, and thus a potentially harmful master narrative (Somers & Gibson 1994). Work on the exegesis soon showed that the *myths* constructed from society, culture and parents are a mountain to be climbed. I am not so much referring here to Jung's ideas on myth as a supernatural or archetypal affair (Jung 1968) but to the personally and socially built ones: more like myth - true or false - equals well-embedded family stories. One such story is about Tim's (my) escape from Hungary (artefact p232). This has now become a family myth for my children and grandchildren. Myths tend to fuel master and personal narratives in an endless loop. The relationship of myth, master and personal narratives referred me to another exegetical exploration; can past narratives be

changed, better understood, or at least re-evaluated? Or can they be put into a different context, or at the very least 'filed' away? For the artefact, this idea also becomes part of story and dialogue between Tim and Josef as they deal with often old, outdated myth-narratives that are memories and ideas held as if true; the action of past narratives and behaviors that still operate in their lives in the present.

My personal experience is that the psychological outcomes of the narratives I swallowed or built myself certainly affected the way I wrote my artefact, and the decisions about what stories and events were placed in it (Polkinghorne 1988; White & Epston 1990). The exegesis hopes to uncover what may be behind Tim's narratives and how these narratives were born and taken on as Tim's life. I aim to show this in a more scholarly way and hence add knowledge to the continuing academic debate. My narratives *are* my memories, my memories are narratives, as Winograd suggested (in Neisser & Fivush 1994). Yet I am keenly aware that once written it is possible that, "these words rather than the events themselves will be remembered" (Hilberg 1974 p83). I found that my research affected me as a person, as an author and as the narrator. Space limitation kept me from deeper investigation of such issues.

PLR also clearly became Research Led Practice (RLP) (Sullivan 2009), showing that the relationship of artefact to exegesis is an ongoing dynamic one, changing artefact and exegesis as each reflect on the other. Both operate through most of my plot lines and dialogues between characters. On page 207 Tim and Josef directly discuss presents pasts. Tim asks what memories are his and which are genuine? Fictional selves and the constructed nature of selves are spoken about on page 258. These ideas were developed as exegesis material and then re-translated into a dialogue, giving deeper meaning to the protagonists' struggles. Such dialogues were indicated in the artefact, but are now more clearly elucidated.

Section 4. Genre and fictional minds

In this section I consider how writers are partly "autobiographical novelists" (Dennett 1995 p111). Developing "fictional minds" is a necessary instrument of writing and with this view I develop further insight into my 'autobiofiction'. One of the factors of writing a personal narrative is said to entail social critique and personal experience. I see this as the "incommensurability" of the personal and the master narrative (Bruner 2006). Considering "incommensurability" as one of the major themes of the exegesis, I endeavor to show how the artefact explores the ways that cultural and social input, by way of the master narratives, contribute to and are the dynamo by which we construct individual and social lives. This is where fictional minds come into play for "the narrative self draws on literary characters, tragic plot lines, and psychoanalytic phenomena" (McCarthy 2007 p115).

A. Genre

It was whilst thinking about my genre for the artefact that the idea of 'autobiofiction' came to me. I would write *my* stories as they were, but give some *life* to Tim's (my) father. I had not the stomach to write him back into my life, not even fictionally. The next best thing was to get him to leave an inheritance; money, a life story, a character and the stories he had lived. I had to create a fictional mind and life. *The Inheritance* became an invention of memories and fictional truths that may have/could have been actual outcomes, if lives were lived in a less disrupted way. Tim's life was disrupted by many factors, particularly his missing father. Kureishi (2008) notes Ibsen's point that the dead, dead fathers are the living dead, and very potent, even more than the fathers who are still alive! This articulates the very dynamo that wrote the artefact. It was the dynamo taken from my own life story that needed to be told.

I wanted the reader to view my story in a different way from either a novel or an autobiography. I wanted the reader to ponder on - even to be a touch confused - about the sort of thing they were about to read. On page one I placed this declaration:

"This is Autobiofiction.

Much of what came to pass in this story is true, lots of it is not.

Many people in this book lived, loved and thought deeply about what happened to them, some did not.

Several characters are still alive, but most do so only as a figment of my imagination.

I wish that some of this story was true; but I'd rather that some of it had never happened."

Tibor Weisz

I have not found novels or autobiographies that state the above. This led me to consider such questions as whether readers read autobiography and novels differently. Do they have differing expectations when picking up a self-confessed 'true' story compared to a novel? The answer, for me at least, is yes. James Olney notes that in autobiographical slave narratives, readers will find many similarities. Olney asks, "are not (all) unique tales, uniquely told, of a unique life?" (Olney 1984 p2) I believe this also applies to novels, particularly if written in the first person mode. After all, human lives do have and carry many similar feelings and responses to situations. Candace Lang suggested that perhaps autobiographical writing seeks to establish an "equilibrium or synthesis between inner self and outer existence" (Lang 1982 p2). This is certainly true about my artefact, but I see it as potentially true about any writing of value; partly because of the incommensurability of inner life and actions taken in the world and partly because the two have to be somewhat synthesised into a coherent whole.

My artefact aims at a 'narrative audience', rather than at a 'cognizant' one. The latter are readers of autobiographies while the former are readers of fiction (Shen & Xu 2007 p48). My artefact presents a "direct role of the real author" for a narrative communication (Shen & Xu 2007 p49). Yet, my artefact offers itself as 'perhaps' biography, and not by accident. I may be an 'unreliable' author, one where the reader will have doubts and questions about what I offer. Readers may or may not pick my intended genre, but they will, in any case project whatever they will onto the story and

the author (Shen & Xu 2007). Yet, an important rider is that, "an individual can imitate various culturally available narrative voices, and he can be the narrator and the hero of his stories but he is not the author of his life…" (McCarthy 2007 pp1304-5). And this quote refers to the very nature of my artefact, where I blended fact and fiction as the author, and yet do not claim to be the or the only author of my life. "I am what has been possible for me to be." (Stein 1984 p39)

B. A review of narratives

The narrative works I shall now review are ones that have - in flavour and voice at least - a similar feel to my artefact. A brief exploration of the memoir and autobiographic genre shows Bernard Schlink exploring social, political, national and personal issues in *The Reader* (Schlink 1995). What parts of his writing are biographical, what partial memory, or whether it is all fiction, we may never know, in spite of the guesses made by critics. His stories are powerful because they sound true, or at least plausible, and because they show the individual's inner struggles, the conflicts of the human condition. For my artefact I have found it necessary that my stories were told by Tim, who is the writer, actor and narrator. However, other parts of *The Inheritance* such as the section titled "Father" are and had to be told by an unidentified narrator.

Another example close to me is the work of Canadian professor, writer and therapist, Dr Andre Stein, my cousin. He has written several books on Holocaust matters including *Hidden Children* (1994) and *Broken Silence - Dialogues from the Edge* (1984). Only I know that the events in his book are mainly factual, for Stein (and me) about the 1940s.

I am one of the characters in these books, as are several family members. His philosophical explorations of the Holocaust and personal feelings, and thoughts form parts of autobiographies (Stein 1984). "No, I don't agree that I *chose* my acts. My acts were the inevitable fruit of a biography…" (Stein 1984 p38) It is hard to say what genre Stein's writing is, but his works were certainly a factor in what I put as 'facts' in my artefact.

C. Fictional voices participate in the basic thrust of all writing

Autobiography may participate in the basic thrust of all writing and is something that is also apparent in fiction, as it embraces truths "that are an inherent aspect of the human condition" (Arnold 2010 pp15-16). Arnold's paper goes further; it is about the 'sous' voice, the liminal and apophatic that is derived from texts by the reader. This is the voice that the author demonstrates rather than writes (Arnold 2010 p14). Arnold proposes that texts are enhanced by such recognition of the sous voice, leading to the discovery of what an author says that he himself is not aware of. This is challenging because I wonder how readers will hear/read/see my sous voice, via their own prism. The idea of the sous voice, I surmise, further enhances the 'fictionality' of texts. Inevitably I expect that readers will hear/see some things in my artefact of which I am not aware.

The thought of sous voices brought me to the exegetical idea of, "Who the researcher is, is central to what the researcher does" (Graham 1984). I believe this may also apply in reverse: what the researcher does may come to re-define who the researcher is, when seeking self-understanding via the writing process (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001). One example of this is Gunter Grass's *Peeling the Onion* (2007), a memoir. Nothing but the facts? 'Facts' in memoirs may be subjective. What is of extra interest is that Grass's memoir of events may be factual, but the judgments, ideas, feelings and thoughts he brings to them, are clearly today's, and sound as though his views, after many years of experience, are layered upon the original story and have indeed re-defined his thinking. This is, I hope, similar to my story. Grass's work shows the personal and the master narratives at work where the clash of master and personal narratives is evident. There was a conflict at the time of the action and there is one now, between the master narrative of the war years and Grass's thinking/feeling now (Grass 2007).

Barak Obama's *Dreams from my Father* is another memoir consisting of facts, together with opinions, feelings and thoughts of the writer. What the book is about in the end

for me, is the thoughts and feelings of a black child and. I also wanted to explore the story of the dispossessed, the hated, the out-group, the underdog (for being a Jew is a little like being black) and the fatherless boy. This was what I wanted to create, even if I was unclear about the genre I wanted to address.

The Bell Jar (Plath 1996), *On the Road* (Kerouac 1951), *Tropic of Cancer* (Miller 1961), *The Painted Bird* (Kosinski 1965), *Slaughterhouse Five* (Vonnegut 2000) and others are flagged by their publishers as being semi or completely autobiographical and yet fiction. It is difficult to know, but these books appear to have some factual basis on which the writer may well have built fictional extras to embellish the stories, as I did in mine.

Patrick Modiano's stories feel, in intent at least, close to mine. Morag Young states that Modiano's writing revolves around his personal identity crisis (Young 2000). Dervila Cooke also wrote about Modiano's work, in a book titled *Present Pasts: Patrick Modiano's (Auto) Biographical Fictions* (Cooke 2005). The title reinforces my point; a research into self and writing is facilitated by the writer's 'fictional' mind. Alan Morris comments that Modiano's artistic vocation was spawned by emotional compulsion: "It is, then, self-avowedly, to try to resolve an identity crisis that Modiano first put pen to paper," and, Modiano's "false autobiography is a project to show the ability of language to create (a whole new) reality by itself" (Morris 1996 pp208-209). I also aimed in such a direction. The existential angst Modiano writes into his books is something I also feel, and wish to write out into at least a coherent narrative form (Cooke 2005). This is in contrast with Kurt Vonnegut in *Slaughter House Five*; he begins his story by saying that "The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true" (Vonnegut 2000 p1). This book seems a mixed genre, as I think mine is. Vonnegut's use of "fictional minds" is highly notable.

A different and distinct genre is shown by Isaac Bashevis Singer (1977, 1980, 1981), Chaim Potok (1983, 1984) and Elie Wiesel (1982), who have written on the human, but particularly Jewish, life experience so well, and often in the first person, that it is hard to imagine that there is not some personal experience in their stories. Melvyn Bragg

was interviewed about his new book *Remember Me* (Times Online 2009). He calls his book a novel and then admits that it is partly autobiographical and partly fiction. Bragg asks, why not step inside one's self for material that furthers/changes and fictionalises one's story. Using the imagination to delve into what one thinks one knows about one's self may bring rich rewards (Bragg 2009).

I wanted my narrative genre to be a crossover of Grass's *Peeling the Onion*, Schlink's *The Reader* and Singer's stories, with a certain voice that is mine. Not easy; but why not aim high? These examples show the channeling of personal experience characteristic of biography and authoethnograpy, and of the mixing of fictional minds with the author's personal views and life experiences.

In this section I have considered genre and fictional minds and how these interact in my artefact. Past life is remembered life; instead of recalling all our life at once we posit moments, and this holds true enough also for invented characters (Neisser & Fivush 1994). Robert Graham wrote that, "past life is therefore being rearranged… retrospectively interpreted, in terms of the meaning that life is now seen to hold" (Graham 1984 pp98-99).

I consider my genre a mixed one, almost an anti-genre. My fictional characters now written are in a sense alive, at least for me, and hopefully for my readers. Autobiography and memoirs appear to have a great deal in common with fiction. A mind full of fiction is likely to develop several fictional minds, and while this sounds somewhat glib, I think it is legitimate enough, given that understanding another mind often may well be a touch fictitious (Kai 2006; Neisser 1994; Ochs & Caps 1996).

Section 5. Writing truth as fiction and fiction as truth

This section continues to develop the scholarly conversation about the relationship of truth and fiction and relate it to my artefact and exegesis by considering that fiction and fact interrelate and construct one another in literature. In the essay 'Can fictional narratives be true?' Paul Ricoeur argues for fiction to re-direct us to what is more important in the "actual world of action" (Kai 2006 p5). The combinations of truth and fiction seem endless, and in the final analysis matter only because belief in fiction as fact may lead to fatal consequences, as for example Cervantes' Don Quixote shows us.

An interesting view from Dianne Ketelle (2004) says that by fictionalising some of her more difficult experiences as a university administrator, she could translate the experience in new ways. Ketelle writes out the facts of, for example, a problem at work and then extends and couples the facts with fiction. This process has allowed a different way of understanding events, and of altering even her behavior by creating "the distance necessary to see, feel and analyze the work" (Ketelle 2004 p449). Laurel Richardson says that such fictionalising of her own process has allowed her to "relocate" herself on the writing map (1998, cited in Ketelle 2004).

I realise in retrospect that I also aimed to 'relocate' myself via what I invented as Tim's later life; the wished for resolution both in an emotional and creative sense. The fictionalising of my artefact and the work on the PhD has indeed helped to 'relocate' myself in some ways. It has helped to see that one can be an atheist, a spinner of tales, an academic, and even a Jew, who, like a black person, will always be a 'black' person carrying the narratives and history of that race and culture. It has changed my "personal map" (Richardson 1998 p450).

I accept Ketelle's (2004) views when she writes that fictionalising allows *re-processing* of the various often unprocessed aspects of stories. I believe this comes about in a rather autoethnographic way, in the "blurred genres of writing" (Anderson 2009 p373), where self-reflexivity and emotions are the mainstay of the story. These are plentiful in

my artefact. I have tried to draw in the reader, addressing them at times with a degree of intimacy and emotion that may be particularly - one might say - Jewish autoethnography. "The exposure of self who is also a spectator has to take us somewhere we couldn't otherwise get to." (Behar 1996 p14) Take us to where? I had a t-shirt that said, "follow me and I'll take you where I'm going". At the start I was rarely sure where I was going when writing the artefact. Reflection has shown me that fictionalised conversations in the artefact have indeed captured emotional truths, helping to make meanings in new, perhaps changed ways (Richardson 1998). An example is the last part of the artefact where Josef and Tim find shared needs, feelings and resolutions, and do come to see past and current events in a now slightly different light.

I had interesting, and often baffling, feelings about the idea that we are 'fictitious' human beings who are always wondering about which parts of ourselves are actual (Albright 1994; Kai 2006). In addition, it is true that "each of us being a main character in his own drama, plays subordinate parts in the dramas of others" (MacIntyre 1984 p213). I found myself at times emotionally involved with the drama of others and even with my written fictitious characters. Present and past time, fact and fiction mixed with memory and the characters I had been, or may yet find. Characters are, after all, built from the writer's memory and life experience (Nourkova, Bernstein & Loftus 2004).

To me, the idea of 'novel' does not mean that the story cannot be true, or partially so. "A fictional narrative is nothing more than a narrative fiction", according to Gerard Genette (1991 pp15-16). Does a piece of fiction carry properties that enable the reader to tell it apart from real facts (Patron 2006)? How does one know what is, or is not 'real' or factual, or which minds are fictional? The idea that "Fiction tries to reproduce the emotional impact of experience to move the reader" (Burroway 1978 p78) also means that today's truth can be, "illusions that we have forgotten as illusions", and illusions may become over many years as if truths (McCarthy 2007 pp1443-45).

"Through usage, ideas unduly gain value" (Bachelard 1993 p17) and I add, a kind of veracity that may be believable as fact, perhaps depending on the reader's views. Alan Palmer speaks of the "illusion of fictional minds" (Palmer 2002 p29), while R D Laing (1967) notes that we are invisible to one another; we cannot know or experience each other's minds. This might make everyone a kind of *fiction*, a fascinating idea I often think to be correct. However, are we then no more a character than a fictional one might be, except that real bodies act and activate more than fictional ones? It is our personal patterns of inference that we project on characters in fiction (Fludernik 1993). Thus, my perceptions of another's identity may not differ too much from my reading of fictional characters. This is worrying and yet it has intuitive value. In my artefact, as Palmer says, 'minds' are visible to readers, via the characters' actions (Palmer 2002). A further complicating factor is that the world changes, some fictions become closer to truth or further from it, according to Mikonen Kai (2006). Commonsense may tell us up to a point, what may or may not be narrative truth, so "fiction does not therefore equal lying…" (Kai 2006 p12). Hamlet's sister was Ophelia; this is a fictional truth, as is that Tim now exists as a fictional truth.

That "we are never more, (*and sometimes less?) (*my italics*)* than co-authors of our own narratives" (MacIntyre 1985 p213), also plays a part in writing, referring not only to intertextuality, but also to the wider narratives that interact when we write. In fictionalised narratives, as Barone (1997) agrees, the writer may explore and re-navigate unresolved experiences and feelings. Personal writing can be self-conscious (DeVault 1997). It is meant to be immediate, confessional - and therefore I add, emotionally laden, for otherwise it is not 'personal' in a real sense. This made me look at the narrator/author divide, for a narrator may be seen by readers as an unable, un-willing or misinformed narrator and thus one who is not even in agreement with the author. (Cohn 2000). Shen and Xu (2007) speak of a 'second self' in autobiographical writing, where the narrator is the author. This I find in my work, up to a point, but my artefact also moves between a first-person emotional narrator who is close to and open to the reader, and that of a cooler observer-reporter-narrator and author. This unknown narrator still presents emotionally, now and then, about Tim, Josef, Lajos and

human affairs. And I believe the unknown narrator's voice is still 'personal writing', as DeVault has it.

Interpretations and understanding of my narratives also did change, once I considered the author/narrator question, and sometimes it changed parts of the artefact into a different framework (Baronne 1987; Ketelle 2004; Richardson 1988). Sylvie Patron posits that the novel has two possible narrators: the first and the third person (Patron2006). Not, evidently, enough for me, for I have Tim as narrator, and the unknown narrator of the Father's chapter, who may not be the same as, for example the narrator who tells us about Tim or Josef and others. This may be why my artefact sounds more biographical at some points and less so at others. Patron also says that "the author is not a narrator; he does not recount in the usual sense" (Patron 2006 p123). I consider that this means that an author uses narrative to constitute a fictive world, and this seems correct. However, the 'narrator' may well be the "inferred author" (Abbott 2008 p85) who, I believe, may or may not be the narrator.

Tim and I - narrator, author and character -are the same person only up to a point. In my writing the author/narrators are seemingly, interchangeably, characters in the narratives (Abbott 2008; Ketelle 2004; Patron 2006). I was aware of the blurring and the difficulty between me as author, putting words in Tim's mouth, and me as narrator, of other characters' actions and stories. I argue that it is in the nature of my particular artefact - an autobiofiction - that this happens more than if my novel was a 'total' invention. And in a lighter, but telling way: "I mean can a character recognise her creator? Of course I do deah, I wince all the time at your punctuation and your excruciating use of cliché." (Jolly 1992 p149) It seems Ms. Jolly also wondered about being a character in her fiction.

In this section I have looked at fictionalised truth and the sometimes blurred line between fact and fiction, and between author and narrator. We truly are a "quarry" from which our shape and our narratives are cut (Albright 1994 p31). In 'The Dry Salvages' T.S Eliot refers to memory and how selectivity of memory might operate:

"That the future is a faded song, a Royal rose or a lavender spray

Of wistful regret for those who are not yet here to regret,

Pressed between yellow leaves of a book that has never been

Opened." (Eliot 1943 p134)

I often thought of such 'faded songs' when writing the artefact, wanting to place them into my text and then agonisingly, I either cancelled or did write them. Such were, for example, several of Tim's discussions with Josef about their early years. Memories, regrets, wishes that have been in a "book that has never been opened…", the imagined possibilities, strove to find a place in my artefact.

Section 6. Narratives

"We are born into a universe of stories." (Parry 1991 p37)

In this major section, I will look deeper at what narratives are, and explore the powerful effect they have in human affairs socially and personally. Writers and commentators use various expressions for these wide, socio-cultural narratives such as: Master, Meta, Universal, or Grand narratives. I see no substantive difference between these for my purposes and shall use the term MASTER NARRATIVE from here on. The term refers typically to pre-existent socio-cultural forms of interpretation and institutions; these are the mores and norms of a society (Bamberg 2004). Bruner states that "*the* principal way in which our minds, our 'realities' get shaped to the patterns of daily cultural life is through the stories we tell, listen to, and read - true or fictional" (Bruner 2006 p14). I will differentiate the 'master' from the 'personal' narrative later in this section, however the 'personal narrative' is that which we build from the early and ongoing input of master narratives, genetic and physical givens, and abilities. I will examine the impact, effect and meaning of master and personal narratives and the potential conflict between them.

I mean to look at narratives as a concept in the wider sense than, simply, narrative equals a formal story shape. To unpack this I first agree with Lyotard's suggestion: narratives are fundamental to all societies, but narratives cannot be identified only with literature (Crome & Williams 2006). In this, my wider sense, I use the term 'narrative' to include story, propaganda, socio-cultural imperatives, the arts, body language and more. I think of 'narratives' as the plot and story of life/consciousness. The work of writers such as Bruner (1986), Eakin (1999), Ochs and Capps (1996), Lyotard (1995), McAdams (1993), Polkinghorne (1988), Richardson (2009) and Wyile and Pare (2001) appear to agree that narratives include, and are the general socio-cultural inputs via myths, laws, rules, norms and ethics of a given society.

We know our local culture implicitly, perhaps like fish might know water, and are inevitably immersed all our lives in this situation of society and culture. In my artefact the father, Lajos, cannot comprehend what has happened to him and to his beloved

Hungarian background when his world-belief (master narrative) is shattered. That was the case for many people when their beliefs and meaning crashed against the master narrative of the Nazi years. Anti-Semitism was part of the Jewish master narrative for most Jews in the 1940's, but what actually happened, the genocide, was not (Herf 2006; Lange 1995; Stein 1984, 1994).

A. What a narrative is and how it powerfully fills the idea of lives.

Narratives are 'us', the 'me' I know and show to others, for "If you want to know me, then you must know my story, for my story defines who I am" (McAdams 1993 p11).

Although a narrative is basically a story, typically describing a conflict of fictional, and/or true events, it is different from a logical sequence of explanation as in, say, scientific research (Bruner 1986). Bruner contributes to the academic debate by saying that human beings understand the world in one of two ways: in a paradigmatic or in a narrative mode. It is in the narrative mode that we understand and live lives, and deal with the "vicissitudes of human intention organized in time" (McAdams 1993 p29). And in this way we see, "a representation of causally related series of events" (Richardson 1997 p3). This configures meaning and communication linking together individual thought, feeling and experience into an "interrelated" understanding of the composite (Bruner 2006). The composite shows how events affect each other and produce "the particular form and meaning that is human existence" (Polkinghorne 1988 p13). All this is mostly and blissfully (or dangerously) a routine part of human lives because, "We are born with a narrating mind" (McAdams 1993 p28). Narratives build meaning, construct identity and facilitate personal action. In my artefact, the narrative drama of the Holocaust that both men 'inherited' certainly had a big impact on the lives of Tim and Josef.

Ample evidence is offered by all the writers mentioned that we are our narratives and the narratives are us. Two good examples are McAdams' book *The Stories We Are* (McAdams 1993), which explores the master and personal "myths" we are and act out and *How Our Lives Become Stories* (Eakin 1999). Paul Eakin states that our realities are

shaped by and to the pattern of the stories we hear and see, tell and formulate. Bruner adds an important rider; it is largely narrative interventions that achieve cultural and social cohesion. Therefore there is no suggestion that all master narratives are good or bad, but caution and insight is needed when examining our master or personal narratives. Our culturally shaped preconceptions depend not only on language, but on sharing our thoughts and the business of the "exchange" of life (Bruner 1986). I add that not only cohesion, but coercion is also done by the master narratives of society. Some of these master or personal directives are "tacit", some are overwhelmingly large in impact, and some are banal (Bruner 1999; Linde 2001), "in fact, we easily and often eagerly embrace the banalities of our cultural setting and even object if critics attack them" (Bruner 2006 pp13-14). We tell and live the stories that we are surrounded by, and see everything in terms of our narratives and then try to lead our lives accordingly (Sartre 1990).

However, master narratives are not 'natural': they are only what society constructs (Hutcheon 1988). Further, "The grand (master) narrative has lost its credibility" (Lyotard 2006 p83). According to Jenkins (2010) postmodernism is suspicious of totalising theories and imposed universal directions. Human philosophy manifested as master narratives is, and should be treated as, incredulous. "The decline, perhaps the ruin of the universal idea, can free thought and life from totalizing obsessions." (Lyotard 1993 p7) Lyotard called for "mini narratives" - what I understand and offer as the smaller, more "personal narratives", to replace the (seemingly) infallible larger ones (Jenkins 2010). My artefact wishes to risk adding my small voice to disrupt the massive sequence of master narratives by telling the awful tales created by the Nazi narratives (Braiterman 2010).

In summary, master narratives pervade lives and thinking, and are dynamic and ever-changing. To me this seems intuitively correct. At times, a particular master narrative is dropped, only to be replaced by another. Sigmund Freud replaced the narrative of repressed sexuality with a new one that is still a master affair in its tone and content. Similarly some outdated religious narratives have been replaced (at least for some

people) by perhaps an atheistic one, for example as regards to morals, and much else (Adams 2007; Onfray 2005).

Master narratives rather than mini ones - to use Lyotard's concept - tend to uphold a certain view of history, human action and thought. Such are biblical stories, isms, or the obeying of laws, morals and ethics in a given society as the ideals everyone must follow. As such, these master narratives are emphatically part of the personal narratives we each hold and identify with. An example is the global master narrative of the Ten Commandments: the "no killing" rule is usually accepted by most people as also their personal narrative. The immediate clash is obvious if you are a soldier, or if you are attacked. I will explore such conflicts in more detail later.

B. How we build and embed master and personal narratives

Charlotte Linde looks at "narrative and social tacit knowledge" (Linde 2001). She terms some social knowledge (master narratives) "tacit knowledge" as opposed to the explicit. Linde's work refers to *unconscious social knowledge* about interactions in society, practices that are not at the foreground of conscious thinking. Although tacit, or unconscious, this know-how is necessary to make one's way in the world. Tacit know-how is conveyed via master narratives. "Narrative induction is the process by which newcomers to a group take on the story as their own." (Linde 2001 p3) It is from these tacit stories that we build our very personal narratives in our early years; with or without awareness of having built them. It is as if our personal narratives are hidden from us by the overwhelming nature of master narratives, so it is by our smaller, personal narratives, our autoethnographies, that we allow space for individual voices and connect our personal and group narratives, the bridge between "the tacit and the explicit" (Linde 2001 pp1-15). Much of our knowledge of the world is picked up by simply participating in everyday life as we gain "cultural toolkits", made-up models of the world patterned to the local set of rules (Bruner 1984; Feldman 2006). I strongly agree with the view that some master narratives are very explicit and well known while others are indeed more implied, and recall that such 'tacit', automatic acceptance of some master narratives – the Holocaust or the Chinese cultural

revolution etc – are known to be dangerous and disastrous. The issue is even more worrying, given that language carries the master narratives, and language may be the most tacit form of tacit knowledge; one knows how to speak or hear, without thinking about it. Tragedy shapes talk as Ruth Wajnryb observed (2001). A further problem is that much of our identity and personal history also emanates from our tacit knowledge. Linde (2001) goes on to draw a parallel regarding how groups accept specific tacit input. Nazism built the 'master race' idea as the useful (for them) master narrative. The victims had to re build their master narratives after the Holocaust, often "sanitizing" their stories, for to tell it all was too much:"I was afraid of giving it more validity…more power" (Wajnryb 2001 p107).

My artefact refers, in part, to what Tim (me) picked up as a child, as both master and personal, tacit and explicit narratives. Likely, this happens to all children to a degree for the "child imitates not 'models' but people's actions" (Bourdieu 1977 p 87). I believe not only actions are imitated, but also words, sentences and concepts. For example, the idea that reading literature was noble and good, had somehow seeped into Tim (me). However, to study well at school was explicitly stated (artefact p227). As an adult, one sometimes unquestioningly accepts the status-quo of society; for Tim (me), the only way to live well was - as society had it - to follow the given norms, get married, have children and work hard. And having been a businessman most of my life I realised that for example the 'no lies' rule is often disregarded by the business community. Indeed, doing business seems to incorporate, for example, legalised lying, which is elegantly called 'negotiating' and marketing.

All stories are personal and yet group stories as Ulric Neisser (1994) suggests. His is a constructivist understanding of both the self and of the lives and stories we 'construct'. Society is constructed by individuals, as the individual affects and constructs society (Neisser & Fivush 1994). In the artefact, Tim and Josef live within the master scheme of society, but are sometimes on the fringe of it. Josef's open marriage is an example. At the same time, my protagonists are reconstructing lost selves and society by writing a book. In that process they need to recall their lives and that very act can re-construct self, and the world at large, at least for them. As an author, I note that in such a

constructivist frame, "no mode of reading *of stories, (italics mine)* will be regarded in principle as a misreading" (Shen & Xu 2007 p52).

The Perceived Self and *The Remembering Self* (Neisser & Fivush 1993; Neisser 1994) are books of essays that had a great impact on understanding what I finally did or did not allow, into the artefact or this exegesis. The whole idea of 'the remembered self' became both important and enlightening for my exploration of narratives. I note that not only society and parents, but also "reading books of fiction" constructs the self, and the "power of fiction…" affects and "transforms the reader's self" (Doring 2006 p77). What and how the self is, particularly my writing self, and how social and personal memories operate was an important issue for my process for we all "…participate in the construction of the story" (Linde 2001 pp4-5). If we are unfamiliar with the shared cultural stories we will be outsiders, or at least find it hard to fit in. Tim, as a migrant, experienced the Australian master narrative of 1957, as shown in *They're A Weird Mob* (dir. John O'Grady 1957), from a migrant's point of view; a greatly different situation from the Hungarian one of the day. The change had to be made virtually overnight. In the artefact I endeavor to show how the new world of Australia changed and differed from Tim's old narratives (artefact pp240-241). Tim had to become not what or how he was before (Nourkova, Bernstein & Loftus 2004). Throughout the artefact I found that in order to say what I did, I left out other things I may have said about my ex-master narratives (Macherey 1966).The artefact explores the master narratives of Tim's days, often indirectly, via allusions to 'puppet governments' or 'fake communism' or what people held as personal ethics or morality. In addition, each time we tell a story, whenever we narrate, we do so always with the hearer or reader in mind and thus we tailor the telling (Linde 2001), particularly of inconvenient truths. During work on the artefact and exegesis I became keenly aware that with one ear I was listening to what the reader might think about my novel, and what an examiner might think about my exegesis.

Are there stories that do not include the influence of master narratives? I believe not. Henry James said that stories happen to those who know how to tell them (Eakin 2004). Such 'telling' always involves *my version*, and that version is part of my personal

narratives, the ones I constructed. For the input of society and culture shapes our cognitive processes, guiding our own storytelling so powerfully, that eventually we become the narratives we tell and think of as our lives (Bruner 2004).

Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics explains language and the common signs we know and interpret similarly. We are our language and consciousness is largely language. Gadamer appears to agree with Barthes when he states that "the idea of the original reader is full of unexamined idealizations" (Gadamer 2004 p396). And yet, I add, each author feels as if he is an 'original'- at least person- if not an original author, for after all, originality may emerge from a process that includes imitation and intertextuality (Montuori 2005).

I have already said that I agree with the above writers regarding the nature of narratives and the all-pervading, persuasive powers they carry. Whether we speak of propaganda as master narratives, or socio-cultural inputs, or the law of the land, these are all a heavily underlined way of organising and understanding social and individual lives. The construction of self is always done by "remembered self" (Neisser 1994) and via the master narratives from which we construct our individual ones, forming the identity and meaning of persons. Intuitively, I am unable to say that people are nothing but narrative, though it appears hard to say what else one is, other than this language-narrative based identity and meaning (Bamberg & Andrews 2004; Bruner 2004; Eakin 1999).

C. Exploring masternarratives and their significance

I have considered how narratives affect meaning and identity in the construction of personality and self, and now I follow with a review of the relevant literature. The scope and purpose of this review points to large and varied areas of academic interest regarding theory and use of narratives. I have considered mainly writers from areas of research such as narrative theory, psychology, sociology, anthropology and ethnography, and philosophy. These are the basis for and the essence relevant to this

exegesis. My focus is on the power of master and personal narratives for the writer of a creative work.

In this section I further consider Stephens and McCallum's idea that knowledge and experience are explained by Master narratives, which serve as totalizing cultural narrative schema (Stephens & McCallum 1998). To further unpack the idea of the difference between master and personal narratives I will examine six significant points:

1. A potential model of the hierarchy of master narratives leading to the construction of personal narratives
2. Narratives, meaning and identity
3. Personal and emotional narratives
4. The incommensurability and conflict of narratives
5. Therapy and narratives
6. The clash and conflict of master and personal narratives

1. A potential model of the hierarchy of master narratives

I now propose a kind of hierarchy to break up and illustrate the all-encompassing term of 'master narrative' into further detail. This may assist to understand the power and the conflicts inherent in narratives. In relation to the artefact, it is useful because such a breakdown shows how master and personal narratives affect one another and can be confusing to the individual's life narrative.

In the beginning there was the word, (the master narrative) and we saw that it was good (or believed it) and acted very much within the framework set by the gods. Later, we began to have experience and developed curiosity toward the 'tree of knowledge'. As that progressed we built our individual narratives, weighing these against that of God and society, and trouble started. That God threw us out of the garden may be a good metaphor for the separation process of children from their parents, and for the developing of awareness about the hypocrisy of society's narratives. Questions, conflicts, agreements arose, as master and personal narratives began to show each

other as less than consistent or perfect (Horney 1999; Neisser & Fivush 1994; Yalom 2002).

In keeping with my autoethnographic narrative methodology (Anderson 2006; Bochner 2001; Bullough & Pinnegar 2001), I offer an admittedly subjective view of how the many and various master narratives may build upon and yet conflict with one another. I have not managed to find much academic material to directly reinforce my scheme as presented below. I offer this hesitantly, and knowing that if it has any merit, then further research work is needed. I felt the need to break down what seemed like an all too solid block called master narratives into smaller segments, in order to explain the complexity and conflicts between master narratives themselves, and those between master and personal narratives (Bochner & Ellis 1996; Bruner 1986; Cox & Stromquist 1998). In my thinking I have found that there appeared to be a kind of vertical structure, a progression flowing from global master narratives down to personal narratives.

Global master narratives.

Meta, Master, Grand or Universal narratives by any name are the global socio-cultural mores and norms. This incorporates and publishes ideas such as the ten commandments, accepted history, being nice to guests, not cheating/lying, global trading laws, cultural admonitions and recommendations, ethics and much more. These are generally and globally accepted as *the* European/Western narratives that drive a similar enough worldwide view about how humans 'should' live (Bamberg & Andrews 2004; Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1992; Lyotard 1995). For the Hungarian Jews in the 1940's anti-Semitism was part of their master narrative, but the Holocaust was not (Popkin 2003).

East – West – North – South

There are huge differences between the master narratives of societies and cultures by geographic areas, even while some of the global ones are, more or less, accepted by all. However, several of these global narratives may conflict. For example, Western ideals often conflict with Eastern ones, even while co-operating, at least regarding

commercial trading laws. "Our Western culture with its 'individualistic orientation' gives rise to a sharply demarcated sense of self" (Lutz 1995 p68), as opposed to say the Muslims of Java whose focus is on the soul as different to the individualistic orientation (Cox & Stromquist 1998; Lutz 1995).

Religious narratives: Christian – Moslem– Jewish – Buddhist

I see the power of underlying religious narratives as a most powerful block. They have had a huge historical input on many master and personal narratives. The narratives may vary between religions, but most share some of the global ideas about say, monotheism, morality and ethical ways. There are conflicts even within the same religions. Old master narratives are thrown out, for example rules about meat eating on Friday for Catholics, ordination of women or gay people for Anglicans, female Rabbis, birth control and so on (Bamberg & Andrews 2004; Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1992) have changed and are now allowed.

Country or regional narratives

These incorporate many of the above, but not all. There are great variations between, say, Egypt and England or America North and South, and even between countries next to each other, language being one variant (Pinker 1994). There are various historical, traditional, cultural and nationalistic master narratives that each country tends to use to instruct their inhabitants. "The American identity makes powerful claims on the personal identity of all its members" (Feldman 2006 p28), differently to, say, the Japanese ethos.

Local: City, town, village, neighborhood

All the above may be included, but there are additions. Melbourne includes not only the Global, Western, Christian, Capitalist and Australian modes, but some extra ones – some rather banal commonplace ones like football, or more important ones, like the narrative of multiculturalism. Cox and Stromquist (1998), Feldman (2006) and Kerkyasharian (1998) all speak of the constant debate about what shared values should underpin Australian multiculturalism.

Gender

As I see it, master and narratives must also break down into the male - female variation. In an interview with Toni Morrison she speaks about the protagonist of her book *The Bluest Eye* (Morrison 1970):

"Morrison: She has surrendered completely to the so-called Master Narrative, the whole notion of what is ugliness, what is worthlessness. She got it from her family; she got it from school; she got it from the movies; she got it from everywhere.

Moyers: The Master Narrative . . . what is . . . that's life.

Morrison: No. It's white male life. The Master Narrative is whatever ideological script is being imposed by the people in authority on everybody else: The Master Fiction."

(Moyers 1989)

Although both genders have a great deal in common, there is the obvious fact that gender distinctions mean that a male can never have some of the female experience/narrative and vice versa. And most master narratives have been authored by male dominated societies. The 'hero's journey' (Campbell 1993) for example, salient as it is, should have been also the 'heroine's journey'.

Scientific – technological narratives/paradigms

I am unsure where to place this in the hierarchy. Science and technology certainly drive many master and personal narratives. There may be conflicts that take place between any and all of the above narratives, due to the input of science and technology. Paradigm-breaking scientific narratives can, and usually do, change many and various master and personal narratives. For example the birth control pill facilitated change and stress for global, local, religious and certainly for personal narratives, bringing a great deal of change. The pill helped further the cause of women's liberation, giving more power to feminist narratives, gay liberation, etc. It changed sexual behavior, social, moral and cultural rules (Djerassi 1992, 2001; Kotz 2010). Other examples can be seen in education, psychology, electronic communications, the arts and literature.

I have stated before that personal and master narratives intermingle and affect one another constantly, dynamically creating newer versions, if not always better ones. Thus, narratives at all levels change from time to time (Kuhn 1970). A further breakdown of the master narratives is no doubt possible and perhaps desirable, but the above will suffice for my purposes.

Herewith a few samples of the Hungarian narratives of my youth, taken on board as either the master or my personal narratives. The demand was that these narratives be accepted as the way to live, but they were confusing, often fearful, or else nonsensical.

- Keep the law of the land, but in secret, behind closed doors, never admit that you are Jewish or that you are not a communist.
- We were always short of money, but we were definitely not the 'proletariat'. Heavens no, just hungry! A personal narrative I knew well.
- Marriage is between two people and for keeps, but I knew mum had a boyfriend…and lots more. How to react to all this?
- The Hungarian police represented and enforced the law, but we needed to bribe them and/or stay away from them. A well know master narrative that became a personal warning.
- The nice man below us used to be a Nazi, he is now a communist.
- Grandmothers are like mine, very nice - but one of them would not feed us when starving.
- I voraciously read books, often way beyond my comprehension, where the heroes were upright, noble, kind people – except when it came to Jews. Lots of confusion and worry about this last one: I mean, if even my heroes hate Jews…

2. Narrative, meaning and identity

"Narrative is international, trans-historical, trans-cultural: it is simply there, like life itself."

(Barthes 2000 p251)

Writers and theorists of narrative enquiry such as Bruner (2004, 2006), Eakin (1999, 2004), Herman (2003), McAdams (2008) and Polkinghorne (1988) appear to agree that the self, personal identity and meaning are constructed from and by our narratives. It is hard to imagine any human life without inherent narratives. David Herman says that an essential part of our mental lives is a narratively organised system of signs which are "socially constituted and propagated, being embedded in social groups and constructed in social encounters" and represented by way of narratives, and that human intelligence comes from narrative ways of knowledge and interaction (Herman 2009 pp7-12). This speaks of the nature of human existence and the structures of mind and refers to master narratives (Cox & Stromquist 1998; McAdams 2008). My artefact signals that Tim's life was strongly influenced by both social and maternal narratives.

Cameron Lee (1996) argues for the master narrative of religious belief, saying that this should not be thrown out with the postmodern idea of getting rid of all master narratives. Some of what he argues is salient to establishing the value of narratives as the builders and fabric of personal and social identity, meaning and understanding, which translates to our ways of acting in the world. Lee quotes narrative therapists Jill Freedman and Gene Coombs (1996) whose stance defines that reality is socially constructed through language use, and is maintained and organised via narratives. Lee also states that understanding of our selves and others is set in narrative modes. To this end, Lee is cautious about the loss of some, in this case, religious narratives. (Lee 1996).

Bruner wrote about meaning-centered psychology, pointing out that meaning can only be thought of as a narrative of sorts. Humans must organise their individual and social world through the use of narrative and language structures. This is done by participation in the symbolic systems of a given culture. The narratives have an intrinsically teleological structure. We speak of stories from the past, and propose possible futures, for our personal selves and the society around us (Bruner 1990 pp42-45).The structure of the artefact shows how old stories might propose and facilitate a new ending. When it came to my work, this became an issue in itself. What to write,

how far to break the master narratives, the canon, and what to reveal was a major issue for me: Tim ponders what stories he should tell (artefact p86), and what can or ought to be told. As mentioned before, this also impacted on plot development, because "where an un-interpreted life is merely a biological phenomenon, the structure of human action and suffering is already plot-like" (McCarthy 2007 p1588).

It is also here that the writing of human lives tangles with the teleological narratives. Individuals are tangled up in stories before they even realise it (Ricoeur 1991) and narrating them may, or may not, come later. Significant events are not always immediately seen by characters. This is clear in many well-written novels such as *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (Kundera 1984), *The World According to Garp* (Irving 1988) and *The Reader* (Schlink 1995). The main characters are shown to have a past and a projected, or at least reader-imagined, future.

Hayden White (2003) said that faith is rooted not in the present, but projected into the future. This reflects my feelings in the artefact. Additionally, and after all, my identity and meaning is not, and cannot be rooted in a single accepted or unacceptable story. It has to have "meaning that is wider than that" (Lee 2004 p229); our stories are not ones of ultimate, objective, final truth. Rather they represent the "will of some group expressed through language" (Lee 2004 p237). This, in fiction-writing at least, provides the basic elements of conflict needed to make a story. Lee's point is that master narratives are inescapable, and that we cede authority to them and that participation in society needs that to happen. However, in fiction writing we have the ability and separation that enables the writer to say whatever they wish. And yet most good fiction is still within the bounds of the norm of socially accepted narratives. For even in fantasy or in science fiction we see - if in a changed form - that master narratives are necessary, even for a society of green people with big ears, if it is to be a coherent story.

Society would likely be totally chaotic if we had no social contracts; the master narratives that we can refer to. In the artefact Tim speaks about his awareness of this, and the opposite; the often utter hypocrisy of the prevailing master narratives.

Kenneth J Gergen (1999) cautions that if one were to throw away all the master narratives and all social norms, this would lead to many problems and I add, to story-writing problems.

We need the clash of narratives in order to create stories. Bruner (1991) said that to be worthwhile, stories must breach the canonical (I think I can say master) script of society or at least challenge it. In my artefact I endeavored to challenge the reader to think on various prejudices about Jews, or anyone else. *The Uncanny Jew: Brief history of an image*, by Susan E Shapiro (1997), addresses how the mysterious image of Jews is still embedded in popular culture and notes that "images, metaphors and tropes have consequences". It is this that shaped the "logic" of the "Jewish Question" (Shapiro 1997 p158) - a question that ought not exist, but one that has spawned many narratives.

In my artefact we see that Tim grew up with the help of his love of reading and culture, even though they often seemed contradictory or painful. He constructed his own stories, wishes and obsessions via the books he read. The construction of life-stories is strongly conditioned not only by cultural narrative models, but also by collective memory (Steinmetz 1992). In the production of my artefact and exegesis, I have explored how it is that ideological structures are built and can be confusing. The capitalist, communist or Nazi fascist economic structures, for instance, knowingly manipulated their population (Herf 2006; Langer 1995). Such narratives were transmitted by literature, movies, art, speeches, propaganda and taught history that was twisted to suit. I show in the artefact that personal narratives then tend to fill in the rest, often tacitly, without much personal evaluation. Alternately, the personal sometimes contradicts the master story, or even moves against it. This is shown in some of the situations Tim, Josef, the mother and others live within the artefact; like the "we are not proletariat" and "the Jews will be persecuted" ideas that Tim considers. For Josef, there is the struggle against communist ideology. The mother lives in a range of narratives, vacillating from always looking way beyond her class or situation, to the fear and losses she still expects.

There are also banal examples: I recall the first time I got on a motorcycle. It was not possible not to somewhat copy and feel like Easy Rider, or Marlon Brando. That banal enough narrative of how one is, or looks like, was embedded into me. As a migrant, I thought I was stuck in the working class mode: bottle-washer, chair-maker, rubber-cutter and grape-picker. The model stuck with me and needed a conscious effort (and much luck) to break it. Tim (me) made his world as the world made him. World making is always, and can only be a re-making, given the world is "already on hand" (Herman 2009 pp105-109). *The Inheritance* tries to re-build Tim's 'world making' by the fictionalisation of his story.

3. Personal and emotional narratives

Here I explore the following propositions by Elinor Ochs and Lisa Capps because they relate to my artefact and to the psyche of the two protagonists. As a writer I found that particularly in this narrative of *The Inheritance* self and author/narrator were just about inseparable.

"Narrative is simultaneously born out of experience and gives shape to experience. Narrative activity provides tellers with an opportunity to impose order on otherwise disconnected events, and to create continuity between past, present, and imagined worlds." (Ochs & Capps 1996 p19)

My artefact, as any story might, "interfaces self and society, constituting a crucial resource for socializing emotions, attitudes, and identities, developing interpersonal relationships, and constituting membership in a community. Through various genres and modes; through discourse, grammar, lexicon, and prosody; and through the dynamics of collaborative authorship, narratives bring multiple, partial selves to life." (Ochs & Capps 1996 p19) Though sometimes it seems so, a person may not be just a narrative text, but cultural formations seem always to be a text of sorts (Bruner 2004; Ochs & Capps 1996). That is how they usually appear in works of fiction or embedded in the law, or in any of the things we call culture.

Now, I intend to further differentiate the personal from the master narratives. This is necessary in relationship to my artefact because that show how personal and master narratives, while interactive, were also often contradictory. "Personal narrative simultaneously is born out of experience and gives shape to experience. In this sense, narrative and self are inseparable." (Ochs & Capps 1996 pp20-21) Narrative and self are inseparable as many commentators have agreed but, "personal narratives reveal multiple and conflicting self-expressions" (McAdams 2008 p243). That struggle is likely to be inevitable for anyone, as I tried to show throughout the artefact.

A part of this struggle refers to memory; to what Milan Kundera calls a paradoxical relationship between remembering and forgetting. While warning us that "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting", Kundera (1988 p130) despairs that memory never captures authentic experience. "We immediately transform the present moment into its abstraction. We need only recount an episode we experienced a few hours ago: the dialogue contracts to a brief summary, the setting to a few general features…. Remembering is not the negative of forgetting. Remembering is a form of forgetting." (Kundera 1988 p132) I believe Kundera means that we forget the facts as they were. But did we ever really know, can we be sure of what the 'facts' were? Does the dialogue always contract to a brief summary?

Even though survivors of traumatic events sometimes wish to 'sanitise' their stories, trauma is often not contractible (Wajnryb 2001). Conflict and trauma often facilitate the start of story-making, such as in my artefact (Chapter 1) when Tim discovers his hidden fairy tale at Esalen. Kundera notes that one important challenge we all face is to recognise that our life stories are the pasts we tell and re-tell to ourselves, and as writers, to a larger audience (Kundera 1988). In my artefact, the narration of the self is shown as complex and sometimes contrary. Decisions made about what I wanted to capture as authentic experiences, or as wished-for outcomes, were always challenging.

Individuals build personal narratives and attribute such to others in order to make sense and explain –to understand and to be an active member of society (Bruner 1990; 1985; Eakin 1999; Herman 2003, 2009; Polkinghorne 1988). George Lakoff and Mark

Johnson are quoted by Eakin: "all experience is cultural through and through… experience, meaning and identity all take from… cultural presuppositions" (Eakin 1999 p35). And this is where the power of cultural master narratives comes from.

Kessel, Cole and Johnson, in a paper titled 'The self as a center of gravity', say that "we are self-enhanced by an illusion of greater unity" (1992 p7). This important idea I understand as one coming from both the personal and master narratives, that have built the personality and even further, for it suggests a lack of self as a unity. In my writing of the artefact this is relevant because Tim makes much of his feeling of not being united with himself or with his world even while he accepts and lives well enough within the 'cultural presuppositions'. That I write from my presuppositions and as a unity of sorts, illusion or not, may be because "we are all virtuoso novelists", and "we try to make our material cohere into a single good story" (Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1992 pp7-8).

I turn to Julie Kristeva: "writing novels is a sort of process I like to call transubstantiation. There is, as I see it, a very strong linkage between words and flesh in writing fiction. It's not merely a mental activity. The whole personality is in it. You have psychology, you have belief, you have love affairs, you have sexuality, you also have a connection to language. When I'm writing novels, I am making a voyage around, or into, myself. I do it also, of course, in my essays… In the novel, I take all the risks of the traveler, or the explorer. And I get the pleasures as well." (Kristeva 1987 p381)

An 'explorer' of the personality is what every serious writer has to be. Eakin (2004) posits we can only look at our storied identity by looking at our narrative self. That is an exploration in itself, but then the transmutation of this into writing also changes the personal exploration. My artefact is the example; the events that take place through the story lead Tim to a re-writing of his story/life.

I had to look closely at the personal stories that Tim, as an author, inherited and interpreted. Umberto Eco cautions one to look closely at what narratives we have swallowed and are living by. He states that though words define they may also lie,

leading always through a distortion to both tragedy and comedy. "The world as we represent it to ourselves is an effect of interpretation." (Eco 1999 p48) The stories that energise life and emotional trauma do so via the incoherence of the lies that were defined as truth, but were hypocrisy and lies just the same, and part of the story plot. I paraphrase Polkinghorne: we explain our lived experience in terms of plots, which are made up of the events and stories that happen to us (Polkinghorne 1988). The point is that we are trained to think in the narrative mode; indeed, how else could we be trained? In my artefact, Tim, as a migrant, carried the messy Hungarian narrative of his day; the new Australian one came fast and was accepted first in a tacit way, later to be examined for its veracity.

All the preceding in this section led me to another important and challenging idea; that of the 'us' or 'ourselves', when we think of who or how we are and operate in the world. The artefact shows how this further complication, that of several narrative selves being a possibility, fitted my thinking, for Tim and Josef live different lives even within themselves. Michael Gazzaniga offered that the "mind is not beautifully unified, but a problematic yoked-together bundle of partly autonomous systems" (in Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1992 pp6-8).We try, and need to make our stories cohere into a single plot, just as when writing a novel. However, if I accept that I am not an autonomous 'one' of self or text, not a stable fact or truth, then who writes my story, biographical or fictional? I will return to this question soon in more detail, but first it is necessary to further consider the emotional aspects of narratives.

The emotional make-up of Tim, Lajos and Josef in the artefact shows that they carry a great deal of sorrow. We are privy to Josef using sex and affairs to fill his psyche with a sort of replacement for what is not there. Tim makes much of the fact that his emotional traumas refer to the lack of a father and roots, to having no relatives who can confirm his life story. Both men are damaged and know it. I found myself cautious about how much emotion I placed into the mouths of the characters. I presume that all stories are, one way or another, emotional, full of a self that feels and clashes with either external or internal narratives and events. At this point, I had to look at the rather abstract idea of the 'self' and feelings. Initially I tried to imagine how my

characters might feel in certain situations, and then realised that first I had to look at mine, the author's feelings, actions and reactions.

Looking at the emotional component of writing brought an interesting point from the work of Sara Worth (2008) who asked, "How is it that we have emotional responses to what we know to be fiction?" I was somewhat surprised and intrigued at the question being called a "paradox of fiction" (Worth 2008). Then I recalled my emotional response to my auto-bio-fiction's factual parts, and even more so to parts of my fiction! I have cried whilst writing some of my old stories, and also at some of the fictionalised parts. "Iconic Mental States" (IMS) is an idea formulated by Richard Wollheim (Worth 2008). IMS is what people have (or should have) in order to imagine themselves into fictional situations. To have a wider IMS, it is suggested that one has to partake in good literature, quality art and culture (Worth 2008). My experience has shown me that I do not have more than fleeting reactions to, say, outer space monsters, but I do have strong ones at the plight and stories of Rwandan refugees. Perhaps my IMS been widened by being a Jewish refugee, as well as by reading good literature when I was young.

I found my own emotional responses to my fiction because - in my imagination - things may well have turned out differently - as they do in my 'bio fictive' artefact. Polkinghorne points out that, "Imagination can help to facilitate causal judgments about how things might have turned out differently" (Polkinghorne 1988). As life came at me, by way of the master narratives, I began to hide many things, quickly becoming aware of the fact that bucking the master narrative and "not participating in the 'proper' brought with it usually absolutely no punishment…" (Lem 1983 p7) unless you were found out, and that could be deadly. Thus I railed, as best I could, against all the hypocrisy and master narratives that I found faulty or nonsensical, keeping it all inside me. It was new to me that in Australia one could let go of some fears about being Jewish, or about politics, policeman, starched morals, and that one could voice an opinion.

I consider that both personal and master narratives form and then act via certain kinds of plots, though I am not suggesting a deterministic plot. Characters are revealed by the narratives they use, and the "coherent (if there is one) plot that completes them" (Chatman 1980 pp110-120). We see the 'plot' only when examining and understanding our lives (Kundera 2000 p5). Thus all our narratives might form the life plot(s) we hold or write about, but do not rule out alternative plots (Bruner 1996).

In this section I have tried to show that we are inevitably our narratives. What we have 'written' into our individual lives is like what we eat; it walks and talks and acts – as the 'me' and my life. As for the writer, the awareness of narrative conflicts is very important, for these conflicts are the great source that we write from (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001). This relates to my artefact, for the great conflicts involved in both old and new stories therein are clearly dynamic to the creative effort.

 In the next chapter I look further at 'writerly voices' all of which, I propose, may come from the many narratives of the writing self or, as earlier alluded to, the 'selves'.

4. The incommensurability and conflict of narratives

This is another major point the exegesis explores precisely because it is likely that such conflicts often cannot be resolved, and yet the conflicts are at least part of the fuel of my creative writing. Bruner offered that culture captures the mind via narrative and that the "Incommensurability of individuality on one hand and the cultural identity on the other…" has not been resolved (Bruner 2006 p13). Thomas Kuhn similarly claimed that new or different paradigms are often "incommensurable". Kuhn's aim was to sweep away the idea that there could ever be a single scientific truth, but the idea applies equally to master narratives (Dupre 2007 pp138-139). I want to differentiate three versions of this incommensurability:

A. Between master narratives themselves.

B. Between society's master and the individual's personal narratives.

C. The clash of personal narratives within the individual.

Tim (me) was squarely in an 'incommensurable' situation as a child: the world of unexplained master and personal narratives clashed all around him/me. In the artefact, the mother's friends praise Tim for looking after his mother, for his intelligence, for reading books, and even for cake eating (artefact p133).Pleased at the praise, there was a nagging feeling about where the 'me' was in all this. I was indeed fastened to a publicly allowed image that was set by my society. I acted out what I had, offering intuitively what was expected. I liked pleasing the adults, but where was the private me? Did anyone understand? The answer was no, they knew only my acted public image; the ones that grew to make both my master and personal narratives. Each of us from childhood are "Fastened to some publicly allowed piece of himself", which gains momentum, the "consensus omnium", until we simply "cultivate the fragments, polishing, perfecting so that our social selves may develop in an acceptable manner; each of us being a part, pretends to be whole – like a stump that claims it is a limb" (Lem 1983 pp7-19). This is just how I recall myself in younger years.

My artefact demonstrates the narrative of how we are our remembered selves as Neisser (1994) proposed. Each of us remembers and knows mostly only ourselves, and we do so via constructed narratives. Others we know only barely, unless a real effort is made to understand the other (Barclay 1994). Neisser (and many others) states that the self is not an entity, but an abstraction (Barclay 1994; Bruner 1986; Herman 2009; MacIntyre 1984; Neisser 2006). Dennett and Ricoeur argue that an account of the self as substantial is problematic because the concept of the self does not have an ontological referent- it is not a thing, substance, organisation, or further fact (McCarthy 2007). However, memories and a sense of self and of others, play a large part in life, and even more so for me now, in the writing process.

Polkinghorne (1988) said that our narratives display and make sense of the significance of events. We live in our stories, real or imagined, and it is by sharing our stories that we not only relate, but also realise that we humans have a shared biography. Shared biographies carry power that is hard to resist when it is, as in my artefact, between a mother and a son. These become not only shared, but are taken on as the gospel by the young. While a mother is 'sharing' memories, the child soaks them up, as if they

were also his (Neisser 1994).One example in the artefact is the mother's words about a family the son does not, cannot remember (artefact p128). In later adult life, after much research into self and others, I began to appreciate that shared stories were indeed relation-building. And the lack of them is a problem. In the artefact, the stories about both the Argentinean detective and his relationship with the father (Lajos) shows this, as does the story of Tim's ex-employee, now a detective who finds, and is protective of Tim (artefact p185). In writing the artefact, this kind of thinking fuelled my craving to relate to relations long dead or never met, and even to relate to the self I was as a child.

Writing as an art form does expect to explore, challenge and perhaps even change the inherent conflicts of Brunerian "incommensurability". In my artefact, there are many contradictions between both the prevailing master narratives (artefact p214) and between the smaller personal ones, constructed from the larger ones. Other examples include the stories I tell about grandmothers (artefact p121), or about Josef when he plots to act illegally (artefact p251).

5. The conflict of master and personal narratives

All the preceding has led me to consider the conflict of master and personal narratives, a major issue in this exegesis that winds its way through the artefact. "The grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses." (Lyotard 2006 p83) And it often uses the law, force or moral power to do so. Thus I argue that master narratives are indeed an "artillery of moral truth and the personal narrative defixes that truth" or may do so (Dailey & Corey 1998 p250) and that our personal narratives are a "…way of disturbing, even *rewriting* the master narratives", thus, personal narratives swing back and forth between the private and the master, "between what is said and what is thought... between the individual and society" (Dailey & Corey 1998 p250). It is relevant to note that Sheron Dailey and Frederick Corey write from a gay male point of view. The examples they cite refer to the clash of homosexual and heterosexual master narratives, a strong example of conflict. Medical science, for example, has added words, and further narrative concepts, referring to

homosexuality as disease; "…perversion, deviance, unnatural acts" (Dailey & Corey 1998 p251). Religion added the concept of sin. These views illustrate and bring into sharper focus the Brunerian 'incommensurability', for whatever is incommensurable will create opposing views and actions between master, personal, private and public narratives.

An example I offer from *The Inheritance* is the story of how 'Father Stalin' saved us (artefact pp214-216) and then how, overnight, he became not our 'Father Stalin' but a mass murderer. This was a master narrative swallowed whole by me at the time as part of my security system. Russians were godly, Germans were deadly; full stop. Yet, I already knew that Communism was a bloody affair, and all was not well in Hungary, and that we were not 'free' – whatever that meant at the time. I ingested that Father Stalin and the heroic Russians saved particularly us, Jews. The story tells how shaken Tim was when Stalin was deposed, which was - in any case - after he died. My personal and master narratives, and therefore my security system, were destroyed in a few minutes.

Another example of an inherited master narrative that became a personal one can be seen in the words of the mother;
"Mum used to watch me turn around to look at a sexy looking female when I was perhaps 14. She'd say 'Why are you looking at that 'cheap' woman?'" (artefact p92)
A conflict between 'our' master narrative and my personal one; what I thought of as sexy was merely 'cheap'.

6. Therapy and narratives

This brief section is included because it is salient to me as an author. My study of narratives shows a strong relationship between narrative and psychological therapies. 'Narrative Therapy' is a specific style of therapy, but here I include all 'talking cures' that seek to help people via the telling-hearing, and the re-setting of their stories. 'Narrative Therapy' (Morgan 2000) explicitly states that "the problem is the problem, not the owner of the problem". Such separation of problem and its owner is important

because it refers to the *storied component of a person*; the narratives they live by (Morgan 2000). Therapy points to the possible re-examination and re-writing of the stories we live by (McAdams 1993) and that "the remembered self is a sort of literary achievement" (Gergen 1994 p80). Most therapies seek to read the stories people live by, and work to enable clarification, deletion, or re-writing of the stories, sometimes by actual writing. Narrative therapists speak of the effects of 'dominant' stories, the broad social and the personal ones (Morgan 2000). These are the master and personal narratives that are constructed one from the other in an endless loop.

As people '*separate* from their stories' they develop a stronger sense of personal agency and an enhanced capacity to direct their own lives. Individuals need to look critically and analytically at, and perhaps separate out from, the master/social narratives they have accepted as the only way to live (White & Epson 1990 p16). The problem is that the master narratives will not fit all minds, personalities, or places, and therefore cannot be the only things that direct a life (Lee 2004). In my artefact, Tim had to let go of many of his old narratives, while keeping others in some locally modified form. Tim kept to the social contract he found in Australia, he fitted in and became a successful businessman. Tim hung on to his love of culture, but challenged the idea of being married, or being a businessman, and reconsidered for example the Jewish, capitalist and communist narratives. It is when the usefulness of identification with the past ends that a newer version of identity may be built (Neimeyer & Metzler 1994).

Notably, some of my research has become 'self-study' (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001 p14). My writing process included self-exploration for me as a person and as a writer. My work became practice led 'therapeutic' research. And I realised that personal problems, and therapy must always be understood within the framework of society, "public issues and history" (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001 p13).

Section 7. Writers 'voices' and selves are narratives?

In this section I consider writerly voices, looking further into 'who' might be the scriptor of what is written. What/who are the particular 'voices' that speak out of the author wanting, needing to tell a story? My interest in writerly voices comes from my explorations of how narratives operate; the inner dialogues that conflict with themselves and with others in society and culture. Eakin suggested we "think of self less as an entity and more as a kind of awareness process" (Eakin 1999 p10). It is in this sense that I use the plural of voice to indicate the many and various voices of a writer. Neuroscience states that the "term conflicted could not be sensibly applied to an entity that has a single program" (Eagleman 2011 p108). I believe a 'program' may be likened to voices or sub-personalities.

Thus, perhaps in writing, "My consciousness behaves as though it were the consciousness of another" (Palmer 1999 p30). Or a program? Alan Palmer's reference is to the construction of fictional minds, and the idea fits well with what I am groping to propose. I questioned how one could describe another's thoughts or actions without finding some referent to it in one's own? Does a writer look for an internal "voice that is part of the continuing dialogue that we have with other individuals in the culture within which we live" (Palmer 1999 pp30-31)? I believe Palmer is talking about the internal dialogue of the writer, and his/her set of personal and master narratives, and how the writer is able to tap into these. In my artefact, as it happens, both protagonists write a story about their lives, and make the decisions in respect to their writerly voices.

The self is an artificial theoretical construct according to Valerie Gray Hardcastle's review of Dennett's *The Self as a Centre of Gravity*. Moreover, it is offered that there is not a single self, but rather "multiple self-lets about which we weave intriguing stories" (Hardcastle 1992 pp7-8). I might add that as writers we weave stories not only about our known, but also about other imagined selves. Schwartz refers to the work of Michael Gazzaniga (1985), a brain research scientist who speaks of "a group of modular selves" as well as to Robert Ornstein (1986), who uses the concept of a

"conglomeration of different kinds of small minds... temporarily employed - wheeled into consciousness - and then returned to their place after use" (Schwartz 1987 p22). Perhaps even more telling is Douglas Hofstadter, who relates the brain to that of a computer resembling a "community" and he calls on "sub-selves or inner voices...competing facets..." to explain that one is not a simple unified one-voiced self (Schwartz 1987 p22). Hence, this is how inner conflict rises; a 'multi-mind' operates (Ornstein 1986). I believe this is so particularly when writing creatively. I now think that to say that writing is a talent, whatever this might be – plus a vivid imagination, is not enough. Possibly, it is the multiple selves that activate during and for the writing process. Theorists previously mentioned, and several others such as Assagioli (1965), Gazzaniga (1985), Hofstadter (1986), Minuchin (1974), Ochs and Capps (1996) and Stone and Winkelman (1985) use terms such as 'personality parts' or 'sub-selves', 'partial self' or 'multiplicity of partial selves'. It is in this sense that I use 'voice' in this exegesis section. Archetypes in the Jungian sense (Jung 1986) should be mentioned here, as supporting the theory that voices are manifestations of subliminal forms from perhaps the rarer airs of consciousness. And we cannot "confidently posit realities independent of our consciousness" (Morrow 1994 p77).

Taking intertextuality into account with the idea of multiple selves, a writer may well be a *'family of selves'* where one or several of selves activate the creative act. "If the world is a text..." and so are individuals - even if not only a text -"it demands careful reading" (Wyile & Pare 2001 p16). "Narratives have the potential to generate a *multiplicity* of partial selves…" and conversely, the reader approaches a narrative from and via his or her partial selves (Ochs & Capps 1996 p22). This sounds as if my *many selves assemble* to write a narrative and then the reader's many selves will read it; a sort of 'group' to 'group' activity. This is partly what we commonly understand as the 'baggage' each person brings to every piece of communication.

Authorship may include a tapping of racial memory, experience, pure imagination and/or wishes and regrets of a psychological, personal nature, or all of these. It seems possible then that stories are made by multiple voices. Neuroscientist David Eagleman states that "The brain is a team of rivals" (2011 p101). Eagleman speaks of sub-agents

or sub-populations in the brain, who conflict. The writer's concern is how to tap into and express them. Expressing them is an acquired skill, but ability seems to be innate. It is not only the product of education or indulgence in literature, because older, traditional cultures are capable of the most extravagant imaginings, the creation of characters and outlandish beings; the production of many narratives. So is the uneducated child. Texts, particularly modern fiction, do not necessarily hide the fact that they are a "created illusion" (Adorno 1984 p39). Fiction or autobiography taps into all the writer is, or has collected, as narratives, one way or another via the life experience. This is a significant element in my artefact, as there is the autobiofiction as announced by the author and in the end the protagonists write a book; a narrative within a book. Not only is the 'illusion' not hidden, but it is referred to, asking the reader to be curious about it.

I had difficulties differentiating voices in my artefact. For example, mine as author from the narrator, mine (Tim's), from Josef's - although I also wanted him to be uncannily like me. Some other characters' voices were easier; others, like the Father's, harder to find. Some authors find it easy to change their voice to accord with the nature of the story. Laurence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet recounts the same events in four novels, each novel retelling events the way each of the four leading protagonists experienced them (Durrell 1962). As Irving notes, the right use of language is essential. For example I refer to the story in my artefact called *The Famous and Very Expensive family Heirloom (artefact p128)*. An ordinary story might go like this: "mum told me I was inheriting an important work of art that turned out to be of no value". What I wrote about it tries to be far more than plain facts, or just the actual event.

What makes the difference between storytelling and literature? I have proposed the notion that it is an amalgam of heightened intelligence, combined with keen and relentless observation of everything, especially of personalities, including one's own. In addition, what is needed is an exploration of one's inner 'voices' or 'sub-selves' (Rowan 1993; Stone & Winkelman 1984). Perhaps talented writers search, digging into these selves, into the multiplicity of voices and narratives they are able to contact. To illustrate how these mix, there are small, ordinary and big events I refer to in the

artefact. When Tim leaves the cemetery (artefact p119) a taxi driver tells him that there is no anti-Semitism now in Hungary. That brief encounter is a voice from Tim's life; the constancy of the anti-Jew narrative lives on in him.

The writer's voice is the "mirror of the world" (Farren 2004/2005 p41-47). Every writer has Grass's "rear view mirror" (Grass 2007) in which he sees not just self or selves past, but others as well; characters, colors and smells. That perceptions in my head are memories, rear-view mirror based seems obvious. This takes us deeper into the role of memory and what it serves. Self-construction and/or reconstruction is what a writer constantly engages in, both in fiction and autobiography (Neisser 2006; Worth 2008). This facilitates the idea that fact and fiction may intersect (Arnold 2009; Eakin 1999; Ricoeur 1991). Not only intersect, but sometimes it is hard to know which is which, even for the writer; memory or imagined, distorted memory (Barclay 1994; Neisser & Fivush 1994). This is where the sub-voices or 'sub-personalities' of different narratives might facilitate more understanding of creativity. Thus, there is the voice/sub-personality of the child Tim recalls, and talks about, and his mother's voices, as well as his voice now - and/or, of imagined characters: all of these may be composite sub-voices.

A. 'Sub-voices' and sub-personality

Anti Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia states on page 1: "The two of us wrote *Anti Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd." (Deleuze & Guattari 1983 p1) I wish one of 'me' thought of saying this!

That each of us is 'several' and a 'crowd' leads me to explore deeper, difficult issues about authorship that maybe no more than subjective assumptions needing more work. I have suggested that conceivably a multiplicity of 'voices' from within the self may do creative writing. This is relevant to the artefact, particularly if we ask: is good literature always fully conscious and fully an intended construction? I doubt it. The common myth that we are an integrated whole, a unity of sorts now seems incorrect, "quite the contrary, a person is an amalgamation of many sub-persons, all with *wills* of

their own" (Hofstadter & Dennett 1981 p342). If this be at all the case, than every creative act, indeed every act might be taken by one or several acting sub-selves/voices.

Earlier, I have supplied evidence that these sub-selves are actually narratives; not only stories, but also the narratives of personal identity and meaning. Our known or remembered selves are a gestalt, constructed and reconstructed by memories; narratives of pasts. The memories and narratives were acquired via socio-cultural input; in relationship to others (Barclay 1994). There is a "the multiplicity of the selves we remember" (Neisser 1994 p9). Neisser goes on to say that Bruner, Albright, Reed and Barclay, also have reservations about the singleness of self. These views suit my proposition. In a text, sub-selves and therefore their voices can be released to be heard. Fictions, factions or a mix of both may eventuate, as in my artefact. The Father's life story is 5% fact and 95% fiction about his later life. His personality is made up from within mine. I suggested that our accepted, or indeed unaccepted, known or unknown *narratives* may be the 'voices', the 'sub-selves that create the stories we write via a "complex of selves" (Reed 1994 p279). Albright (1994 p33) paraphrased Jung: "Novelist's characters were simply the author's psychological complexes elaborated into little sub-personalities of their own." (Jung 1968 pp80-81)

A brief exploration of how or why these sub-selves formed and what they do follows. I brought to the writing of the artefact and exegesis long and deep studies of psychotherapeutic techniques. One such was "Voice Dialogue" a method established by Stone and Winkelman (1985), ex-Jungian therapists and authors. They established a way of thinking about how the personality and consciousness operate and followed the ideas of Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli, the originator of what he called semi-autonomous s*ub-personalities* (Vargiu 1974). I follow the idea of voice and sub-personality particularly from these authors. The main idea is that our 'voices' or 'sub-personalities' each have a *life,* so to speak, of their own! Each wishes to be heard and to be 'driving the car of one's life'. Each voice wants to be acted out, lived by and through. We are aware of many of these sub-voices and oblivious to others, while some are suspected but shadowy in the back of one's mind. The quest is not to subdue

or eradicate any of the voices, but rather, to turn them to productive, positive employment using their energy to achieve, for example, the writing of a book. Thus not denial of competing voices, but acknowledgement and accommodation is required, in order to integrate the personality and to achieve goals. In *Our inner conflicts*, post-Freudian psychologist Karen Horney captured something similar, as have many others from Freud to Yalom; we have inner conflicts because we have competing conflicts of our narratives (Horney 1999). The conflicting narratives manifest as our feelings and thoughts, wants, needs and the features we hold as persons - as acted out in my artefact.

I re-emphasise that all of these narrative voices are worded, storied and plotted. This is acted out in the artefact. Some of our narratives clash, some do not; some serve one another in a sort of justification of what they are. This is what sub-selves are said to be doing (Assagioli 1975; Stone & Winkelman 1984). Sub-selves may be likened to the idea of a whole piece of music that sounds wonderful, but we know that it is composed of many different instrumental voices. The art of writing a beautiful fugue (or book) might mean the bringing together of such varied voices. Daniel Dennett states that each one of us have "inner parts with *their* own free will, although these parts are less free than 'we' are" (Hofstadter 1981 p342). I showed this by the very act of writing something I never wanted to write: a Holocaust based autobiofiction.

Another important issue is the presence of other minds in our shared reality. The artefact makes much of connections and relationships between people; alive or dead. This strong thread carries much of my artefact. 'As many selves as interpersonal relations' (or maybe even more) is the title of a paper by Katarzyna Stemplewska-Zakovicz, Justyna Walecka and Anna Gabinska (2006). They explore the dialogical nature of the internal audience; the relationships we have within, each of which may call up a different facet or self in response. Their article's title is taken from William James who contends that "a person has as many selves as important social relations". This, our three authors wish to change to "a person lives in many worlds (relationships) and each of them takes a specific identity" (Zakowicz et al 2006 pp72-74). This may surely apply to authoring a novel, given we are dealing with imaginary characters and

situations, and we are indeed in a 'relationship' with them as the author. My proposition here is that if the dialogical self be correct, than the "self may be understood as a multi voiced structure" (Zakowicz et al 2006 pp72-74).

B. How narratives may create sub-selves/voices

The voice of the 'Critic' as a sub-self is a strong example (Stone & Winkelman 1985). Our critical, interpretive and discriminating facility comes partly from early childhood input at home, school, the arts and literature. No child can refuse the input; most accept it as given. No child can possibly do everything well, so the earliest input is 'NO, don't do that, that is wrong, or bad or dangerous'. The voice of the 'Critic' beds in, setting the look and sound of at least part of the story/ life of its owner (Assagioli 1975; Rowan 1993; Sorensen 2009; Stone & Stone 1991; Stone & Winkelman 1985). The Critic is a strong, virile and not entirely negative voice. Its flip side is the faculty of discrimination, a positive side that may help to make better choices (Stone & Stone 1991). As oft stated before, our narratives and thus sub-selves can conflict. The voice of the Critic will at times clash with the voice of the 'Lover', or the 'Religious persona', or with the 'Risk taker' etc (Rowan 1993; Stone & Winkelman 1985). In the artefact, the conflict of opposing feelings is often shown; losing the inheritance versus what's been gained, or Josef's illegal plots.

Eakin speaks directly of "registers of self and self-experience" which build and turn into stories and have "more than one self to tell them" (Eakin 1999 p11). A continuing story develops that one learns to live with (Ferrari 1998). It may bring fun and games, or depression and emotional upheavals to my protagonist/self, and it stays through life. The artefact builds a rich and complex narrative in Tim's life, but the old stories remain, in some ways, both above and below the surface of his actions and existence. The artefact suggests that Tim has now lost, discarded and rejected some of his out-dated narratives. This might happen in any case via the maturing process, but in Tim's case also because he is in a new culture, and no longer needs some of the old, out dated, defensive selves. New sub-selves are being constantly constructed along lines previously discussed, for example; the businessman persona, the father role, the 46

year old student and so on. Tim's core however remains. The wish, the magical solution he craved, is still there when he is 35 years old (artefact p195) and later, but now ready for re-discovery and thereby for possible resolution. At this point I, as the author of Tim's life, had to ask and explore where and how Tim wanted to be, and how I should present that in the novel. The awareness of my sub-selves, the reintegration, and the building of Tim was a process by itself, and it was unexpectedly facilitated by my exegetical study; an example of research led practice, and of the relationship of artefact and exegesis work.

Saul Bellows said that when you read a good novel you enter into a state of intimacy with its writer; you hear a 'voice', a tone, under the words (Bellows 1990). I add that one might hear several voices. A claim is made by Mark Turner that we tend to run two (or more) stories mentally, blending them when they *should be kept apart*. This, Turner claims, is part of what makes us human (Herman 2003). I wonder about 'kept apart'. If my proposition of many selves - particularly as they facilitate - writing has any merit, then a harmonious 'group' story, acceptable to the various sub-selves is needed. I do agree with Turner that several stories may rise at the same time. That is my experience of writing several stories at the same time. "I try to take one day at a time, but sometimes several days attack me at once" said humorist Ashley Brilliant (1987). Such was the case when I was writing the dialogues Tim has with Josef; several 'days' or ideas attacked me at once. For me, these are pivotal scenes. Both men recall many stories and wonder what could be said. What strikes me is that the actual segment of "Josef at the door", though total fiction, was the catalyst that brought about the writing of the artefact. And I am keenly aware that a 'part' of me needed to air the story and what it may become.

The artefact was enabled, activated even, by my acting of several narrative voices, and I suspect this is the experience of many writers. The artefact was enriched by my 'acting' several narrative roles for example I had to virtually act out the father's role. Does all this mean that a writer needs to have multiple personalities? Not in the psychological sense of illness. As Assagioli (1975), Eagleman (2011), Stone and Winkelman (1985) and Vargiu (1974) offer, it is the blending of the sub-personalities -

once there is awareness of them - that makes the individual clear and solid. Multiple personality disorder is about fragmented selves where different selves are 'walled' off from each other (Turkle 1999, in an interview). Turkle suggests that psychological health is not the constructing of one, but the negotiating of our many selves. Just as Ochs and Capps posit, that narrative "space engages only facets of a narrator's or listener/reader's selfhood in that it evokes only certain memories, concerns, and expectations" and in this sense "narratives are apprehended by *partial* selves" (Ochs & Capps 1996 p22, p41). When writing, only some fragments of the personality may find themselves textualised into a story. Some partial selves come together to make, perhaps, the whole creative effort. "Narratives have the potential to generate a multiplicity of partial selves." Further, "A narrator may first present partial selves in the form of distinct protagonists, and then recognise them as facets of a single being" (Ochs & Capps 1996 pp22-23). Selves may multiply along such dimensions as past and present, subject and object, public (master) and/or private (personal) selves.

In a psychological sense, Ulric Neisser, Michael Lewis, Ernest Keen, Catherine Lutz, Michael Gazzaniga and Daniel Dennett, all contributors to *A Self Divided* (1995), appear to agree that there is no such thing as a unified self (Kessel, Cole & Johnson 1995). I argue that if this is the case, than there can be no such thing as a unified author, but rather, one who hears, activates or articulates selves who do the creating of plots and characters. Vaclav Havel said that one exists as the tension between all one's versions, and that tension, perhaps above all, is what we know as the "me" (Ochs & Capps 1996). Havel's "tensions" are what I termed the conflicted narratives of the sub-selves that I now think of as the creative force that writes. Kundera said that the novel is a form of prose where the author explores - using experimental selves - the themes of existence (Kundera 1988). It is the mission of modern novels to present previously unseen possibilities of existence, and to uncover what is hidden in each of us (Kundera 2005). Such was, once I realised it, and thanks to the exegetical work, my intention when writing artefact and exegesis. Thus the two speak to one another.

There are two more major themes that I feel compelled to discuss to complete this exegesis: that of humour and briefly, of 'present pasts'.

Section 8. Humour and irony

In the artefact I used humour and jokes, which hopefully act as a disruption and counterpoint to the drama and tragedy. Humour can be shock and disturbance, contrasting the bad with the funny, and intending to be a jolt to the reader (Attardo 2001). Humour is "a vehicle of the painful truth about man's humiliation, which otherwise will be unacceptable" (Amir 2002 p8). Some 'unintended' humour was already in the artefact, and I found an increasing push to inject more of it. I found that I was drawn to using mainly Jewish humour; a curiosity given what I have already stated about my atheism and Jewish-ness. In contrast, Lyotard maintains: "Having from the outset woven disappointment with the strand of its promise, the Jewish narrative seems invulnerable to despair" (Lyotard 2006 p148). It is not easy to even partly disagree with a thinker like Lyotard, but there is plenty, there were always plenty of despairing Jewish narratives (Stein 1984, 1985; Wiesel 1982).Amongst despair, one can find the humour of disobedience. Inappropriate, even offensive humour, may be funny to some and not to others (Attardo 2001). Humour's purpose is amusement, but not only that, it can also be antagonistic, a form of hitting back. "Humor is non-cooperative…" and it "must violate" (Attardo 2001 p72). I believe mine does just that in the artefact. Although Jewish humour used by Jewish people can even be a cooperative affair bridging the master narratives of wider society and the Jewish narrative.

Humour and irony were my (Tim's) main ways of dealing with what at the age of ten or twelve I began to recognise as the absurdity of my young life. Humour and irony can be used to exclude (people) from a group (Attardo 2001). This is very much the Jewish experience in many places right up to this day. However, none of the above is exclusive to Jews, many others, mainly minority groups, also use humour in similar ways and feel excluded from others.

Lydia Amir suggests that humour comes about as an answer to the realisation that human life is a basically humiliating condition (Amir 2001). I am in some, if not total, agreement with Amir. Humour is often spontaneous, like when we meet impotence,

hopelessness and frustration. I suppose one might say that all these might be part of the 'humiliation' Amir suggests as the source of humour. That, "Human Dignity is man's creation" is true and ironical in itself (Amir 2002 p1). Humans are not so dignified when on their own; most of our so called 'dignity' is a show, a deception to others. The tension between dignity and humiliation, or other negative emotions, can often be resolved or at least handled by the use of humour and irony.

Humour is not just entertainment, but sometimes it is the servant of painful truth - or even reality. "Self-consciousness makes people aware of their contradictions, and is the seed of frustrations." (Amir 2002 p7) Humour often reveals the human condition as it really is, rather than in glossy, pretentious terms. It shows the vulnerability that is felt, and the fragility experienced, by every human being, and the contrariness of having to react to situations as best as one can. "By providing us with the lovely illusion of human greatness, the tragic brings us consolation. The comic is crueler: it brutally reveals the meaninglessness of everything." (Kundera 1988 p125) I quote a joke from the artefact (p81) that refers to possible but averted humiliation.

It is the year 1939. A Jew walking on the streets of Berlin accidentally brushes past a Nazi officer.
"Schwine" yells the Nazi,
"Goldberg" replies the Jew clicking his heels together...

Funny, yes, but also telling of a dangerous situation. Such jokes are also a kind of metaphor for what happened. The German Nazi propaganda set up various anti-Jewish narratives, including one that said that it was the International Jewry started and expanded the war (Herf 2008). This is almost funny now. Indeed the Jewish conspiracy idea is as ridiculous as it seems in retrospect. Herf points out that it was propagandised that the Jews were allied to the Bolsheviks, and to the UK and USA, all at the same time! The Nazis said that they were merely taking preventative or defensive actions. How funny or ironical is that? Or take the publication of a forged book called *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The text was supposedly written by the Elders of Zion, but was in fact first published in Russia in 1903, translated into multiple languages, and

disseminated internationally in the early part of the twentieth century. Amazingly, Henry Ford funded printing of 500,000 and distributed them in the United States in the 1920s. Adolf Hitler and the Nazis used the text and it was studied, as if factual, in German classrooms after the Nazi Party came to power in 1933, despite having been exposed as fraudulent years before. Historian Norman Cohn (1967) said that the *Protocols* was one of Hitler's primary justification for initiating the Holocaust. This story is absurd and yet by now almost funny. Amir (2002) notes that one of the most widely accepted theories of humour is that it is incongruous. But not all incongruity is amusing; all the anti-Jewish nonsense propaganda is not comical, unless viewed from the different standpoint of today, and perhaps with a sense of the absurd. The alternative is feeling the tragedy and craziness that I also no longer wish to feel (Herf 2006).

My own narrative myth was that I was a boy-man who could see the funny in life's "shifting ambiguities and complexities in the human existence" (McAdams 1993 p52). For me, there was indeed a relationship between humour and humiliation (Amir 2002). The absurdity of life is a powerful teacher. In a way, humour as used in the artefact is my cry of "Non Serviam" (Lem 1983); a refusal to go under, to obey or to disappear (Payne 1960 p305).

Creating irony is a bit like "gathering mist; there is plenty to take hold of if only one could" (Hutcheon 1994 pp252-253). Hutcheon also pointed out that irony is in the eye of the beholder and not the same as humour (Hutcheon 1994). That readers need to have a familiarity to my situation in order to understand Jewish jokes was a concern to me. Most of my irony, and of seeing absurdities, came to me automatically, it seems, but the jokes, like the ones quoted, I had to find and fit into the story. I figured that my use of humour, the Jewish 'in joke' was a good vehicle. Some of these are universal enough for anyone to get the point, but some might not be (Friedman & Friedman 2003). The following is an example:

The class was asked to write an essay on elephants. The English lad wrote 'The elephant of the British Empire'. The French boy wrote 'Love life of elephants'. The

Russian boy's 'Stalin was our elephant', the German boy 'We will ask the elephant questions' and the Jewish student's essay title: 'The Elephant and the Jewish Question'.

This joke may not make some non-Jewish people laugh, others may not think it funny at all, and/or feel it is offensive, but Jewish people think it is at least a bitter, ironical laugh.

Humour tends to be a put down, or up, or even sideways? It certainly shows something that may be a kind of secret, or at least something not spoken of within the master narratives, or something painfully obvious, but not usually mentioned in polite society; "Laughing always implies a secret" (Bergson 1928 p135). Perhaps my humour does imply personal secrets and also aims to undo 'secret' worlds. The humour process also aims to build mythopoeia; my own myth, as opposed to the myths of the world - of how the world might, or ought to be. One's mythology is built and is meaningful only if it connects with the needs, feelings and ideas and the reality of one's experiences (Jayne 1972).

I believe my sense of humour will always be part of my narrative. There is a connection to this in Eco's description of paradox. He says that a paradox is something "beyond current opinion", and a paradox is, or may be, a "genuine reversal of a commonly held viewpoint" (Eco 2006 p64). Sometimes in a paradoxical situation there is little left to say beyond humour. Emotions build up and may explode inappropriately, we wish to make a point, but the metaphor of humour can usually say something beyond the obvious. I also posit that a lot of sub-voices may be involved in humour. Sub-self-voices -humour included - are an intrinsic part, constructed as we grow, of the human survival kit (Eco 2006; Ornstein 2003; Stone & Winkelman 1985).

Readers are not obliged to see my humour as theirs, unless they happen to do so. Looking up old Jewish jokes in the public domain has helped me to re-hone some parts of the book, making the serious points sharper here and there. MacHovec (1988 p31, quoted in Amir 2002 p14) offers; *"A man said to the universe; 'Sir, I exist'. 'However,' replied the Universe, 'that fact has not created in me a sense of obligation.'"* A telling

line that Mel Brooks expressed in his own way: *"For every ten Jews beating their breast God designated one to be crazy and amuse the breast beaters. By the time I was five I knew I was that one."* (Brooks 1998)

Well, Mel, so did I, or rather, I intended to be, but the Universe/God was paying me no attention. Yet now, the mode of comedic hero or writer as a tale of transformation seemed to come to me naturally when artefact writing (Bullough & Pinnegar 2001).

Humour and irony is like parent and child, they may be related (Attardo 2001) and may relate to the conflict between master and a personal narratives. Perhaps personal humour can be an answer to the demands of master narratives. For irony is often intimately connected with the expression of perhaps negative feelings (Attardo 2001). Or perhaps negative to some hearers, but a positive relief to the joker?

In this section I have summarised the use and style of humour employed as defense, attack, and irony, to strengthen points made when writing my artefact. I considered humour mainly from the Jewish perspective as a method of survival; the way it was used in my artefact. There are limits to humour, particularly when it is about the Holocaust and I trust I respected such boundaries (Lockyer & Pickering 2009).

Section 9. Present pasts and personal resolution

I have little scope to deeply explore this matter, but I have mentioned it on several occasions through this exegesis. In this section I consider whether 'present pasts' can be at least somewhat re-constructed. The 'present' is the meeting point of the past and of our idea of the future (Hermansen 2006). By the act of writing the artefact, I have 're-written' some of the past to a more meaningful, even if fictional, reconstruction that has changed the present (Hermansen 2006).

The past is not deterministic, not a "unified evidence that we have always been becoming who we are now" (Stephenson 2005 p36). This is agreeable and even necessary to keep in mind. However, I cannot see, as Feldman (2006) suggested, that the world can be reconstructed in a new version. Yet our way of dealing with the world, past or present might be reconstructed. Tim cannot regain his losses, but perhaps he can try to reconstruct the emotional sense of his world (Eagleman 2011; Feldman 2006; Hermansen 2006).

To be creative, to re-construct, we need "motivation and courage", experience and apprenticeship and "insight into the workings of the self and other minds" (Damasio 2001 p64). The past is "the remembered self" (Neisser 1994), the only thing we can speak of as the abstraction we call 'self', selves or life, and it is both a psychological phenomenon and largely a narrative, as many thinkers readily agree (Albright 1994; Gergen 1994; Miller 1994; Neisser 1994)."Literature is a wilderness, psychology is a garden", wrote Daniel Albright about the split between literature and psychology (Albright 1994 p19). I wonder if it is not the other way around - or even some of each. Perhaps my artefact will be read by some as a 'wilderness' and others as a 'garden', depending on their own psyche, for as Craig R Barclay claims, the remembered selves are constructed and structured "especially through the use of narration" (Barclay 1994 p61). Though the self is an abstraction, it is via memories that we live and continue, making sense and meaning via our narratives (Barclay 1994; Bruner 1994; Polkinghorne 1988). Selves are constructed by autobiographical narrating, as constructivist narrative psychologists suggest (Hirst 1994). This remembered self can

only be a *present past* at any moment, so that writing narratives and re-visiting them is like re-reading an old book you've read before. Or a new version of it? "One leaves *here,* one goes over there, backward, elsewhere, toward the true past that is still to come." (Lyotard 2005 p143) In this way, the authoring self, I think, may be thought of as an editor of life/narratives. In writing, one always takes something from personal experience (Barthes 1968 pp142-168). This is what my novel's characters and the writer experienced during the work on both artefact and exegesis.

As for resolution of pasts, I believe writing may be a catalyst and a sort of customs depot and clearing house. My process of writing and research has certainly helped both psyche and my creative ability to tell stories of things not always easy to speak of. I have indeed found something that has been *sort of* resolved by my writing process. 'Resolved' may be overstating it. It has been re-understood, and thus given a smaller (or larger) place in my personal meaning and authoring work.

Section 10. Conclusion

"Theory thinks the world, practice 'grasps' the world." (Van Manen 2007 p20)

In this exegesis I have explored the nature of master and personal narratives. That study took in investigating the self or selves, minds and brains, meaning and identity, humour and fictional truth, and asking 'who' are the writers of stories? I strove to explore the "interconnectedness of the research process with the lived experience of author and authored" (Allen 2011 p7). "Nothing comes of philosophy" and "you can't do anything with it" (Heidegger 2000 p13), yet something certainly comes from literature, reading and writing, for that engagement is personal (Van Manen 2007).

My journal record

Reviewing the journal work whilst considering this exegesis brought new light to the artefact and to the exegesis. The early stages of the journal provided me with sometimes unexpected ideas. It confirmed that some notions -factual or fictional - that I wished to elucidate were indeed important to me, as my repeated journal notes showed. The process of journaling is in itself an interesting affair, as sometimes I did not want to do it, while at other times I could barely restrict the flow. Journaling offered a continuance of some ideas, which did not get into either artefact or exegesis, but this served as a process of discrimination.

I have shown how my artefact is something of a mixed genre; I hope it is unsettling, but with a message of hope as a possibility. I have recognised that autobiography shares "many characteristics with narrative fiction" while having its own distinctive features (Shen & Xu 2007 p80). I endeavored to use features of both to create my artefact. I am concerned that, as Wittgenstein put it, my book will only be understood by those who already think somewhat like I do (Kolak 1998). This applies, as it must, to any author; will readers understand what is offered if they have not had the same or

similar life experience? "Yet text is nothing without the appropriate conjectures of the reader, as both Foucault and Wittgenstein were well aware." (Radford 2002 p11) After all, text and the reader are held in an "eternal reflexive relationship" (Radford 2002 p11).

One major inquiry was that of narratives and the narrative nature of reality and self-construction. Reality is subjective and actively constructed by the brain, and the conscious 'me' is only a small part of the workings of the brain-mind (Eagleman 2011). Master and personal narratives are dynamic and change without notice, sometimes obviously or imperceptibly. I discussed how we derive meaning, understanding and our ability as individuals to live within society via our master narratives, the base from which we build our personal narrative/identity that we either accept or reject; usually some of each. I have shown both in the practice of making my artefact and in the theory that master narratives are the powerful instruments that serve social cohesion, and yet also produce dissent, both of groups and for individuals. Their acceptance or rejection appears to emanate from the conflicts of narratives, master and /or personal.

A great deal of material on master narratives is in agreement about the nature and power of such narratives, but discussion of the nature of personal narratives was scarce, coming mainly from a psychological base. These are mostly couched in terms of exploring memory and the nature of the self (Bruner & Kalmar 1998; MacAdams 2008; Neisser 1993; Neisser & Fivush 1994; Polkinghorne 1988). Another consideration is that our brain has (in a simplified way) input of external and internal events and makes sense and cohesion of these if it can. Eagleman refers to these two states as the "rational and the emotional systems" (Eagleman 2011 pp110-111). I correlate internal/emotional to personal, and external/rational to master narratives. This in itself is another interesting study.

Clearly, much fiction is based on the vicissitudes of human lives, thoughts and emotions. I have contributed to the academic conversation about the process of writing as an outcome of the conflict between master and personal narratives as I - and others - term them (Dailey & Corey 1998; Linde 2001; Wyile & Pare 2001).

In both my artefact and exegesis I explicate how my 'narrative' is my life; own it or reject it. What I can have is the freedom to invent and discover fictions and factions that are within me, the stories I can tell. Throughout this exegesis I considered how the cultural and power contexts that I lived and live with affect my thinking and actions (Wyile & Pare 2001). Human lives are, I agree, "determined by wider social processes" (Wyile & Pare 2001 p8) but I hope not entirely so. It is easy to mistake what is in fact cultural for something innate and immutable (Saleebey 1994). Sometimes one must fight the situation, and this I can do by writing my life stories and experiences in whatever way I decide; the great gift of literature and of writing.

Another area that emerged as I worked on the exegesis and artefact was the consideration of 'voices', and of whether personal resolution might be found in writing an autobiographical and yet fictional narrative. I have discussed my 'voice', which comes not just from the young fellow I was at 15 or at 20, or the adult businessman of my working career, or from the older man and student I am now. It comes from all the various parts, the possible sub-selves within, that are now integrated into what I call 'me'. The idea of 'present pasts' of memories suits my thinking. This fits in with the idea of voices and sub-personalities (Neisser & Fivush 1994).

In the essay 'Return upon return' Lyotard said that, "we moderns, sons of Ulysses, cannot believe that an expedition, an exile, experience in general would not imply some sort of alteration or alienation" (Lyotard 2005 p136). All the characters, and the author, ought to be somewhat touched by such expeditions and alterations. Tim, Josef and others certainly are changed by the end of the novel. Their identity, personal meaning and actual lives have been transformed (Popkin2003).The characters change the plot, the plot changes the characters. Perhaps this is how both narratives and real life is, or should read. To write or not to write… is that the question? To write may bring angst, exile, alienation as Lyotard noted. An odyssey into consciousness may bring storms that damage and yet clear the air, even while there is the final inability to say, to put out, what one conceives but is unable to present, at least not in a totally satisfactory way (Lyotard 2005 pp129 & 136).

Instead of I think therefore I am perhaps we might say *I write, you read me, therefore we are; something is created.* And that something created between writer and reader can be tremendous.

Notably, this exegesis is autoethnographical in its tone and intent. Perhaps I will go on being the '*wondering* Jew' (no mistake, not wandering) and perhaps that wondering will be the very material to fuel whatever I will yet write, and in the knowledge that just maybe, my voice will be considered by others. "Writing is precisely this compromise between freedom and remembrance, and it is impossible to develop writing without…becoming a prisoner in someone else's words. And even my own." (Barthes 2000 p37)

I have found that I may be a 'constructionist' - for all I see are stories about people; the building of narratives as the human existence. Because of this, I am now strongly interested in investigating the nature of the self in the general sense, and specifically for the creative writing process. I will also further investigate humour – it is fun to do so - and the issue of personal resolution of past events. Keener to write fiction than ever, I have fear of it too; for the creation of characters will I imagine, bring much personal challenge and work.

"As for the notion of the narrative unity of a life, it must be seen as an unstable mixture of tabulation and actual experience. It is precisely because of the elusive character of real life that we need the help of fiction to organise life retrospectively, after the fact, prepared to take as provisional and open to revision any figure of emplotment borrowed from fiction or from history." (Ricoeur 1992 p162)

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To bring the whole of this exegesis into one paragraph: creativity is practice led research and research leads to enhanced creativity (Sullivan 2009). Master and personal narratives are the self or selves as we know them, in both a private and in a social-relational way. If this is so, then they will lead to conflicts and agreements on

both a personal and social basis. The conflict fuels the drama of life and the writing of it. The study of human nature and literature has much in common and they are merging; we are indeed "virtuoso novelists" of our lives (Dennett 1995). I have proposed that all the above brings to the surface those multiple selves/voices that writers draw on in the creative endeavor. My artefact is testimony for the views expressed in preceding sections, for it is built on memories, present pasts and re-constructed wishful futures. I am the teller of the tale, the writer-protagonist and the unknown narrator. I connected the past and the future via Tim's story to complete the novel and then examined the artefact exegetically.

Many of the issues (in fact all) touched upon in this exegesis could be explored in a deeper way, but limited scope has not allowed that. I will pursue further investigating the narrative nature of the self, or selves, and the multiple or sub-selves ideas. My focus will be on the creative and psychological aspects. The self as 'the remembering self' is clearly another study that fits in with my interests. Humour, always close to me, is another study I shall explore, particularly in respect to trauma and minority groups. Finally, I quote the following story because it says so much about narratives, the presentation of stories, the media, the Holocaust, research, social behavior, memory and interpretation, and about Jewish humour. This tableau was shown on Israeli television in commemoration of the Holocaust:

The 'witness' is telling his story, which sounds like a stereotypical 'Holocaust' story:

Witness: I remember it as if it was yesterday . . . it was a very cold night, and they told everybody to stand in lines. . .women, children . . . around there were barbed-wire, dogs, guards, and all you could hear was shouting.

Interviewer: And then? What happened then?

Witness: Then he came, with a big black car. The car pulled up beside the wagons and then he got out.

Interviewer: That was Oscar Schindler?

Witness: Then we didn't know who it was.

Interviewer: And then, what happened then?

Witness: Then, he shouted at us: what is happening here?

Interviewer: And that was Schindler?

Witness (shouting): What Schindler? Spielberg! He shouted that it wasn't good and we had to do it again . . . they told everyone to get back on the wagons and to start all over again! It was horrible, absolutely horrible.

Interviewer: What? And later? What happened later?

Witness (very calm): Later? They paid us and we went home. But it was very late, very late. And they didn't pay much.

Interviewer: And Spielberg?

Witness: Spielberg? He got the Oscar.
(Zandberg 2006 p573)

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