A Psychological Approach into the Hypermodernity Aspects of the Netflix Series "Dark"

Dimitrios Tachmatzidis*, **Vasillios Chasiotis**

Department of Psychology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Western Macedonia, Florina, Greece

Email address:
tahmatzidis@gmail.com (Dimitrios Tachmatzidis)
*Corresponding author

Abstract: *Dark* is a Netflix series that explores the interesting idea of time travel, which is very famous in popular culture. This paper is trying to interpretate the notion of time travel, as a literary theme, in its psychological aspects, in relation to the *Dark* Netflix series, using statistical analysis of the duration of every scene in each episode of the first season of *Dark*. The authors are using statistical analysis to explore (a) the conflicting relations between major characters and (b) their relationship with space and time. Our research estimated the duration of each scene in every episode of the first season in Dark. Each episode "broke down" into scenes, the duration of each scene and the duration of the timeline of each character (in every scene, sequence, episode respectively). Each character's relation with specific space (i.e. Winden, police station, school etc.) and time (1953, 1986, 2019 2052) was statistically measured. In addition, we measured the duration of the conflict of each character in every scene in every space and time. The duration of every scene, characters timeline and conflict time was calculated and then clustered into first order factors such as, NATURE, CIVILIZATION, CONFLICT, TIME etc. Other first order factors were clustered, such as the total duration of a character's appearance in specific space and in certain time Statistical analysis showed that there is no significant difference in any of the 1st order factors examined. This finding highlights key aspects of *hypermodernity*, a key term that outlines the current human condition by describing the deeper connection of an individual with space and time. The authors are arguing that time travel theme in *Dark* is very close to the theoretical construct of hypermodernity because it is expressing the profound ways in which individuals are related, intertwined, and reflecting upon their own experience with space and time. This experience of space and time is a core element in today's hypermodernity state. In addition, this paper is also trying to articulate a psychoanalytical reading of the *Dark* series, which further highlights the hypermodernity aspect of this narration. Under this scope, the authors are arguing that "Dark" should be considered as one of the most prominent hypermodern television series.

Keywords: Time Travel, Hypermodernity, Non-Place, Hyper Individual

1. Introduction

Time travel stories are interesting and captivating narratives, very famous in popular culture. The basic plot line evolves around the effort of a character that tries to change something in the past, using a sophisticated time machine. Time travel stories usually depict the so-called *grandfather paradox* [6], which describes time traveler's effort to visit his own past and kill his grandfather before giving birth to his father. The paradox is that, if the traveler succeeded, then his father would not have been born, therefore time traveler could not have been born and, thus, he could not have traveled to the past in the first place. Although the paradox can be seen as an interesting mind-bending trick, we cannot help ourselves not to ask why someone should travel back in time in the first place and kill his grandfather. This effort may sound very Oedipean to a skeptical psychoanalyst. Apart from time travel, we are also aware that patricide is a very common narrative in many different cultures. Edmunds and Dundes, for example, they have compiled many narratives from all over the world that describe a plot structure which is remarkably close to the oedipal narrative [5]. Many different cultures have structured a story about a young boy that

somehow ends up killing his own father. Under this scope it should be interesting to examine the literary them of time travel and the grandfather paradox in its oedipal context.

This examination is mainly psychoanalytical in its core. The skeptical psychoanalyst may be tempted to examine why someone, having a powerful machine that control time, would form a patricide phantasy. In this study we argue that when the offspring breaks his own birth line, by killing his ancestor, he gets an important symbolic victory: he is responsible for giving life and death to his family; his life is not the outcome of other people's choices in the past; he is now in control, he controls the timeline of his own life by distributing death to the past. What serves as a drive for this behavior and how can we interpret this drive in psychoanalytical terms?

We try to answer these questions under the scope of *hypermodernity*, a theoretical construct that tries to describe the special relation that individuals have with space and time. This relation is depicted in modern narratives such as movies (i.e., *Back to the Future*, *Predestination* etc.) and tv series such as *Dark* on Netflix streaming platform [12]. Dark is a complex time travel multiplot and multicharacter narration that encapsulates patricide, matricide amongst other plotlines. Although time travel is quite common in popular culture, we argue that Dark is profoundly different because it depicts the psychological impact that time travel has to its character and this impact is a signifier that elaborates the very essence and meaning of hypermodernity. To structure our arguments, we used a specific methodology to examine the ten episodes of the first season in *Dark*.

2. Methodology

The first stage of our research included the calculation of the duration of each scene in every episode of the first season (DS01). Each episode "broke down" into scenes. Then we measure the duration of each scene and the duration of the timeline of each character (in every scene, sequence, episode respectively). After that, we were able to statistically depict each character's relation with specific space (i.e., Winden, police station, school etc.) and time (1953, 1986, 2019 2052). In addition, we measured the duration of the conflict of each character in every scene in every space and time. Since the duration of every scene was calculated then we clustered the durations and the timelines of each character into first order factors such as, NATURE (i.e., every scene that takes place in natural environment such as: forest, forest roads, cave, lake etc), CIVILIZATION (i.e., every scene that take place in urban surroundings such as: houses, Winden, police station, nuclear plant, etc.). Other first order factors were clustered, such as the total duration of a character's appearance in space (in NATURE or CIVILIZATION environments) and in time (in total and in each epoch: (1952, 1986, 2019 2052). Finally, we calculated the duration of the conflicts of each character with other characters in space and time in a similar fashion. Since most of the action in DS01 is taken place in 1986 and 2019, very few observations were taken from 1953 and 2052.

It should be noted that characters are interacting mostly in nature (lakes, forests etc.) and in urban surroundings (school, police station etc.), so when characters are appearing to be driving, the time that they spent in car was calculated in nature or urban surroundings respectively to the surrounding of each scene. For example, when Charlotte is driving in the forest road and she speaks over the phone to Ulrich while being on the Police Station, Charlotte's appearance time is measured as "nature" time and Ulrich's appearance time is measured as "civilization" time. If there is a conflict in these two characters, the duration of this conflict is measured as conflict in "nature" or in "civil" respectively. After running our statistical analysis, we were able to establish a baseline to examine semiotically what these first order factors may reveal about the hypermodern human condition.
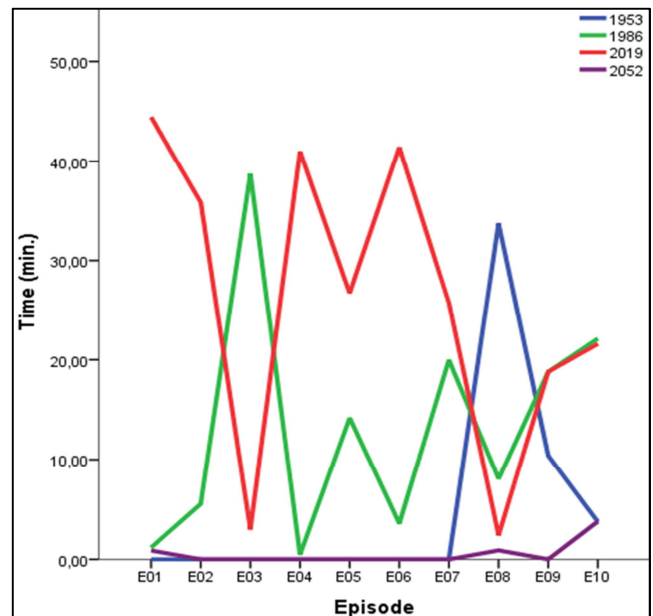
3. Statistical Analysis

Figure 1. The duration of each epoch in each episode.

The statistical analysis, conducted to explore the relations between major characters as well as their relations with space and time, highlights key aspects of hypermodernity which exemplifies *Dark* as the most prominent hypermodern TV series. As mentioned above, we focused on DS01, which consists of 10 episodes (DS01E01-E10). At first, we were interested in investigating the time of each epoch during episodes. Figure 1 shows the duration of each epoch (1953-2052) in each episode (E01-E10). An independent t-test was run to determine the mean difference in time between Timeline 1986 and Timeline 2019. It was found that time in Timeline 1986 ($13,267 \pm 11,992$ min.) was not significantly different than in Timeline 2019 ($26,088 \pm 15,125$ min) ($t(18) = -2,101$, p =,05) with a difference of -12,822 (95% CI, -25,646 to 0,002) min.

Moreover, we estimated the time of epochs in specific locations. "Nature" includes every scene that takes place in

natural environment (forest, forest road, cave, lake etc.), whereas "Civil" includes every scene that takes place in urban surroundings (houses, town, police station, nuclear plant etc.). Figure 2 shows the time of "Nature" and "Civilization" during the epochs 1953, 1986, and 2019.
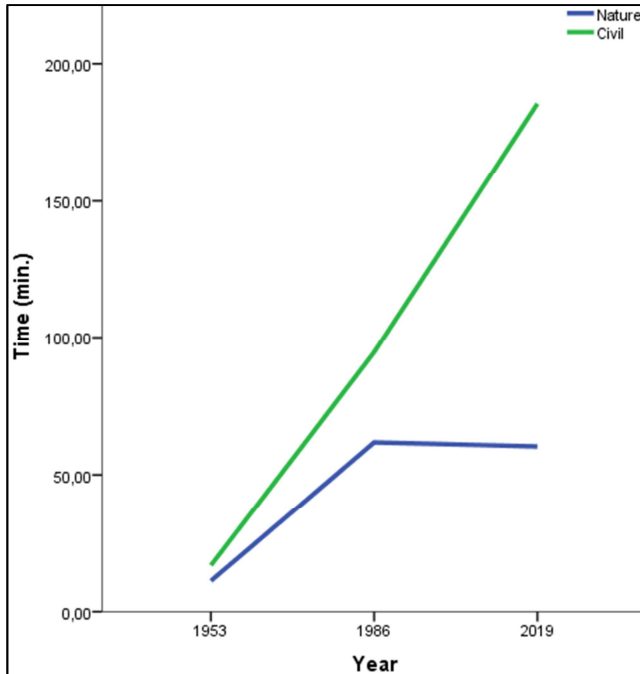

Figure 2. The time of "Nature" and "Civilization" during epochs.

The duration of conflicts that took place in "Nature" and "Civil" locations was also calculated, during the epochs 1953, 1986, and 2019 (Figure 3).
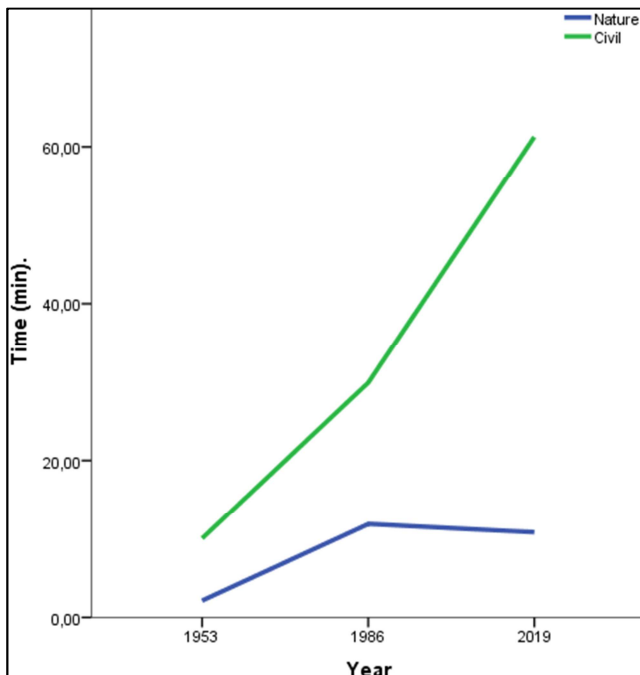

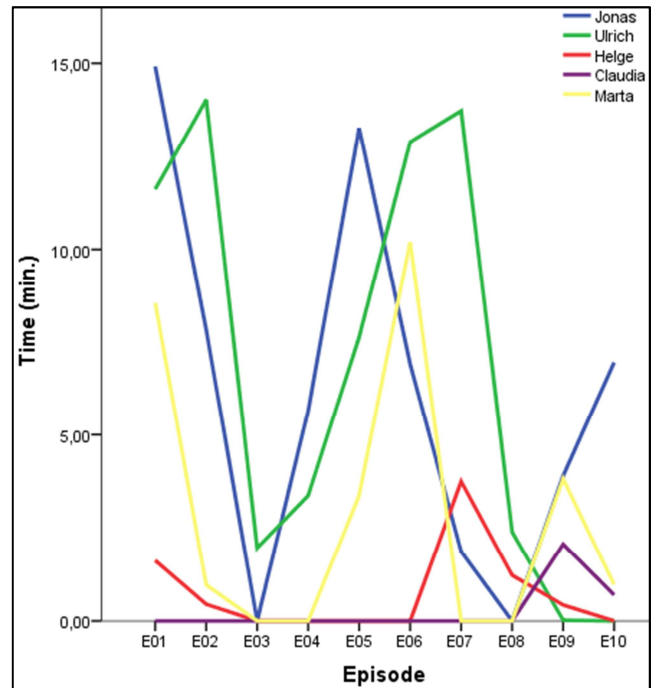*Figure 3. The conflict time of "Nature" and "Civilization" during epochs.*

Figure 4. Duration of appearance of the major characters in 2019.

Figure 5. Duration of appearance of the major characters in all epochs.

In addition, two independent t-tests were run to determine the mean difference in conflict time, the first one between "Nature" in 1986 and "Civilization" in 1986, whereas the second one between "Nature" in 2019 and "Civilization" in 2019. Conflict time that took place in "Nature" in 1986 (1,47 ± 1,06 min.) was not significantly different than in "Civilization" in 1986 (1,50 ± 1,20 min) (t(20) = -,067, p =,947) with a difference of -,03 (95% CI, -1,14 to 1,07) min. Conflict time in "Nature" in 2019 (1,61 ± 1,82 min.) was not significantly different than in "Civilization" in 2019 (1,49 ±

0,90 min) (t(30) = -,222, p =,825) with a difference of,12 (95% CI, -1,00 to 1,25) min. Figures 4 and 5. show the duration of appearance of the major characters in the epoch 2019 and in all epochs totally, respectively.

Finally, we give attention in conflict time of the characters under different plot lines.

1) Between major characters for each conflict event in all epochs:

   a) Jonas, Ulrich, Helge, Claudia, and Marta: A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the different characters, $\chi^2(4) = 4,357$, p =,360, with a mean rank conflict time of 32,55 for Jonas, 26,02 for Ulrich, 37,86 for Helge, 22,00 for Claudia and 27,38 for Marta.

   b) Jonas, Ulrich, Helge, Claudia, Marta, and Egon: A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the different characters, $\chi^2(5) = 4,572$, p =,470, with a mean rank conflict time of 35,60 for Jonas, 28,27 for Ulrich, 41,43 for Helge, 23,80 for Claudia, 29,69 for Marta and 30,70 for Egon.

   c) Jonas, Ulrich, Helge, Claudia, Marta, and Regina: A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the different characters, $\chi^2(5) = 5,040$, p =,411, with a mean rank conflict time of 37,90 for Jonas, 29,90 for Ulrich, 44,43 for Helge, 25,20 for Claudia, 31,25 for Marta and 36,75 for Regina.

   d) Jonas, Ulrich, Helge, Claudia, Marta, Egon, and Regina: A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the different characters, $\chi^2(6) = 5,194$, p =,519, with a mean rank conflict time of 40,95 for Jonas, 32,15 for Ulrich, 48,00 for Helge, 27,00 for Claudia, 33,56 for Marta, 35,30 for Egon and 39,45 for Regina.

2) Between epochs 1953, 1986, and 2019 for each conflict event of characters Jonas, Ulrich, Helge, Claudia, and Marta: There was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the epochs 1953, 1986, and 2019 as determined by one-way ANOVA (F(2,48) =,508, p =,605).

3) Between epochs 1953, 1986, and 2019 for each conflict event of all characters: A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in conflict time between the epochs 1953, 1986 and 2019, $\chi^2(2) =,517$, p =,772, with a mean rank conflict time of 52,67 for 1953, 61,64 for 1986 and 58,64 for 2019.

Considering the complex grid of characters' relationships that exists in DS01, all the previous no statistically significant results lead to the following conclusions:

(1). The concept of time dominates the narrative, regardless of any plot, any conflict, and any duration. If this wasn't the case, we would have find statistically significant results in different timelines, therefore, the concept of time is considered as "the back bone" of the Dark narrative.

(2). When it comes to screenwriting, a basic idea in the organization and structure of a plot is that the main character should have more screening time, while the secondary characters should have less. However, in "Dark", such a difference does not exist, since there are no statistically significant differences in any character's timeline, and so we may argue that we have only plots and no subplots.

(3) In relation to the above, the absence of subplots shifts the narrative focus on the quality of the conflicts (within the time given). In the following section we will argue that this "quality" can be described in psychological terms, i.e. the characters travels in time in order (a) to control his own time line, (b) by colliding with different versions of himself. Since the concept of time is dominant, then the main "villain" of the Dark narrative is time itself which is present in every characters time line. Each character tries to establish a personal relation in time and this effort is actually producing conflicts that push the action forward.

(4). The structural part of the narration does not have any statistical difference in the sense that the narrative weight does not fall in one plot at the expense of another. So, the thematic weight is the same quantitatively distributed, even though it is qualitatively different.

(5) To some extent, we may notice an exception to the above results by examining the epoch of 1986. The two poles in our statistical analysis are the first order factors marked as NATURE and CIVILIZATION. If we examine figures 2 and 3, we notice a positive strong correlation between Nature 1986 and Culture 1986, which is statistically significant, meaning that the higher duration in nature correlates with the higher duration in civilization in the same year and vice versa. This is the case only in 1986. Obviously, it is an editing choice that, semiotically, shows that conflict duration levels are "equally" distributed: if a conflict occurs in nature environment, there is another conflict in culture (i.e. while conflict duration increases in one pole, it also increases to the other). This is interesting, because this finding does not concern time as a value but time as a "construct", and that is an editing choice (therefore time as a sequence). This leads us to the conclusion that the plot in 1986 seems to be a focal point in Dark's dramaturgy, because we observe that conflicts that are done both in nature and in urban environment have a positive correlation: as the one increase so does the other as well. This is not the case either in 1953 or in 2019. When it comes to scriptwriting, it is generally accepted that the script should have one or more conflicts (conflicts enhance and move forward the plot). In DS01 conflicts are occurring in all epochs (1953, 1986, 2019), but those held in 1986 show that this epoch has a more hub relationship to the plot. Only in 1986 as the duration of conflict increases in one pole, it also increases to the other.

(6) Considering all the above, the fact that different character's conflict amongst each other, the conflict as a plot characteristic expand beyond characters; it becomes a continuous space – time attribute. This means that a conflict does not provide us only with an insight about the psychological (cognitive or emotional) state of a character

but it becomes a constant attribute of the (post/hyper) modern human condition: conflict exists in different epochs; a character will travel into time in order not to achieve a goal or find some kind of piece but in order to move a conflict to another (space-time) dimension.

These findings will be thoroughly deployed and semiotically analyzed in the following sections by using the notions of hypermodernity as an interpretive tool.

4. Auges Hypermodernity: Non Places in Dark

The term hypermodernity, initially introduced by French social anthropologist Marc Auge [2, 3] is trying to describe main aspects of urban life in early '90s. Hypermodernity is the intensification of the postmodern condition [11]. The suffix 'hyper-' implies that some aspects of (post) modernity are exaggerate and being exaggerated, that is, the dominant tendency in the current human condition is to do everything to the fullest, reaching its limits. Auge introduces the concept of 'non-place' to describe urban space that does not carry the necessary meaning to be regarded as 'place'. Auge defines 'place' as a certain space where humans can develop personal and meaningful relationships. Under this scope, only a 'place' can have history or carry identity (social, public, personal, etc.). If a space cannot be defined in this way, then it automatically becomes a "non-place". Spaces that defined as "non-places" are airports, highways, railways, supermarkets, shopping malls, etc. Non-places include people who do not "stay" (i.e., who do not maintain emotional ties with them); they only simply "pass" by them. Non-places do not create identity (cultural, personal, etc.), they do not create relationships, on the contrary, they produce loneliness, alienation, uniformity and similarity. In this way, non-places remove one's attachment to the past; they separate people from their personal identities by creating mass groups. According to Auge [2], a hypermodern society does not produce places, but creates non-places, i.e., places where people enter in groups so as not to connect with each other; hypermodernity creates alienation. Auge also explains that the person who enters in a non-place, abolish his/her usual and traditional determinants, his/her personal identity, and becomes nothing more than what he/she is doing or experiencing at the moment (shopping, consuming, having fun etc.) acquiring the role of a "Passenger", a "Customer", a "Driver", a "Consumer", a "Commuter", a "Passer-by", a person without a personal identity.

Korstanje [9] approaches Auge's idea of non-place critically. By examining airports as a non-place, from the point of view of tourism management, (the airport as an intermediary between the airplane and the urban space), Korstanje considers that airports are not only centers of traffic control, but in many cases are introducing to the travelers the values of modern society. Airport is not just a transit station, but also transmits symbolic codes to the citizens who use it. Korstanje's critique is interesting and is

worth considering the following question: under what conditions a non-place can be considered as a place. Auge [2] typically states that we should always keep in mind that places and non-places are not real spaces but imaginary ones: a space passes from the typology of "place" to that of "non-place" when it lacks its history and meaning. Even though, the question: how can a "non-place" be considered a "place"? How do we give meaning or history to a non-place?

We may answer this question by reflecting upon the movie *The Terminal* [13], which can be considered as a hypermodern film. In The Terminal the main character (Viktor Navorski played by Tom Hanks) is trapped at New York's JFK Airport for political reasons. There is a political upheaval in his country, Cracosia, which the US has not yet recognized. Authorities cannot issue a visa to a citizen of a country that does not "exist", that is, does not exist legally. According to Auge, airports are non-places and therefore Viktor is a passer-by, an unidentified man, trapped in a non-place where he cannot have a real relationship. Spending nine months at the airport, Viktor transforms the non-place into a place: he has become acquainted with the people who work at the terminal, he has also worked there, while trying to establish a relationship with another passer-by, Amelia (played by Catherine Jetta Jones) who is not only passing through the airport but also from life itself, not being able to enter into any real, meaningful relationship with any man. Interestingly, this film seems to be partly inspired by the true story of Mehran Karimi Nasseri who stayed at the Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris for 18 years, from 1988 to 2006 [7].

So, which is the key-factor that turns a non-place into a place? The answer is time. In order for a person to be able to enter into a relationship with a place, he/she also enters in a procedure that takes time. The person must allow him/herself to be emotionally involved with other people who share the non-place. This is a time consuming and often a painful process. Only when Viktor accepted his situation and decided to interact with the people at the airport, he saw the airport as a potential place to stay, not as a non-place. This process takes time and it is the interaction between space and time that produce history and meaning. The lack of history and meaning is exactly what is depicted in Dark series.

Characters in Dark live in a town called "Winden". According to Auge, we can regard Winden, as a non-place, in which people come and go, failing to develop a harmonic relationship with each other. Although the main characters have the flexibility to move in time, they seem incapable of escaping from the space of Winden. On every occasion they state very eloquent that they hate Winden:

1) Charlotte: - *Why are you so certain Erik ran away?*
   Ulrich: - *This is Winden.* (SE01E01)
2) Radio live transmission: *Monday night in Winden, another boy vanished without a trace.* (SE01E2)
3) Teen Hannah: - *If the world ended today, and everything started anew, what would you wish for?*
   Teen Ulrich: - *Easy. A world without Winden.*
   Teen Hannah: - *To a world without Winden.*
   Teen Ulrich: - *To a world without Winden.*

Teen Hannah: - *I don't think Winden is going to give up that easily*.
Teen Ulrich: - *Well, maybe next time*. (SE01E03)

4) Charlotte (to Ulrich): - *When I was little, I always felt that something was wrong with Winden. I have that same feeling again*. (SE01E05)

5) Katarina (to the radio, addressing to the people of Winden): - *I want people to finally understand what's really going on here. We're all so blind. There's a murderer among us. No one actually dares to say it. But it's the truth. We cling to the hope that it won't happen here. We all know one another. We think we know everything about each other. But do we really? We live right next door to people; we know almost nothing about. And behind one of those doors... is my son. It could be anyone's door. The man behind the cash register. Someone we invited for cake on a Sunday, who plays with our children. I don't want to look away anymore. And you shouldn't either. This city is sick. Winden is like a festering wound. And we're all part of it.* (SE01E06)

6) Katarina (to Ulrich): *As long as I've known you, you've wanted out of Winden. Were you ever really happy?* (SE01E07)

7) Adult Egon (to adult Agnes): *May I ask why you came to Winden, of all places?* (SE01E08)

Ulrich, Hannah, Charlotte, Regina, Egon, they all seem to hate or despise their city. The very name of the city (Winden in German may refer to "wind")[1] indicates instability, as if no one can build anything solid in the wind. Moreover, Winden itself does not seem to exist. The stereotypical concept of a modern city is that of a civic center, with public buildings, services, shopping malls, which extends to the suburbs and so on. With the exception of the characters family homes, Winden, as a city, does not exist. The school, the hospital, the police station and the nuclear plant seem to emerge out of the woods without being connected to each other. We never see urban space, shops, parks, nightlife in Winden, which are common even in small provincial towns. Winden is a non-place, where children (symbol of the future) disappear and birds (symbol of freedom) fall dead from the sky. Winden also seems to be cut off from the map and the rest of the world, completely out of the grid. Regina's Winden Hotel is a deserted hotel, on the verge of bankruptcy (no one ever visits Winden). When the situation with the vanishing children and adults escalates, the headquarters send only one inspector and, in fact, we are never sure if they really sent him or if he arrived in his own will, driven by his personal

agenda, sharing the same dark past with the other characters.

Our statistical analysis showed (Figures 1 and 2) that in 1953 (the beginning of the Atomic Era) most action and conflicts are consuming - more or less – approximately the same duration in the Dark narrative. But as the story goes on, (1986, 2019) there is more action taken place in urban settings than in rural ones. This may serve as an initial remark of modern humanity alienation to nature. By separating himself from nature, modern human is "building in the wind" he has more time than space. But there more to that. We have to consider Winden as "a part" of the environment and at the same time as "apart" from the environment.

What dominates in Winden are two basic spatial elements that act as opposite poles: on the one hand is the forest and rural roads (as a symbolic reference to nature and the primitive pagan way of life) and on the other hand the nuclear plant (as a symbolic reference to the modern technological way of life). The characters move on roads that connect either the forest or the factory. In the very first episode of the first season Jonas accidentally runs into Peter in the forest, which is the most awkward place to run into a therapist. These two poles, although opposite, are connected: the disappearances of children take place in the forest, but the Winden police estimate that they are somehow related to the nuclear plant. The fates of the inhabitants of Winden are linked to the existence of the factory and, when it is destroyed, it is impossible to return either to a life in nature or to a life with technological comforts. In this sense, Winden is a non-place, a trap, in which no one can live neither escape.

Winden's urban layout serves its mythology: from ancient times there was the idea that the city is nothing more than a set of settlements; settlements are a set of families and families are the core, the primary cell of the city. In Dark, by omitting the city, the archetypal social cell emerges: the family. The institution of family is the primary core of ancient Greek tragedy. At the 1st episode of DS01, Mikkel in 2019 spends his time with his family, doing his magic tricks, bonding with his father Ulrich, but when he travels back to 1986 the family house itself becomes a non-place, it just a building. There is nothing there for Mikkel. His paternal home is transformed from a place to a non-place. Although the building is basically the same, when Mikkel meets at the front door his young parents, he has no relation to them whatsoever. We could read this scene as a symbolic reference to hypermodernity, a scene that shows that if there is a relationship between people, it is "tied", i.e., dependent on space and time, and that when time continuum is violated, this relationship is vanished.

Under this scope, the omnipotence of the Family, as an institution, is relativized. In this sense, Family is not timeliness; Family is an institution with an expiration date. Clearly, families have been around and always will be, but the essence of the institution, the quality in its characteristics (which are the emotional relations and bonds of the members with each other) are fluid and have a beginning, a middle and an end. Therefore, if there is something 'sacred' or important,

---

1 In German the word "winden" has a variety of meanings (to wind, to turn, to worry) but we may as well assume that refers to "wind". The verbal stem *wind- produces a notion of "twisting" or "turning". Assuming that the suffix "-en" grammatically states the ending of an infinitive, we could argue that the word "winden" describes a process of "blowing in the wind", that is the continuous random motion. The use of an infinitive as a town name suggests that "Winden" is a non-place, a process that is constantly repeated without any personal significance for the characters. No one is feeling attached to his hometown. In Winden there are no meaningful relationships for the characters.

it is not in the City, or the Family, per se, but in the relations of its members. Mikkel's journey through time will highlight this paradox in order to present, in the best possible way, the notion that if you travel to the past and meet your father, he is not your father but a stranger.

There is a clever joke about a six-year-old girl and a teacher that illustrates this notion. A teacher asks the girl how old is her father and the girls answers that her father is six years old. When the astonished teacher asks how is that possible, the girl replies: "Well, he wasn't a father before I was born!". Fatherhood, motherhood, family and so on are attributes depended on time. The family bond that once perceived a consistent, was, essentially, a fixed point in time and by traveling in time, this point ceases to exist, is no longer fixed, it is fluid; evasive. The same scene with Mikkel encounter with his parents in 1986 also functions as a symbolic point of reference and critique towards hypermodernity: by trying to control time, the hypermodern individual loses the opportunity to build strong emotional bonds with his family members, because emotional bonds take time, and by controlling time, one does not control bonds, he/she removes them as he/she can exist beyond their limitations. Every Winden character who acquires the ability to travel through time seems to lose the ability to acquire solid bonds with the other members of his/her family as time travel gives him/her a divine, "timeless", property.

Claudia Tiedemann, for example, is a woman of the '80s who manages to make a carrier in a patriarch society by becoming the director of a nuclear power plant, but at what cost? She has alienated herself from her father Egon and from her daughter Regina. When she acquires the ability to travel through time, the degree of alienation increases rapidly. By acquiring the time machine, Claudia does not change her personal situation, on the contrary: for her, time machine serves as a mean of self-knowledge, as a conscious mechanism that helps her understand her mistake but not to correct it. When she travels into the future, she sees that her father will die on July 27, 1986 and she realizes that she has only seven days to improve her relationship with him, something that she will never be able to do, as she will cause his death. Time control does not solve problems, because, as a psychological concept, time travel is not the solution to the problem but it is part of the problematic way in which we deal with the problem itself: we do not really need to control time but learn to we enjoy it in the quantity that is available to us. Dark series depicts the interesting idea that a hypermodern individual by controlling time, loses what makes him/her human, that is, his/her relationship with his fellow human beings in his/her geographical and temporal aspect, an idea for which Jim Jarmusch had suggested us by quoting Hagakure [8, 15]:

It is said that what is called "the spirit of an age" is something to which one cannot return. That this spirit gradually dissipates is due to the world's coming to an end. In the same way, a single year does not have just spring or summer. A single day, too, is the same. For this reason, although one would like to change today's world back to the
spirit of one hundred years or more ago, it cannot be done. Thus, it is important to make the best out of every generation.

5. Lipovetsky's Hypermodernity: Time Against Time in Dark

Hypermodernity is also described not only in terms of space (place/non-place) but also in terms of time. According to Lipovetsky [11] the basic characteristics of hypermodernity is hyper-speed: everything is experienced as "urgent", there is always a "deadline" in an individual's "timeline", something ends constantly only to be replaced by something else, which is still "urgent"; hyper-individualism: de-fragmentation of the self [1, 4] loss of strong bonds amongst individuals, narcissism [10]; hyper-consumerism: constant consuming according to mainstream trends, ongoing acceleration of purchasing new goods, overgrowing need of constantly experiencing new emotions by buying new products customly made for the individual needs [14], overall: a society in excess [16]. The result of this excess is the disorganization of the individual's time but also of social time. Therefore, Lipovetsky's notion of hypermodernity is trying to define a new "temporality", which is an effort to articulate human's current relation with time. The temporality of hyper-modernity is oriented to the present, with a specific reference to the future, which is considered as short-term and an uncertain concept, constructed and depended on the present by the individual's efforts in the present [11].

While the present moment is experienced as urgent, the concepts of the past and the future are also affected in hypermodernity. The past, according to Lipovetsky, maybe best described as a double process: initially fragmented and commercialized and then sanctified. Memory of the past is perceived not as a "story" (personal narration) but as "snapshots" of "past/present" and, as such, exerts charm on the individual and his obsession with controlling his own timeline. The more the past loses its social significance, the more it gains importance for the individual as a consumer good [11:60]:

"The past does not offer a social foundation or structure: instead, it is renovated, recycled, updated, exploited for commercial purposes. Tradition no longer seeks its faithful repetition and rebirth of the way things have always been: it has become a nostalgic product to consume, a piece of folklore, a nod to the past, a fashion item."

In this context, references in progress and future are transformed into demystified versions of modern counterparts that can be optimized, researched, and developed by the individual. Future is conceived as a tangible "short-term" concept, that can be evaluated and predicted by today's actions. It is a strict personal concept, closely correlated to the individuals present actions. The inability to imagine and construct the future as a society, according to Lipovetsky, stems from a rapidly evolving technology that realizes "today" (i.e. the present moment) as series of basic (and mainly personal) future visions. Where the postmodern individual

sought pleasure, the hypermodern individual is focusing on the present by seeking the prevention of a calamity and he/she is determined by insecurity and stress [11].

Since, in hypermodern condition, the individual is determined by his relationship with the time given to him/her and (a) the past is considered as a decontextualized snapshot, (b) the present as an urgent task-at-hand and (c) the future as an imminent danger, for Lipovetsky, the negative aspect of these tendencies is the fragility of the self, caused as a reaction in the individual's ego, due to the lack of context (i.e. relations) outside the present [11]. Therefore, in relation to Auges notion of hypermodernity, where non-places act as agents of alienation, Lipovetskys hypermodern past/present and future act as agents of "time against time", which means that the individual uses his personal given time to alienate from (collective) time (personal/social history, narrative etc.). This leads to the conclusion that hypermodern space and time can perceived as non-place and non-time: non place doesn't have history and non-time doesn't have narrative. Therefore, the time machine is, actually, a machine that makes time for the individual to create personal timeline in different places. The only narrative in hypermodernity is not the content of the narration but the construct of narrative.

In Dark, past is perceived as an intertwined triquetra of three main snapshots: 1953, 1986, 2019. The statistical analysis of these snapshots shows that there the timelines of 1986 & 2019 (i.e., the events occurred in 1986 and 2019 in the first season of Dark) are not significantly different (they don't serve as past/present but different aspects of a character's present, Figure 1). These snapshots are experienced as a very personal timeframe to each main character. As stated previously, Winden is a non-place where characters cannot develop a harmonic relation with their home town. Instead, they establish a neurotic relation with time-travel: something "very urgently" has to change "here and now". In addition, each main character (Ulrich, Jonas, Claudia, Helge) are seeing their past as a snapshot, as a specific point in their timeline and by traveling in this point they are using it as an urgent task that will prevent a calamity in the future. This creates a personal agenda for each character and where these personal agendas are incongruent, they collide and conflicts are emerging. These conflicts in return they produce a chain of events that will repeat the existing timeline for each character. Therefore, there is no collective future, only an individual (personal) future. Ulrich's jacket "No Future" logo, states the hypermodern condition where there isn't really any future, only a recurring present and this is the actual work of the time machine: it turns past and future into tangible present that can be shaped and constructed again and again (by continuous time travels) in order to create a false sense of control to the hypermodern individual by using the prevention of a catastrophe as motive for action. Event tough this time travels are only re-producing again and again the same results, characters will continue to use the time machine, because they can't help themselves otherwise. What is the point in that? This vicious circle of events serves as a medium for the hypermodern

individual to get in touch with his/her inner self, which is the only way, in Freudian terms, to surpass the Super Ego and dive into the depths of Id: Jonas will use time travel to stop his father's suicide and by doing so he will cause it; Claudia will try to prevent her father's death and she will eventually kill him; elder Helge will travel to the past to stop his younger self from killing children only to find his own demise and Ulrich will use time travel to stop a child murderer by becoming one. By trying to change the content of their personal story, each character justifies his/her existence only by the effort of creating a narrative and not changing one, in a non-place where nothing really happens.

6. Conclusions: What Is Dark in Dark

Our statistical analysis of the duration of time in every scene and in every character of the first season of Dark showed that the notion of time and each character's relation to time is the main conception, the main narrative construct. The editing choices in Dark gave to the series a specific timeline to every character. Even the split – screen sequences have more or less the same duration for every character. Since there are no significant statistical differences in the duration of the time given to any character and, thus, since there are no subplots but only plots, we have to argue that the core conceptual element depicted in DS1 is not the time (as a theme / narrative construct) per se, but the relation of every character with time. This relation can be interpreted when applying the theoretical construct of hypermodernity. This construct describes the modern human condition as a domain where the individual (i) cannot have or establish harmonical relations with the environment and, therefore, (ii) have a constantly urgent task, an eternal deadline: that is to use time in order to manipulate time which in return will give to the same individual the ethical alibi to destroy his personal past timeline in order to acquire a sense of control over him/herself. This sense of control is the only way for the hypermodern individual acquire a sense of stability in a "Winden" situation. Therefore, in Dark we have a new way of understanding time travel narratives. As stated before, in hypermodernity an individual will experience time as an urgent task at hand. The oedipal aspects of the grandfather paradox are manipulated in Dark in a new way: Jonas and Claudia by travelling to the past, they (unwillingly) kill their ancestors. The word "unwillingly" goes in brackets in order to express the latent meaning of hypermodernity: both Jonas and Claudia feel the urge of averting a calamity, and by travelling in time they are causing it. They do not know the consequences of their actions, but when they do acquire a sense of self-awareness they dive deeper into time travel. Therefore, they are tragic individuals. Like Oedipus, the killer they are trying to find, the white devil is themselves. Is there something therapeutic in this revival of the oedipal tragic condition to us, the modern viewers? Of course, there is. By rationalizing time travel with time travel machines now the hypermodern individual acquires a new means to an archetypal end: by travelling to the past and killing their

ancestor, they get an important symbolic victory: they are responsible for their own timeline; they are in control. Hypermodernity just got easier to cope with. The word in bracket "unwillingly" is an alibi in the sense that "it's not my fault", "I have to fix this" so "lets travel in time again".

References

[1] Amarante, M. D. F. S., Andrade, E. R. D., & Azzari, E. F. (2016). EFL BraziLian tEachErs in thE hypErmodErn worLd: prêt-à-portEr suBjEcts, sociaL mEdia and discoursE. Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada, 55, 457-481.

[2] Augé, M. (1992/2008). Non-places: an introduction to supermodernity, trans. John Howe. London and New York: Verso.

[3] Augé, M. (1996). About non-places. Architectural Design, 66, 82-83.

[4] Brandon, J. M. (2009). "Brother," Enjoy Your Hypermodernity! Connections between Gilles Lipovetsky's Hypermodern Times and Post-Soviet Russian Cinema. Communication and Theater Association of Minnesota Journal, 36 (1), 2.

[5] Edmunds, L., & Dundes, A. (Eds.). (1995). *Oedipus: a folklore casebook.* Univ of Wisconsin Press.

[6] Garrett, B., & Joaquin, J. J. (2022). A Note on the Grandfather Paradox. In Time, Identity and the Self: Essays on Metaphysics (pp. 37-41). Springer, Cham.

[7] Gilsdorf, E. (2004). Behind'The Terminal,'a true story. The Christian Science Monitor.

[8] Guay, R., Jarmusch, J. (Producers) & Jarmusch, J., (Director) (1999). Ghost Dog.

[9] Korstanje, M. E. (2015). The anthropology of airports, criticism to non place theory. Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research (AHTR), 3 (1), 40-58.

[10] Laskoski, P. B., Gastaud, M. B., Goi, J. D., Bassols, A. S., Machado, D., & da Costa, C. P. (2013). Hypermodernity and the Psychoanalytic Clinic. Revista Brasileira de Psicoterapia, 15, 14-24.

[11] Lipovetsky, G., & Charles, S. (2005). Hypermodern times. Polity.

[12] Müsch, J., Friese, J., Berg, Q., Wiedemann, M., bo Odar, B. (Producers) & bo Odar, B. (Director), (2017). Dark.

[13] Parkes, W. F., MacDonald, L., Spielberg, S. (Producers) & Spielberg, S. (Director) (2004). The terminal.

[14] Paz, M. A. Q. (2018). Post-Truth as a Feature of Hypermodern Times. Edukacja Filozoficzna, 66.

[15] Tsunetomo, Y. (2012). *Hagakure: the Book of the Samurai.* Shambhala Publications.

[16] Verhoeven, P., Zerfass, A., Verčič, D., Tench, R., & Moreno, A. (2018). Public relations and the rise of hypermodern values: Exploring the profession in Europe. Public Relations Review, 44 (4), 471-480.