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# "There's a great text in Galatians": Episodic Memory in Robert Browning's Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister and Porphyria's Lover

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**Abstract**

Episodic memory defines human conduct through mental time travel which allows the individual a choice in decision-making by bringing forth personal past events, as well as future-thinking of a specific situation or creating counterfactual situations in the mind. It holds the capacity to position the individual in the past, future, and conditional states with the aid of autonoetic consciousness which provides the opportunity to consider all aspects of thoughts in order to make decisions. This unique mental time travel which is only provided by episodic memory and not by other memory types, reconstructs an individual's memories from the past and activates the state of envisioning. In connection to this theory, this article's aim is to analyse the occurrences of episodic memory in Robert Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" and "Porphyria's Lover". The first poem is about a Spanish monk who delivers a soliloquy about the intense dislike he had experienced in the past as he watches his fellow monk Brother Lawrence organize and complete his gardening rounds. As the Spanish monk plots to allure Brother Lawrence into impure feelings which is connected to future-thinking in episodic memory, he also reveals his experiences in the past that had created his hostility towards Brother Lawrence. Another instance of episodic memory is found at the very end of the poem wherein he creates a counterfactual situation. On the other hand, "Porphyria's Lover" introduces a crime of passion in which an unhealthy obsession of a lover is observed. Robert Browning acquaints the reader with abnormal psychology with his depiction of Porphyria's serene executioner who reveals the details of the night one step at a time, right up to the act of crime by exposing his episodic memory.

**Keywords:** episodic memory, autonoetic consciousness, 3W theory, Robert Browning, Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, Porphyria's Lover

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# "Galat'larda muazzam bir metin bulunur": Robert Browning'in Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister ve Porphyria's Lover şiirlerinde Epizodik Bellek

## Öz

Epizodik bellek insan davranışlarını zihinde zaman yolculuğu vasıtasıyla tanımlar. Zihinde zaman yolculuğu kişiye şahsi geçmiş olayları öne getirerek karar verme şansını sunarken, spesifik bir durumu ileriye yönelik düşünmeyi sağlar ya da karşıolgusal durumları zihinde yaratır. Karar verebilmek için tüm düşüncelerin bakış açılarını dikkate almayı sağlayan Otonoetik bilincin yardımı ile kişiyi geçmiş, gelecek ve duruma bağlı vaziyetlere konumlandırmaya izin verir. Başka hiçbir bellek tipinde olmayan ve sadece epizodik bellek tarafından sağlanan bu eşsiz zihinde zaman yolculuğu, kişinin geçmiş anılarını yeniden inşa ederek planlama durumunu etkinleştirir. Bu teoriye bağlantılı olarak, bu çalışmanın amacı Robert Browning'in "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" ve "Porphyria's Lover" şiirlerinde bulunan epizodik bellek oluşumlarını incelemektir. İlk şiir İspanyol keşişin arkadaşı rahip Lawrence'ı bahçe işlerini organize edip tamamladığı sırada izlerken onunla ilgili geçmişte yaşadığı yoğun hoşnutsuzluğunu monolog olarak aktarır. İspanyol keşiş, rahip Lawrence'ı saf olmayan duygulara kapılması için komplo kurarak epizodik bellekte ileriye yönelik düşünme ile ilişkilendirmiş olurken aynı zamanda rahip Lawrence'a olan düşmanlığını yaratan geçmişteki deneyimlerini açığa vurur. Epizodik bellek ile ilgili bir başka vaziyet de şiirin sonunda oluşturduğu karşıolgusal durumdur. Buna karşılık, "Porphyria's Lover" okuyucunun bir sevgiliye karşı sağlıksız bir obsesyon gözlemlemesini sağlarken bir tutku suçu ile tanıştırır. Robert Browning okuyucuyu, gecenin detaylarını epizodik belleğini sergileyerek suç anına kadar adım adım anlatan Porphyria'nın dingin celladını tasvir ederek, anormal psikoloji ile aşina etmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** epizodik bellek, Otonoetik bilinç, 3W teorisi, Robert Browning, Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, Porphyria's Lover.

## Genişletilmiş Özet

Bellek kişinin kimliğini oluşturmasında ve davranışlarını biçimlendirmesinde önemli bir rol oynar. Kişinin şimdiki ve gelecekteki psikolojisini ve davranışlarını etkileyerek temel oluşturan karmaşık bir sistemdir. Bellek aynı zamanda gerekli gördüğü anda geçmişteki anıları yeniden canlandırabilecek şekilde depolayabilen bir kasa gibi işlevini yerine getirir.

Temelde bellek iki ana türe ayrılabilir: kısa dönem ve uzun dönem bellek. Uzun dönem bellek, açık bellek ve örtülü bellekten oluşur. Açık bellek bilinçli olarak hatırlanırken, örtülü bellek bilinçsiz ve istemsiz bir şekilde oluşur. Örtülü bellek, çağrıştırma ve prosedürel bellekleri içerir. Çağrıştırma belleği bilinçsiz bir tepki oluşturabilmek için uyarıcı unsur kullanırken prosedürel bellek motor hareketlerini kontrol eder. Buna karşılık, açık bellek anlamsal ve epizodik bellek olmak üzere ikiye ayrılır. Epizodik bellek kişinin şahsi deneyimlerini hatırlamasına izin verirken belirli bir zaman aralığını derinlemesine düşünmesini sağlar. Diğer taraftan, anlamsal bellek "dünya ile ilgili genel bilgi" ile bağlantılıdır (Queensland Brain Institute, 2019:para.2).

Epizodik bellek insan davranışlarını zihinde zaman yolculuğu vasıtasıyla tanımlar. Zihinde zaman yolculuğu kişiye şahsi geçmiş olayları öne getirerek karar verme şansını sunarken, spesifik bir durumu ileriye yönelik düşünmeyi sağlar ya da karşıolgusal durumları zihinde yaratır (Tulving, 1993:68). Karar verebilmek için tüm düşüncelerin bakış açılarını dikkate almayı sağlayan Otonoetik bilincin yardımı ile kişiyi geçmiş, gelecek ve duruma bağlı vaziyetlere konumlandırmaya izin verir (Gardiner, 2001:1351).

Çalışmada ilk olarak Schoenberg ve Scott'ın 2011'de yayımladığı belleğin çalışma şeklini anlatan metinden bahsedilmiş, kısa dönem ve uzun dönem dışında duyusal belleğe dikkat çekilmiştir. Kodlama işleminden bahseden Schoenberg ve Scott (2011) kolay kodlama sağlayabilecek yöntemleri anlatırken bellek oluşumundaki evrelere dikkat çekmiştir. Bellek tiplerini detaylı bir şekilde inceledikten sonra epizodik belleğin ne olduğu ile ilgili bilgi vermiştir. Tulving, epizodik belleği tarif ederken ilk önce ne, nerede, ve ne zaman sorularının sorulması gerektiğini söylemiş (1996:11280) ve bir anının epizodik olarak tanımlanabilmesi için 'bilinçli farkındalık' olması gerektiğinden bahsetmiştir (Gardiner, 2001:1351). Araştırmalara göre bilinçli

farkındalık ikiye ayrılır: otonoetik ve noetik. Bilinçli olarak bir anıyı tecrübe etmek otonoetik bilinç olur iken, kasıtlı olarak dünya hakkındaki bilgiye ulaşım noetik olarak nitelendirilmiştir (Tulving, 2002:313). Buna ilave olarak Tulving, zihinde zaman yolculuğundan bahsetmiştir. Zihinde zaman yolculuğunun sadece geçmişe dönmek için kullanılmadığını, aynı zamanda ileriye yönelik düşünceyi de sağladığını belirtmiştir (Tulving, 2002:313).

Bu doğrultuda, çalışmanın analiz kısmında edebiyatta bellek konusu dikkate alınarak yola çıkılmıştır. Bellek, edebi karakterin sadece tarihsel, sosyal, ve dini geçmişi ile ilgili bilgi sağlamakla kalmayıp, geçmiş ve geleceği göz önünde bulundurarak karakterin oluşumunu destekler. Bununla birlikte, sorulması gereken soru şu şekildedir: Şahsi bellek edebi karakterlerin gerçek kimliğini ortaya çıkarmada yardımcı olur mu? Başka bir ifadeyle, epizodik bellek yazarın edebi karakterinin gerçek kimliğini ortaya çıkarabilmesinde kullanabileceği yardımcı bir araç mıdır? Bu soruları temel alan çalışma Robet Browning'in şiirleri "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" ve "Porphyria's Lover"'ı epizodik bellek oluşumlarını yakın okuma metodunu kullanarak incelemiştir.

"Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" şiirinde Robert Browning manastırda inzivaya çekilmiş İspanyol bir rahibin başka bir rahibe olan öfkesini ve kıskançlığını ele almıştır. Dramatik monolog tekniğinin bir türü olan soliloquy tekniği ile yazılan şiir, riyakarlığı göstererek gerçek erdemin anlamını ortaya koymuştur. Şiirin ilk dizelerinde gizlice rahip Lawrence'ı uzaktan izleyen İspanyol rahip, nefretini dışa vurmaktan çekinmez (II. 1-8). Daha sonra epizodik belleğini kullanarak rahip Lawrence'ın yemek saatinde yanında oturup Latince bilgisiyle gösteriş yaptığını anlatır (II. 9-16) Yine epizodik belleğini kullanarak rahip Lawrence'ın nasıl yeni bir kaşığa ve üzeri isminin baş harfiyle oyulmuş bir kupaya sahip olduğunu ve bu tür kişisel parçaların rahip yaşantısıyla ters düştüğünü anlatır (II. 17-24). Bunlara ek olarak rahip Lawrence'ın köylü bayan yardımcılara baktığını gördüğünü söyleyerek (II. 25-32) tekrar yemek sırasında yaptığı hareketlerden bahseder (II. 33-48). Epizodik belleğini ileriye yönelik düşünce yöntemini kullanarak nasıl rahip Lawrence'ın ruhunu lanetleyebileceğini planlarken (II. 49-70) tüm düşüncelerini tam olarak açıklayamadan akşam duası için çalan çanları duyar ve şiir son bulur (II. 71-72).

Benzer bir şekilde Browning'in "Porphyria's Lover" şiirindeki şiir kişisi epizodik belleğinden yararlanarak olayları okuyucuya aktarır. Browning bu şiirinde insan doğasının bozulmuş ve çirkin tarafını kriminal düşünceyi sergileyerek kanıtlamıştır.

Dramatik monolog tekniğiyle yazılan şiir, Porphyria ve sevgilisinin arasındaki ilişkiyi anlatırken üzücü ve şok edici bir sonla bitirir. Sevgili olay anına kadar olan biten her şeyi detaylıca anlatır.

Şiir zaman, mekan ve hava durumu ile ilgili detayları (II. 1-5) verdikten sonra Porphyria'nın kulübeye girişini ve yaptığı aktiviteleri anlatarak başlar (II. 6-13). İşlerini bitirip yanına oturduğu anı ölümsüzleştirmek istediğini fark eden sevgili, Porphyria'nın bir tutam saçını kullanarak onu boğar. Porphyria'nın da ölmek istediğini ve mutlu olduğunu vurgular çünkü aralarındaki statü ve Porphyria'nın ailesinin düşünceleri artık önemli değildir (II. 14-41). Şiirin son üç satırı okuyucuya büyük bir tedirginlik yaratırken şaşkınlığa sebep olur. Okuyucu sevgilinin epizodik bellek yardımıyla anlattıklarını aslında Porphyria ile yan yana otururken aktardığını o anda anlar.

Çalışmanın bulguları: Robert Browning'in "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" ve "Porphyria's Lover" şiirlerinde otonoetik bilinç, 3W teorisi ya da ileriye dönük düşünce gerektiren epizodik bellek kullanılmıştır. Epizodik bellek kullanımı şiir kişilerinin karakterlerine ayna tutmuş ve anormal psikolojilerini açığa vurmuştur. İspanyol rahip, gerçek karakterini epizodik anılarını ve ileriye dönük düşüncelerini ifade ederek gösterirken, isimsiz sevgili ölümcül sonuçları olan içsel kaosunu rahatsız edici bir sakinlikle epizodik anılarını kullanarak aktarmıştır.

## 1. Introduction

Memory assists in structuring personal identity and human behaviour. It is a complicated system which provides a basis for an individual's psychology and behaviours for the present and the future. Memory also functions as a vault in which memories from the past are stored to be reinvigorated when needed. Fundamentally, memory could be divided into two main types: short-term and long-term memory. Long-term memory is composed of explicit and implicit memories. While explicit memories are consciously and deliberately recalled, implicit memories occur unconsciously and involuntarily. Implicit memory contains priming and procedural memories in which priming uses stimulus to influence response unconsciously and procedural memory controls motor movements. On the other hand, explicit memory is further divided into semantic and episodic memories. Episodic memory allows the individual to recall memories of personal experience in which the person reflects on a certain event from a certain period of time. Conversely, semantic memory is concerned with the 'general knowledge of the world' (Queensland Brain Institute, 2019:para.2).

When memory in literature is considered, one can observe that memory not only provides a historical, social, and religious background of the literary character, but it also supports the construction of the individual by taking into consideration the past and the future. However, does personal memory assist in exposing literary characters' true identity? In other words, can episodic memory be a useful tool for the author that aids in revealing the true nature of the literary character? With these questions in mind, this article aims to analyse the occurrences of episodic memories in Robert Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" and "Porphyria's Lover". In order to make a close reading

of the poems, it is crucial to understand how the memory system works, the types of memory and what episodic memory is.

## 2. How does memory work?

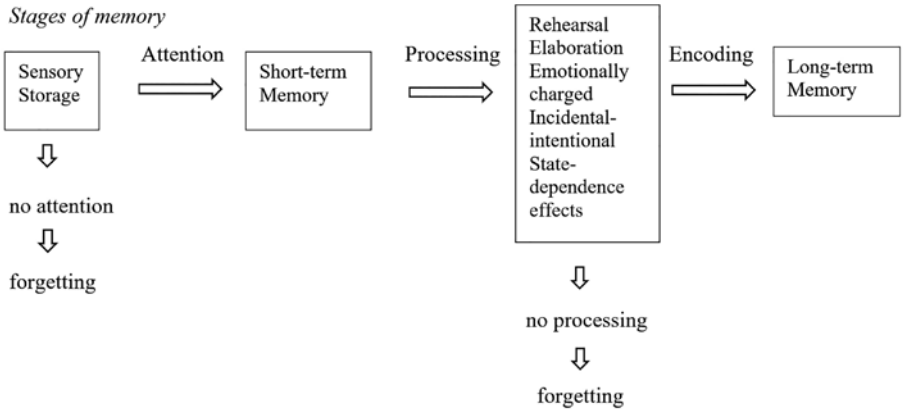
Schoenberg and Scott (2011) assert that individual memory contains three memory stages: sensory, short-term, and long-term memory. The "sensory storage" (Schoenberg-Scott, 2011:181), by definition, is connected to the five senses and lasts not more than a few seconds if not repeated. Therefore, to have a complete transition into the short-term memory stage, the received senses must be identified and organized. Recognised as "working memory" as well, the second stage is known to be the short-term memory (Schoenberg-Scott, 2011:181). According to Schoenberg and Scott (2011:181), the estimated capacity of the short-term memory is seven elements at a time which can be improved by "chunking", that is to say, by organizing the elements into pieces of information. The easiest way to establish this is to connect the elements with others that one knows. However, the temporary stored information, alike the sensory phase, relies on reiteration, that is to say, if one does not repeat the information there is a possibility of forgetting.

Finally, the long-term memory which holds the greatest of length, allows one to access at will. In order to secure the information at hand, the long-term memory applies several procedures such as repetition and an elaboration of the subject. In addition, the condition of one's internal state which could be positive or negative, generates an easier encoding of the knowledge, whereas connections to previous learned subjects or incidents accelerates the course. On the other hand, the state-dependence effect which is connected to one's physical and emotional harmony, likewise intensifies the efficiency of the encoding and retrieval process. Furthermore, knowledge which has been learned in one environment can be retrieved at the same environment since it performs as a stimulus (Schoenberg-Scott, 2011:182). Figure 1 exhibits the stages of memory

while it displays how knowledge is relocated through the phases and the requirements that are needed to transfer from one stage to another.

**Figure 1**

*Stages of memory*




*Note*: Adapted from *The Little Black Book of Neuropsychology: A Syndrome-Based Approach*, by M. R. Schoenberg & J. G. Scott, 2011, p.182. Copyright 2011 by Springer.

## 3. Types of Memory

Long-term memory contains two key types of memory: "implicit memory" which is also known to be nondeclarative and "explicit memory" which is the opposite, that is, declarative and a conscious structure. Implicit memory is concerned with skills, automatic behaviours, or processes in which one mostly is not capable of remembering the origins. Essentially, it incorporates complex human behaviour and motor skills (Queensland Brain Institute, 2019:para.2). An example would be using your computer in class to take notes or swimming. Therefore, the process in which involuntary memories interlink with past experiences unconsciously is entitled as implicit memories. Priming and procedural memories are the subdivisions of implicit memory. Priming is concerned with stimuli since it is the circumstance of being influenced by any factor and responds accordingly (Queensland Brain

Institute, 2019:para.2). For instance, in most cases, the word cow will induce the word milk or the color green will evoke the word grass or trees. On the other hand, procedural memory, by definition, is related to motor skills which engage in the execution of certain procedures. An example would be driving a car or cooking an Aussie meat pie.

On the other hand, explicit memory is concerned with consciously recollected memories which at the same time are referred to as declarative memory. It is the condition of recalling facts, faces, names, or occurrences. It is further divided into semantic and episodic memory. Semantic memory is related to the common knowledge of the world and generates accessibility for retrieval (Queensland Brain Institute, 2019:para.2). An example would be knowing that the longest river on earth is the river Nile or knowing the chemical formula of water which is H2O (two hydrogen atoms plus one oxygen). In contrast, episodic memory aids an individual to recollect the moments in time which have been personally experienced. The individual consciously thinks about that moment's details. For instance, the memory of one's first day at school or the time you had lunch with your friend are episodic memories. Nonetheless, episodic memory is not only connected to the past. Therefore, before elucidating any further, it is important to understand what precisely episodic memory comprises of.

## 4. What is episodic memory?

In 1983 Endel Tulving in his *Elements of Episodic Memory* asserts that his 1972 presentation of the topic was missing two important points which were of grave importance. He believes that only with these elements his theory would be complete. He argues that in order to evaluate episodic memory accurately the questions 'what', 'where', and 'when' are to be asked. Secondly, he indicates that in order to define a memory as episodic "conscious awareness" is one of the key conditions (Tulving, 2002:3). Enhanced study

demonstrates that conscious awareness has two types: autonoetic which aids in consciously experiencing a memory and noetic which relates to the intentional recollection of the general knowledge of the world (Tulving, Chronesthesia 313). In addition, Tulving indicates that episodic memory is connected to mental time travel. He asserts that an individual employs autonoetic consciousness to revive the moment in the past with the assistance of mental time travel (2002: 313). Tulving also claims that mental time travel not only works for the past but also aids in future-thinking (1993: 67) by enabling the individual to experience the future before it happens. He points out how episodic memory is unique since it is the only memory type that allows mental time travel.

Moreover, the 3W Theory, that is to say, the "what", "when", and "where" theory is developed by Tulving in correlation with mental time travel. He asserts that episodic memory embodies "what" is recollected from past events, "where" the event has occurred and "when" it has happened. However, the 3W Theory can only be associated with episodic memory if there is autonoetic consciousness which is the individual's personal experience (Rock, 2018:33). To elaborate, one might be able to watch the *Tour de France* race on television but the experience of actually being at the competition is essentially different. Although mental time travel occurs when one recollects the moment in which one witnesses the race on television, the episodic act is not experienced since there is no autonoetic consciousness. There only occurs a recollection of autobiographical memory.

Tulving also refers to "the human sense of time" in his *Chronesthesia: Conscious Awareness of Subjective Time* (2002: 312), which allows an individual to recollect the past and mental time travel into the future. He has coined the term "chronesthesia" which indicates that human beings are continually cognizant of the past and the future (2002: 312).

Finally, it is essential to differentiate episodic memory from

"autobiographical memory". Autobiographical memory comprises of occurrence-related knowledge, such as experiences, specific aspects of events, sentimental incidents, facts, or uncertainties (Anderson-Dewhurst, 2009:369). It employs episodic and semantic memory together. Therefore, it would be acceptable to indicate that to uncover and understand episodic memory one could investigate the existence of autonoetic consciousness and find the answers to the 3W theory which may possibly be from the past, future or simply in counterfactual situations.

## 5. Episodic Memory in "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" by Robert Browning

The close reading of Robert Browning's dramatic monologues exhibits the fact that they are written as a text which is spoken by an imaginary or historical person who is experiencing a crisis in which reveals the true nature of the literary character (Fletcher, 1908, p.108). One of his most famous dramatic monologues is the "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (Browning, 1979:62). Browning creates a Spanish monk who is enraged, encompassed with hatred and jealousy towards a fellow monk. The poem represents true morality by showing true hypocrisy. The poem starts with the monk expressing his anger in such a way that it indicates he is not able to do much about it:

Gr-r-r – there go, my heart's abhorrence!
Water your damned flowerpots, do!
If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
God's blood, would not mine kill you!
What? Your myrtle bush wants trimming?
Oh that rose has prior claims –
Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
Hell dry you up with its flames! (II. 1-8)

The poem starts with a nonverbal sound which suggests anger and revulsion towards a fellow monk named Brother Lawrence and the speaker

defines him as his heart's detestation. It is overt that the monk is watching Brother Lawrence from afar who is attending to the monastery garden. As Brother Lawrence waters the flowers, the speaker is so beset with hate that he points out if hatred had the capacity to murder, he swears that his would have done the job without hesitation. It seems from the following remark of the speaker that Brother Lawrence comments on the myrtle bush and carries on towards the roses. Therefore, the monk asks a rhetorical question with a touch of sarcasm. He states that the roses have prior claim which implies that Brother Lawrence awards more attention towards the roses than to the myrtle bush. As Brother Lawrence fills the grey vase with water to the top edge, the monk curses using a contrast. He wants Brother Lawrence to "dry up" (I. 8) from the flames of hell. The second part informs the reader of the conversation topics which Brother Lawrence likes to talk about at meal time and the italics which the poet uses indicate that these are Brother Lawrence's exact words:

> At the meal we sit together:
> *Salve tibi!* I must hear
> Wise talk of the weather,
> Sort of season, time of year:
> *Not a plenteous cork crop: scarcely*
> *Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:*
> *What's the Latin name for "parsley"?*
> What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout? (II. 9-16)

Episodic memory is overtly seen in this part of the poem since the speaker is drawing attention to a conversation which he has had with Brother Lawrence that seems to be a tedious regular event. Episodic memory identifies with the notion of autonoetic consciousness and the 3W theory which search for the answers to the questions of "what", "where", and "when". At this stage of the poem the monk is recollecting moments of the past.

He states that they are seated together at the table which could be at dinner,

lunch or even breakfast since the speaker does not provide details on the subject. It seems that Brother Lawrence is of a higher rank as he is the first to speak at the table and the speaker points out his favourite topics of conversation. As he salutes the monk, he begins his speech by chatting about the weather in which the speaker ironically points out to be "wise". He states that the weather was not suitable for growth of anything, and that he hopes for oak-galls[1]. Subsequently, Brother Lawrence asks the Latin name for parsley which the speaker finds unnecessary and unsuitable since Latin is the language of ceremony and not for daily use. It seems that the speaker believes Brother Lawrence is boasting of his language skills and trying to show how he is able to speak Latin. In return, the speaker asks another rhetorical question which indicates a pun. He asks the Greek name for Swine's Snout which is a phrase for a rare dandelion[2] in the 16th century but also means pig's nose. Since the monk is highlighting the fact that Brother Lawrence sits next to him at meal time and has a "wise talk", autonoetic consciousness is apparent. The speaker has mind travelled to that exact moment in time. While the "wise talk" which the speaker "must hear" answers "what" is being recollected from the past, the meal hall at the monastery answers the question "where" of the 3W theory. Although there is no specific time which would answer the question "when", it could be stated that it is meal time since there is no definite indication of breakfast, lunch or dinner. The next lines of the speaker suggest jealousy and aggression with the snapping of the lily which is one of Brother Lawrence's flowers:

> Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
> Laid with care on our own shelf!
> With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
> And a goblet for ourself,
> Rinsed like something sacrificial

1 "Galls are damages and saliences which happen to a tree by an abnormal increase of plants texture due to the activities of some insects called parasite or some other hanger like tick and also some mono-cells" (Pirozi-Adeli vd. 2015:9)
2 According to www.lexico.com Thomas Nashe was the first to use "Swine's Snout" in his writings with this meaning.

Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps
Marked with L. for our initial!
(He-he! There his lily snaps!) (II. 17-24)

This part which is empowered with an insincere use of the plural pronoun 'we' which is normally used for royalty, indicates mockery and sarcasm. The subject is a continuation of the second part. The speaker now talks about how Brother Lawrence has personalized items and the routines he has with regards to these items. Brother Lawrence owns a polished dinner plate, a new spoon which was donated and a personal goblet which is engraved with his initial. He places the dinner plate on his own shelf carefully with the new spoon. Drawing attention to the details, the speaker is mainly pointing out how monks are not supposed to have possessions (English Standard Version Bible, 2021:Act 4:32). The speaker puts emphasis on how he thoroughly washes the goblet he owns before he uses it, as if it was a tool for a ceremony. He also indicates that there is the letter 'L' for Lawrence engraved on the goblet which implies ownership. It is overt that the speaker is there and sees the actions of Brother Lawrence which points towards autonoetic consciousness. The speaker mind travels to the past once again to relive his memory. He is so extremely caught up in the moment that he cannot prevent himself from being irritated which results in him breaking off one of Brother Lawrence's lilies. This spiteful action brings pleasure to his heart. In connection with the 3W Theory, the speaker elucidates Brother Lawrence's attitude towards his "belongings" which answers the question "what" is being remembered. The subject of this part of the poem is a continuance of the one before. Since Brother Lawrence prefers a very clean goblet before he uses it, the question "when" is answered as in before meal-time. Finally, the answer to the question "where" would be the meal hall at the monastery. Without doubt, there is episodic memory present. The next lines provide the speaker's astonishment of Brother Lawrence's behaviour towards women:

Saint, forsooth! While brown Dolores
Squats outside the Covent bank
With Sanchicha telling stories,
Steeping tresses in the tank,
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
- Can't I see his dead eye glow,
Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's
(That is, if he'd let it show) (II. 25-32)

This part of the poem starts with the utterance of disbelief. With a touch of sarcasm, he points out how Brother Lawrence could not be considered to be a saint. He portrays how Brother Lawrence is connected to the sin of lust just like he did in the part before by associating him to the sin of pride with regards to his possessions. Although there is no specific time allocated to this part of the poem, it is apparent that the speaker has seen Brother Lawrence watching Dolores and Sanchicha who are most probably the help from the village. While Sanchicha tells stories and wets her hair from the water tank, Dolores crouches outside the nunnery. The speaker also describes Sanchicha's hair, that is, shiny, bluish black in color and thick like horsehair which suggests that essentially the speaker admires the women he is talking about. The speaker indicates that he can see Brother Lawrence's eyes fixed on the women with lust and "glow". However, at the end of this part the speaker asserts that the lust which he had just described would be seen only if Brother Lawrence had allowed it. This signifies that the speaker only "thinks" that Brother Lawrence stares at the women in lust. Autonoetic consciousness is employed here since this part of the poem reveals how the speaker secretly watches Brother Lawrence and the women mentioned. While Brother Lawrence's observation of women wetting their hair and telling stories answers the question of "what" is being remembered, outside the convent answers the question "where". Since there is no indication of time, one could only presume that the event happens at

day time, which answers the question "when". Thus, with both autonoetic consciousness and the 3W theory present, it can be stated that there is episodic memory in this part of the poem. Next, the speaker resumes his memory of the meal-time in the following part of the poem:

When he finishes refection,
Knife and fork he never lays
Cross-wise, to my recollection,
As do I, in Jesu's praise.
I the Trinity illustrate,
Drinking watered orange pulp-
In three sips the Arian frustrate:
While he drains his at one gulp. (II. 33-40)

The speaker describes how Brother Lawrence and himself are different from each other in the way they behave at the dinner table. The speaker remembers that Brother Lawrence does not lay his knife and fork in a cross shape which honours Jesus Christ once he finishes his dinner. On the other hand, the speaker points out how he particularly places them cross-wise since he is a good Christian and praises Jesus. In addition, the speaker calls attention to how he sips the orange juice in three steps to demonstrate his belief in the Trinity which also would infuriate Arian[3]. In contrast, Brother Lawrence does not take any of these into consideration and like a bad Christian swallows down the orange juice at one gulp. Given that the speaker provides evidence of being present at dinner and afterwards, there is autonoetic consciousness. While the actions of both the speaker and Brother Lawrence provide for the question "what" is being recollected, the time after dinner answers the question "when" the incident had occurred. Furthermore, since the event takes place at the meal hall of the monastery, the matter of "where" the episode takes place

3 According to Maurice Wiles' "Archetypal Heresy": "The heresy (Arianism) is described as guilty of five major errors: denial of the Trinity, of divinity of the Son, of the eternal generation of the Son, of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, together with the affirmation Christ is to be called God not with reference to his essence, but by reason of his domination" (2001:49)

is resolved. As a consequence, it can be indicated that this section contains episodic memory. The speaker in the next part of the poem uses sarcasm by employing rhetorical questions which are addressed to Brother Lawrence:

Oh, those melons? If he's able,
We're to have a feast! So nice!
One goes to the Abbot's table,
All of us get each a slice.
How go on your flowers? None double?
Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
Strange!-And I, too, at such trouble,
Keep them close-nipped on the sly! (II. 41-48)

As he points out to the melons, he indicates that they will have a feast if Brother Lawrence is able to grow them properly. He adds that while a whole melon will be given to the Abbot, everyone else will be rewarded with a slice. Subsequently, he asks if the flowers are blooming, if they have a double head and if he is able to see any fruit giving buds. Although he knows the answer to these questions, he indicates that it is a strange occurrence. Then, he confesses what he had been doing all along; that he had been cutting off the fruit buds close to the stem secretly in order to prevent any fruit from growing. Since there is no evidence of the 3W theory, this portion may be accepted as an autobiographical memory only if one does not consider that the speaker is future thinking a conversation that he will make with Brother Lawrence, as that would indicate episodic memory. The following section of the poem begins with the speaker's evil will to corrupt Brother Lawrence:

There's a great text in Galatians,
Once you trip on it, entails
Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
One sure, if another fails:
If I trip him just a-dying,

Sure of heaven as sure can be,
Spin him round and send him flying
Off to hell, a Manichee? (II. 49-56)

The speaker draws attention to a challenging text from the Bible which he claims to hold twenty nine curses. He believes that if he succeeds in having Brother Lawrence interpret the "Galatians" and read the curses, he could use one of them just before Brother Lawrence dies. His thought is that if one does not work, another will. Brother Lawrence is quite sure that he will go to Heaven, so by doing this the speaker aims to send him to the opposite direction, that is, Hell like the heretic Manichee[4]. Simply by pointing out that he will send Brother Lawrence to Hell, the speaker essentially believes that Brother Lawrence is a pious monk. It is apparent that the speaker plans for the future. With future thinking, he puts himself into the moment where he tricks Brother Lawrence into interpreting the hidden texts so he can go to Hell on his death-bed. He mind travels into the future which makes this event an episodic memory. Episodic memory not only looks into the past as in remembering memories, but it is also connected to the future or counterfactual situations. The next part of the poem contains another plot of the speaker to damn Brother Lawrence's soul:

Or, my scrofulous French novel
On gray paper with blunt type!
Simply glance at it, you grovel
Hand and foot in Belial's gripe:
If I double down its pages
At the woeful sixteenth print,
When he gathers his greengages,
Ope a sieve an slip it in't? (II. 57-64)

The speaker states that he can either make him interpret the curses or if

4 According to www.lexico.com a Manichee is a follower of Manicheism which has Christian, Gnostic, and pagan elements and was founded in the 3rd century in Persia.

this does not work he will secretly find a way to deceive Brother Lawrence into reading a morally corrupt French novel. He states that he owns an immoral French novel which has turned gray presumably from overreading and that has bold large letters. He asserts that the moment one takes a glimpse of it, that individual crouches and crawls into Satan's grip. He plans to bend the page like a bookmark at the most immoral chapter and secretly place the book into Brother Lawrence's fruit basket when he gathers plums from the monastery garden. It is overt that the speaker is mentally putting himself into the future, that is to say, he is mind travelling to the moment of his plan and imagining himself secretly placing the notorious French novel into Brother Lawrence's basket which indicates autonoetic consciousness and future thinking. It is overt that episodic memory is present also in this part of the poem. The final part of the poem becomes more interesting in comparison to others:

> Or, there's Satan! – One might venture
> Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
> Such a flaw in the indenture
> As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
> Blasted lay that rose-acacia
> We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Zine*…
> 'St, there's Vespers! *Plenia gratia*
> *Ave, Virgo*! Gr-r-r – you swine! (II. 65-72)

The speaker seems to be at the top of his agitation. Finally, he considers another plan which is associated with the Devil. He argues that one can always take a great risk and make a contract with Satan in such a way that the agreement can have a flaw which Satan will not notice until it is too late. Although this plan seems to be unrealistic, one might think that the speaker is willing to trade his soul for Brother Lawrence's removal of life. However, this could be considered as future thinking depending on the reality of Satan. Since the speaker believes in Heaven and Hell it is possible that he considers

Satan to be real. Therefore, this part of the poem indicates episodic memory since the speaker puts himself into the future and makes a contract to get rid of a fellow monk. While mind travelling to the future occurs, autonoetic consciousness is present. In the following lines, it is understood that the speaker crushes and tramples on a flower named rose-acacia which Brother Lawrence seems to be proud of. Then he either utters the beginning of a curse on Brother Lawrence or hears the bells ringing for the evening prayer '*Hy, Zy, Zine*…' (Aiken, 1979:379). The speaker is so angry and annoyed that he mixes up the order of his evening prayer and grunts by comparing Brother Lawrence to a pig. As demonstrated in detail above, there are several occasions in the poem that provide a background for the episodic memory theory. The next section of this article will investigate the instances of episodic memory by a close reading of Browning's "Porphyria's Lover".

## 6. Episodic Memory in "Porphyria's Lover" by Robert Browning

Browning's certain dramatic monologues demonstrate the immoral and grotesque side of human nature by exposing their criminal minds. One of his greatest poems which reveals abnormal psychology[5] is "Porphyria's Lover" (Browning, 1979:74). Similar to the "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister", Browning does not provide a name for the speaker. The dramatic monologue is about a love affair between Porphyria and her lover with a devastating, or rather, a disturbing finale. The poem begins with a gloomy setting as the speaker describes how his night started:

The rain set early in tonight,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,

5 According to Ronald J Comer's *Abnormal Psychology*, "Patterns of psychological abnormality are typically deviant, (different, extreme, unusual, perhaps even bizarre), distressing (unpleasant and upsetting to the person), dysfunctional (interfering with the person's ability to conduct daily activities in a constructive way) and possibly dangerous" (Comer, 2009:2).

And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break. (II. 1-5)

The rain started early that night and the wind quickly accompanied it and tore down the tops of the elm trees just for wicked fun and soon after stirred up the waves in the lake. It is overt that the description of the setting indicates an uneasiness that the speaker is experiencing. The wind is personified and seems to be acting like a mean child. It is overt that Browning uses personification to foreshadow the future. The speaker states he listened to all that was happening outside with a heart which was ready to break, almost as if he is pointing out that he had a feeling in which he was going to do something terrible and the storm outside was a reflection of the storm in his heart. Since the whole poem is alike a confession of a criminal mind of the night of crime, it is overt that the speaker uses his autonoetic consciousness throughout the poem. However, the 3W theory which is a constant of the episodic memory is able to find the answers to its questions throughout the poem. The only apparent answer is for the question "when" the event had happened and that is at night. The following lines meticulously portray the actions of Porphyria the moment she enters the cottage:

When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side (II. 6-14)

When Porphyria arrives she quickly shuts the door and leaves the cold and storm outside. Then she gets down on her knees and cheers up the fireplace

which makes the cottage warmer. Her comfortable behaviour indicates that she is familiar with the place. From these lines it is overt that the event has taken place in a cottage which answers the question "where" the event had happened from the 3W theory. The speaker describes every movement of Porphyria which indicates a disturbingly careful observation. Having done all those mentioned above, she stands up and takes off her cloak and shawl which are soaked and dripping. As soon as she takes off and puts aside her dirty gloves she unties her hat and lets her damp hair down. Finally, she is able to sit by his side. Until this part of the poem which seems to be a routine because Porphyria is very comfortable in her actions, the speaker provides the reader with a description of the outside weather and an account of Porphyria's activities in the cottage which presents episodic memory. However, the answer to the question "what" had happened is yet to come. Although the following lines describe an act of affection of Porphyria, a confusion in accepting it is clearly seen in the thoughts of the speaker:

> And called me. When no voice replied,
> She put my arm about her waist,
> And made smooth white shoulder bare,
> And all her yellow hair displaced,
> And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
> And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
> Murmuring how she loved me – she
> Too weak, for all her heart's endeavour,
> To set its struggling passion free
> From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
> And give herself to me for ever.
> But passion sometimes would prevail,
> Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain
> A sudden thought of one so pale

For love of her, and all in vain:

So, she was come through wind and rain. (II. 15-30)

When Porphyria calls his name, the speaker states that he does not answer. As a reaction, she puts his arm around her waist and clears her hair out of the way so that she could make his cheek lie on her shoulder. This might indicate that she is wearing a strapless evening gown and that maybe she was at a party before she arrived. Then she whispers that she loves him. The act of nestling up to the speaker is an indication of intimacy. Suddenly, as if complaining to the reader, the speaker accuses Porphyria of being too weak although her heart desires him. He points out that she struggles to cut her ties off from her pride and society which he finds it to be vain. There might be a probability that Porphyria is afraid to be called a loose woman. That is why she is not able to give herself to the speaker for good. She wishes to share intimacy with the speaker but her pride which is installed on her by society is in the way since society demands marriage to be together[6]. The speaker points out that right at that moment, passion could overcome any obstacle and not even the feast which Porphyria had sneaked out of could have stopped her. The word "feast" indicates that Porphyria is of a higher class since only rich people are able to have feasts. In addition, the clothing items that she undresses supports the idea of Porphyria being from a wealthy family. This overtly exhibits class difference between Porphyria's lover who lives in a cottage and herself which suggests that the lover seems to believe everything is in vain since the class difference is a great obstacle that cannot allow them to be together. The speaker unexpectedly defines himself as pale and in love with her but without hope. The last line provides two meanings in which the first one is the literal meaning. She secretly escapes the happy feast to be with her lover although there is a storm outside. The second meaning is metaphorical; since they are

6 Victorian middle-class men 'displayed a lack of self-control resulting in incontinence' (Davidoff, 1979:91) Society's solution was to create a dual vision of women (the angel in the house or the fallen) and control middle-class men by marrying them off with middle-class ladies who were seen as 'agents of salvation'(Davidoff, 1979:91).

not fit for each other, her family's treatment to their love will be like the literal storm outside. In the following lines the speaker states his joy as he sees pride and happiness in Porphyria's eyes.

> Be sure I looked up at her eyes
> Happy and proud; at last I knew
> Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
> Made my heart swell, and still it grew
> While I debated what to do. (II. 31-35)

As soon as the speaker looks into her eyes he understands that Porphyria is happy and proud which indicates that she had found the courage to defy society's rules. Although the speaker is astonished to see that Porphyria worships him, he is thrilled. However, the speaker calls attention to an internal conflict. Previous to Porphyria's arrival he was in a miserable mood, but as soon as she appears he is delighted and thoughtful at the same time. Until this part of the poem a romantic story is introduced: a rich girl and a poor boy from different classes who have a love affair against all odds. After the speaker becomes emotionally intimate with Porphyria an unexpected event occurs in the following scene which answers the main part of the 3W question "what" happened:

> That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
> Perfectly pure and good: I found
> A thing to do, and all her hair
> In one long yellow string I wound
> Three times her little throat around,
> And strangled her. No pain felt she;
> I am quite sure she felt no pain. (II. 36-42)

This is the instant that the speaker turns into a murderer. He sees that Porphyria is at the highest point of her beauty and pureness. To maintain her as she is and to lock that moment in time, the speaker wraps a string of Porphyria's

hair around her throat and chokes her to death. He upholds the idea that she did not feel any pain as he was strangling her and repeats his claim as if he is trying to convince himself that he is right. As stated before, this section of the poem answers the question of "what" happened which is connected to the 3W theory. Subsequent to the act of murder, the speaker portrays Porphyria's dead body as if she is still alive:

As a shut bud that holds a bee,
I warily oped her lids: again
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once more
Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:
I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still: (II. 43-51)

The speaker compares Porphyria's eyelids to a flower bud and her eyeballs to a bee which almost sounds innocent if one could disregard the fact that he had just murdered her. As he opens her eyelid he sees that it is still the same, intact without any sign of damage or one might say, no indication of death. Next, the speaker loosens the hair which he had used to strangle her and sees that color rushes back to her face while he kisses her on the cheek. Although it is overt that the last pump of the heart brings life to her face one last time, the speaker believes that she blushes because of his kiss. He arranges the lifeless body of Porphyria in a way that she leans her head against his shoulder just like she had done in the beginning of the poem. There occurs to be no obvious reason[7] for Porphyria's murder other than the ill-mind of the speaker which is also overt in the following lines:

The smiling rosy little head,

7 There is no obvious reason such as an accident, or a fight, or any kind of extreme situation that would have led to the murder of Porphyria.

So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would be heard. (II. 52-57)

The speaker indicates he is delighted that Porphyria had acquired her greatest wish which was to be with her lover. He believes that by dying Porphyria gained courage and was able to dispose of everything she disdained, like society's standards for love and her family who would not have wanted nor allowed her to be with the speaker. Thus, he believes that she was able to gain his love by rejecting everything she scorned. He adds that Porphyria essentially wanted God to hear her wish which was to be with her lover but she was not sure if her prayers would be heard. One is not only startled by the last three lines of the poem but is also assured that the speaker has a mental illness: And thus we sit together now, / And all night long we have not stirred, / And yet God has not said a word! (II. 58-60).

Now, the speaker and Porphyria who has leaned against his shoulder with her long yellow hair are sitting together which is almost like a scene from a romantic movie. The speaker states that they had not moved an inch all night and God had not said anything. He expects God to punish him which suggests that he knows he had done something wrong. However, since he is not punished he thinks that God approves his actions.

All things considered, it is apparent that this poem contains episodic memory. Since the speaker is recollecting everything that had happened that night and portrays everything in detail; such as the weather outside, Porphyria's actions, how he strangles her and how he places and supports her body in a specific position, autonoetic consciousness is apparent in the poem. While the event recollected occurs at night and answers the question "when" in the 3W theory, the cottage of the speaker provides for the question

"where" the event had happened. Finally, the murder of Porphyria and its details supports the question "what" is being remembered that is associated with the 3W theory. Once the presence of autonoetic consciousness and the 3W theory is established, episodic memory is overtly seen in the poem.

## 7. **Conclusion**

In this brief study, my objective was to close read and analyse Robert Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" and "Porphyria's Lover" while investigating the presence of episodic memories which require autonoetic consciousness and the 3W theory or future thinking in which allows the individual to place herself/himself into a future moment that is being imagined. While the Spanish monk reveals his true character to the reader by expressing his episodic memories and future thinking, the un-named lover exposes his inner turmoil that literally had a deadly effect on Porphyria by delivering his episodic memory in a disturbingly calm manner. It is overt that Browning could not have known the process or the working of the episodic memory theory. However, in order to create an impact on the reader Browning did know how to use the characters' memories in which he depicts unforgettable personalities who are not what they seem to be. For instance, the Spanish monk who is annoyed and at times furious with his fellow monk Brother Lawrence, reveals how he is spying as he talks about his episodic memories. It seems he is trying to convince himself that Brother Lawrence reeks of immorality while he is the righteous monk without fault. However, his attempt to appear moral, as he accuses Brother Lawrence with decadence, swiftly changes in to exposing his true nature. The occurrence of Brother Lawrence talking to Dolores and Sanchicha as the speaker watches and accuses him of having carnal thoughts uncovers his own thoughts instead in the way he depicts Sanchicha's hair. Other improper behaviour that discloses character would be how he ridicules Brother Lawrence's knowledge of Latin, his attitude towards the spoon and goblet, his behaviour at the dinner table and the way

he attends to his fruit-garden. In addition, the speaker plots to destroy Brother Lawrence's commitment to God with a French novel. He also considers to make an agreement with Satan simply to eliminate Brother Lawrence. On the other hand, Porphyria's lover who elaborately describes everything that had occurred on the night of the murder, focuses on the chain of events and thoughts which aids in Porphyria's destruction. Although the stormy weather at the beginning of the poem essentially foreshadows the events to come, the lover's idea of their relationship, what he thinks of Porphyria and her family, how he believes that she blushes with his kiss after he had suffocated her to death, the way he poses the dead body and his belief that he did not do anything wrong since God had not punished him, demonstrates his distorted and ill mind. Therefore, the analysis of Browning's "Porphyria's Lover" and "The Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" without doubt corroborates the idea that episodic memory not only provides a background for the literary characters, but also aids in the exposure of their true identities which strengthens the claim that episodic memory is a valuable tool that writers can use to create their literary characters.

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