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AUTHORS: Merve ALTIN

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# LONG NARRATIVE POETRY AS A LYRIC AND NARRATIVE HYBRID FORM: A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF DAVID JONES' IN PARENTHESIS[*]

## MELEZ BİR TÜR OLARAK UZUN ANLATI ŞİİRİ: DAVID JONES'UN IN PARENTHESIS ADLI ŞİİRİNİN BİÇEMSEL BİR İNCELEMESİ

• **Merve Altın**

*Arş. Gör. Dr., Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi, Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Anabilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, mrvdmrts.altin@gmail.com*

*Abstract*

*This study presents a stylistic analysis of David Jones' long narrative poem In Parenthesis in order to find out and discuss the prominent stylistic features that contribute to the hybrid nature of the poem. In Parenthesis embodies the stylistic features associated with lyric, narrative and drama. A stylistic reading of the poem proposes that the generic hybridity of the poem is supported by the style variations, graphological deviations and other internal deviations that foreground the generic and stylistic varieties in the text. This study aims to explore that a stylistic analysis of the poem is important in defining the long narrative poem as a hybrid form.*

*Öz*

*Bu çalışmanın amacı David Jones'un In Parenthesis adlı şiirinin biçemsel bir incelemesini yaparak şiirin melez yapısına katkıda bulunan önemli biçemsel ögeleri bulmak ve tartışmaktır. In Parenthesis, lirik şiir, anlatı türleri ve oyun türlerine özgü biçemsel özellikler göstermektedir. Şiirin biçemsel incelemesi sonucunda, metin içindeki biçemsel değişkenlerin, grafolojik sapmaların ve diğer metin içi sapmaların şiirdeki biçemsel melezliğe katkıda bulunduğu ortaya konmuştur. Şiirin biçemsel incelemesi uzun anlatı şiirinin melez bir tür olarak tanımının yapılması için önem arz etmektedir.*

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[*] This paper is a part of my Ph.D. thesis entitled "A Stylistic Analysis on the Redefinition of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Long Narrative Poetry".

### Introduction

This paper aims to construct a reading of David Jones' *In Parenthesis* (1937) as a lyric and narrative hybrid long poem from the perspective of stylistics, focusing on its form and stylistic playfulness. The poem is going to be analysed by the methods provided by stylistics in order to find out the stylistic peculiarities of the poem that contribute to its lyric and narrative hybrid nature both in terms of form and content. The objective of this study is to reveal the stylistic features of *In Parenthesis*, and to redefine it as a lyric and narrative hybrid long poem through using the stylistic features peculiar to a hybrid form.

Long narrative poetry as a hybrid form is *"interstitial, a liminal, always becoming form that does not privilege either poetry or narrative, but rather finds power in a perpetual give and take between their techniques"* (Kroll, 2010, p. 1). Therefore, in order to understand and define *In Parenthesis* as a long narrative poem, both the lyric and narrative constituents of it should be addressed in a holistic manner. To that end, stylistics that provides systematic methods and approaches in the analysis of poems, plays and fictional prose is used in this study. In general, for the analysis of hybrid texts such as long narrative poems, it is claimed that "*we need a further hybrid of critical approaches, one that combines poetic theory with narrative theory*" (Morgan, 2003, p. 502). In this sense, stylistics can well enhance one's understanding of long narrative poetry as lyric and narrative hybrid, without underestimating the value of lyric in order to assert the value of narrative, or vice versa.

Stylistics is basically defined as "*an approach to the analysis of (literary) text using linguistic description*" (Short, 1996, p. 1). The term "style" can denote more than one concept. Leech and Short argue that "*[s]ometimes the term has been applied to the linguistic habits of a particular writer; at other times it has been applied to the way language is used in a particular genre, period, school writing or some combination of these"* (p. 11). Yet, the major focal point of stylistics is the style of texts of all kinds. The focus is on the text as the text itself reflects "*a homogeneous and specific use of language*" (12). Accordingly, stylistics is primarily interested in the revelation of linguistic characteristics of all types of texts and spoken language as well.

A stylistic analysis has three main phases: the overall interpretation of a text, the detailed analysis of "*significant stylistic features*", and the evaluation and the interpretation of the text using linguistic descriptions (Short, 1996, p. 17). Such an analysis seeks to explicate the meaning of the text and how the text comes to mean what it means through in-depth examination of the significant stylistic features, and it does not necessarily aim at coming up with new or startling explanations. Stylistics is argued to be a "scientific" approach as it proposes well-established methods and a technical vocabulary in order to arrive at concrete and objective explanations.

Certain stylistic and formal characteristics in the composition of *In Parenthesis* will be analysed by the methods and terminology provided by Mick Short and Geoffrey Leech. Short's *Exploring the Language of Poems, Play and Prose* and *Style in Fiction* co-authored with Leech are seminal works which are considered as key textbooks in the field. Foregrounded, deviated and parallel structures, style variations, the discourse structures, linguistic indicators of viewpoint, speech and thought presentations in the poem will be analysed so as to reveal the lyric and narrative structure of the poem.

### 1. The Notion of Long Narrative Poetry as a Lyric and Narrative Hybrid

Poetic literature has conventionally been divided into three categories as narrative (or epic), lyric and dramatic. Narrative poetry, in its broadest sense, can be defined as a type of poetry that narrates a sequence of events, real or imaginary, either in written or spoken form. As one of the oldest forms of literary genres, narrative poetry is a very broad generic term subsuming epics, romances, ballads, and idylls. Lyric, on the other hand, is one of the main, conventional constituents of the poetic tradition along with the narrative and dramatic. The definition and the form of lyric poetry have changed and varied throughout the ages. Lyric, as a nominative term, has begun to be used to indicate a short poem with a single speaker expressing his/her state of mind, thoughts, feelings, and/or perceptions (Abrams, 1999, p. 146). Therefore, the term "lyric" is associated with any type of poem which is personal and emotional in expression. Although epic poems, idylls, ballads, and romances are the best known types of narrative poetry, McHale argues that

> [t]he range of narrative poetry is enormous; it includes the entire epic tradition, primary and secondary, oral and written, as well as medieval and early modern verse romances, folk ballads and their literary adaptations, narrative verse autobiographies such as Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, and novels-in-verse from *Eugene Onegin* through Les Murray's *Fredy Neptune* and Anne Carson's *Autobiography of Red*. The category also includes many lyric sequences, as well as the many free standing, non-sequence lyric poems that evoke or imply narrative situations, incorporate narrative elements, or display some degree of 'residual narrativity'. (2010, p. 12)

Such long narrative poems cannot simply be defined as poems containing only narrative elements, namely a story and a storyteller. Nor can they be defined or described by means of historical and traditional definitions of epic, lyric and romance, since they no longer count on set of conventions, predetermined rules, or formal and contextual norms, in terms of form and subject matter.

Although the terms used by the critics to define the long poems are varied such as "verse novel", "novel in verse", and "autobiographical verse", narrative poetry is an umbrella term encompassing all these forms. It is argued that "*[t]he texts described as verse novels are all long narrative poems, however else we classify them. 'Long narrative poem' is their definitive, and adequate, taxonomy*" (Addison, 2009, p. 544). Naming such poems verse-novel, novel in verse or prose poem puts these poem under the hegemony of the popular genre, that is novel especially in the nineteenth century. As Addison suggests "*[l]ong narrative poems, predating novels by millennia, have probably always been with us*" (2009, p. 544); therefore in order to emphasise both the lyric and narrative qualities, and in order to foreground the multiple components of the form such as lyric, epic, romance, drama, and so on, the term "long narrative poem" is used in this study.

The term "hybrid" denotes one of the most important characteristics of long narrative poetry that distinguishes it from traditional narrative poems:

> Derived from the Latin word *hybrid* ('having a mix character, based on heterogeneous or incongruous sources'), the term 'hybrid genre' is used to designate works of art which transgress genre boundaries by combining characteristic traits and elements of diverse literary and non literary genres. (Herman et al, 2010, p. 330)

Long narrative poems as lyric and narrative hybrids meld, transform, blur and unsettle the conventions and the stylistic features of more than one narrative and poetic forms. "*By transgressing genre boundaries, hybrid genres aim at distancing themselves from the homogenous, one-voiced, and 'one-discoursed' worldview conventional narratives seem to suggest*" (Herman et al, 2010, p. 330). In this sense, the hybrid nature of long narrative poems liberates them from the constraints of traditional genres, and makes them more free and flexible both in terms of form and subject matter.

The word "long" denotes the length, duration and the intensity of reading experience along with the proper development of a plot and characters.

> In terms of length, the work must have a sustained duration and intensity of reading experience with line length a contributing but not determining factor of this. In terms of structure, it may have a variety of structural shapes from continuous narrative to fragmented sequence of units of varying lengths, but it must have an underlying plotted narrative involving characters and events occurring in time. (Murphy, 1989, p. 67)

Long poem allows a space for a development of a plot structure, elaboration on various themes and the inclusion of different voices and perspectives. In this sense, narrative poem's being long and having hybrid structure complement each other.

Deviating from its monological and authoritative language and form, long narrative poems, thanks to their lyric and narrative hybrid nature, begin to display numerous voices, dialogues, narration, description, action in a manner that can be recognised in prose narratives. Individual voices and personal perspectives also prevail in these poems in a manner that can be recognised in lyric poems. In this sense, the characteristics of lyric and narrative are blended, and the multivoicedness in these poems exposes the diversity of life and the great complexity of human experience. The long narrative poems as lyric and narrative hybrids foreground personal narratives in the face of larger social events and grand narratives, and personal feelings in the face of social stances. As a lyric and narrative hybrid, in a long narrative poem, narrative form and novelistic features give stylistic and contextual freedom to poets, and "*retaining the form of verse allow[s] greater latitude in the use of symbol, allegory, and even emotional intensity*" (Tasker, 1996, p. 197).

The prominent stylistic and formal features of a long narrative poem as a lyric and narrative hybrid form are complex discourse structure, style variation in the text in terms of medium, tenor, domain and dialect, the elements of foregrounding, deviation and parallelism, the elements of speech and thought presentation, the presence of multiple narrators and/ or different types of narrators, sequential plot structure, the development of a plot and psychologically realised characters, a manifest concern with contemporary realities, the inclusion of various voices, perspectives and consciousness presented through the linguistic indicators of viewpoint, the deviation from a unitary speaking voice and the interaction of the differing perspectives and ideas with each others. These stylistic features separate the long narrative poems as hybrid forms from the conventional long narrative poems and pure lyric poems.

## 2. A Stylistic Analysis of David Jones' *In Parenthesis*[1]

David Jones' *In Parenthesis* is the first of his two long narrative poems, and it relates the experiences of Private John Ball in B Company, an English and Welsh regiment. The poem begins with the embarkation of the regiment for France, and ends in Mametz Wood when Private Ball is wounded in the leg during the Battle of Somme. The poem opens in an infantry camp in England.

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1 Jones, D. (2003). *In Parenthesis*. New York: The New York Review of Books. Hereafter all citations will refer to this edition and will appear by the part number and page.

In Part 1, readers are introduced to B Company along with the main figures of the narrative such as Private John Ball, Captain Gwyn, Mr. Jerkins, Sergeant Snell, Corporal Quilter, and Lance Corporal Aneirin Merddyn Lewis. The B Company is preparing for the embarkation for France in December 1915. Part 2 opens in France, and it narrates the daily activities and the training of the troops. The troops start parading through the front lines, and from this part onwards the troops are gradually moving closer to the front line. The last part, Part 7, is about the confrontation of the B Company with the enemy in Mametz Wood in July. The book ends when Private John Ball is wounded in the leg and waiting for the stretcher-bearers to find him.

The poem displays diverse and rather unconventional stylistic features. It combines free verse and prose, and it is enriched by illustrations, epigraphs, authorial notes, style variations, constant changes in narrative perspective, allusions, references and many other stylistic features that debunk the conventional expectations about prose and verse, even in modernist terms. In this sense, the poem combines literary and non-literary forms in order to construct a meaning. This stylistic versatility suggests that the form of the poem becomes more free and flexible when compared to that of the nineteenth century long narrative poems. The stylistic features of *In Parenthesis* also reflects the notion of diversity that defines the era both in social and literary terms. *In Parenthesis* can be defined as a lyric and narrative hybrid long poem as it "*is not definable as a particular art form, and does not fit neatly into any genre. It is a mixture of prose and poetry*" (Eaves, 1984, p. 54). The stylistic analysis of the poem, thus, will reveal how the poem stands in parenthesis between lyric and narrative. Moreover, this study will also reveal that it is a poem that conveys its meaning through its preface, illustrations, inscriptions, and endnotes that defy all genres and forms.

From stylistics' perspective, Jones' frontispiece[2] and end-piece drawing[3] are of great importance within the work as they communicate the feelings and ideas of the poet to readers not through words but through images. The two drawings rely on visual stylistic devices to provide information to readers, and thus, they are integral to the overall assessment of the idiosyncratic style of the poem. They indicate how certain visual elements are arranged and functioned within a narration. The frontispiece portrays a battlefield which evokes a waste land notion. The barren soil crowded by mice, leafless trees, barbed wires, a strayed mule, tools for trench digging, working and marching soldiers, and the stars in the dark sky enrich the waste land motif. The images in the drawing are interwoven, and this chaos also adds up to the waste land motif. A half-naked soldier who is probably wounded and surrounded by barbed wires is

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2  See Figure 1: David Jones' Frontispiece
3  See Figure 2: David Jones' End-piece Drawing

foregrounded as he is located in front of the other soldiers who are probably busy with engaging in the daily activities of the trench. The half-naked soldier amid in barbed wires also evokes a Christ figure. This figure represents self-sacrifice and agony, the death of whom will be expected to redeem his fellow countrymen.

The end-piece, likewise, sustains the waste land motif with the images of barren soil, the same leafless trees, a dark sky, the moon and a bunch of stars, all of which create a gloomy atmosphere. In this end-piece drawing, the soldier figure is replaced by a goat which is surrounded by the same barbed wires, and pierced into two by a long spear. The goat image suggests a rite of sacrifice. In the end-piece drawing, the half-naked soldier in the frontispiece transforms to a goat, and he is sacrificed. The notion of war is equated with sacrifice, and the battlefield is equated with sacrificial ground. The goat figure also calls to mind the scapegoat archetype. The war turns out to be a sacrificial ritual and the soldiers become scapegoats. In this sense, the soldier in the frontispiece turns to a material, a scapegoat, to which ills of the whole world and human suffering are diverted. The scapegoat figure relieves people of their own responsibilities, and it serves as a kind of cathartic purge. Both the frontispiece and end-piece drawing create parallelism which foregrounds such prominent motifs of the poem as chaos, waste land, agony and sacrifice in a visual way. The frontispiece becomes an opening parenthesis while the end-piece drawing becomes a closing parenthesis that contributes to the hybrid nature of *In Parenthesis* as a long narrative poem. Moreover, the drawings build an analogy between what is contemporary (the war) and what is religious and mythic (Christ, sacrifice, scapegoat).

At the very beginning of the poem, readers come across with a dedication page. From stylistics' point of view, the typology of the page attracts the attention as the whole text is in capital letters, and thus, it is foregrounded. This graphological deviation leads us to the notion of an inscription as seen on a war memorial, or a gravestone. The dedication text is in free verse, and has no punctuation mark (except from the periods indicating the abbreviations and apostrophe). The whole page is read as if it were one long sentence. Jones dedicates his poem to his "*FRIENDS / IN MIND OF ALL COMMON & HIDDEN / MEN AND OF THE SECRET PRINCES*", to "*THE MEMORY OF THOSE*" who fought beside Jones, to "*ESPECIALLY PTE. R.A. LEWIS-GUNNER*" who was killed in the action, to French soldiers "*WHO EXCHANGED THEIR LONG LOAVES WITH US*", and also, to "*THE ENEMY / FRONT-FIGHTERS WHO SHARED OUR / PAINS AGAINST WHOM WE FOUND / OURSELVES BY MISADVENTURE*" (xvii). In the dedication page, instead of glorifying the notion of war, or praising his fellow soldiers, Jones remarks the common concerns and sufferings of all soldiers, friends and enemies alike.

At the end of the poem, readers come across an epilogue facing the end-piece drawing. The whole text is in capital letters, yet contrary to the dedication page that consists of Jones' own

words, the epilogue consists of six quotations from the books of *The Bible* such as "Apocalypse", "Leviticus," "Song of Songs", "Isaias" and "Exodus". The three out of six quotations are in Latin, while the rest is in English. In the epilogue, the domain of language in terms of subject matter deviates from the main body of the poem as it presents the language of religion. In this sense, the epilogue contributes to the style variation in the text. For instance, the first quotation is from "Revelation 5: 6". It reads "*ET VIDI . . . AGNUM STANTEM TAMQUAM OCCISUM*" (Epilogue), and the passage is translated as "*And . . . I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain*" ("Revelation 5:6"). The second quotation is taken from "Leviticus 16", and it reads "*THE GOAT ON WHICH THE LOT FELL LET HIM GO FOR A SCAPEGOAT INTO THE WILDERNESS*" (Epilogue). The third quotation is from "Song of Songs 5: 9"; it reads "WHAT IS THY BELOVED MORE THAN ANOTHER BELOVED" (Epilogue). The fourth one is from "Isaiah 50", "NON EST EI SPECIES NEQUE DECOR ET VIDIMUS EUM ET NON ERAT ASPECTUS" (Epilogue), and it is translated as "he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him" ("Isaiah 50"). The fifth quotation is from "Exodus 12", "ERIT AUTEM AGNUS ABSQUE MACULA, MASCULUS ANNICULUS" (Epilogue), which means "Let your lamb be without a mark, a male in its first year" ("Exodus 12"). The last quotation is also from "Song of Songs 5: 16", and it reads "THIS IS MY BELOVED AND THIS IS MY FRIEND" (Epilogue). Though taken from different parts, the quotations recount the religious and ritualistic aspects of the notion of scapegoat.

From stylistics' point of view, the quotations create parallelism which foregrounds the same message that is delivered by frontispiece and end-piece drawing. The soldiers in the great war have assumed the role of a scapegoat as they have been driven away to the battlefields in order to carry away the ills of the society. The presence of dedication page and epilogue contributes to the hybrid nature of the poem very much like the drawings do. Moreover, the frontispiece, end-piece drawing, dedication and epilogue have different discourse structures from that of the main body of the poem. These parts have one layer of discourse structure, that is poet and reader level. These parts divulge the author's personal stance on certain themes developed in the main body of the poem. While revealing his own perceptions, Jones relies on the common knowledge, experiences and feelings of his readers. In this sense, these parts add up to the lyrical elements in the book in rather unconventional and unique ways. It is unconventional in the sense that instead of directly revealing his own thoughts and feelings as a first person narrator in the poem, he latently reveals his individual thoughts and emotions through these parts as they propose a discourse structure that foregrounds the relation between the poet and readers.

*In Parenthesis* also comprises of other parts such as "The Preface" and "The Notes" that contribute to the unorthodox style of the poem. These two parts demonstrate David Jones'

desire to be clearly understood. One layer of discourse structure, poet and reader, is adequate to explain how these two parts work within the poem. Jones as a poet directly addresses his readers in order to guide them in their reading process. In "The Preface", Jones explains the nature of his poem, gives brief glimpses of his own experiences when he was a soldier in the First World War, tries to justify his use of Cockney and Welsh in the poem, explains what the title means and how the punctuation marks function in the poem. It is evident that in "The Preface" Jones covers the most significant issues related to the poem. In "The Preface", Jones says "*I would ask the readers to consult the notes with the text, as I regard some of them as integral to it*" (xiv). In "The Notes", Jones gives bibliographical references, explains the words and phrases especially the ones related to military, Cockney and Welsh, and sometimes he gives anecdotes and shares memories and experiences of his own. The note numbers are inserted in the text in order to reference the related note. The presence of the notes conduces to the internal deviations in the text, as a reader constantly returns to the notes, the storyline is interrupted and the discourse structure changes. Since Jones regards these notes as an integral parts of the poem, the presence of the notes can be read as Jones' endeavour to regulate the relation between the readers and tenor of discourse. Since there is an inevitable relation between subject matter lexis and accessibility (Short, 1996, p. 85), the main purpose of the notes, thus, is to explain the words and phrases that the writer believes to be inaccessible to the common readers.

Each part of the poem is entitled individually, and there is an epigraph on each title page. The titles constitute the vast amount of literary allusions in the poem as the poem is dense with allusions. Allusion is an important stylistic device, a kind of metaphor, "*a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place, or event, or to another literary work or passage*" (Abrams, 1999, p. 9). Though the sources of the titles and epigraphs are explicitly identified in the endnotes by the poet himself, he does not state how these allusions and epigraphs are analogues to the main story. In this regard, these allusions and epigraphs can be read as deviations as they are external contexts, not directly related to the main body of the events. These deviations foreground the poet's endeavour to destabilise what is contemporary and historical, what is real and fiction, and what is individual and collective. Also, they remind the readers of the interconnection of the past and present, and thus, link the poem with a wider literary tradition as the allusions are diverse in terms of genre and style. Moreover, it can be argued that the title pages also have a one layer of discourse structure which consists of David Jones as a poet and readers. The title pages, very much like the other pages discussed above, are clearly separated from the main body of the story, and the presence of the Jones as a poet becomes explicit as allusions and epigraphs on the title pages are Jones' deliberate choices. Jones as a poet directly addresses his readers as the allusions and epigraphs require a common cultural and literary experience shared by the poet and the readers.

Contrary to the titles taken from various diverse sources, the subtitle of the poem and all the epigraphs are from *Y Gododdin*, an epic poem which belongs to an early Welsh tradition. The poem is thought to be narrated by Aneirin, an orator who lived in the 6ᵗʰ century. In the endnotes, Jones says

> [t]he whole poem has special interest for all of us of this island because it is a monument of that time of obscurity when north Britain was still largely in Celtic possession and the memory of Rome yet potent; when the fate of the Island was as yet undecided. . . . So that the choice of fragments of this poem as 'texts' is not altogether without point in that it connects us with a very ancient unity and mingling of races; with the Island as a corporate inheritance, with the remembrance of Rome as a European unity. (191-192)

The constant use of *Y Gododdin* as the source of the epigraphs in the poem create parallelism and "*invite the reader to search for meaning connections between the parallel structures*" (Short, 1996, p. 14). As Jones himself explains, this parallelism foregrounds the notions of solidarity and unity that have been reigning on the island since the very ancient times. It reminds the readers of the shared culture of Britain, and marks the First World War as one of the fundamental cornerstones of this shared culture.

The graphological deviations that can be recognised on every page are the most striking and significant deviations foregrounding the generic hybridity of the poem. In a traditional sense, the lines of a poetic work are not expected to extend to the right edge of the page, and they are usually expected to begin with capital letters. In *In Parenthesis*, however, Jones "*employs a system of 'verses' of varying lengths. These sections are not verse in the strict sense of the word, some of them taking the form of vers libre, others an irregular prose form*" (Eaves, 1984, p. 56). For instance,

> Obstacles on jerks-course made of wooden planking—his night phantasm mazes a pre-war, more idiosyncratic skein, weaves with stored-up very other tangled threads; a wooden donkey for a wooden hurdle is easy for a deep-sleep transformation-fay to wand
>
> carry you on dream stuff
>
> up the hill and down again
>
> show you sights your mother knew,
>
> how you Jesus Christ lapped in hay with Uncle Eb and his diamond dress-stud next the ox and Sergeant Milford taking his number, juxtapose, dovetail, web up, any number of concepts, and bovine lunar tricks.    (3. 32)

Such examples of graphological deviation can be multiplied as all parts of the poem break consistently into verse and prose. In this sense, the lyric and narrative hybridity can be observed not only in terms of context, manner and aim, but also in terms of graphological means.

The constant graphological deviations in the poem also signal the changes in the discourse structure and narrative mode. In this context, graphological deviations in the poem are recognised as the markers of style shifts that navigate readers from one narrative level to another. The presence of Jones as a poet is highly perceivable especially in the illustrations, the dedication page, epilogue and in the endnotes. Especially in those sections of the poem, Jones directly addresses his readers. On the other hand, in the main body of the poem, there is a narrator whose identity is unknown to readers. The narrator takes the form of an omniscient narrator, and he seems capable of narrating the events from a larger vantage point than other individual voices do. Throughout the text, this omniscient narrator is generally responsible for narrating the broader details of the camp life and the ongoing events through moving between various focal points. For instance, The poem begins with the routine morning roll call of B Company, and the omniscient narrator gives some of the details about gathering of the soldiers for the morning roll call.

> A hurrying of feet from three companies converging on little group apart where on horses sit the central command. But from 'B' Company there is no such darting out. The Orderly Sergeant of 'B' is licking the stub end of his lead pencil; it divides a little his fairish moist moustache.

> Heavily jolting and sideway jostling, the noise of liquid shaken in small vessel by a regular jogging movement, a certain clinking ending in a shuffling of the feet sidelong—all clear and distinct in that silence peculiar to parade grounds and to refectories. The silence of a high order, full of peril in the breaking of it, like the coming on parade of John Ball. (1. 1)

Soldiers are assembling on the camp's central square, and the omniscient narrator is able to convey the smallest detail such as "the noise of liquid shaken in a small vessel", and the positions of the different companies and horses that are invisible to John Ball. The omniscient narrator, however, is not the sole domineering consciousness of the poem. Apart from the narrator, "*John Ball is the only character whose thoughts are permitted to assume the narrative function of advancing the story, although occasionally the thoughts of other men are presented objectively as a means of enriching the tapestry of the war experience*" (Gemmill, 1971, p. 318). The constant change of narrators from an omniscient narrator to third person and to a lyric first

person, and also to various other minor voices multiplies the points of view enabling readers to witness the realities of war and the military life from various different perspectives. The transitions between the narrative mode when the omniscient narrator is narrating the story and the lyric mode when John Ball dominates the narration can sometimes be identified by graphological deviations. For instance,

It is difficult with the weight of the rifle.

Leave it—under the oak.

Leave it for a salvage-bloke

let it lie bruised for a monument

dispense the authenticated fragments to the faithful.

It's the thunder-besom for us

it's the bright bough borne

[. . .]

Marry it man! Marry it!

Cherish her, she's your very own.   (7. 183)


Here, John Ball is heavily wounded in the leg, and he is bewildered by his own inner conflict, and cannot decide whether it is best for him to abandon his rifle and save his life, or to hold on to it. During such significant, touching and delicate moments, the omniscient narrator totally disappears, and the narration takes the form of stream of consciousness, a kind of writing cherished by most modernist writers. The example above reveals multitudinous thoughts and feelings passing through the mind of John Ball in time of distress. The stanzaic structure, thus, indicates the narratorial change and the narrative mode as in the case of the excerpt above.

Jones makes "*systematic use of such style variation, that is, variation from one identifiable kind of English . . . to another within the same text*" (Short, 1996, p. 80). Language variation in terms of dialect, medium, tenor and domain is a kind of foregrounding which is produced through the notion of internal deviation. John Ball's B Company consists of Londoners and Welshmen, and the direct speech mode enables the presentation of various dialects. Jones himself says; "*I am surprised to find how much Cockney influences have determined the form; but as Latin to the Church, so is Cockney to the Army, no matter what name the regiment bears*" (xii). The use of Cockney dialect and Welsh words and phrases conduce to the lexical variations within the

text. Such variation adds up to the realistic presentation of the characters and environment. In this sense, readers can sympathise with the characters, and they can relate the multivocal and heteroglossic nature of the poem without much effort.

Another style variation that is explicitly noticed in the poem is a variation in terms of the medium. The characteristics of spoken language such as short, elliptical sentences, hesitation noises, pauses and syntactic peculiarities (such as wiv, luv'ly, soljers, wot) are to be seen throughout the text when John Ball or any other characters speak. These are also the examples of eye-dialect that indicates the dialectical varieties of spelling. Style variation in terms of medium, thus, appears to be echoic of the various dialects of the soldiers. In terms of domain, on the other hand, there is clearly a relation between the subject matter, and the subject matter lexis. As Jones states, *In Parenthesis* is concerned with war, and therefore, it is abundant in technical lexis. The phrases and instructions related to military service and war are frequently used throughout the text. Jones defines and explains most of those specialist lexis in the endnotes especially for those who are not familiar with such terms. In this sense, he is trying to regulate the relation between the tenor of discourse and his readers.

### 3. Conclusion

*In Parenthesis* is a long narrative poem, a lyric and narrative hybrid, and thus, when analysed from stylistics' perspective, it can be stated that the poem embodies the stylistic features associated with lyric, narrative and drama. Moreover, non-literary elements such as the frontispiece and end-piece drawing are instrumental in contributing to the hybrid nature of the poem through providing narratively salient information. *In Parenthesis* differs from the other war poems as "*this book-length poem combines an extraordinary amalgam of voices, registers and discourses . . .*" (Palmer and Minogue, 2015, p. 240) instead of nursing just one dominant subjective and lyric voice. Contrary to most of the war poems, as a lyric and narrative hybrid *In Parenthesis* imparts a sense of collective experience as it cherishes multivoicedness and polyphony.

*In Parenthesis* is lyric in the sense that it reflects the quality of being personal and emotional in expression. The characters are allowed to express their states of mind, thoughts, feelings and perceptions in relation to war and to the everyday realities of the military life. The poem is novelistic in the sense that it evokes the everyday life of the soldiers in the kind of detail that allows readers to relate them easily. Readers can relate the common situations, thoughts, feelings, sufferings aroused by the notion of war without effort. The poem is also dramatic in the sense that various different characters and voices are in a constant dialogue with one another

each revealing his/ her own distinct perceptions without merging into a single dominant voice. The generic hybridity of the poem is not only supported by the style variations in the text, lyric elements such as the revelation of individual thoughts and emotions and narrative elements such as sequence of events recounted by narrators, but it is also supported by the graphological deviations and other internal deviations that foreground the generic and stylistic varieties in the text.

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**Figure 1: David Jones' Frontispiece**

**Figure 2: David Jones' End-piece Drawing**