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**Pilgrimage and Tourism:  
The Role and Functions of Travelling in Selected Fiction of David Lodge**

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## Abstract

Travelling is an essential part of everyday life, and it is hardly surprising that the subject is often treated in contemporary fiction. Not only does the acclaimed contemporary British novelist David Lodge send his characters on vacations, tourist trips and religious pilgrimages, but he also utilises the space of the road and the characters' perception of travelling to move his narratives forward. This paper investigates the distinct types of travelling presented in the novels *Paradise News*, *Therapy* and *Deaf Sentence* written by Lodge and aims to discover whether there are any connections and similarities between these forms of travel, relying on the insights offered by several leading critics and interpreters of the historical genre known as travel writing.

**Keywords:** David Lodge, pilgrimage, tourism, space, poetics of space, travel writing

The topos of the road is one of the oldest in literature, and it has taken several fascinating turns in its development — from early travel literature to contemporary reinterpretations. It is no surprise that David Lodge, a lover and devoted theoretician of literature, explores and utilises this topos — a term of pertinent polysemy here — in several ways in his writing. Even though his novels are not typically focused on the road and travelling specifically, many of his characters are often involved in several types of movement around and between cities in which the action of the novels takes place. It is both intriguing and necessary to investigate the role of the road and travelling in Lodge's fiction, since very often the topos of the road, the space of travelling, is not only a setting for the characters' actions but also a strong influence on their beliefs and actions, almost a character in its own right. Along with the process and the setting of travelling, it is also necessary to be aware of the locations that the characters move between, since they are as inherent to the process of travelling as the road itself. Hence, this investigation includes David Lodge's novels *Paradise News*, *Therapy* and *Deaf Sentence*, which are in many ways concerned with (but not necessarily focused on) tourism and pilgrimage, which are in a number of ways important and transformative for the protagonists of the novels. The means of transport used by the characters will also be explored to determine whether they can be rendered in some way important for the development of the narrative. Not only do the novels in question portray the spaces and process of travelling, but also investigate the changes in the characters that are sparked by the experience of travelling, thus providing a necessary background for the examination of the relationship between the described journey and character development in the novels.

Considering the fact that the topic of travelling, both pilgrimage and tourism, is a recurring theme in Lodge's fiction, it is not at all surprising that it has been touched upon by a number of researchers. The questions related to academic pilgrimage in particular have been addressed and investigated from multiple perspectives, including the representation and intertextual connections of Lodge's quest narratives<sup>1</sup>, as well as the ethical problems and consequences that characters face due to travelling<sup>2</sup>. Most of the aforementioned research is focused on the "Campus Trilogy" (which includes *Changing Places* (1975), *Small World* (1984) and *Nice Work* (1988) which, indeed, provides a variety of types of travel to be investigated. However, travelling is present in other novels written by Lodge as well; it takes various forms and allows for diverse interpretations of its representation and narrative functions. The present research focuses on travelling as represented in three novels that describe the main characters' experiences abroad. The novels in question, *Paradise News* (1992), *Therapy* (1995) and *Deaf Sentence* (2002), introduce the accounts of the protagonists' pilgrimage to the foreign countries, describe the settings of their adventures and investigate the outcomes of their expeditions.

The category of the road in this case should be understood metaphorically, since at present (and in the novels written by Lodge) it is not only on roads that travelling occurs on but a much wider range of spaces. Lodge's characters travel by plane as often, if not more so, as by cars. They move between cities, countries and continents, they commute and travel for pleasure, for work and in search of knowledge.

Tourism, an integral part of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, as well as an important process involved in a number of Lodge's narratives, is often defined as "leisure travel"<sup>3</sup> which may pose a problem for the present research since the characters of Lodge's novels very rarely, if ever, travel for the sole purpose of pleasure: instead, the original purpose of the majority of journeys is related to academic activities (the main character of *Deaf Sentence* is invited to give a lecture in Poland, the protagonist of *Paradise News* attempts to resolve a conflict in his family). However, their travelling often involves some elements of tourism, such as recreational activities or visits to places of interest. It is important to understand the roots of tourism in its contemporary form, as well as the ways it has been presented in narratives throughout history, to be able to judge its representation in the three aforementioned novels written by Lodge.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Ammann, *David Lodge and the Art-and-Reality Novel* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter University Press, 1991), 108; Robert A. Morace, *The Dialogic Novels of Malcolm Bradbury and David Lodge* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 163.

<sup>2</sup> Morace, *The Dialogic Novels*, 158; Kenneth Womack, *Postwar Academic Fiction: Satire, Ethics, Community* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 83.

<sup>3</sup> Rachel Dodds and Richard W. Butler, *Overtourism: Issues, Realities and Solutions* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2019), 47.

While there is no immediate agreement regarding precise dates and names, according to most researchers, travel writing as such originates from ancient, if not prehistoric (if travel narratives passed verbally are included in the survey), times<sup>4</sup>. The main purposes of such travel narratives were twofold — the stories were used to entertain, as well as to pass the knowledge and memory on of the previous generations<sup>5</sup>. The *Histories* of Herodotus, for instance, provided an important, if somewhat simplistic, understanding of the Other<sup>6</sup>, and the *Odyssey* can be understood as a form of Bildungsroman, at least from the point of view of Telemachus. The purposes, styles and types of travel writing have changed much since then, while remaining at the margins of literary genres for most of ancient history, but they became more and more popular in medieval times.

One of the first well-documented styles of travelling was pilgrimage<sup>7</sup>, the earliest textual accounts of which date back to the Middle Ages. Although travel writing did not originate from pilgrims' accounts, it was developed by them in many respects. Medieval travel writing was “a constant of medieval literary culture, from empirical guides to the sites of the Holy Land to rhetorical satires of dubious activities during pilgrimages”<sup>8</sup>, as well as a detailed representation of foreign cultures<sup>9</sup>. The main focus of pilgrims' diaries and other texts related to pilgrimages was, however, not the experience of travelling itself, but rather the spiritual journey they were involved in<sup>10</sup>.

By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, travel writing had become one of the most popular literary genres in Europe, focusing not only on religious travel, but also on the journeys made by merchants and fishermen, on diplomatic trips, on geographic and, eventually, scientific discoveries<sup>11</sup>. Interestingly, the attitudes towards travelling turned increasingly negative among religious authorities of the time, since they saw secular travel as having a “potential for moral corruption”<sup>12</sup>.

As the variety of travel forms increased, so did the multitude of genres and sub-genres of travel writing: Picaresque novels that originated in Spain in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and gained

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<sup>4</sup> William Hutton, “Travel Writing in the Ancient Mediterranean,” in *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Carl Thompson (New York: Routledge, 2016), 101; Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 34.

<sup>5</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 35.

<sup>6</sup> Hutton, “Travel Writing,” 104.

<sup>7</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 153.

<sup>8</sup> Anthony Bale, “European Travel Writing in the Middle Ages,” in *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Carl Thompson (New York: Routledge, 2016), 152.

<sup>9</sup> Bale, “European Travel Writing,” 154.

<sup>10</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 154.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew Day, “Western Travel Writing, 1450–1750,” in *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Carl Thompson, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 161-162.

<sup>12</sup> Day, “Western Travel Writing,” 162.

significant popularity in Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> often consisted partly or fully of the accounts of their roguish characters travelling around the country and abroad<sup>13</sup>. Other sub-genres and themes ranged from philosophical reflections through political commentary to the pursuit of spirituality<sup>14</sup>. This variety of subjects inevitably included recreational travel as well.

Tourism, when understood as travelling primarily for pleasure, became popular comparatively recently, having probably originated from the Grand Tours of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Then, young men (mostly wealthy British ones) travelled around Europe to learn and “see the world” by experiencing diverse cultures<sup>15</sup>. Not only was it a way to enrich one’s own knowledge of European cultures, but also a rite of passage: British elites believed themselves to be the heirs of ancient Rome’s power and culture<sup>16</sup>, which turned the Grand Tour into a journey of discovery and reimagination of their cultural roots. For a while, however, most of the Grand Tour narratives were mainly concerned with the objective descriptions of such enterprises, and only in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century did the focus shift from collecting knowledge and experiences to the personality of the traveller and the effect of the tour on him<sup>17</sup>, thus placing the characters’ introspection at the centre of attention of the narrative. The Grand Tour is, of course, a quest in its nature — one embarks on it to attain a certain goal and state of mind.

The references to both religious pilgrimage and travelling on a Grand Tour are present in both the three novels of David Lodge and elsewhere in his fiction. Such allusions and connections, along with other significant accounts of travelling in the novelist’s oeuvre, are addressed in this investigation to discover the ways in which Lodge drew upon classical travel accounts and to determine whether the instances when travel experiences are mentioned, described and used as a setting influence the plot and the characters in any significant way. The novels in question specifically address the amalgamation of the secular and the spiritual in the characters’ understanding and experience of the journey.

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<sup>13</sup> J.A. Garrido Ardila, “The Picaresque Novel and the Rise of the English Novel: From Baldwin and Defoe to Smollett,” in *The Picaresque Novel in Western Literature*, ed. J.A. Garrido Ardila (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 118.

<sup>14</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 11.

<sup>15</sup> John Towner, “The Grand Tour: A Key Phase in the History of Tourism”, *Annals Of Tourism Research* 12 (1985), 302.

<sup>16</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 100.

<sup>17</sup> Barbara Korte, “Western Travel Writing, 1750–1950,” in *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Carl Thompson (New York: Routledge, 2016), 178.

### 1. *Paradise News*

It is not immediately obvious whether tourism be perceived as pleasure or necessity in the case of Bernard, the main character of *Paradise News* (1991). On the one hand, it is a necessity both from the point of view of the story's progression (the need to visit a dying family member) and from the point of view of the character's development, as it would allow him to rediscover new aspects to his personality (the latter being a possibility often attributed to travelling in general). On the other hand, Bernard's journey of self-discovery and the unveiling of disturbing family secrets transforms at some point into a pleasing encounter with the local culture of Hawaii (or, in a sense, the absence of it). Even though the narrative seems to be preoccupied with the events of the trip, eventually it becomes apparent that the main focus of the story is on the spiritual journey Bernard has to take.

The novel's obvious parallels between a touristic destination and Eden start, quite logically, with Limbo, the role of which is played by an international airport: "Bernard and his father passed out of the limbo of the International Arrivals Hall, into the noise and bustle of the terminal's main concourse"<sup>18</sup>. This imagery is followed by a number of allusions which eventually become literal statements: Honolulu is Paradise. The contradiction with reality is immediately pointed out by one of the characters, Professor Sheldrake, who "is working on the theory that the mere repetition of the paradise motif brainwashes the tourists into thinking they have actually got there, in spite of the mismatch between reality and archetype"<sup>19</sup>. Interestingly, the rest of the novel seems preoccupied with the task of reminding the reader of this comparison. Sheldrake in his attempts to create a typology of tourism, investigates and compares various kinds of leisure travel:

Two basic types of holiday may be discriminated, according to whether they emphasize exposure to culture or nature: the holiday as pilgrimage and the holiday as paradise. The former is typically represented by the bussed sightseeing tour of famous cities, museums, chateaux, etc. (Sheldrake, 1984); the latter by the beach resort holiday, in which the subject strives to get back to a state of nature, or prelapsarian innocence, pretending to do without money (by signing chits, using credit cards or, as in Club Med villages, plastic popper beads), indulging in physical rather than mental pursuits, and wearing the minimum of clothing. The first type of holiday is essentially mobile or dynamic and strives towards fitting the

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<sup>18</sup> David Lodge, *Paradise News* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 55.

<sup>19</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 132.

maximum number of sights into the time available. The latter is essentially static, striving towards a kind of timeless, repetitive routine typical of primitive societies.<sup>20</sup>

In the background to the main story, that preoccupied with Bernard's family and personal life, another narrative slowly unfolds that investigates tourism itself, its effects on both the local culture and the visitors. Bernard comes across elements of local culture, which are increasingly difficult to find. One of the important topics being touched upon is the disappearing of ethnoscares, "landscapes of group identity"<sup>21</sup>, territories where a specific culture prevails. Such spaces are endangered by globalisation since spaces become more connected and cultures increasingly intertwined. Tourism as a destructive force as well as being in opposition to the notions of "holiday as paradise" and "holiday as pilgrimage", is one of the sub-themes explored, while Bernard's story is the one in focus and cannot avoid being interpreted in a similar way.

Bernard, invited to Honolulu to deal with the problems of his family, begins his trip not acknowledging the contradiction, but soon leans towards the "holiday as pilgrimage", experiencing all of the typical touristic adventures. However, it is possible to assume that it is these practices that lead him to rediscovering himself spiritually. Bernard's ascetic life in Britain is contrasted with the surrounding bliss of Honolulu, and this drastic change of setting brings Bernard to a better understanding of both his faith and his secular life.

"Ah, place," said Bernard. "That's the difficulty, isn't it? Thinking of heaven as a place. A garden. A city. Happy Hunting Grounds. Such solid things."

[...]

"There's a contemporary theologian who has suggested that the afterlife is a kind of dream, in which we all achieve our desires. If you have rather low-level desires, you get a rather low-level heaven. More refined desires and you get a more refined heaven."<sup>22</sup>

The motif of paradise is present throughout the novel and, in opposition to Bernard's serious approach to the religion he abandoned, is primarily used for comedic effect: a few religious practices are mentioned rather ironically, as, for example, a swimming pool dip defined by Sheldrake as "[a] kind of baptism"<sup>23</sup>. Such an attitude towards religious rituals can

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<sup>20</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 192.

<sup>21</sup> Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 48.

<sup>22</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 206.

<sup>23</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 90.



be described and explained from the point of view of the Bakhtinian carnival. According to Mikhail Bakhtin, a scholar whose works David Lodge was very familiar (and on whose work he collected a number of essays in the 1990 volume *After Bakhtin: Essays on Fiction and Criticism*), not only do the practices related to carnival invert the binary oppositions of the serious (powerful) and the comic, but also “certain carnival forms parody the Church’s cult”<sup>24</sup> in particular, while being outside the realm of religiosity. This leads to the desacralisation of the Church and the ridiculing of religious practices for the duration of the carnival, which seems to be endless in Honolulu: on multiple occasions the descriptions suggestive of religious symbolism are subsequently revealed as forms the entertainment for the visitors, or vice versa - some elements of entertainment acquire features of the sacred, including such occasions as the aforementioned “baptism” in a swimming pool, the Limbo-like process of waiting at the airport or the absence of the change of seasons in Honolulu which is associated with “it gives [people] the illusion that they won’t die, because they are kind of dead already, just by being [there]”<sup>25</sup>.

Such a carnivalesque approach, being prevalent in all descriptions of Honolulu, suggests that the secular and the spiritual parts of a tourist experience have merged to such an extent that it is impossible to separate one from the other; and it is this combination that Bernard finds his inner peace in.

Bernard’s shift to and acceptance of the spiritual side of his journey starts, paradoxically, with a sexual experience: it is the trust he puts in a woman who endeavours to help him rediscover the long forgotten and forbidden sides of his personality that allows Bernard to reconcile the two sides of his identity: the former priest and the secular man. Paradise, thought of as a place and even a particular spot on the map throughout the novel, turns out to be a state of mind, the internal balance of the secular and the spiritual.

A number of other novels written by Lodge involve and sometimes focus on a similar change in the life of the protagonist brought to light and investigated through the journey the character goes on.

## 2. *Therapy*

*Therapy*, a novel published in 1995, talks about pilgrimage in even more explicit, sometimes literal, terms. The main character of the novel, Laurence Passmore, is a middle-aged

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<sup>24</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 7.

<sup>25</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 142.

screenwriter suffering from a mid-life crisis and a health condition his doctor calls an Internal Derangement of the Knee. As the mysterious-sounding term is explained, “[t]hat’s what the orthopaedic surgeons call it amongst themselves. Internal Derangement of the Knee. I.D.K. I Don’t Know”<sup>26</sup>. This dual ailment is what brings Passmore, Tubby to his friends, to both the exploration of new forms of alternative healing and a search for peace in his private life. The situation does not improve while he tries to fix his problems one by one, signing up for sessions in aromatherapy, acupuncture and other forms of alternative medicine to have his knee healed, and trying to find a sexual and romantic partner to “replace” his wife whom he has recently divorced.

It is scarcely surprising that Tubby finds a solution to both his medical problems and the difficulties in his personal life simultaneously, as the reason for both is neurotic in nature. However, before that happens, Laurence engages in various activities that are supposed to relieve his pain and Kierkegaardian angst — a term he finds of keen personal importance as he stumbles into reading the Danish philosopher.

The trips Tubby-Laurence throws himself into on his quest for peace are of particular interest for the topic of spatial poetics explored here. The first journeys he goes on are focused on sexual fulfilment and offer touristic experiences to him: he invites the women he is interested in to join his trips abroad, with the hope of romance. Although in one of the cases he is motivated by the pursuit of knowledge — being interested in the works and life of Søren Kierkegaard, he is enthusiastic about travelling to Copenhagen to find out more about the philosopher, — ultimately, his trip resembles a sightseeing tour more than a spiritual journey. A Kierkegaard room in the City Museum of Copenhagen turns out to be “a bit of an anti-climax”<sup>27</sup> for Laurence’s companion, while Laurence is fascinated by the experience, since he finds himself identifying with the existentialist thinker and especially with his dramatic love story. It should be noted that Laurence himself produces a reaction similar to his companion’s to the final destination of another journey: as he sets off to find his first love Maureen who went on a pilgrimage to Spain, he finds the view of the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela “a bit of an anti-climax nowadays”<sup>28</sup>. The parallelism of response highlights the analogy between the psychological implications of exposure to the secular and the religious objects of modern pilgrimage as represented in the novels of David Lodge.

Maureen Kavanagh, the goal of Laurence’s final quest, was his girlfriend in his teenage years. Laurence keeps mentioning her throughout his diaries, first without any particular

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<sup>26</sup> David Lodge, *Therapy* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1995), 13.

<sup>27</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 184.

<sup>28</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 308.

reason other than pleasant memories, then as a comparison with other women in his life and, eventually, as the woman he should pursue. This almost obsessive idea forces Laurence on a quest to find Maureen, while she is on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

Maureen is presented to the reader somewhat in a style of defamiliarization reminiscent of the technique familiar from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: she only appears in the story after a number of fleeting mentions, a long flashback about Laurence's youth and a search for her along the highways and byways of rural Spain. The real pilgrimage of Maureen's is contrasted with Laurence's quest for romantic and amorous relationship, as well as the emotional peace he wishes to derive from "making amends" to his youthful lover whom he had rashly jilted on being denied sexual fulfilment.

Laurence starts his quest with a "touristic" attitude similar to that of his previous journeys, and the places he visits on the way only reinforce his frame of mind. He comes across villages, most of which he describes along the lines of "a curious place, halfway between a folk village and a shrine"<sup>29</sup>, with the viewpoint of a foreigner on a tourist trip. Once he finds out that he might have found Maureen; however, his perception of the locations on his way changes significantly almost in an instant. It is at this point that he, while maintaining the tourist's attitude to the place, names his journey a quest:

The church contains relics of some gruesome mediaeval miracle, when the communion bread and wine turned into real flesh and blood, and the place is also said to be associated with the legend of the Holy Grail. It was certainly a crucial stage in my own quest.<sup>30</sup>

Laurence's tourism changes its purpose acquiring some features of a proper, that is, religious pilgrimage. As he reflects on his own experience and refers back to Kierkegaard's philosophy, he summarises the types of pilgrims in the terms introduced by the philosopher describing the "stages on life's way" (Kierkegaard). Here is how Tubby transforms Kierkegaard's general theory of lifelong moral education into a typology of touristic pilgrimage:

The aesthetic type was mainly concerned with having a good time, enjoying the picturesque and cultural pleasures of the Camino. The ethical type saw the pilgrimage as essentially a test of stamina and self-discipline. He (or she) had a strict notion of what was correct pilgrim behaviour (no staying in hotels, for instance) and was very competitive with others on the

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<sup>29</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 293.

<sup>30</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 293.

road. The true pilgrim was the religious pilgrim, religious in the Kierkegaardian sense. [...] The whole point was that you chose to believe without rational compulsion: you made a leap into the void and in the process chose yourself. Walking a thousand miles to the shrine of Santiago without knowing whether there was anybody actually buried there was such a leap. The aesthetic pilgrim didn't pretend to be a true pilgrim. The ethical pilgrim was always worrying whether he was a true pilgrim. The true pilgrim just did it.<sup>31</sup>

It is possible to state that this typology reflects Laurence's own quest, since he may be able to find himself in any of the three types of pilgrimage depending on the moment in the story he is at. This classification can also be reshaped to express the balance between tourism and pilgrimage in Laurence's case. Tourism, as a secular form of travelling, requires less introspection rather involving more in the way of seeking aesthetic gratification on the part of the traveller. In Laurence's case this manifests itself in his desire to enjoy the company of his partners on his first trips. The true pilgrimage he finds himself on is the one that makes him embrace the idea of spiritual rather than physical reunification with a long-lost love.

The fact that Laurence, after "tempting" Maureen to give up her difficult barefoot pilgrimage, joins her and walks the rest of the way instead of riding along in his luxury sedan, reflects his growth towards an understanding of what "true pilgrimage" is. His actions prove helpful to Maureen too, since her ethical pilgrimage turns into true pilgrimage once she understands that it is not the way she completes it that counts as she accepts Laurence's offer to drive her through a part of the way.

The "leap" of a true pilgrim mentioned in the quotation above is an image that is present throughout the book: Laurence discovers it among the first of Kierkegaard's concepts and questions the possibility of this action as such: "But in making that 'leap', man 'finally chooses himself'. A haunting, tantalizing phrase: how can you choose yourself when you already are yourself?"<sup>32</sup>. The answer appears to Laurence in the form of his own metamorphosis — the leap into the absurd (the trip into nowhere to find a person he has not seen in years) that he makes delivers him to the long-sought peace with himself. The carnivalesque inversion of the sacred and the secular brings Laurence closer to understanding and the finding of a solution to his problems. The "physicality" of the term "leap" itself is also of interest, since it can be taken quite literally in the setting of the novel: it highlights and contrasts with the slow movement of a barefoot pilgrim on the way to Santiago de Compostela.

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<sup>31</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 304–305.

<sup>32</sup> Lodge, *Therapy*, 109.

Laurence, thus, turns what was intended as tourism into pilgrimage: with a greater respect for the final destination and a deeper emotional and spiritual connection with the location.

### 3. *Deaf Sentence*

The main character of *Deaf Sentence* (2008), Desmond Bates, experiences a similar shift in his travels. While the majority of the novel takes place in the same city and in the same few locations, the unexpected account of travelling at its end stands in contrast to the rest of the book. Desmond, a retired academic, accepts his colleague's invitation to conduct a lecture in Poland, which is in itself a "leap of faith" for him, considering the fact that he has been trying to avoid communicating with people as much as possible due to his hearing impairment. However, it should be noted that this decision is pragmatic rather than spiritual: Desmond is desperate to recuperate from the difficulties in his family life, his father's fast deteriorating health and his disturbing involvement with an apparently unbalanced PhD student and her demands on his time and attention.

Desmond's trip to Auschwitz can hardly be defined as a leisure activity, and yet, his journey can be seen as an act of tourism. It is, however, not immediately clear if it can be called a pilgrimage. Although, borrowing the fictional Sheldrake's term, Desmond is involved in "cultural pilgrimage"<sup>33</sup>, Desmond does not perceive his trip to Poland as such. Unconsciously, however, Desmond, while describing his trip in his diary, chooses his spiritual and emotional experience over any other, thus emulating real pilgrims' narratives, which are characterised by the search for moral significance<sup>34</sup>. The road to Auschwitz is described in detail and gives an impression of a difficult one giving further possibilities to interpret the experience as a pilgrimage, as the experience of hardship on the way to a higher spiritual goal:

After a few miles of motorway towards the airport, the road to Oswięcem (the Polish name of the town of Auschwitz) became a congested single carriageway. There had been a fall of snow in the night, and the fields and trees were virgin white, but the road was slushy, impeding progress.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Lodge, *Paradise News*, 192.

<sup>34</sup> Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 11.

<sup>35</sup> David Lodge, *Deaf Sentence* (New York: Viking, 2008), 251.

The touristic experience of the entrance to the camp itself, with its Visitors' Centre, "photographic displays, a cafeteria, and a cinema showing film footage of the camp when it was occupied"<sup>36</sup> and other attributes of a modern tourist's experience provoke a corresponding attitude in Desmond. He calls the famous gate to the camp "something of an anti-climax after the dread with which one approaches it"<sup>37</sup>, replicating Laurence's (and, earlier, his female assistant's) perspective and, eventually, following a similar path towards the transformation of his tourist experience into that of a pilgrim while redefining the purpose of his visit.

It has been said often enough that there are no words adequate to describe the horror of what happened at Auschwitz, and in other extermination camps whose traces were more thoroughly obliterated by the retreating Nazis. There are no adequate thoughts either, no adequate emotional responses, available to the visitor whose life has contained nothing even remotely comparable.<sup>38</sup>

The moment of emotional connection to the space of collective trauma redefines Desmond's attitude and turns what seemed an anti-climax to him into the climactic event of his journey. The tourist experience hence alters, acquiring the features of a pilgrimage, which requires a moral and spiritual significance. Desmond, ironically, only understands what the goal was when he reaches it.

In sum, all three novels at the centre of this paper seem to suggest that the perceived binary opposition of secular and spiritual is not, in fact, an opposition but rather a complementary combination of the two, in which each of these major aspects of travelling can manifest itself to a greater or lesser extent depending on the given circumstances as seen above. It is possible to associate such circumstances with the way the characters of the novels experience the locations, rendering them as either belonging to the secular world or to the spiritual one, a quality contingent on the given traveller's own understanding and readiness to accept both sides of the perceived opposition.

The transformative experiences that redefine the notions of the secular and the spiritual for the characters of the novels are intricately linked to the spaces and locations the narratives unfold in — the spaces provoke and facilitate action along other factors that influence the characters. In *Paradise News*, the "paradise" of Honolulu inspires Bernard to look into himself

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<sup>36</sup> Lodge, *Deaf Sentence*, 252.

<sup>37</sup> Lodge, *Deaf Sentence*, 252.

<sup>38</sup> Lodge, *Deaf Sentence* 254–255.

and search for his own paradise be it a religious or a secular, metaphorical one, Bernard's pilgrimage opens a new understanding of life and purpose for him. In *Therapy*, Laurence is transformed by the unexpected pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela and his meeting with Maureen. And in *Deaf Sentence* Desmond finds his inner peace in the space of trauma that helps him redefine his own traumatic experiences. Travelling, then, is a way of self-exploration and self-actualisation as much as it is a source of pleasure and profit for the characters of David Lodge's fiction — as it is for most other travellers, whether fictional or actual.

The locations on the way of these modern pilgrims, the experience of spaces different from the characters' usual and habitual ones, the destination points that often fail to meet the initial expectations of the protagonists create a certain level of alienation that, eventually, is resolved by the characters' acceptance and appreciation of the spaces around them. The carnivalesque liberation from fear and trauma provides the characters with a new perspective on their lives and actions. Tourism in these novels seems to become a source of growth when turned into pilgrimage, while the spaces of such travelling facilitate the change in the protagonists' perception of their journey from purely secular experience motivated by curiosity, legal questions or the need of entertainment towards a better understanding of the spiritual significance of spaces, locations and their journeys.

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